

Bluffton Police Department

Strategic Plan

2019-2022



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Message from Chief Chapmond

This strategic plan, developed with the relationship between officers and community at the forefront, will be the police department's guideline for the next three years as work is done in creating a safer community and building stronger relationships with those who live, work, and visit Bluffton. This plan was created based on where the department is now, and where the department should be in the future.



Bluffton is one of the fastest-growing municipalities in South Carolina. With that brings challenges, but it allows the officers to incorporate the national issues facing our rapidly changing law enforcement profession. This strategic plan utilizes the Presidential Task Force on 21st Century Policing as the framework. In the process of developing this Strategic Plan, tough questions were asked of the community concerning biased-based policing, trust, transparency, legitimacy, and officer safety/wellness.

You will see this Plan address how improvements can be made, what is already being done well, and how officers can be held accountable in areas that need adjustments.

This is a living document, with a monthly review, that will help ensure the goals are relevant and are being achieved. Ultimately, the hope of this plan is to keep the communication open with the community and with each other, making the Bluffton Police Department more successful.

Chief Chris Chapmond

Special Recognition



Town Manager Marc Orlando

Front Row: (L-R) Mayor Sulka, Councilman Fred Hamilton, Councilman Dan Wood

Back Row: (L-R) Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Toomer, Councilman Harry Lutz

The Bluffton Police Department would like to thank Mayor Sulka, Mayor Pro Tempore Larry Toomer, Councilman Fred Hamilton, Councilman Dan Wood, Councilman Harry Lutz, and Town Manager Marc Orlando for your strong leadership and continuous support of our Town and its citizens. The Mayor, Town Council, and Town Manager have continued to show their support and focus on providing leadership for the Town of Bluffton. They recognize the importance of safety in the community, which is a critical cornerstone to not only the overall quality of life for the citizens of Bluffton, but also to our Town's ability to achieve our established goals.



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Department Overview



The Bluffton Police Department is a 24 hour, 365 days per year law enforcement agency that provides contemporary law enforcement services including patrol, traffic, investigations, community policing, crime prevention and detection, emergency management, and drug interdiction to a daily population of more than 50,000 residents, business owners, and visitors.

There are 53 sworn officers, 13 civilians, 9 Chaplains, and 12 volunteers that make up the Bluffton Police Department.

The officers protect and serve the members of the community by responding to all crimes in progress, calls for service, quality of life issues, and other law enforcement issues. The hard work of the men and women of the department, in conjunction with partnerships with the community, has allowed it to be recognized as one of the safest places to raise a family in the state of South Carolina.

Mission, Vision and Core Values

Mission

Our Mission is to enforce the law and serve the community with professionalism and integrity; with an emphasis on community policing.

Vision

The Bluffton Police Department will strive to be a model agency noted for professional law enforcement service and community policing by adhering to our core values.

Core Values

Bluffton Police Department understands that Values are developed over time. We understand that our officers must “PRACTICE” our values every day until they become our habits. The decisions we make on a regular basis are a reflection of our values. The Bluffton Police Department strives for excellence and high-character officers, therefore, we will ensure all officers adhere to, and “PRACTICE”, our core values.

- Professionalism
- Respect
- Accountability
- Courage
- Transparency
- Integrity
- Commitment
- Effort



Building the 2019-2022 Strategic Plan

The 2019-2022 strategic plan is designed to build on the accomplishments of the previous three-year plan and further strengthen community support for law enforcement actions. To ensure the best course of response to community concerns, the department has adopted the goals of the President's 21st Century Policing Plan as the guideline. These goals, referred to in the plan as pillars, will help ensure the department continues to earn the trust of the people it protects and serves. The six goals that will be utilized in this plan are as follows:

1. Building Trust and Legitimacy
2. Policy and Oversight
3. Technology and Social Media
4. Community Policing, Crime and Crash Reduction
5. Officer Training and Education
6. Officer Safety and Wellness

The 21st Century Policing Plan was the culmination of a task force established by President Obama in December 2014. The charge of the task force was to identify best practice and offer recommendations on how policing practices can promote effective crime reduction while building public trust.



With trust from the community as the primary goal of the plan, the department can work with the public to promote effective crime reduction strategies.

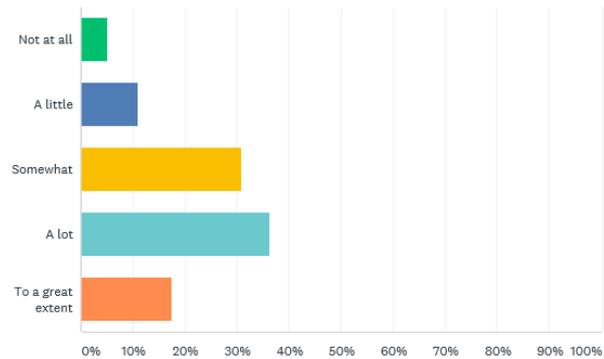
Early in our development of this plan the internal staff was asked to offer recommendations on how the department should move forward. In addition, the Department sent out a survey to the community to help gather specific information needed for the strategic plan. This survey provided the Department with an idea of how external stakeholders currently viewed the department. The participants of the survey had to identify strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats facing the department and community. The items identified by the community members helped assist in developing the plan. This essentially enabled the focus to be on building upon strengths, improving weaknesses, taking advantage of opportunities, and focusing on potential threats.

External Survey Result: Community Relationships

The external survey was sent out via various social media websites. The department also utilized several media outlets to make people aware of the survey. This survey was available to our community for approximately 2 weeks. There were 277 people who completed our survey. The survey was composed of 10 different questions where participants could provide one of five answers on a scale provided to them. This scale consisted of the following categories: not at all, a little, somewhat, a lot, and to a great extent. The first two questions of the survey involved the public's viewpoint on our officers and how well they treat others and build relationships.

Do you believe Bluffton Police Officers develop relationships with the community?

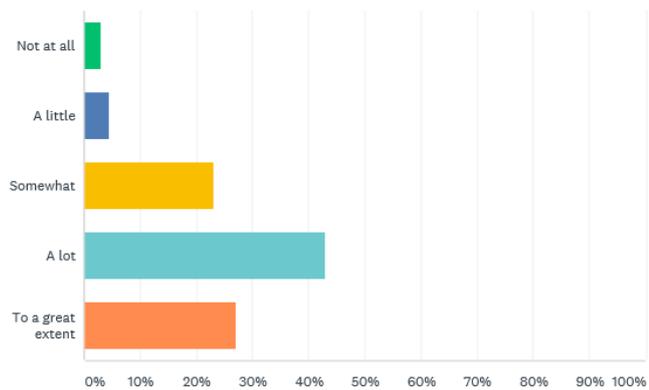
Answered: 277 Skipped: 2



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	5.05% 14
A little	10.83% 30
Somewhat	30.69% 85
A lot	36.10% 100
To a great extent	17.33% 48
TOTAL	277

Are Bluffton Police Officers respectful?

Answered: 275 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	2.91% 8
A little	4.36% 12
Somewhat	22.91% 63
A lot	42.91% 118
To a great extent	26.91% 74
TOTAL	275



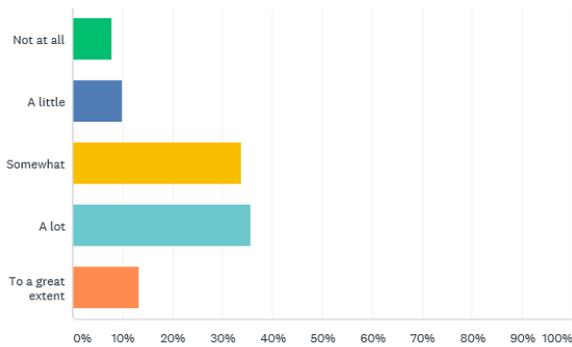
External Survey Result: Communication

The next set of questions involved communication between the department and its citizens. This includes the communications during encounters with officers, as well as, communication through various media outlets/social media sites.

Q3

Does the Bluffton Police Department make it easy for community members to provide input?

Answered: 273 Skipped: 6

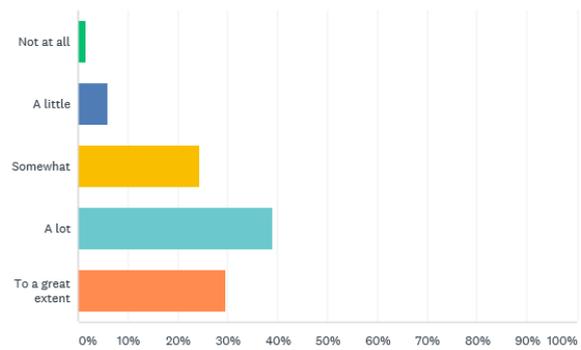


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all	7.69%	21
A little	9.89%	27
Somewhat	33.70%	92
A lot	35.53%	97
To a great extent	13.19%	36
TOTAL		273

Q6

Does the Bluffton Police Department adequately use their social media sites?

Answered: 275 Skipped: 4



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Not at all	1.45%	4
A little	5.82%	16
Somewhat	24.36%	67
A lot	38.91%	107
To a great extent	29.45%	81
TOTAL		275

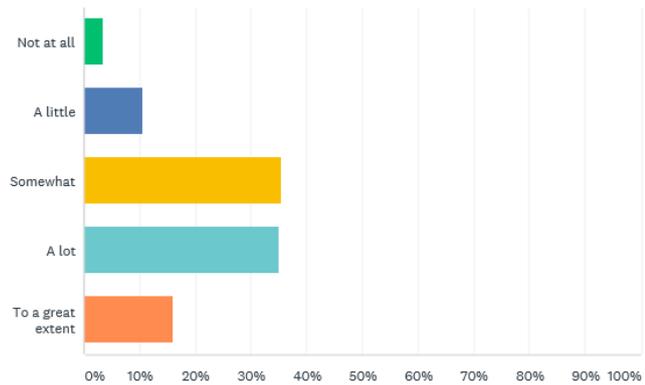


External Survey Result: Community Concerns

Bluffton Police Officers strongly believe in the statement, "Committed to Community." This means that all men and women of this department are willing to go above and beyond their normal duties to ensure the community is being served appropriately. The next two questions were asked to find out where the department stands in the eyes of our community members. This assisted us in determining if we were truly "Committed to our Community."

To what extent does the Bluffton Police Department work with community members to solve local problems?

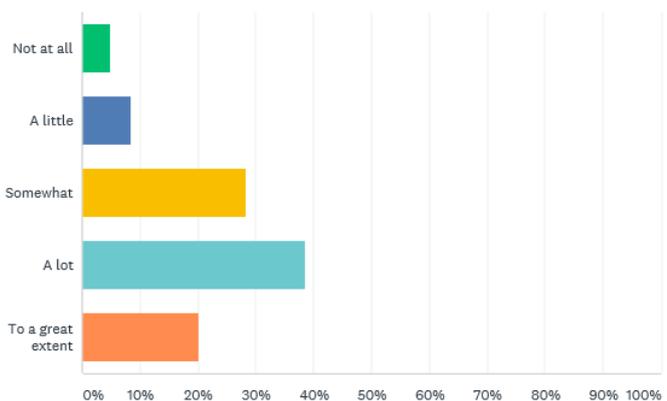
Answered: 269 Skipped: 10



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	3.35% (9)
A little	10.41% (28)
Somewhat	35.32% (95)
A lot	34.94% (94)
To a great extent	15.99% (43)
TOTAL	269

Are Bluffton Police Officers responsive to concerns?

Answered: 273 Skipped: 6



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	4.76% (13)
A little	8.42% (23)
Somewhat	28.21% (77)
A lot	38.46% (105)
To a great extent	20.15% (55)
TOTAL	273



External Survey Result: Officer Training

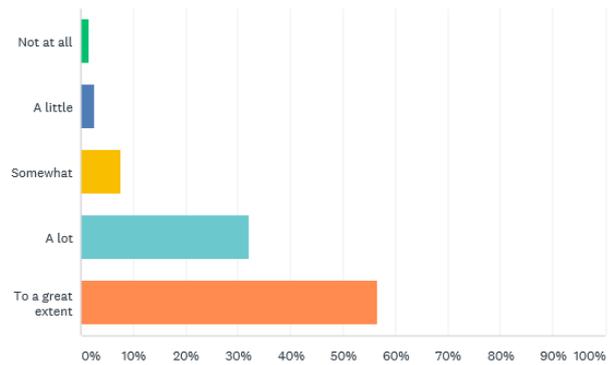
As the world, society, and communities become more complex, more is being asked of officers. The Bluffton Police Department, as well as, departments across the country, need to adapt to evolving community needs and problems. Training must stay current with these developing and changing situations. The final two questions included in the survey involved the public's thought process pertaining to training for the officers.



Q10

How important do you think it is for a Bluffton Police Officer to have tactical training?

Answered: 278 Skipped: 1

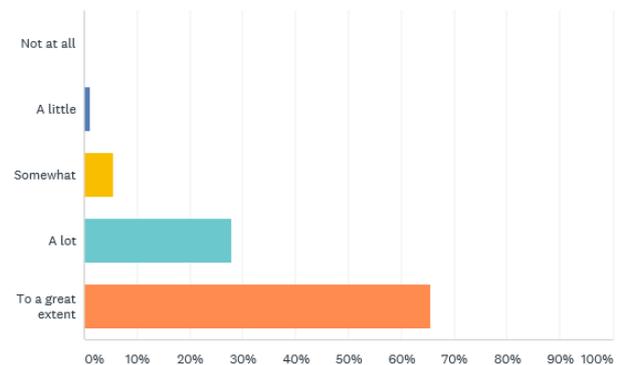


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	1.44% 4
A little	2.52% 7
Somewhat	7.55% 21
A lot	32.01% 89
To a great extent	56.47% 157
TOTAL	278

Q11

How important do you think it is for a Bluffton Police Officer to have de-escalation training?

Answered: 276 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Not at all	0.00% 0
A little	1.09% 3
Somewhat	5.43% 15
A lot	27.90% 77
To a great extent	65.58% 181
TOTAL	276

SWOT Analysis

Strengths

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Competitive Pay Salaries	Community Involvement/ Engagement
New Hiring Process	Youth Outreach
K9's on every Shift	Professional Officers
Good Community Involvement/Support	Social Media Outreach/ Communication
Wellness Program	Traffic Enforcement/ Visibility
Low Violent Crime Rates	New Chief/Leadership
Take-Home Police Vehicles	Technology

Weaknesses

Confidence in Command Staff / No Clear Mission	Shortage in Staff as Town Continues to Grow
Staffing Issues	Crime Prevention Proactive Patrols
Lack of Bi-Lingual Officers	Traffic Enforcement on Major Roadways
Too Many Specialized Units. Need to focus on Patrol.	De-escalation Techniques Handling a Stressful Call
Communication	Drug Enforcement
Fleet	Diversity/Hispanic Community Outreach
True Hands-On Training	Reserve Officer Program
Turnover of Officers	Retention of Officers

SWOT Analysis Continued

Opportunities

INTERNAL	EXTERNAL
Promotions/New Promotion Process	Continue to Build Relationships with Community and Schools
Bringing in Good Candidates to Address Staffing Issues	More Socializing with Officers Meet & Greets
New Chief/New Ideas	Strong Economy
Workout Program	Reserve Officer Program
Growing Department	Growth of Department and Town
New Equipment and Uniforms	Proactive Crime Prevention
Improve Community Relationships and Partnerships with other Agencies	Use Experience for Community Education

Threats

Patrol Understaffed	Not Enough Officers with Growth of Town
Lack of Communication Throughout Department	Drugs/Gangs
Safety Around Police Department	Media
Lack of Accountability	Complacency
Leadership Breakdown	Community Perception
Employee Turnover	Dealing with People who have Disabilities/Metal Disorders
Lack of Open Slots at the SC Criminal Justice Academy (SCCJA)	Vehicle Accidents/Traffic

Goal 1- Building Trust and Legitimacy

Law Enforcement culture should embrace a guardian-rather than a warrior-mindset to build trust and legitimacy within the agencies and with the public. To that end, law enforcement agencies should adopt procedural justice as the guiding principle for internal and external policies and practices. This will guide their interactions with rank and file officers and with the citizens they serve. Law Enforcement agencies should also establish a culture of transparency and accountability to build public trust and legitimacy.

Building Trust and Legitimacy Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Increase local recruiting efforts in support of creating a diverse workforce	Personnel & Recruiting	January 2020
Identify and Assign Liaisons to established special interest groups	Community Action Team	October 2019
Expand Youth Officer Program	School Resource Officers	July 2019
Release a Comprehensive biased based policing report on a quarterly basis	Administration	July 2019
Hold quarterly public forums for Citizen questions and Department Information	Administration/Community Action Team	July 2019
Increase Positive Non-Enforcement Activities	All personnel	January 2020

Goal 2- Policy and Oversight

Policies and procedures must be readily available to the public and clearly articulated to ensure transparency. Pursuing a more open format, such as discussion groups where citizens can provide feedback on policies and procedures, may be more beneficial, both to the citizens and the department.

Sanctity of life is the overarching goal in the department's use of force policy but is something that might not be widely understood. The policies balance the rights of all people without creating a dangerous working environment for the officers.

Data collection and proper supervision will be utilized to ensure the officers are accountable for their actions as individuals and as a department.

Policy and Oversight Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Create Policy Review Committee to review and update all Policies	Administration/Policy Review Committee	January 2020
Create Review Board for Pursuits and Use of Force Cases and provide feedback on Training/Legal issues	Internal Affairs	March 2020
Establish a Citizen Advisory Committee to provide perspectives in Various Areas	Administration	January 2020

Goal 3- Technology and Social Media

Not only can technology improve policing practices, but it can lead to a more open relationship between the police department and the community. When considering technology for use by law enforcement it can be easy to forget the budgetary component and the rapidly changing nature of both hardware and software.

It is our goal to implement technologies that will help promote the openness of the Bluffton Police Department and provide ease of access to frequently asked questions and educational topics. Some of the action items associated with this goal are specifically designed to reduce violent crime, promote community cohesiveness, and increase the ability to access information about our Police Department.

Technology and Social Media Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Implement an advanced Laser/Digital Crime and Crash Scene Mapping Technology	Investigation Division	July 2020
Invest in alert Technology for Major Incidents and Traffic Issues for Town of Bluffton	Administration/Public Information Officer	January 2020
Expand Lowcountry Crime Report in Spanish	Public Information Officer	October 2019
Create a Library of Promotional and Educational Videos for Presentations and Public Education	Public Information Officer	January 2020
Upgrade Department Website to Support other Activities	Administration	January 2020



Goal 4- Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Sir Robert Peele once said, “The Police are the Public and the Public are the Police.” Our Community Policing Goal for the next three years is to work more closely with the community to define problems as they see them and collaborate on solutions. It is important to work diligently to foster a culture within the Bluffton Police Department that demonstrates to the citizens that Bluffton officers are professional, compassionate, and accountable guardians of the community.

The officers will take every opportunity to provide education and allow their interactions to provide insight into the daily operations of the Police Department. With a solid understanding of what the officers do as the primary law enforcement agency in the Town of Bluffton, the residents will better be able to appreciate and support the department as a whole. These principles will help ensure the crime reduction efforts are a success.

One program in which the community will be able to see the results of community policing and crime reduction is through the efforts of the Lutzie 43 Distracted Driving campaign. The Town of Bluffton has partnered with Lutzie 43 to actively demonstrate the dangers of distracted driving and the ways the public can stop this action with repetition and exposure to the facts.

Community Policing and Crime Reduction Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Complete Community Service Projects utilizing Crime Prevention through Environmental Design Principals in each District	Community Action Team/ Operations	Ongoing
Increase Drug Activity/Arrests by 10% from 2018 data - <i>implement a multi-jurisdictional Narcotics Enforcement Team</i>	Operations	January 2020 <i>July 2019</i>
Renew Helping Hands Thanksgiving and Christmas Food to families in need.	Community Action Team/ Chaplains/Event Coordinator	December 2019

Goal 4 - Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Focus on Implementing a date driven to Crime and Traffic Safety (DDACT) Program

Administration

July 2020

Decrease Traffic Accidents by 10% (2018 data) through Enforcement and Education

Operations

January 2020

Create an Auxiliary Police Program/Reserve Officer Program and Promote it

Training/Support Division

March 2020

Promote and Educate the Public on the Dangers of Distracted Driving through the Lutzie 43 Campaign

Community Action Team/
Operations/Community Relations

April 2020



Goal 5- Training and Education

Law Enforcement officers today are faced with such a variety of challenges that specialized training is a necessity. Officers of the Bluffton Police Department will continue to receive the training mandated by the South Carolina Criminal Justice Academy; in addition, they will receive specialized training throughout the life of this plan.

Training in crisis intervention, fair and impartial policing, conflict resolution, de-escalation techniques, and officer safety will remain a focal point for the department. We will seek training to the department from experts around the country to ensure the exposure received by Bluffton Police Department officers remains at the highest level possible.

Where practical, the community will be invited to participate as a way to ensure our officers understand the perspective of those they serve.

Training and Education Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Improve Emergency Medical Training/First Aid Course	Training Division	October 2020
Pursue Training for all Department Personnel in De-escalation Techniques and Verbal Confrontation Resolution	Training Division	January 2020
Implement Performance Qualifications Standards for each Rank	Administration/ Training Division	March 2020
Create a Professional Development Program	Administration/ Training Division	October 2020
Provide Basic Language Classes associated with our Population (Basic Spanish Class)	Training Division	January 2020

Training and Education



Goal 6- Officer Safety and Wellness

Recent estimates suggest that more than 100,000 law enforcement officers are injured in the line of duty each year. Many of these instances are the result of assaults; but, many are the result of motor vehicle crashes. Other injuries are related to poor nutrition, lack of physical fitness, sleep deprivation, and psychological impacts.

As a department, we must continue to foster a culture where being physically fit is rewarded, where taking care of personal health through proper sleep and nutrition are emphasized, and where policies and procedures support these ideals.

Mandated training will highlight these principals during this three-year strategic plan. Health and wellness will be a sub-topic of most training offered by the department.

Officer Safety and Wellness Strategies	Responsible Position	Timeline
Implement a Critical Incident Stress Management Team	Chaplains	July 2019
Create Physical Fitness Standard/ Testing Procedure for All Officers. Enhance Gym Equipment.	Administration	March 2019
Review Shift Schedules that Promote a Healthier Life	Operations	July 2019
Develop Seminars Focused on Family Issues (Finance, Parenting, Marriage, etc.)	Support Division	July 2019



Evaluation and Accountability

In order to be effective in achieving the goals and objectives established, while simultaneously meeting an everyday service level, it will be imperative this plan is tracked by those responsible for the individual goals and objectives.

Supervisors within the Bluffton Police Department will be responsible for documenting the progress of the goals and objectives by providing updates to the Strategic Planning Committee at monthly meetings. This will include determining if the goal/objective is on track, any unforeseen impacts that may change the timeline, and if adjustments need to be made to the goal/objective.

Once a year an updated plan will take place. This update will include the progress/completion of the individual goals or objectives. This will also provide us with an opportunity to add or delete goals/objectives based on the ever-changing world of law enforcement and the changes within our community. Ultimately, this will ensure the Strategic Planning Committee, the Bluffton Police Department, and all of our employees stay on track and continue to move in a positive direction.



Closing Remarks

The development of the Bluffton Police Department's 2019-2022 Strategic Plan provides the organization an opportunity to continue growing in a positive direction. We would like to take a moment to thank the Strategic Planning Steering Committee made up of Bluffton Police Department officers, employees and Chaplains. They have worked tirelessly on developing this plan and providing a clear path for the officers and employees to follow to achieve our goals. Those part of the Steering Committee are Chief Chapmond, Captain Joe Babkiewicz, Captain Scott Chandler, Lt. Jim Carmany, Lt. Joe George, Lt. Christian Gonzales, Lt. Kelly McCauley, Officer Rob Harman, Officer Peter James, Officer Tyler Nelson, Community Relations Manager Joy Nelson, Executive Assistant Dana Smith, Records and Evidence Administrator Eydie Moody and Chaplain John Ring.

In addition, we would like to offer our sincere appreciation to all the community members who helped provide input into our plan. The ideas and perspectives that were presented to the Strategic Planning Steering Committee will help our Department maintain our focus as we work towards accomplishing these goals.

