Public Safety

What Olympia Values:

Olympians value the protection our police, fire, and emergency medical services provide, as well as the proactive steps public safety partners take to prepare for and manage impacts from natural disasters and other emergencies. They also value code enforcement services that help maintain the safety and appeal of our diverse neighborhoods and districts.

Our Vision for the Future:

A secure and resilient community where public safety services are delivered with professionalism and compassion for all. We envision a public safety system that fosters trust, equity, and collective well-being – a system where every individual, regardless of background or circumstance, feels safe, valued, and heard.

Public Safety in Olympia Means:

1. **Equity and Inclusion**
   - Every individual deserves to be treated with dignity and respect.
   - Our public safety system will work to eliminate disparities and proactively address systemic barriers.
2. **Trust and Accountability**
   - Public safety must be transparent, fair, and accountable to the community.
   - We will engage in authentic collaboration, listen deeply, and act with integrity.
3. **A Community-Centered Approach**
   - We will seek to identify solutions with input from those closest to the challenges.
   - We commit to working in partnership with community members, organizations, and stakeholders to create lasting change.
4. **Compassion and Well-being**
   - We will strive to ensure individuals have the resources and support they need to thrive.
   - We will emphasize prevention, intervention, and holistic approaches that foster wellness.
5. **Innovation and Responsiveness**
   - We will continuously evolve, using data and lived experiences to inform best practices.
   - We will implement strategies that are dynamic, proactive, and tailored to meet the unique needs of our community.
6. **Preparedness and Resilience**
   - We will take proactive steps to manage risks and respond

effectively to emergencies.

- o We will strengthen Olympia's ability to withstand and recover from natural disasters and other crises.

Our Commitment
This statement is more than words—it is a framework for action. We pledge to uphold these values in every policy, program, and decision we make. By centering trust, equity, and well-being, and by prioritizing preparedness and resilience, we will build a public safety system that works for everyone.

Introduction

Community safety requires careful planning, earned trust and collaborative partnerships. The Olympia Police and Fire Departments have recently completed internal strategic plans aimed at strengthening these foundations—positioning the City to address public safety today and be prepared for the challenges of the future. The Public Safety chapter of the Comprehensive Plan establishes the overarching goals and policies that will guide the Fire Department, Police Department, and Code Enforcement. The shared goals, policies, and a commitment to collaboration contributes to a coordinated and proactive approach to safeguarding the community.

Fire Services Prevent Harm to People and Property

Olympia Fire Department vehicles.

The Olympia Fire Department (OFD) recruits, trains and retains highly capable professionals and provides them with the best available equipment and technology to protect the community and themselves. OFD is a core partner in the Thurston County Medic One System and other local and regional programs that seek to advance pre-emptive education, equity in service and reduce reliance on costly 911 emergency services. Additionally, the new CARES (Community Assistance, Referral and Education Services program) the Olympia Fire Department now provides services that will result in a healthier community and reduced reliance on the 911 Emergency system for non-acute concerns.

The department's approach to fire prevention and protection is in the Fire Department Strategic Plan which identifies the challenges facing the City and recommends specific solutions.

The Department's core values include: stewardship, integrity, compassion and professionalism. The OFD mission is to respond rapidly, with highly training professionals to mitigate emergencies for our community. We are dedicated to reducing risk through prevention, fire and medical education, and disaster preparedness.

Olympia Fire personnel rendering assistance

Goals and Policies

GS1 The community has a high level of fire protection, emergency medical services equal to or exceeding the industry standard, and community expectations.

PS1.1 Continue to manage fire protection functions, paramedic services, and City emergency services by planning, organizing, directing, and controlling the resources available.

PS1.2 Provide timely and effective response to emergency and non-emergency calls for service, and report performance levels to maintain community trust.

PS1.3 Continue to provide fire code enforcement in new construction and fire safety inspections of existing businesses to reduce loss of life and minimize damage from fires.

PS1.4 Ensure equipment and other assets are adequate in capacity to serve the safety needs of our evolving community.

PS1.5 Continue to provide paramedic and basic life support care to the City of Olympia, as part of the Thurston County Medic One System.

PS1.6 Upgrade the fire flow capacity of Olympia's water system where needed to meet current safety standards and accommodate any future annexations.

PS1.7 Conduct a comprehensive, inclusive community risk assessment and implement a risk reduction plan to ensure equitable service citywide.

PS1.8 Develop performance measures and annually report on how the department's practices are working so they can be improved or refined.

GS2 The community proactively prepares for major disasters and is in a position to quickly and successfully respond and recover to a wide range of emergency scenarios.

PS2.1 Coordinate the City's preparation, mitigation, response and recovery to disasters through an all-hazard Emergency Management program that includes planning for major catastrophic events.

PS2.2 Maintain role as a participating agency for post-disaster and pandemic recovery through the coordination of disaster cost recovery, and the facilitation of our community's short- and long-term recovery goals and objectives.

PS2.3 Educate community members on how to sustain their households without

outside assistance for a minimum of 72 hours during an emergency event, and that some events, such as a severe earthquake, may require them to sustain themselves for five to ten days or more. Work with community based organizations and other partners to involve and reach diverse residents and neighborhoods in the education work.

PS2.4 Work with partners to gather best available information on the impact a Cascadia Subduction Zone earthquake would have on the community, including the potential magnitude, impacts of vertical movements and tsunamis, and how OFD might best prepare and respond.

GS3 Maintain a well-trained, resilient, safe and sustainable organization.

PS3.1 Continue to provide a highly skilled and adequately staffed fire fighting force to respond to fire, medical, and all other hazards to protect life and property.

PS3.2 Continue to ensure services are aligned with industry and community standards.

PS3.3 Employ the most current for fire fighter safety, command practices, training and equipment maintenance.

PS3.4 Provide professional growth through development and opportunities for all employees. Explore more ways to help ensure public safety staff feel safe and supported when they are on- and off-duty.

PS3.5 Ensure strong retention by maintaining a positive organizational culture driven by shared values, employee recognition and transparency.

PS3.6 Reduce 911 emergency response volumes through proactive public education and community assistance referrals.

PS3.7 Continue to build on regional partnerships and seek alternative funding sources that helps reinforce and expand response capacities.

Police Services Build Partnerships, Enhance Public Safety, and Contribute to Moving People Towards Wellness

The police department is the most visible part of the criminal justice system but

is only one piece. The courts, prosecutors and defense attorneys play key roles in carrying out the city's mission of balancing compassion with accountability. The Department is dedicated to building partnerships and exploring non-enforcement solutions to situations where entering someone into the criminal justice system is not in the best interests of the individual or the community. The department continues to seek and expand alternative responses to situations that don't require law enforcement, while also holding chronic offenders accountable. Through its outreach services, including the Crisis Response Unit (CRU) and Familiar Faces, the Department can tailor its responses to people in crisis, enabling it to provide assistance that fits each situation. As a result, the OPD can maximize the effectiveness of its resources and provide individuals with more of the help they need.

The department continuously uses data to track its progress. Available crime data is used to guide the deployment of police resources, track the successes, and identify opportunities for improvement. Use of force incidents and arrest data are tracked, evaluated, critiqued, and ultimately reported to the council-appointed police auditor. This data is used to ensure the department is aligned with community expectations and industry best practices.

Goals and Policies

GS4 Police services are delivered in a manner consistent with the values of the community.

PS4.1 Broadly and clearly communicate the Department's vision, mission and values and make readily accessible the Department's strategic plan, priorities, policies, and accomplishments.

PS4.2 Deliver services in a professional, timely, and objective way.

PS4.3 Continuously seek to understand the make-up and public safety values of the community.

PS4.4 Interactions with the community will continue to focus on de-escalation and be aligned with community expectations.

PS4.5 Maintain transparency, accessibility, responsiveness and a desire for ongoing community input.

PS4.6 Balance compassion and accountability; hold individuals responsible and accountable in a safe, relational, and equitable way.

PS4.7 Develop and maintain an accountable public safety system that is

accessible, equitable, trusted by the community, and committed to continuous learning and improvement.

PS4.8 Ensure that Olympia's Community Policing Board, Civilian Police Auditor, and the Office of Professional Standards meets the interests of the community and is in accordance with current legislation and contemporary industry practices.

GS5 Community members are collaborators identifying and solving community problems.

PS5.1 Communicate in an easy to understand and accessible way crime trends, prevention strategies, and enforcement data. Develop performance measures and annually report on how the program's enforcement practices are working so they can be improved or refined.

PS5.2 Continue to partner with individuals and groups in the community to identify challenges and possible solutions.

PS5.3 Regularly meet with and listen to community members to understand and be responsive to their needs.

PS5.4 Ensure the community has easy, reliable, clear, timely and accessible access to Department and public safety information, including data-sharing, crime statistics, and Department programs and activities.

PS5.5 Strengthen community trust and relationships with the Department through the hosting or attending regular events, activities, and other non-enforcement related engagement opportunities.

PS5.6 Continually evaluate police policies, training, and operational standards to adapt and integrate contemporary and best practices.

PS5.7 Recruit community volunteers and use their strengths and talents to enhance the Department's effectiveness.

PS5.8 Build authentic relationships with marginalized community groups to enhance trust, communication, reporting, and collaboration in problem-solving.

PS5.9 Communicate in transparent, timely and accessible ways about critical incidents. .

GS6 The Department is appropriately staffed and equipped to provide a high level of service for the community.

PS6.1 Periodically review staffing levels to ensure adequate coverage for emergency responses, while allowing Department members to connect with the community in non-enforcement ways.

PS6.2 Develop alternate ways to respond to calls for service where armed officers are not required.

PS6.3 Continue to evaluate and expand the use of unarmed responders to assist community members who are in crisis and where there may not be a need for a law enforcement response.

PS6.4 Focus on the quality of service provided to community members with non-emergency calls, and not merely the speed of response.

PS6.5 Use publicly accessible satellite stations to improve community member access to, and interaction with, the Department.

PS6.6 Develop a real-time crime analysis center with regional partners and use data to better identify and address trends.

PS6.8 Continuously monitor trends in illegal activity and identify strategies to reduce or more effectively prevent crimes. Ensure that external partners contributing to police workload share in the responsibility for managing and supporting appropriate crime prevention strategies.

PS6.8 Continue to explore the use of technology to continuously improve and realize efficiencies in Department services and processes.

PS6.9 Provide specialized police units and services important to maintaining Olympia's quality of life. This should include, but is not limited to, traffic patrol and both resource officers and civilian crisis responders available to schools in Olympia.

PS6.10 Maintain a strong commitment to public safety, and the prioritization of the quality of life in downtown through the appropriate staffing and continued deployment of walking patrol police officers and crisis response unit staff.

PS6.11 Ensure regular communication and collaboration between the Police Department and other City departments.

> **GS7 The effectiveness of police services is maximized through collaboration with other departments, agencies and providers.**

PS7.1 Ensure continuous crisis intervention training for officers and collaborate with mental health professionals to address social rather than criminal problems.

PS7.2 Increase the availability of crisis intervention teams and unarmed responders to handle incidents involving mental health.

PS7.3 Continue to grow the Department's collaborative partnerships with community-based non-profit and social service organizations to help address individuals' support needs before and after arrest and reduce recidivism.

PS7.4 Work with the courts and prosecutors to find alternatives to jail, such as dispute resolution, substance abuse treatment, and other strategies that address underlying problems.

PS7.5 Continuously improve cooperation and communication among police, prosecutors, public defenders, judges, and corrections agencies. Work together on process improvements that will improve effectiveness and the ability for community members to navigate the public safety system.

PS7.6 Explore regionalization of certain administrative duties, such as evidence and property management, police records, and shared use of technology solutions.

PS7.7 Continue to engage in conversations with the Olympia School District regarding School Resource Officers at area schools.

GS8 OPD maintains a strong workplace culture with compassionate and dedicated public servants.

PS8.1 Through recruitment and hiring practices, strive to reflect the community within the composition of the Police Department.

PS8.2 Continue to invest in training and professional development opportunities that maintain employee safety and wellness.

PS8.3 Maintain strong internal communications and engagement to support a culture of trust, knowledge and accountability.

PS8.4 Provide employees with a path for promotion and professional growth through training, specialty assignments, and succession planning.

PS8.5 Explore more ways to help ensure public safety staff feel safe and supported when they are on- and off-duty.

GS9 Adopt and maintain a Comprehensive Crowd Management Policy that provides clear guidance to officers, supervisors, commanders, and participating first responders and mutual aid partners regarding the employment of appropriate crowd management and public safety strategies.

PS9.1 Adopt a Public Assembly and Crowd Management Statement of Purpose that declares the Department's commitment to support and facilitate the exercise of citizen's First Amendment rights in a fair and equitable manner, without consideration as to content or political affiliation, with as minimal interference with such activities as is reasonably necessary to preserve public safety and order.

PS9.2 Establish formal communication protocols that consistently inform the community of its actions, including publishing After Action Reports and engagement with community members and business owners who are adversely affected by events.

PS9.3 Require that all OPD officers, supervisors, commanders, and community partners (such as Olympia Fire Department Medics) who assist with crowd management receive training on First Amendment rights, procedural justice, and crowd-specific de-escalation skills.

Code Enforcement Preserves Community Livability

Code Enforcement is a City program that allows community members and others to report violations of city code relating to health, safety, and welfare on private property. The Code Enforcement program investigates and seeks to remedy a variety of safety and livability including complaints about noise, trash, graffiti, signs, abandoned vehicles, animal control, overgrown noxious weeds, dangerous buildings, unlawful encampments and other community safety and livability concerns. Code Enforcement collaborates with Olympia's Police, Fire, Public Works, Building, and Legal Departments to resolve cases, and coordinates with other community entities on education and prevention activities.

Goals and Policies

GS9 The City seeks to proactively resolve code offences.

PS9.1 Seek compliance first and penalties only when necessary.

PS9.2 Reduce the amount of time allowed to achieve compliance by offering technical assistance and referrals to resources.

PS9.3 Educate neighborhoods about code enforcement and other City services, and how they can best interact with them.

PS9.4 Communicate regularly with neighborhood organizations.

> **GS10 Complaints and resolutions are tracked and reported consistently.**

PS10.1 Provide community members who submit complaints with timely information on current code enforcement activities.

PS10.2 Develop performance measures and annually report on how the program's enforcement practices are working, including time to abatement, so they can be improved or refined.

PS10.3 Communicate with those who submit complaints and alleged violators in a predictable and timely manner.

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