

2023 - 2028

STRATEGIC PLAN



GREEN COVE SPRINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF OF POLICE



As Chief of Police, it is my pleasure to present the Green Cove Springs Police Department's 2023-2028 Five-Year Strategic Plan.

Upon being appointed Chief of Police in December of 2021, we published the Department's first-ever "Strategic Plan." That plan was little more than a summary of our vision for the agency, our operating plan, and some strategic goals that we wished to accomplish by the end of my first year. Although I can proudly say that most of the goals I set for the Department in my first year as Chief of Police were reached - such as acquiring body and vehicle cameras, acquiring police bicycles, and reassigning an officer to the county SWAT team – some of our goals were not reached.

With this new plan, we are putting forth a 5-year roadmap for our department. This plan was formulated with input from our department members and various community stakeholders. Any unreached goals from our very first strategic plan, which we feel are still relevant, have also been incorporated into this more comprehensive strategic plan.

 #673

E.J. Guzman
Chief of Police
Green Cove Spring Police Department



“

It's exciting to be a part of the development and advancement this city and department will soon experience

”

CORE PILLARS

VISION

“To be a premier law enforcement agency, always improving for a growing community.”

MOTTO

“To protect with courage and serve with respect.”

MISSION

“The Green Cove Springs Police Department is dedicated to partnering with our community in order to improve the quality of life of our citizens and visitors. We strive to provide excellent customer service through highly motivated members.”

CUSTOMER SERVICE

All of our team members are expected to provide superior customer service. To accomplish this, our members are expected to know and practice The 3 Tenets of Customer Service.

- 1. Your problem is important to me.**
- 2. I will find a way to help you.**
- 3. I will exceed your service expectations.**



INTRODUCTION

A strategic plan is an essential component of any organization, as it helps prioritize resources and facilitate management decisions that target our desired outcomes. As a community, it provides a shared vision for our department and a basis to identify, evaluate, and communicate progress on results. The Green Cove Springs Police Department's (GCSPD) 2023-2028 Strategic Plan is not intended to provide a step-by-step plan for action. Rather, the purpose of this strategic plan is to identify the overall objectives of our organization, and what we are striving to achieve during the next five years. As technology and the American society changes, law enforcement must be both strategic and malleable, so that we can rapidly respond to new challenges. This strategic plan will be amendable by the Chief of Police based on the evolving needs of our community.

SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT (**Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats**) analysis is a tool that can help an organization identify what it does best now, what areas need improvement, and devise a successful strategy for the future. A SWOT analysis examines both internal and external factors. Some identified factors will be in the organization's control, and some will not. In either case, the wisest action the organization can take in response should become clearer once they are identified, recorded, and analyzed.

In November of 2022, Chief Guzman hosted a community meeting at the police department to gather opinions from community stakeholders to utilize when formulating the Department's Strategic Plan. The attendees were asked to complete a 10-question department survey and identify department strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats. Chief Guzman also directed all department members to complete a written SWOT analysis of the Department. SWOTs identified by the community and department members will be considered and referenced throughout this strategic plan.

S

Strengths

W

Weaknesses

O

Opportunities

T

Threats

MEMBER IDENTIFIED SWO&Ts

In 2022, the Chief of Police held individual meetings with various members, as well as a community meeting, intending to identify agency Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats (SWOTs). Out of these meetings, the Department identified the following common points:

Strengths

- Continued training and education
- Good long-term vision
- Competitive pay and retirement plan
- Support from Command Staff
- Relationship with the community we serve
- Equipment
- Focus on health and wellness
- Wide variety of experience among members
- Family atmosphere
- Pride in agency
- Promotes further education
- Members know the community we serve
- Quick response times
- Good Dispatchers
- Time allowed for physical fitness
- Happy members
- Open to suggestions from members and willing to implement new ideas
- Supportive city leadership
- Good culture
- Agency reputation
- Improved relationship with the Sheriff's Office
- Community programs
- Social media presence
- Qualified and committed members
- Partnerships with other public safety organizations
- High standards for applicants
- Department planning and preparedness
- Teamwork
- Willingness to learn
- Agency provides new opportunities for officers to grow through new positions
- Progressive department

Weaknesses

- Pay for sworn and non-sworn members is not competitive enough
- Need for more vehicles
- Communications understaffed
- Patrol understaffed
- No pool of strong applicants
- Poor dispatch software
- Small patrol squads
- Heavy workload for the Communications Section

Opportunities

- To be recognized as a premier law enforcement agency
- More detectives
- An additional K-9 team
- Task force membership/participation
- Plan for city growth
- More inter-agency positions
- Enhanced use of technology
- New positions within the Department
- Community Relations Officer
- Sponsor new officer applicants
- Community involvement
- Department growth through annexation and city growth
- Advancement within the Department
- Advancement in technology
- Growth of the Department
- New opportunities through newly created positions

Threats (known and anticipated)

- Limited space at police headquarters
- Growth of the community out pacing the growth of the Police Department
- Current number of Communications Officers not adequate
- Current number of Police Officers not adequate
- Unsecure parking at the police station
- Issues related to homelessness
- Favoritism showed to few members
- Cameras needed in the evidence room
- Body and in-car cameras will require more staff in Records Section
- Anti-law enforcement sentiment
- Increase in cyber-related crimes
- Weakening economy effecting law enforcement fund
- Surrounding agencies competing for same applicants
 - Better pay
 - Bigger/more opportunities
- Decreased interest in the law enforcement profession
- Officer-safety issue if department growth does not match city growth
- Better succession planning needed

Strengths

- Community involvement/engagement
- High visibility
- Professionalism
- Community minded
- Support from city leadership
- Good department members/quality of personnel
- Quick response times
- Accountability

Weaknesses

- Staffing shortages
- Underfunding
- Low resources
- Growth on south and west ends of the City may present challenges
- Steady recruitment

Opportunities

- Smaller jurisdiction
- Growth in community
- Recruitment
- Expand community involvement
- Second K-9 team
- Relationship with the County and developers to plan for new densities

Threats (known and anticipated)

- Growth of the community out pacing the growth of the Police Department
- City growth effecting safety
- Public opinion of law enforcement
- Homelessness related issues
- Slower response times due to higher densities in and around the city limits
- Increase crime from First Coast Expressway (FCE)

COMMUNITY SIZE



In 2021, The U.S. Census Bureau estimated the City of Green Cove Springs population to be 9,784. Estimates place the City's current population at or above 10,000 residents. The size of the incorporated city is 10.56 square miles, with 9.1 of that being land. The City is approximately 94% urban in nature. During the work week, the City's population, and commuter traffic swell due to major traffic arteries, county government buildings, and local businesses.

According to the City's most recent comprehensive plan, the City's population by 2027 will be approximately 12,000 residents. This increase does not consider the expected population growth in the unincorporated areas just outside the city limits.

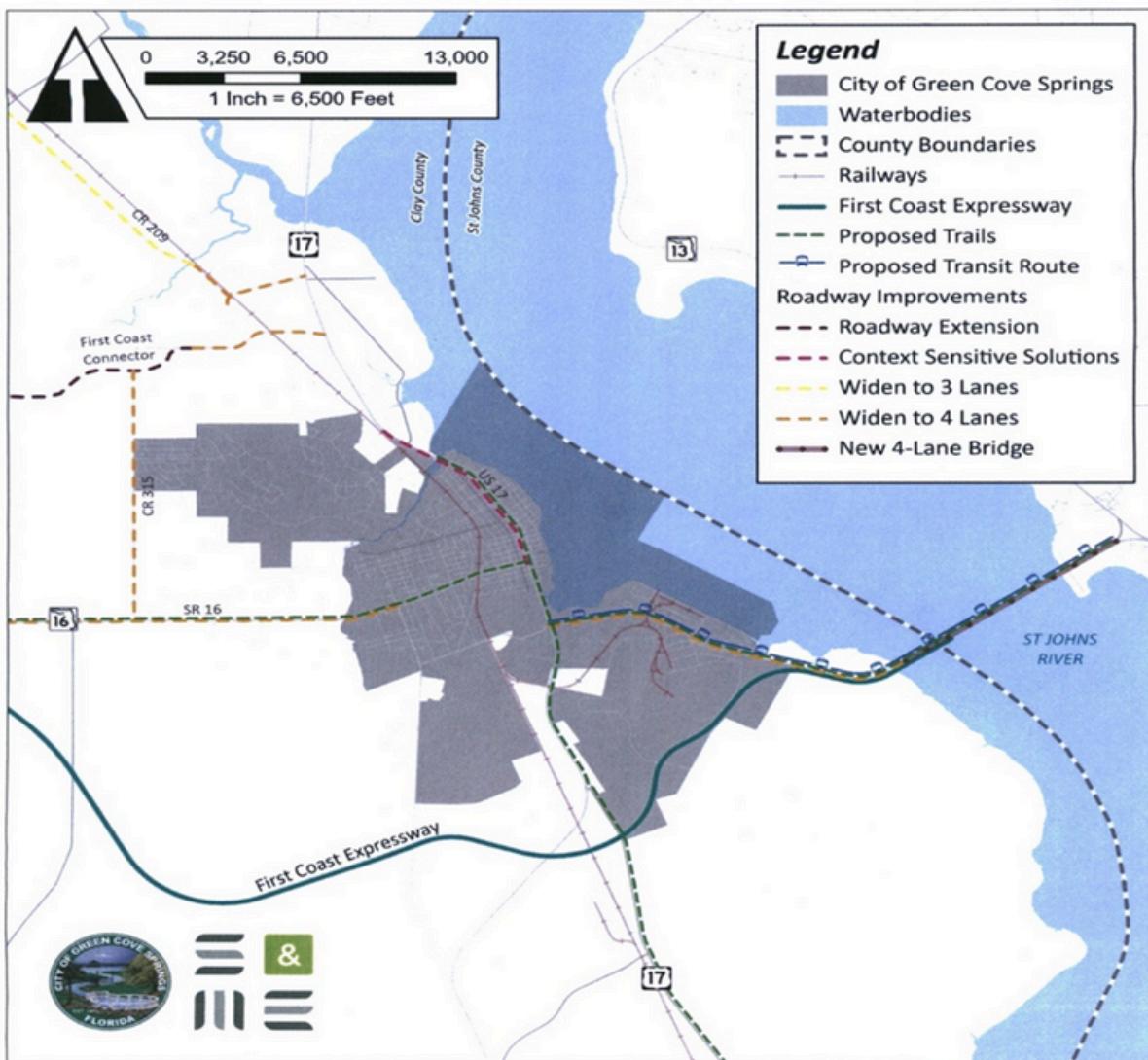
The First Coast Expressway (FCE, SR 23) is a multi-lane, limited-access toll road that, once completed, will cross parts of Duval, Clay, and St. Johns counties. The FCE is currently under construction and will pass through the City's southeast portion and surround the City to its south and west. The First Coast Expressway's Green Cove Springs sections are expected to be completed by 2026. This new by-pass is expected to bring increased traffic and businesses to the City and surrounding areas.

With the expected business opportunities and residential needs, the City has witnessed an increase in annexation and annexation applications. At the beginning of 2023 alone, more than 72 acres of private property near the City's southern border will be annexed into the corporate limits. This trend can be expected to continue and should increase our population faster than originally expected.

CURRENT CITY LIMITS

As of December 2022

GREEN COVE SPRINGS - MAP SERIES - FUTURE TRANSPORTATION



[12/21]

I. FUTURE LAND USE - MAP SERIES

I-15



CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

In 2021, the City had approximately 3,338 households, with 2.66 persons living in each residence. People who were 25 or older with a high school diploma or higher were 90%. People who were 25 or older with a Bachelor's degree or higher were 26.2%. The median household income was \$59,200. In the civilian labor force, 16 years or older, the total percentage of the population was 55. 2%.



DEPARTMENT COMPOSITION and SIZE

The Green Cove Springs Police Department is currently comprised of 33 full-time members and 10 part-time members.

Of those, 25 are full-time sworn law enforcement officer positions, 5 are part-time sworn officer positions, 9 are full-time civilian positions, and 4 are part-time civilian positions.

The Department is divided into two separate divisions: the Administrative Division and the Operations Division. Each division is headed by a Division Commander. The division commanders oversee multiple sections, with the assistance of supervisors.

The Department consists of the following services: Patrol, Criminal Investigations, School Resource Officers, Canine Unit, Traffic Enforcement, Marine Enforcement, D.U.I. Enforcement, Community Relations, Communications/Dispatch, Evidence, and Records.

The Department has one Administrative Assistant and a small number of part-time civilian volunteers.

SERVING A DIVERSE COMMUNITY

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the United States is projected to continue becoming a more racially and ethnically pluralistic society. One in three Americans—32 percent of the population—is projected to be a race other than White by 2060. The fastest-growing racial or ethnic group in the United States is people of two or more races, projected to grow some 200 percent by 2060.

The next fastest is the Asian population, which is projected to double, followed by Hispanics whose population will nearly double within the next 4 decades. In contrast, the only group projected to shrink is the non-Hispanic White population. Between 2016 and 2060, the non-Hispanic White population is expected to contract by about 19 million people.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the City's racial demographics are as follows:

White (only) 77.3%

Hispanic or Latino 13.8%

Black or Afro-American 11.6%

Two or More Races 6.5%

Asian 0.9%

With a fast-growing minority, the Department will take steps to ensure our larger minority groups are both considered when providing our law enforcement services and represented by our staff members.

The national average of Black police officers in the country is approximately 13%. The Green Cove Springs Police Department currently employs 1 Black officer, which represents 3% of our officers. The average number of Latino officers is approximately 10%. We employ 3 Latino officers (one of which is the Chief of Police), which is 10.7% of our sworn staff.

The Department will consider these numbers when formulating our recruitment plan for the years to come.

The Department must also ensure that services and the legal process are not hindered due to language barriers. The second most spoken language used in the City is Spanish. The Department must ensure that Spanish speakers can understand basic forms and report crimes with ease. This will entail translating our forms into Spanish versions and bringing on more Spanish-speaking members to assist when needed.

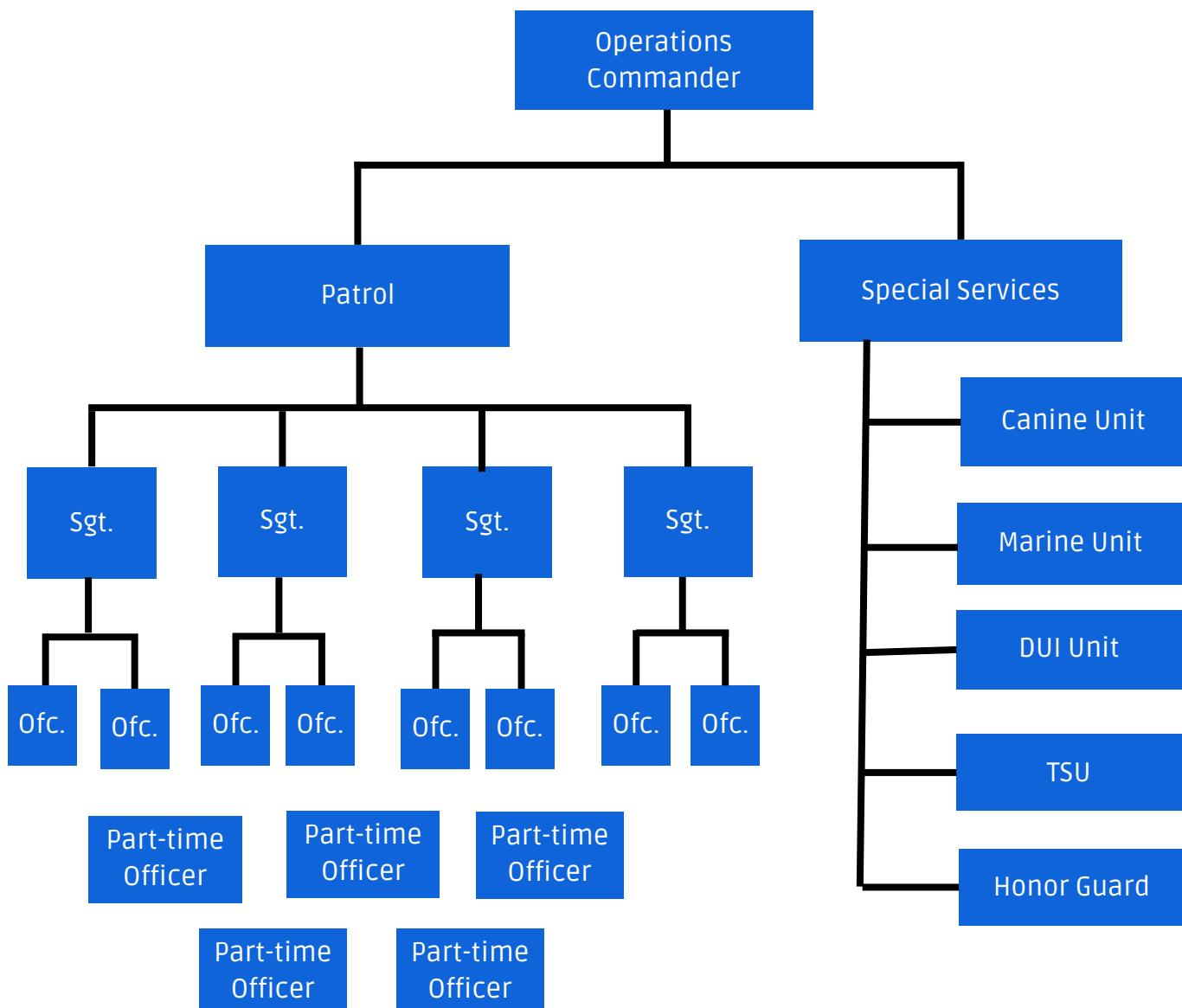
STRATEGIC GOALS

- Expand recruitment efforts to bring in qualified minority candidates to better reflect our community.
- Translate department forms into Spanish versions.
- Ensure members have access to Spanish speaking members and services.

OPERATIONS DIVISION

Commander Shawn Hines

“ Three questions every law enforcement officer should ask before taking action.....is it moral, legal, and ethical ”





PATROL

The main function of our Patrol Section is to respond to service request calls as quickly and as safely as possible, investigate criminal activity, enforce criminal and traffic-related laws, deter/suppress criminal activity, and arrest suspected criminals.

Our department has had a proud history of quick response times to emergency and non-emergency calls for service. In 2022, the Department touted an average patrol response time to non-emergency calls of 5 minutes and 12 seconds. For context, the average call response time for the sheriff's office in 2022 was approximately 10 minutes and 57 seconds. In 2022, the Department also had an average response time to 911/emergency calls of 40 seconds. In the coming years, the Department must be able to meet or exceed our community's expectations for quick response times to their calls for service.

High visibility patrol is a method used by the GCSPD to deter criminal activity and promote safe driving. Our department is the first in the area to conduct high visibility patrol by utilizing specialized "cruise" lighting on our patrol cars that allow them to be recognized as law enforcement from further distances. High visibility patrols will be maintained and enhanced on both our major roads and also inner neighborhoods.

CANINE



UNIT

In 2019, the Police Department revived its long-dormant K-9 services when a working dog was donated to the Department by The Grit Foundation. The need for our very own K-9 Unit was evident when our patrol officers were continuously asking for canine assistance/services from the Clay County Sheriff's Office. With the acquisition of a new working dog, "Grit", and his pairing with an officer, our members no longer need to depend wholly on another agency for these important services.

The GCSPD K-9 team is certified in the detection of 5 different illegal narcotics (MDMA, Heroin, Methamphetamines, Cocaine -Base, and Cocaine-HCL). Grit is also a certified patrol dog, which entails his ability to physically apprehend suspects.

Our one K-9 team is currently scheduled so that its unique abilities are available when it is expected to be needed the most. The team works an average of 10 hours a day; 4 days a week. When the team is not on-duty, our officers again need to depend on K-9 teams from the sheriff's office.

One area identified under Opportunities by our members and community stakeholders, in the SWOT survey, was the opportunity to add an additional K-9 team to the Department.

With the growth in the City, it can be expected that K-9 services will be needed more often. Ideally, two K-9 teams could be scheduled to better assist the two patrol squads. Also, another K-9 team would allow the canine officers and dogs to train with each other, rather than dealing with scheduling conflicts to train with outside agencies.

MARINE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

The Green Cove Springs Police Department currently conducts marine enforcement in approximately 1.5 square miles of the City's waterways (mostly in the St. Johns River). The Department also has an agreement with the Clay County Sheriff's Office that allows us to conduct enforcement in a portion of Black Creek near the City.

Our current marine vessel is an older boat that has been less than reliable on the water. Early 2023, the Department will receive a new 21' Boston Whaler "Guardian" law enforcement hull. With the new vessel, the Department will be able to conduct enforcement on the water more efficiently and with fewer maintenance costs.

Currently, when our Marine Unit is needed, at least two officers must be utilized to trailer the boat to the Governor's Creek Boat Ramp and launch the vessel in the water. The City has plans underway to construct a boat lift near the City Pier that would allow rapid deployment of our boat into the water for rescues and other operations.



MARINE ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

DERELICT VESSEL INITIATIVE

The Green Cove Springs Police Department works cooperatively with the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission, the U.S. Coast Guard, and the Clay County Sheriff's Office to identify and remove derelict and abandoned vessels from our waterways. "Derelict" refers to vessels that are neglected with an identifiable owner and "abandoned" vessels are those where the owner is unknown or has surrendered ownership. Officers notify boat owners who may be subject to fines or jail time if they do not take corrective action. When due process to the responsible and interested parties has been attained, the State or Local Government Agency can remove, destroy, and dispose of the derelict vessel.

Each year the Department, through Clay County Government, utilizes pre-qualified marine contractors that competitively bid for each job for the removal of derelict vessels. In certain cases, the City of Green Cove Springs may remove and dispose of a vessel under City Ordinance. Removal of these vessels can become costly to the City and our partners. The Department will work hard to recoup these expenses from the vessel owner through court-ordered restitution. Also, the Department has the authority to place a title freeze on the vessel so it cannot be sold to an unsuspecting buyer. In addition, we can limit the ability of a person convicted of a derelict vessel to register another vessel or motor vehicle in the State of Florida until repayment for the removal expenses is made by the owner.



To reduce the number of vessels ending up as derelict in our jurisdiction, the Department will support initiatives to prevent this problem. In 2021, the Florida Legislature adopted an At-Risk Vessel Program to provide early notification to vessel owners that their vessels may be at risk of becoming derelict.

In addition, the Department supports other management objectives to address boating-related issues as a whole. It is a challenging issue, but one that can be managed through education, prevention, and strong enforcement measures.

TRAFFIC & STRATEGIC SERVICES



Some of the Department's most prevalent issues are traffic-related incidents such as speeding and traffic accidents. Our officers conducted 5,279 traffic stops and issued 2,121 citations in 2022. This was an increase from 2021 by 355 stops and 308 citations. There were also 217 traffic crashes, two involving serious injury, in 2022. This was an increase of 15 crashes from 2021. To help combat the increasing traffic-related incidences, the agency established a dedicated Traffic and Strategic Services Unit (TSU). The unit's mandate is the proactive enforcement of state traffic laws. Unfortunately, due to staffing shortages, the TSU has not been fully activated.

In addition to traffic enforcement, the TSU has other ancillary duties, such as police bicycle services. At the end of 2022, and for the first time in many years, the Department deployed bicycle patrols throughout the city, and for specific public events. The bike patrols have become possible with the acquisition of two new donated police bicycles.

With the First Coast Expressway (FCE) slated to run through and around our city, the Department expects traffic crashes, speeding, and other traffic-related issues to persist. The Department will deploy speed-measuring radar units in all our patrol cars by mid-2023. The radar units will have both front and rear antennas. These units will be in addition to the handheld laser units already used by our officers.



Operations Related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Quick patrol response times
- Good teamwork
- High visibility
- Professionalism

W

Weaknesses

- Patrol understaffed

O

Opportunities

- Additional K-9 team
- Department growth
- Use of technology

T

Threats

- Growth of the city may outpace growth of the department
- Slower response times
- Increased crime due to the First Coast Expressway
- Growth of the city effecting public safety
- Understaffed officers

Operations Related Strategic Goals

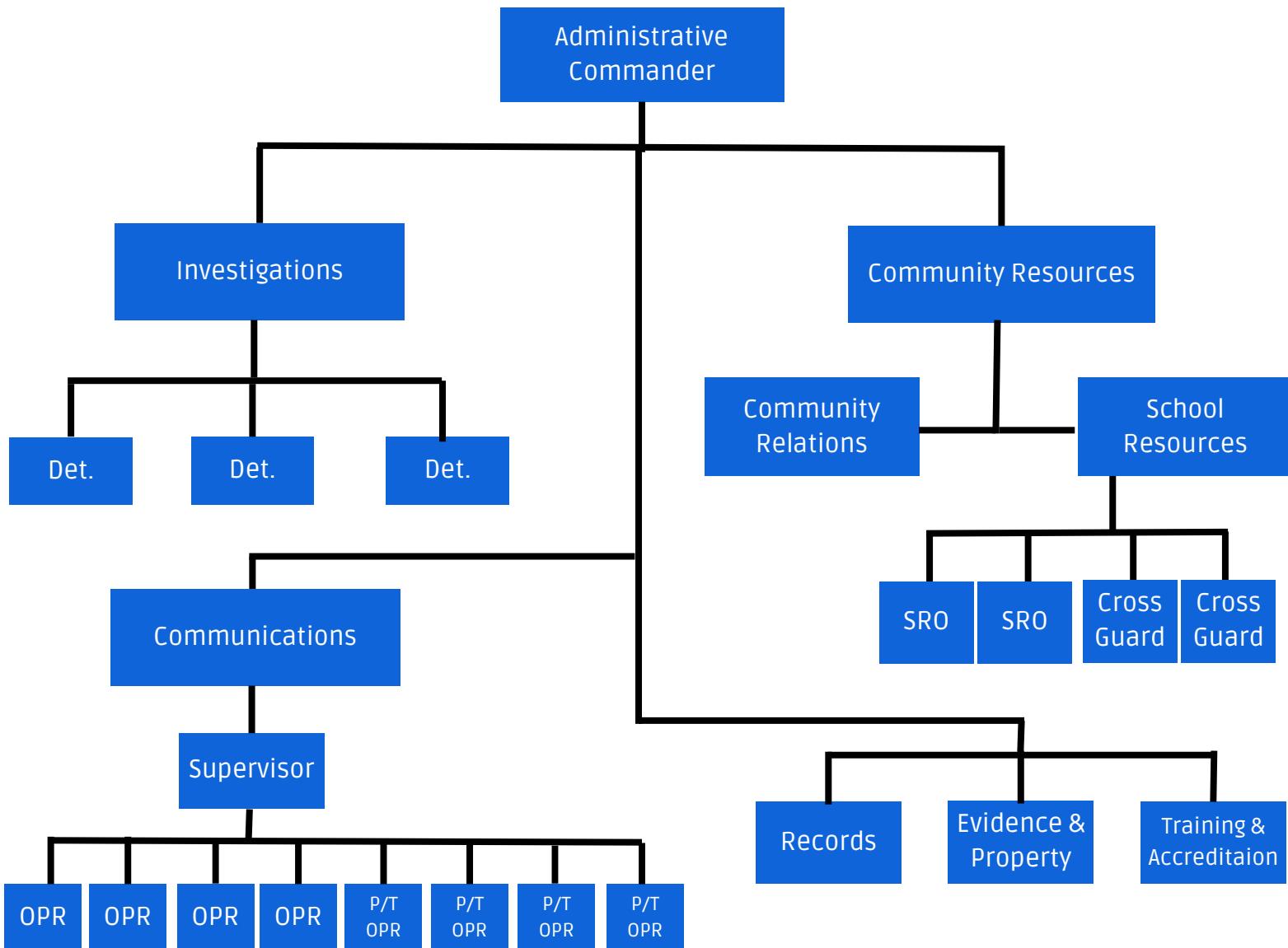
- Continue to provide a patrol response time of less than approximately 5 minutes, without sacrificing other services our officers provide.
- Continue and enhance high-visibility patrols.
- Activate an additional K-9 team for better coverage.
- Continue enforcement of the City's waterways, and of any other waterways agreed upon with our local law enforcement partners.
- Increase use of police bicycle patrols.
- Grow Traffic Unit as needed to deal with emerging traffic related issues.



Administrative DIVISION

Commander Barbara Luedtke

“
"Greatness is not where we stand, but
in what direction we are moving"
-Oliver Wendell Holmes
”



CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

The Green Cove Springs Police Department's Criminal Investigations Section (CIS) currently consists of three full-time investigators. Two of the detectives are dedicated to conducting follow-up investigations passed on by patrol, conducting investigations into major and/or complex crimes, conducting background investigations into job applicants, and other assigned duties. With an increase in population and businesses, the Department can expect to see an increase in person, vice, and property crimes. Any growth in the City would call for the growth of our Criminal Investigations Section.



Fentanyl is a synthetic opioid that is 50-100 times stronger than morphine. Pharmaceutical fentanyl was developed for the pain management treatment of cancer patients but because of its powerful opioid properties, Fentanyl is also diverted for abuse. Fentanyl is added to heroin to increase its potency or be disguised as highly potent heroin. Many users believe that they are purchasing heroin and don't know that they are purchasing fentanyl – which often results in overdose deaths. Heroin and fentanyl overdoses, along with remnants of the sale and use of crack cocaine are issues our department must address.

To mitigate the amount of drugs being used and sold in our city, the Department has dedicated a third investigator to the Jacksonville area Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) Task Force. In the past, our department has also assigned a full-time investigator to work on the Clay County Drug Task Force. Due to manpower issues, the position on the county-wide task force has been left vacant for several years now. This is a position Chief Guzman seeks to fill on either a part-time or full-time basis in the years to come. A full-time assignment to the Clay County Drug Task Force would be an addition to the staff.



With the rapid rise in internet-related crimes, our investigators have taken part in cyber-crime investigations courses and will continue to do so to properly investigate and charge individuals utilizing the web, and technology, for criminal activity.



The Criminal Investigations Section currently does not have a Detective Sergeant (they report directly to the Administrative Commander). Any growth in this section should be accompanied by the assignment of a Detective Sergeant. This would be an addition to the staff.

Criminal Investigations related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Our officers know the community they serve very well
- Good equipment
- Qualified and committed members
- Good working relationships with other law enforcement agencies
- Good teamwork and professionalism

W

Weaknesses

- Staffing shortages
- Limited resources

O

Opportunities

- More positions in investigations
- Inter-agency task force opportunities

T

Threats

- Limited space at the police station
- Increased crime with growing population
- Increase in cyber-related crimes

Investigations Related Strategic Goals

- Ensure that we continue to participate in the DEA Task Force.
- Add a detective position to assign an investigator to the Clay County Drug Task Force.
- Create a Detective Sergeant position.
- Add additional detective positions as needed.
- Plan for additional workspace if more detectives are added to the Criminal Investigations Section.
- Continue to enhance cyber-related crime training.

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Some of the primary roles of our officers are to engage our citizens, ensure a successful environment for tourism and business, prevent crime, and address the fear of crime. Our members are expected to solve problems and be active participants in enhancing the quality of life in the City.



The Department has a well-established community relations culture which we plan on continuing and enhancing. Programs such as Slice of the Cove, Coffee With a Cop, Trunk or Treat, Thanksgiving meal giveaways, Caroling in the City, and Shop With a Cop, have been big successes and we will continue to reap community-building benefits from them for the foreseeable future.



In addition to community programs, our patrol officers will continue to conduct business checks both during and after business hours. This entails making contact with business staff during operating hours and leaving Property Check cards on business doors when the establishments are closed.

Our department has a strong social media presence, but this is mainly on Facebook and to some extent Instagram. The Department also utilizes the SaferWatch application to disseminate information to the public and solicit information from our citizens. The Department will continue to use social media as the most immediate way to interact with our community and share information.

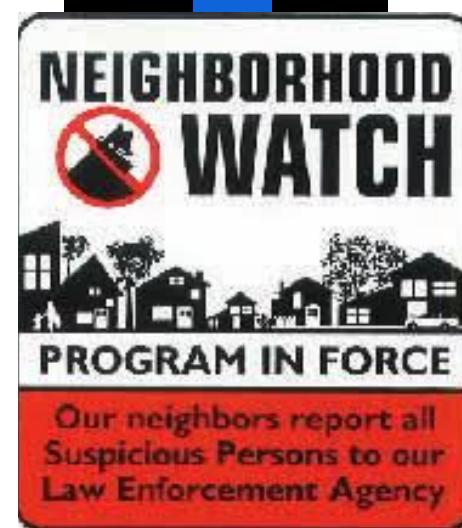
Citizen's academies are a tool used by some law enforcement agencies to help familiarize members of the community with the services the agency provides. The GCSPD seeks to utilize this tool in the form of multiple one-day mini-academies within the next year. Our citizen academy will introduce our citizens to the Department's components, generalize them with basic laws, policies, and procedures, and give them a sense of important decisions officers must make daily.

COMMUNITY RELATIONS OFFICER

At the end of 2022, the Department deployed its first-ever full-time Community Relations Officer (CRO). This officer's role is to cultivate relationships with our citizens, businesses, and visitors, serve as a primary Public Information Officer (PIO), assist in the recruitment of new officers, act as our Homeless Liaison, and other essential functions.

One issue our officers are increasingly dealing with is problems related to the homeless segment of our population. Homelessness is an extremely challenging social issue and one that is not unique to the City of Green Cove Springs. To mitigate this, the Community Relations Officer has begun to document our homeless population, identify the causes of their plight, and compile information on local resources that could be useful to them. The Community Relations Officer will provide these resources to the homeless; however, the Green Cove Springs Police Department cannot force services upon someone. It will be up to the individual to desire change and accept the resources to do what is necessary to alter their course.

The creation of the Community Relations Officer was an "Opportunity" identified by our members in the SWOT. Good community involvement and relations are things cited by members and community stakeholders in the SWOT. As the community grows, additional staff could be assigned to the Community Relations Unit.



SCHOOL RESOURCES



With increased violence on school campuses nationwide, including the devastating events that occurred on February 14, 2018, at a Parkland, Florida high school, legislation such as the Marjory Stoneman Douglas Act and Office of Safe Schools was created. GCSPD assigned School Resource Officers (SROs) to the Green Cove Springs Jr. High School and Charles E. Bennett Elementary School.

The idea was to have a positive law enforcement presence in our schools, interacting with our local children and building relationships with them and the families who live in our community. Our School Resource Officer program has been a success and the Department expects to supply GCSPD SROs to any new public school built in the City.

Although Clay High School is not within the current city limits, the Department has close relations with the staff there, and Chief Guzman sits on the board of the school's Florida Public Service Association-Criminal Justice Academy. The Police Department intends to build meaningful relations with any new Green Cove Springs area schools, regardless of whether that school is inside or outside of our city limits.



Community Relations related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Strong and positive community relations
- Members know the community they serve
- Good reputation
- Community involvement
- Good social media presence

W

Weaknesses

- None recorded

O

Opportunities

- Expand community involvement
- Creation of Community Relations Officer

T

Threats

- Anti-law enforcement sentiment
- Issues related to homelessness
- Growth of community outpacing growth of department

Community Relations Related Strategic Goals

- Continue walk-in business checks to build relationships with business owners and staff.
- Continue organizing community/police department events.
- Enhance involvement in the Clay High School's Criminal Justice/Public Safety program.
- Enhance our presence on new and relevant social media platforms.
- Establish a mini-citizen's police academy.
- Continue hosting neighborhood meetings and attending homeowner's association (HOA) meetings.
- Add a public survey to the Department's website to gauge agency performance.
- Supply School Resource Officers to any new public schools in the city.
- Identify all homeless persons in the city and determine root cause for remaining in our jurisdiction.

The GCSPD recognizes the usefulness of quickly advancing technology that could act as a force multiplier for our members. The Department will continue to invest in a proven and promising technology that can assist us in deterring crime, deterring traffic infractions, and locating suspects and/or victims.

The Department was one of the first agencies in northeast Florida to utilize red-light cameras to help address traffic accidents on our major roadways. The Department was also one of the first to deploy in-car camera systems in all our patrol vehicles. Today, our red-light cameras are still operational, but the in-car camera system was phased out several years ago.



In early 2023, the Department will begin outfitting all our patrol vehicles with the latest AXON in-car camera systems and outfitting our patrol officers with state-of-the-art AXON body-worn cameras (BWCs). These cameras will allow us to record and review interactions between our officers and citizens. Captured footage will be reviewed by supervisors for quality assurance.



TECHNOLOGY

The Department is currently utilizing three automatic license plate readers (ALPRs). They have proven successful in helping to locate and recover stolen vehicles, and in solving other crimes. In early 2023, we will expand our ALPR program with three new ALPRs. These new cameras, provided by FLOCK Safety, will have greater search and user-friendly features. This new system will allow us to share and obtain needed information with other law enforcement agencies.

The AXON in-car cameras being installed on our patrol vehicles will also serve as mobile ALPRs so that every officer patrolling the city will have these instant license plate reading capabilities. A civilian version of these FLOCK cameras will also be available to private entities, with the captured information being shared with the GCSPD. The Magnolia Point Golf and Country Club recently purchased FLOCK cameras, which will be integrated into the Department's system. The Department will be encouraging other communities in the City to join the system.



In 2022, the Green Cove Springs Police Department joined the Clay County Sheriff's Office and Clay County District Schools Police Department in implementing the use of the SaferWatch application by our citizens. This application allows our citizens to receive public safety-related information, and more. The application is a good example of the agency leveraging the use of easy-to-use technology to enhance communication between police and citizens. We will continue to use this type of technology to receive tips and improve our overall services.



The Jacksonville Beach Police Department currently utilizes approximately 40 video cameras throughout their city. This technology allows their Communications Center and officers to have real-time situational awareness throughout their jurisdiction and review captured recordings. This is a technology that Chief Guzman has expressed great interest in. Our officers currently have the ability to view a small number of cameras in the city. This technology could be especially useful with the addition of more cameras throughout the city.

Technology related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Good long-term vision
- Good equipment
- Quick response times
- Good agency reputation
- Good department planning and preparedness

W

Weaknesses

- Growth in the city may present challenges to services

O

Opportunities

- Plan for city growth
- Enhanced use of new technology

T

Threats

- Car and body cameras may require more staff in the Records Section to handle information requests from the public

Technology Related Strategic Goals

- Increase the number of smart ALPRs used in the City as needed.
- Incorporate privately owned ALPRs into the Department's Communications Center.
- Utilize smart video cameras throughout the City's busiest areas.
- Utilize any innovative technology that can assist the Department in accomplishing its goals.
- Promote the use of the SaferWatch application as an effective method for citizens to report criminal activity.

TRAINING

Adequate and effective training and education are essential to any modern-day law enforcement agency's success. The GCSPD will continue to focus on training that will prepare our members to respond to current and future threats and obstacles.



Since 1999, the U.S. has suffered from what seems like an active shooter epidemic. For years now, the Department has conducted annual training on tactics and procedures for responding to this type of active violence. As the profession learns from previous successes and shortcomings when responding to active shooters, the GCSPD will implement those lessons into our annual Active Shooter Training curriculums.

Another increasing issue for law enforcement is dealing with mentally unstable subjects. In this field, the Department plans to ramp up training by partnering with local organizations that can assist our officers with proper responses and resources.

In 2022, the Department conducted its first full-day officer block training for all our police officers. The block-training covered areas such as defensive tactics, DUI investigations, TASER training, Felony Traffic Stops, and Tire Deflation training. In the next 5 years, the Department expects to continue and enhance this type of in-service training.

The Department views it as essential that our members attend professional training courses that could assist them in improving their respective assignments. Although there are courses that are free to our members, many of the advanced courses do cost the Department money. A gradual increase in the Department's training budget will ensure that all members can attend training that can benefit them, and in turn our community.

EDUCATION



Academic education has been an area the Department has emphasized. At the end of 2022, 45% of our members, civilian and sworn, had an Associate degree (60% of our officers). Also, 27% of our members had a Bachelor's degree (35% of our officers). The City has a college reimbursement program in which members can recover up to 100% of their college expenses. We expect this program to continue so that the organization can benefit from educated members. The Department will encourage our members to further their education for the betterment of the agency and the public.

Training and Education related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Continued training and education
- Good long-term vision and planning and preparedness
- Professionalism
- Happy members
- Good agency reputation
- Supportive city leadership
- Qualified and committed members
- Willingness to learn

W

Weaknesses

- Underfunding

O

Opportunities

- To be recognized as a premier agency

T

Threats

- None recorded

Training and Education Related Strategic Goals

- Increase and enhance in-house department block training to cover several relevant topics, including mental health, autism, and cultural differences.
- Continue to encourage and compensate formal college education.
- Continue on-line legal training
- Continue to encourage professional-related courses.
- Provide future leaders with adequate leadership-related training.
- Establish a more detailed training budget.
- Increase inter-agency training with CCSO, CCFR, OPPD, CCDS PD, etc.
- Increase percentage of members with a college degree to approximately 50%.



PROFESSIONAL ACCREDITATION

In October of 2021, the Green Cove Springs Police Department entered into a contract with the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). CALEA is a national credentialing authority established through the joint efforts of law enforcement's major executive associations; it is often referred to as the "Gold standard in public safety." Professional accreditation embodies the precepts of community-oriented policing. It creates a forum in which law enforcement agencies and citizens work together to prevent and control challenges confronting law enforcement and provides clear direction about community expectations.

Under the signed agreement, GCSPD has up to three years to come into compliance with the commission's law enforcement standards. When the Department believes it is ready, CALEA assessors will visit our agency to conduct a thorough examination of all our policies, procedures, pertinent documentation, equipment, and other facets of our organization. The State of Florida's Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA) is a similar accreditation program that many law enforcement agencies in the state participate in. Some agencies are both nationally and state accredited.

The Green Cove Springs Police Department has assigned an officer to act as the agency's full-time Accreditation Manager. The Accreditation Manager operates under the supervision and assistance of the Administrative Commander. Together, and with the assistance of a part-time civilian volunteer, the goal is to have the agency ready for CALEA certification before October 2024.

When a call for service comes over the radio that requires more than usual manpower, or when patrol officers cannot answer a call because they are busy with others, the Accreditation Manager has stepped in to assist them. This aid helps to keep our response times low and prevents us from having to seek assistance from the Sheriff's Office. Although these are good things, it also takes the Accreditation Manager away from performing tasks needed to secure accreditation promptly. The addition of a Community Relations Officer will provide an extra officer in the station during normal work hours who will assist Patrol so that the Accreditation Manager can perform his primary duties.

It is important to note that once CALEA certification is obtained, the Department should easily meet the requirements for CFA as well.

Professional Accreditation related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Professionalism
- Support from city leadership
- Good quality staff
- Good long-term vision for the department
- Pride in agency
- Good agency reputation
- Department planning

W

Weaknesses

- None recorded

O

Opportunities

- Recruitment
- Expanded community involvement
- To be recognized as a premier agency

T

Threats

- Bad public opinion of law enforcement on the rise
- Recruitment issues

Professional Accreditations Related Strategic Goals

- Review all department policies and procedures and edit/revise where appropriate.
- Participate in an actual assessment by 2024.
- Apply for state accreditation through the Florida Department of Law Enforcement's Commission for Florida Law Enforcement Accreditation (CFA).
- Utilize awarded accreditation as recruitment and public relations tools.

PROFESSIONAL PARTNERSHIPS

From 2010 to 2013 the Department had one officer assigned to the Clay County Sheriff's Office SWAT Team. This position is not a full-time slot, but rather an extra duty taken on by officers who work with the Police Department full-time. Since 2013, this position remained vacant. In 2022, one of our officers had the opportunity to try out and successfully became a member of the combined tactical team.

In addition to the above-listed assignment, our officers and investigators regularly work alongside our local and federal law enforcement partners to fulfill the mandate of protecting our community.

Improved relations with the Sheriff's Office, opportunities to work on inter-agency task forces, and good partnerships are Strengths and Opportunities identified by our members on the SWOT survey.

In the next 5 years, the Department plans on building upon and improving these professional relationships for the benefit of our community.



Professional Partnerships related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

Strengths

S

- Recognized as a premier agency
- Improved relationship with the Clay County Sheriff's Office

Weaknesses

W

- None recorded

Opportunities

O

- More inter-agency positions
- Task force membership/participation

Threats

T

- None recorded

Professional Partnerships Related Strategic Goals

- Increase the number of officers participating on the Clay County SWAT Team.
- Assign detective(s) to work closely with Internet Crimes Against Children (ICAC) task force.
- Continue to partner with our federal and local public safety agencies on several levels:
 - Clay County Sheriff's Office
 - Orange Park Police Department
 - Clay County District Schools Police Department and School Board
 - Clay County Fire-Rescue
 - FBI
 - DEA
 - ATF
- Continue to work with and utilize resources from our state and federal partners on several levels.

FLEET and OTHER EQUIPMENT

The Department operates 33 cars between its Operations and Administrative divisions. Of those vehicles, 5 (15%) are ten years or older. For many years, the Department has not been able to adequately renew its aging vehicle fleet. Retention of older vehicles resulted in high maintenance costs and unreliable patrol cars. Under recent and current city leadership, the Department has been able to replace our fleet at a rate of approximately 2-3 vehicles each year. With this commitment to renewing our fleet, we should be in an advantageous position sooner than later. A need for more vehicles was one of the things cited by members in the SWOT survey.



All our officers are currently issued AXON Model X26P Conducted Energy Weapons (CEWs), also known as TASERs. TASERs have become essential law enforcement tools for reducing injury and death for both suspects and officers. Our currently issued model lacks additional features found in newer models of the weapon, such as the ability to use two cartridges without reloading. The X26Ps were purchased under a 5-year payment contract, which will be complete in Fiscal Year 2023-2024. Once paid, the Department should begin a transition to a new TASER model. Features such as dual cartridges and lasers will provide officers with enhanced effectiveness and efficiency.



In 2022, the Department issued its patrol sergeants with less-lethal shotguns (a total of 4). The converted shotguns deliver a round made of a polymer material designed to "pancake" or flatten on impact. The shotgun can deliver less-lethal rounds up to approximately 25 yards. This is another example of a de-escalation tool that can sometimes be used as an alternative to a firearm. The expansion of this less-lethal platform to rank-and-file patrol officers should be explored.



Looking out into the next 5 years, the Department must continue to outfit our officers with modern handguns, small and light patrol rifles, and efficient weapon lighting systems.

Fleet and Other Equipment related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Professionalism
- Good department planning and preparedness
- Good equipment
- Pride in agency
- Happy members
- Supportive city leadership
- Agency reputation

W

Weaknesses

- Limited resources
- More vehicle needed

O

Opportunities

- None recorded

T

Threats

- None recorded

Fleet & Other Equipment Related Strategic Goals

- Replenish department vehicles at a rate of no less than approximately 10% annually.
- Upgrade the Department's TASERS in or about FY 2024-2025.
- Explore expansion of less-lethal shotguns.

COMMUNICATIONS

The GCSPD Communications Section currently consists of 1 Communications Supervisor, 4 full-time Dispatcher positions, and 4 part-time Dispatcher positions. In addition to dispatching for our agency, our Communications Officers currently serve the Clay County School District Police Department, and field calls for other city departments.

Dispatching for our agency requires staff with excellent multitasking skills. Finding qualified applicants has been a challenge. This challenge is enhanced by the fact that Dispatchers typically have a lower annual salary and are not considered "First Responders" under Florida law.

An identified Weakness and Threat is the fact that we typically only have one Communications member on duty at a time. A single Dispatcher can handle the average workload, however, when a situation arises that generates more than usual radio traffic and/or phone calls, Communications can become overwhelming. Attaining a full staff in the Communications Section would allow the Communications Supervisor to work alongside a Dispatcher during normal workdays. Having the two members in Communications at the same time would mitigate the heavy workload generated by certain emergencies.

While there is currently a plan to move towards a combined Communications Center for the Clay County Sheriff's Office and Clay County Fire-Rescue, GCSPD has declined to participate in a combined center. The Department, including our dispatchers, has extensive and historical knowledge of our community. This includes the identity and histories of businesses and citizens who utilize our law enforcement services. Dispatchers also serve as the face of the agency when citizens walk into our lobby, and as the customer service center for callers who wish to report issues with their city utilities. Outsourcing these services or simply relocating our dispatchers away from our police station could have an adverse effect on our customer service chain.

The Police Department not only plans on maintaining its own on-site Communications Center, but it must also invest in it to ensure great customer service from the initial contact with our organization until the end.

The City currently has security cameras inside and outside of City Hall and the Police Station. These live feeds are displayed in our Communications Center. In the coming year, the City plans to install security cameras in Spring Park and other city owned locations. These images will be fed into the Communications Center. With the increased traffic on Orange Avenue, Idlewild Avenue, and Leonard C. Taylor Parkway, it would be advantageous if live video feeds of these areas could also be fed to the police station.

Communications related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Good dispatchers
- Quick patrol response times
- Good teamwork
- Professionalism

W

Weaknesses

- Understaffed
- Underpaid compared to other area dispatchers
- Poor dispatch software
- Heavy workload

O

Opportunities

- Use of new/enhanced technology

T

Threats

- The current computer aided dispatch (CAD) system needs to be replaced

Communications Related Strategic Goals

- Bring salary for dispatchers to a competitive level to dispatchers in surrounding agencies to attract applicants.
- Outfit the Communications Center with the ability to view more live video feeds from more areas in the City.
- Add positions so that Communications have at least two dispatchers on duty during high call volume times.
- Acquire a new/updated Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) system, in conjunction with the other public safety agencies in the county.
- Phone call quality control program.
- Third full dispatch/call-taker console.

OFFICER HEALTH AND WELLNESS



The health and wellness of all our members are vital to our pursuit of excellence in the services we provide to our community. Law enforcement can be a very stressful career for both Police Officers and Dispatchers, who serve as our true first responders.

A Strength identified by our members on the SWOT survey was the fact that the Department is focusing on health, wellness, and physical fitness. The City of Green Cove Springs covers the cost of full gym memberships for full-time members who wish to utilize this service. We also have a well-equipped gym inside the police station. The Department allows all members one hour a shift for physical fitness if staffing levels and calls for service permit it.



In 2023, the Green Cove Springs Police Department will begin an annual Physical Abilities Test (PAT) for all sworn members. The PAT is something that has been required from police applicants, but no physical abilities tests are currently required of officers once they have been hired. Certain rewards and consequences may be implemented for officers who do or do not pass the PAT in the established acceptable time frame. Remedial training and assistance will first be offered to officers who cannot initially pass the PAT.

For overall wellness and health, the Department is partnering with the City's Human Resources Department and other resources to inform our members and provide them with tools to live healthier lifestyles.

Officer Health and Wellness related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

Strengths

S

- Focus on health and wellness
- Support from Command Staff
- Family atmosphere
- Time allowed for physical fitness
- Supportive city leadership

Weaknesses

W

- None recorded

Opportunities

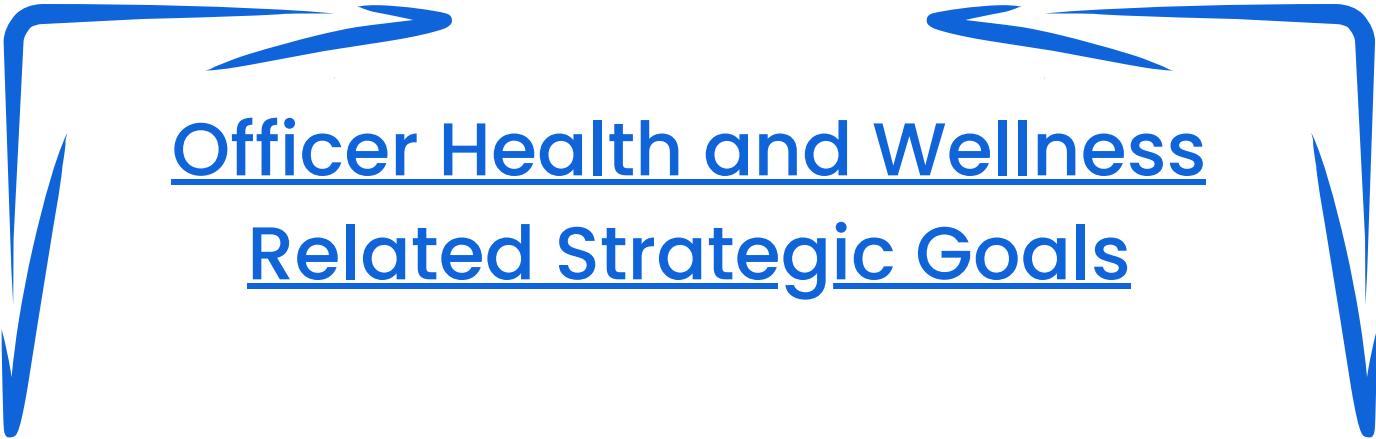
O

- None recorded

Threats

T

- None recorded



Officer Health and Wellness Related Strategic Goals

- Determine the best rewards and consequences for members who pass/fail the PAT.
- Continue to offer health and wellness programs facilitated by Human Resources.
- Encourage use of on-duty workout time.
- Encourage use of free gym membership.

CITY REDEVELOPMENT

Along with the growth in the City, the City Manager, and Council has spearheaded and approved development projects focused on the City's core downtown district. Projects include the redesign of eastern portions of Walnut Street and the establishment of a Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA). The CRA will direct taxpayers' money to certain business areas in the City's downtown district.

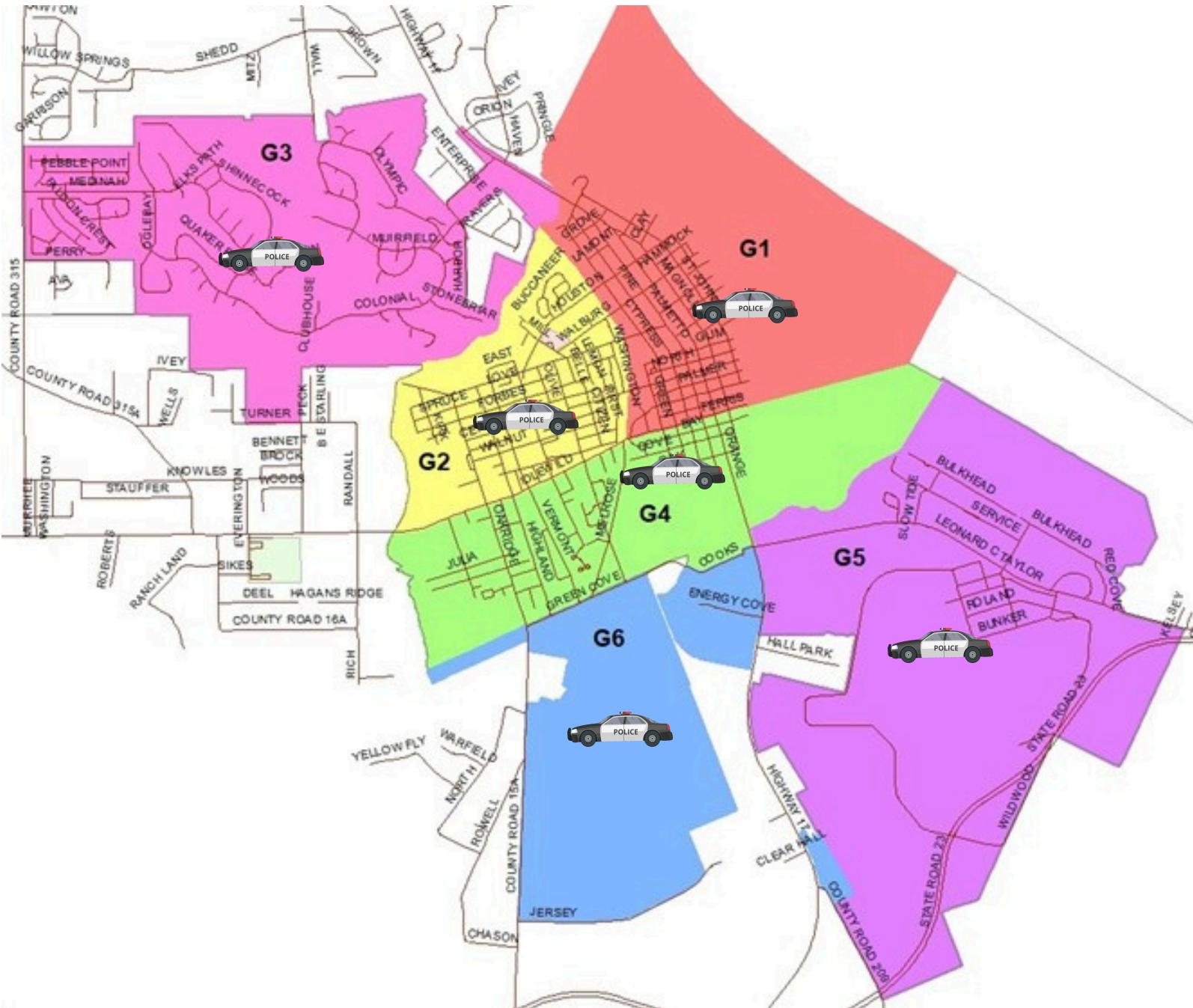
Another area of expected development will be the City's southern end, on and around S. Orange Avenue and CR209 S. The recent and expected annexations in this area fueled by the construction of the First Coast Expressway (FCE) will certainly bring change to the south end of Green Cove Springs.

With redevelopment and change, the Police Department will see a change in where our services are needed. To prepare for this change, the Department will have to reorganize the police beats/zones that the City is currently divided into.

In 2022, the Police Department had the City divided into four policing zones (aka "Beats"). In 2023, the Department will implement a new six-zone map. These six new zones will be reorganized to better group areas of the City together and place the agency in a better position to respond to activity with anticipated development in mind.



REVISED BEAT MAPS



City Redevelopment related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

Strengths

S

- Community presence
- Visible
- Response time
- Professionalism

Weaknesses

W

- Understaffed

Opportunities

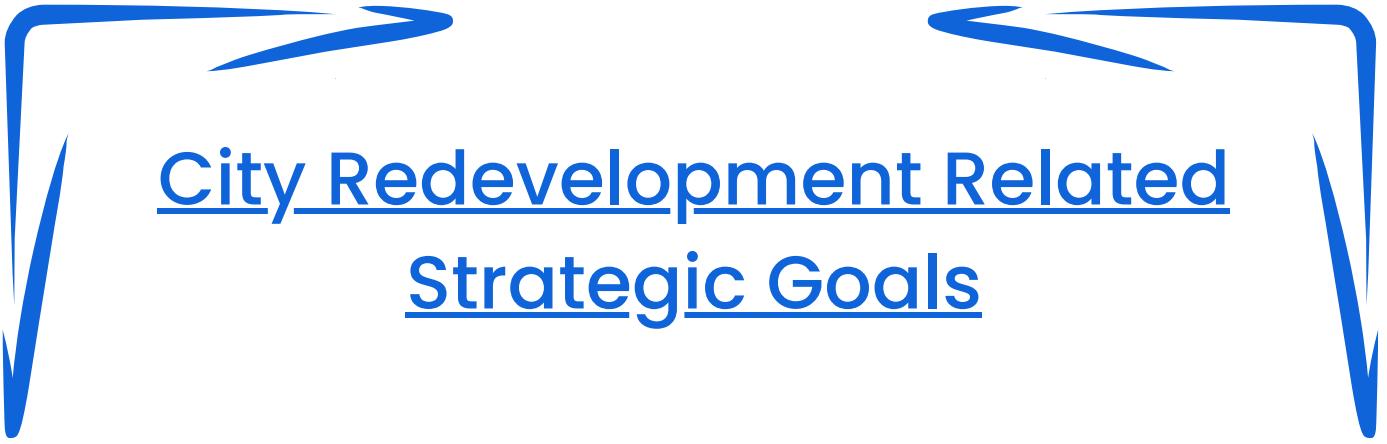
O

- Growth of community

Threats

T

- Growth of the City may outpace the growth of the Department
- Slower response times
- Increased crime due to the First Coast Expressway



City Redevelopment Related Strategic Goals

- Establish and use a new 6 zone police zone/beat map for the Police Department.
- Maintain high law enforcement visibility in all new areas of the City.



FACILITY IMPROVEMENTS

The current Green Cove Springs Police Department Headquarters building is located at 1001 Idlewild Avenue and was completed in April 2014. In early 2023, the building was named the Chief Derek S. Asdot Memorial Building. The station is approximately 15,426 square feet and is the only facility operated by the Department. Areas such as the Patrol Briefing Room, the Criminal Investigations Office, the Operations Commander's Office, and the current Sergeant's Office were all constructed without closets. This design has contributed to a lack of storage space for the agency. In 2022, the City constructed a large shed at the rear of the police station for extra storage to be shared by our agency and other city departments.

As the City and Department grow, it could be expected that the agency will need additional working space. Although a sub-station has been proposed as a possible solution to this situation, it would be more advantageous to add additional workspace to the existing building, if possible, to concentrate all operations in one location.

The police station has an efficient evidence/property room, but the drug vault does not have an exhaust system. The lack of an exhaust system leads to the odor of things such as seized marijuana permeating throughout some portions of the building. A new exhaust system will be needed to provide proper ventilation in the evidence room.

Currently, our three detectives use 3 out of the 4 work desks located in our Criminal Investigations office. Any staff additions made to the Criminal Investigations Section (CIS), to accommodate for city growth, may also require a new workspace for the additional detectives assigned to the section.

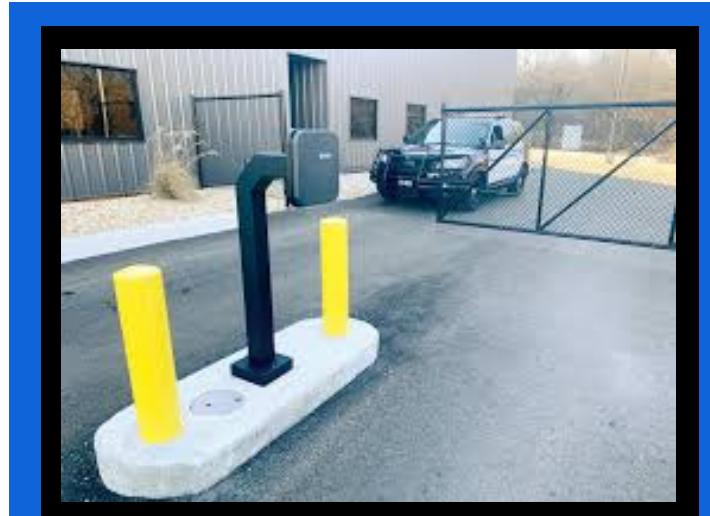
FACILITY SECURITY



The police station was originally constructed without any fencing around the property. The lack of a fence has posed a security concern for the officers and other members, especially in the sallyport area, and rear and side parking lots. For this reason, our Dispatchers who work nightshift choose to park their vehicles close to the front door of the building. It is common for civilians to drive and walk through the areas of the parking lot that should be secure.

The police station currently has security cameras that feed directly into our Communications Center. Blind spots have been identified in certain areas in and around the building that should be addressed for enhanced security.

The double front doors of the police station are currently only lockable with the assistance of the City's I.T. Department. The two separate doors leading into the interior secure area of the building, from the main lobby, currently can only be opened with an access card or hard key. These 3 main entry/access points cannot be opened remotely from inside the building. Currently, any visitor to the station who needs access to the secure area must be let in by a member or passed an access key via the lobby's Communications window. This lack of control by our staff poses a security risk that should be addressed. The on-duty Communications staff should have the ability to lock or unlock all of these doors from within the Communications Center.



Facility Improvements related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

Strengths

S

- Department planning and preparedness

Weaknesses

W

- Underfunding

Opportunities

O

- None recorded

Threats

T

- Limited space at police headquarters;
- Growth of community outpacing growth of the Department
- Unsecure parking lot
- Cameras needed inside of the evidence room

Facility Improvement Related Strategic Goals

- Construct adequate fence around the police station and section off some of the parking lot.
- Add exhaust/ventilation system to the evidence room's drug vault.
- Optimize useable space at the police station for potential department growth.
- Re-striping of station parking lot and pressure washing of building.
- Add security cameras to evidence room and other blind spots in the station.
- Provide the Communications Center the capability to lock and unlock access point doors at the station.
- Maintain a clean and neat appearance of the exterior of the building, with things such as regular pressure washing and proper landscaping.

MEMBER RELATIONS

Great customer service must be a hallmark of any good law enforcement agency, but this should also extend to great “member service”; that is, our members must be served well by their leadership. Our members are our most important asset. Without our professional and dedicated staff, the Department would not be able to accomplish our goals.

Since assuming office, Chief Guzman has implemented a range of practices to ensure members are part of many decisions that affect the agency, feel valued, and they are kept well informed. These measures include open meetings, department surveys, member-led committees, and an open-door policy.

In our SWOT survey, members identified support from Command Staff, leadership that is open to members' suggestions, a family atmosphere, happy members, and a good culture as Strengths of the agency.

To best serve our community, we must see to it that our members continue to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity. Our members must be treated more like family than employees. If our members receive great “member service” they will be more inclined to deliver great customer service to those we serve.

Member Relations related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Agency provides new opportunities for officers to grow through new positions
- Support from city leadership and Command Staff
- Accountability
- Pride in agency
- Leadership open to suggestions from members and willing to implement good ideas
- Family atmosphere
- Happy members
- Teamwork
- Progressive department
- Promotes further education
- Good culture

W

Weaknesses

- None recorded

O

Opportunities

- Advancement within the Department
- More inter-agency positions

T

Threats

- Better succession planning needed

Member Relations Related Strategic Goals

- Ensure members have the equipment needed to complete the tasks they are expected to perform.
- Ensure members are fairly compensated for their time, skills, and performance.
- Ensure members' opinions are heard and considered in matters concerning the good of the Agency.
- Promote and practice transparency in matters concerning the Department.
- Officer succession planning.



RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

A June 2021 national survey found that law enforcement agencies around the country, on average, were filling 93% of available budgeted positions (Police Executive Research Forum). The survey showed a 45% increase in retirement and an 18% increase in resignations over the previous year. The reasons for the recruitment and retention crisis are attributable to multi-social, political, and economic forces, including negative perceptions of policing and low pay.

At the beginning of 2023, the Department had 1 full-time Police Officer position, 1 part-time Police Officer position, and 2 Communications Officer positions vacant. This equates to 93.3% of our Police Officers' positions filled and 66% of the Dispatcher positions filled.

On average, it takes a GCSPD Police Officer six months from the time they apply to the time they are a fully functioning solo officer. On average, it takes a GCSPD Dispatcher eight months before they can operate in the Communications Center on their own.

RECRUITMENT

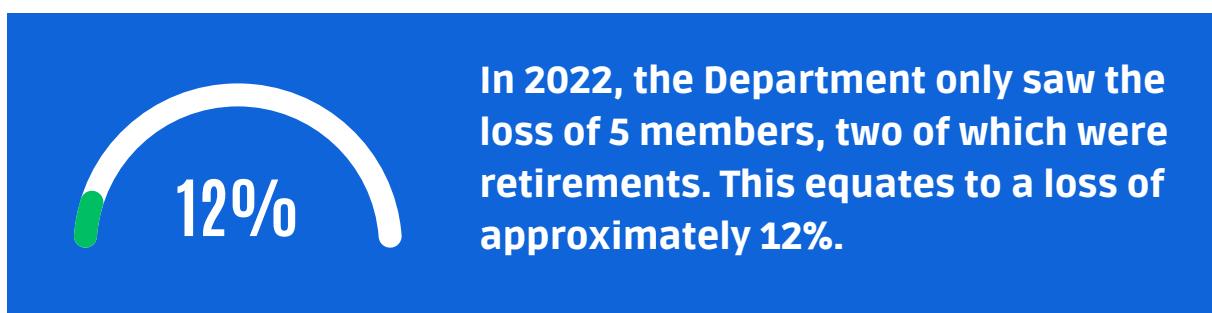
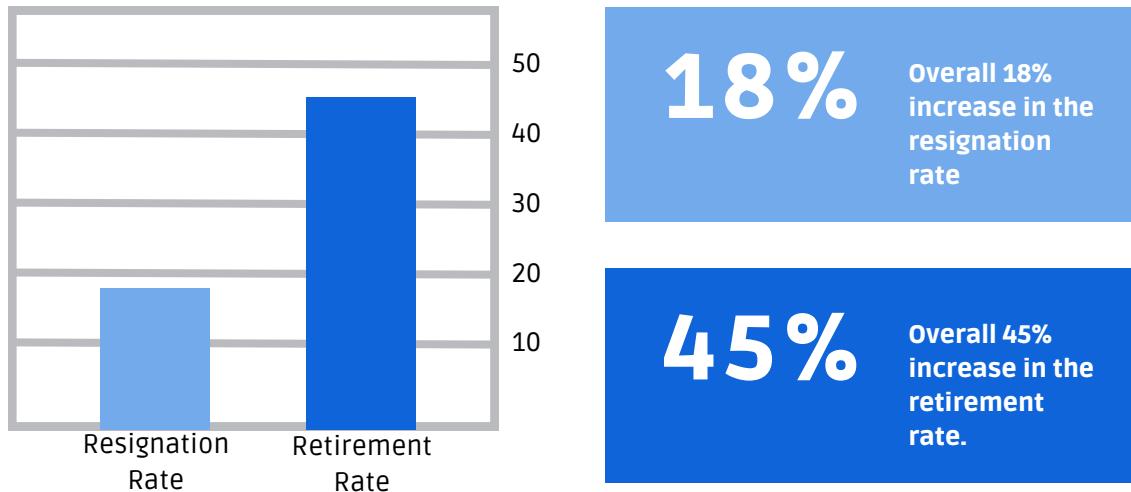
Each year, the Department establishes and publishes a department-wide recruitment plan. In 2023, this responsibility will be shifted from the Administrative Commander to the Community Relations Officer. In 2023, the Community Relations Officer will be responsible for all recruitment efforts.

To attract a larger Police Officer applicant pool, the Department will widen its recruitment efforts to more law enforcement academies in the area. The Department will work closely with the Public Safety Telecommunicator program at Clay High School to attract more Communications Officers. The Department will also enhance and modernize its social media recruitment campaign to attract applicants for all positions.

The Department has sponsored Police Officer applicants and the City Manager has expressed willingness to continue this hiring tactic. The City Manager has also expressed willingness to offer additional incentives to attract applicants for all positions.

RETENTION

Overall percentages reported by law enforcement agencies to PERF (Police Executive Research Forum) in 2020-2021



Under Strengths in the SWOT survey, members cited the organization as having a family atmosphere and said members were happy. Members also said there was pride in the agency. Maintaining and enhancing a positive work environment will be essential to maintaining low turnover rates.

MEMBER COMPENSATION

Not too long ago, our agency was among the lowest paid compared to other agencies in the area.

By the end of 2022, full-time GCSPD Police Officers started at \$21.63 an hour and full-time Dispatchers started at \$16.95 an hour.

To attract applicants in a shrinking applicant pool, the Department will have to keep the starting pay for all members at a competitive level.

The Department does have a pay step-plan that provides most members with a 4% increase in years 1-8, and a 3% increase every year after.

Law Enforcement Agency	L.E.O. Starting Salary
Clay County S.O.	\$41,044
Palatka P.D.	\$41,600
Orange Park P.D.	\$42,500
Starke P.D.	\$42,702
Green Cove Springs P.D.	\$44,990
Putnam County S.O.	\$45,370
St. Augustine Beach P.D.	\$49,255
Atlantic Beach P.D.	\$49,400
Jacksonville Beach P.D.	\$50,024
Jacksonville S.O.	\$50,436
St. Augustine P.D.	\$52,395
St. Johns County S.O.	\$53,000

Public Safety Agency	Dispatcher Starting Salary
Orange Park P.D.	\$34,700
Clay County S.O.	\$35,100
Green Cove Springs P.D.	\$35,256
Putnam County S.O.	\$36,950
Jacksonville Beach P.D.	\$40,220
Neptune Beach P.D.	\$41,038
Clay County Fire-Rescue	\$41,600
Jacksonville S.O.	\$45,100
Atlantic Beach P.D.	\$46,800

ANTICIPATING STAFFING LEVELS

Population ratios are provided by the Florida Department of Law Enforcement for full-time sworn law enforcement officers per 1,000 population. The full-time sworn officer counts are provided by the FDLE Automated Training Management System (ATMS).

Many variables impact adequate officer staffing ratios. These variables should be considered when comparing agencies and populations. Some variables that could impact adequate ratios include population density, crime rate, service calls per officer, the size of the jurisdiction, seasonal residents, and tourists.

AGENCY	POPULATION	# OF OFFICERS	OFFICER RATIO
Clay County S.O.	202,355	241	1.19
Atlantic Beach P.D.	13,519	28	2.07
Green Cove Springs P.D.	9,959	26	2.61
St. Augustine Beach P.D.	6,888	18	2.61
Jacksonville Beach P.D.	24,075	66	2.74
Orange Park P.D.	9,126	25	2.74
Fernandina Beach P.D.	13,051	39	2.99
Neptune Beach P.D.	7,259	22	3.03
Starke P.D.	5,800	19	3.28
Palatka P.D.	10,468	35	3.34
St. Augustine P.D.	14,976	57	3.81

Based on the numbers above provided for 2021, the Green Cove Springs Police Department's officer-to-population ratio is 2.61 per 1,000 citizens. The average ratio for the above-cited local police departments is 2.95. This places the Green Cove Springs Police Department slightly below the average ratio (2.61 vs 2.95). According to conservative estimates, the population of Green Cove Springs will be approximately 12,000 by 2027. According to these numbers, the Green Cove Springs Police Department should add approximately 6 full-time police officers to the organization within 4 years just to maintain the current officer-to-population ratio of 2.61.

These calculations, however; do not account for the influx of people traveling to and through the City for work daily. This increases the City's population during peak hours.

NOTE: The Clay County Sheriff's Office was included in the above table as a reference point. They were not taken into account when considering average ratios compared to the Green Cove Springs Police Department. Sheriffs' offices typically have a lower officer-to-population ratio compared to municipal police departments.

Recruitment and Retention related SWOT's as Identified by Citizens and Members

S

Strengths

- Family atmosphere
- Good long-term vision
- Support from city leadership
- Pride in agency
- Happy members
- Good agency reputation
- Strong social media presence
- High standards for applicants

W

Weaknesses

- Member pay is competitively lower than other area agencies
- Lack of a strong applicant pool
- Understaffed

O

Opportunities

- Sponsor applicants
- Recruitment

T

Threats

- Other area agencies competing for the same applicants
- Decrease interest in law enforcement careers
- Slowing economy

Recruitment and Retention Related Strategic Goals

- Enhance involvement in the Criminal Justice Program's Public Safety Telecommunicator program.
- Create/use QR in social media and printed fliers to direct applicants directly to on-line job information and applications.
- Expand police officer recruiting efforts to police academies with higher rates of Black and Latino recruits.
- Advertise and utilize city sponsorship for qualified police applicants.
- Explore incentive options to attract applicants.

Conclusion

At the beginning of 2023, the Green Cove Springs Police Department will be operating a 43-member law enforcement agency in a city that is expected to experience quicker-than-usual growth, mainly caused by the construction of the First Coast Expressway. Clay County, as a whole, is among the top ten growing counties in Florida. This growth is also aided by various conditions that have made Florida an attractive state for many people to relocate to. If the City and surrounding areas grow as anticipated, the Department will have to grow to maintain the level of service its citizens have become accustomed to.

Recruitment & Retention

In an atmosphere of shrinking law enforcement applicants and competitive law enforcement agencies in the area, the Department and City must become innovative in their recruitment and retention efforts. To attract and keep members, the Department will have to stay competitive with neighboring agencies.

Accreditation

The Department enters 2023 with two years remaining to meet its goal of attaining accreditation through the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (CALEA). The Department should meet this goal, as long as resources and attention are not diverted to address increased basic law enforcement needs.

Technology

In the next five years technology that can be used to aid law enforcement will only increase. These technologies must be acquired and used properly to give the Department an advantage over basic and sophisticated criminal activity and quality of life issues.

The Police Department has very supportive City leadership, (City Manager Steve Kennedy, Asst. City Manager Mike Null, City Council members Constance Butler, Steven Kelley, Ed Gaw, Thomas Smith, and Matt Johnson) and community in general. This places us in an advantageous position not all law enforcement agencies enjoy. With this support, I, as the Chief of Police, am confident that the Department's needs and aspirations will be considered and supported in the near future.



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