

2024-2028 KENT POLICE DEPARTMENT STRATEGIC PLAN



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The Kent Police Department has adopted the following strategic plan to best serve the Kent community. This plan describes priorities exist that demonstrate Chief Padilla's intent as well as the department's mission. This plan is additionally designed to be a roadmap to assist in both day-to-day operations as well as lay out clear guidance to evaluate priorities that emerge over time. The plan will be subject to annual review at the end of each year and any updates or revisions will be posted no later than February of the subsequent year. To fully integrate and execute this plan a full understanding of Chief Padilla's Command Intent, The Kent Police Department Mission and annually adopted and refined department goals and objectives are to be considered mutually supporting efforts.

CURRENT SITUATION AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONSIDERATIONS

The Kent Police Department is a regional leader in the police profession and has adapted to recent developments and reforms in the policing profession in an effective manner. While the adaptations caused friction at times, both in the organization as well as the community, the department has begun transition to maintaining a proactive and responsive posture to environmental influences. The department has largely stabilized staffing to its authorized level and is in the process of integrating large numbers of new employees and leaders. Additionally, several changes to the department's organizational structure have occurred, or are underway, as the department positions itself to provide quality police service in any situation.

Simultaneously, crime and quality of life issues have recently surged in our region. This surge has caused a large section of the community to demand increases in public safety efforts. These demands are reasonable responses to the situation however clear paths to address them are not as obvious or predictable. Further, it has become apparent that a consensus on a reliable framework of fiscal policy for police services will require additional time to identify. In short, the demand for quality police service is rising but is not in alignment with current and projected fiscal support. Beyond the paradigm created by fiscal constraints and demands for service there remains a regional challenge in inconsistent public policy that also regularly limits or at least blurs the effectiveness of policing efforts.

A substantial number of new people, doing new things, in a profession that deserves both support and scrutiny is not a small undertaking. Understanding this environment is crucial to understanding the need to adopt thorough and well-reasoned guidance this plan endeavors to provide.

PRINCIPLES OF OPERATIONAL GUIDANCE

Chief Padilla has developed four principles to guide the purpose of the Kent Police Department. These principles are to provide broad guidance as to how to orient and prioritize specific operational efforts.

- Establish and maintain quality police service
- Adapt to current and emerging needs of our diverse community
- Prioritize the development and wellness of our staff
- Promote a department culture of accountability and transparency

Underpinning each of these principles are supporting priorities which are listed below in detail. To prioritize, quantify and execute the listed supporting priorities the Department leadership will adopt an initial set of goals and objectives by Division beginning in 2024. These goals and objectives will be aligned to successfully carrying out each of the Chief's Principles of Operational Guidance by identifying a desires endstate for each principle. These supporting priorities, as well as goals and objectives, will be analyzed and updated annually based on this feedback as well as other observed outcomes using the stated end state for each principle.

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING QUALITY POLICE SERVICE

Endstate: Customer service-oriented staff who are aware and mindful of the impact of their actions while anticipating the needs of the organization and the community in order to effectively balance problems as well as tasks.

SUPPORTING PRIORITIES:

Analyze metrics for staffing in all divisions to ensure personnel assignment supports mission accomplishment

Analyze sector alignment, size and staffing including staffing levels both current and projected

Analyze and establish metrics for service quality, timeliness and impact as well as how to sustainably continue quality measurement

Identify and support opportunities to increase community engagement

Analyze and maximize the ability to conduct ongoing and formalized quality control functions

ADAPTING TO THE CURRENT AND EMERGING NEEDS OF OUR DIVERSE COMMUNITY

Endstate: Sustained and resourced effort of community engagement that demonstrates a commitment to fairness for all parts of our community and that meaningfully incorporates perspectives of the community we serve while recognizing community trust is a requirement for the effectiveness of the Department.

SUPPORTING PRIORITIES:

Periodically analyze existing community outreach efforts and determine need to enhance, sustain, replace, or discontinue

Proactively evaluate, test, and deploy trust building initiatives

Build and maintain meaningful relationships with community members and groups (Race and Equity Board, YPAR, CILEP, etc.) that are reliable collaboration venues for the Department and community

Develop strategy to communicate community engagement efforts inside and outside the Department to increase engagement

Establish formal criteria for community engagement that develops ability to track efforts and outcomes, adapt effort using the information that is developed

Integrate hiring and recruiting efforts into community outreach at every opportunity

Publish community engagement plan and periodically report on status

Incentivize self-initiated community engagement at all levels of staff

Establish, deploy, and measure community engagement efforts in tangible ways

Establish resourcing and measurement of community engagement on par with that of existing operational functions

DEVELOPMENT AND WELLNESS OF OUR STAFF

Endstate: Clearly defined, identified, and implemented paths maximizing wellness and development of our people that demonstrate increased engagement, resilience, and effectiveness across the entire organization to ensure mission accomplishment.

SUPPORTING PRIORITIES:

Leader Development

Create and enable leaders who anticipate and address the needs of community, employees, and organization

Create and enable leaders who are self-aware and proactive in their leadership

Establish consistency in leader training with identified strategies for success

Establish and maintain leader success metrics

Staff Development

Establish formal plan to develop staff members at each level of the organization

Analyze feasibility and impact of a Master Police Officer Program

Wellness

Define wellness as it pertains to the Department (establish a common definition that facilitates developing supporting efforts)

Recognize adequate staffing is foundational to wellness efforts

Define, quantify, and monitor work/life balance initiatives

Maintain schedule stability and define and monitor key indicators of schedule effectiveness

Initiate and monitor sustainable on duty wellness and fitness opportunities

Initiate and monitor sustainable on duty training opportunities

Coordinate wellness effort across entire department

Define intent, goals, and objectives for wellness programs

Measure impacts of wellness efforts

Develop and publish a wellness policy

PROMOTING A DEPARTMENT CULTURE OF ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

Endstate: A fully developed understanding of self and organizational accountability that enables tangible solutions to showcase the department's work while also providing meaningful tools that create access and utility to relevant internal and external information.

SUPPORTING PRIORITIES:

Participation in the City of Kent Business Information Team (BIT)

Adoption of a suitable use of force data reporting system that informs the department and the community

Enhancement of professional standards business practices and systems

Use of public facing systems that promote end user engagement

Orient staff effort on data collection and quality

Establish and monitor metrics that demonstrate the overall health of the organization

Incorporate lessons learned in a meaningful and transparent manner

Define and monitor the philosophy of accountability and transparency

ENABLING INITIATIVES IN SUPPORT OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN

PERFORMANCE MEASURE INITIATIVE

The department has initiated a Performance Measure initiative by attempting to merge data and formalized organizational priorities into collective decision making. This involves each division establishing measures that they believe indicate a level of performance and subsequently collecting data that demonstrates whether the discovered level of performance is in line with organizational values and established expectations. These outcomes will then be assessed to determine what initiatives might be undertaken to bring the performance in line with expectation while also validating the expectation itself. Additionally, the collection and analysis of data about the department's performance serves to increase internal attention and quantify how the department serves the community in a sustainable way.

FACILITIES STATIONING PLAN

With input from staff and in conjunction with City of Kent Parks Facilities Department analyze and adopt short-, medium- and long-term facility plan for the Department. This plan will incorporate current as well as future operational and staffing considerations as well as lay out goals for each year regarding project completion and personnel distribution at each location.

STRATEGIC STAFFING PLAN

This plan was developed through analysis of the listed priorities and considering current staff availability and capability, the need to adapt to emerging community needs, and to identify areas of strength to sustain while mediating or eliminating instances expectations not being fulfilled.

STAFFING PRIORITY #1

Maximize quality of service response - Analyze and, as appropriate, increase personnel staffing, alignment, and deployment to facilitate:

- Officer and community safety
- Improved call response time
- Quality of service as perceived by community
- Quality of investigations and their outcomes
- Opportunities for proactive contacts in the community
- Increased time for enforcement, community engagement, employee wellness and training

STAFFING PRIORITY #2

- Develop increased capabilities and capacity to best serve our diverse City- Analyze feasibility and impact of the following types of units and/or capabilities:
- Dedicated bicycle patrol
- Intelligence led crime reduction team
- Human trafficking and online exploitation investigation
- Regional task force involvement
- Technical investigation and digital evidence management expertise
- Crime scene response
- Non-traditional engagement of vulnerable and high need communities through outreach
- Victim advocacy to include partnerships with Non-Governmental Organizations
- Quality assurance and quality control

STAFFING PRIORITY #3

- Develop sustainable development effort that cares for our people and enables them to be best positioned to care for the community they serve:
- Dedicated personnel to maintain internal wellness efforts
- Dedicated personnel to maintain and expand training opportunities and organization growth requirements
- Stabilized on-duty wellness and training opportunities

METHODOLOGY FOR STAFFING PLAN CONSTRUCTION

In the second half of 2023 the Police Chief, DC and ACs met in two sessions to devise options for growth that allowed for addition of 25 sworn personnel and 10 non-sworn personnel. This planning constraint was based in projected tax revenue from either a sales tax increase or a ballot measure. The growth from this analysis was spread across all three divisions and in line with Chief's pillars of operational guidance and three staffing priorities.

Subsequently, the DC met with line staff from the Patrol and Investigations divisions over three total sessions. Their instructions were to use their relevant experience to assess where additional staff could be used most effectively. The planning constraint they were provided was a limit of 35 sworn positions and 20 non-sworn positions. This team also provided input across all three divisions. The intent was to specifically integrate the line level staffs experience and perspective into what they believe would make them most effective.

Also used in planning was the ratio of officers per 1000 people of population in the City. Currently this ratio is 1.21 given a sworn personnel strength of 167 officers and a population of 138000. By adding 25 officers (192 total) the ratio increases to 1.39. By increasing it to 35 officers (202 total) the ratio is 1.46. For reference state and national ratios are 1.38 and 2.31, respectively.

In considering the executive analysis completed by the Chiefs as well as the line staff input the following personnel additions are recommended. This assumes the addition 25 police officers and 10 civilian staff members while still considering ideas and input from the exercises that had larger staffing additions proposed:

SWORN:

- 10 Patrol Officers
- 2 Patrol Sergeants
- 1 Patrol Commander
- 1 Crime Reduction Officer
- 3 Human Trafficking and Narcotics Detectives
- 1 Human Trafficking and Narcotics Sergeant
- 3 Homicide and Violent Crime Detectives
- 1 Homicide and Violent Crime Detective Sergeant
- 1 Crime Scene Detective
- 1 Public Information Officer/Recruiter
- 1 Field Training Coordinator

NON-SWORN:

- 1 Evidence Custodian
- 2 Crime Scene Technicians
- 1 Criminal Intelligence Analyst
- 1 Contract Specialist
- 1 Corrections Sergeant
- 4 Corrections Officers

While some of these positions are completely new, many add additional capacity to existing efforts or units. Other ideas from leadership and focus groups included additions of Victim Advocate, Training Officer, Quality Assurance Specialists, Wellness Coordinator and KPOA President or administrative officer. The span of control for supervisors was also discussed and it was recognized that additional commanders and/or sergeants may be necessary to effectively supervise the additional personnel.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS AND REFERENCES

In order to carry out this plan and ensure ongoing initiatives or efforts are aligned with it the following documents are associated resources or references:

- Chief Padilla's Command Intent Document dated 10/10/22
- Kent PD Policy 1.10, Mission Statement