

# A Blueprint for Re-envisioning Rochester Police Department



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ROCHESTER, MINNESOTA  
**Police Chief**  
**Jim Franklin**

Police actions and conduct across the country in recent years triggered an enormous public outcry for police reform. Law enforcement agencies nationwide are now examining their foundations of organizational management including hiring practices, policies and procedures, training, supervision and discipline.

Immediately following the death of George Floyd, Rochester Police Department (RPD) began reflection and discussion with internal and external stakeholders including RPD command staff and community groups. Our focus has been on how we can best fulfill our mission to provide the highest level of public safety for everyone in our community.

This document presents **A Blueprint for Re-envisioning Rochester Police Department** and serves as a guide to continue propelling the agency forward during this especially challenging time. It is based on the many voices we have heard as well as foundational law enforcement principles. This is not a comprehensive document but rather a living and breathing plan that will evolve as the agency progresses.

This blueprint is an expression of our commitment and dedication to continuous improvement. Making it a reality will require that we build on our current strengths, address current shortcomings and move forward in partnership with our community.

## BACKGROUND

In 2015, the White House released its [Final Report of The President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing](#), offering several best practices that all police departments in the United States should strive to adopt. The report identifies six critical, overarching pillars: Building Trust & Legitimacy, Policy & Oversight, Technology & Social Media, Community Policing & Crime Reduction, Training & Education and Officer Wellness & Safety.

RPD emphatically embraces each of these pillars. In the pages ahead, you will see an overview of each pillar along with related current and in-progress initiatives as well as actions we are committed to in the future.

These pillars, along with the reform report by the U.S. Conference of Mayors and Sir Robert Peel's Policing Principles, are a key part of our blueprint, and so is our commitment to community policing – a philosophy centered on building relationships, including community/police partnerships, and proactive problem solving.

Community policing is not a static endeavor but one that responds to an ever-changing reality. Many cities have seen ample evidence that innovative, community policing strategies can have a significant impact on not only crime and disorder, but also quality of life.

In 2020, Rochester Mayor Kim Norton signed the [My Brother's Keeper Alliance pledge](#), introduced by former President Barack Obama. As part of this pledge to **review**, **engage**, **report** and **reform** use of force policies, RPD hosted several community listening sessions in conjunction with the Police Policy Oversight Commission (PPOC) and Diversity Council.

“RPD is committed to working with the entire community to identify and prioritize public safety-related issues and to collaborate to address those issues. We believe that this process will not only enhance public safety but also promote unity. By working together, RPD and the citizens of Rochester can build bridges that encourage mutual respect and positive change.”

Mayor Kim Norton





## OUR PROFILE

RPD has an authorized strength of 150 sworn officers, supported by approximately 70 civilian members, all dedicated to providing the highest level of public safety. The department provides a full-range of patrol and investigative services.

The Public Safety Communications Center, staffed by non-sworn personnel under non-sworn management, serves RPD, Olmsted County Sheriff's Office (OCSO), Rochester Fire Department and several smaller fire and first responder organizations in the area.

Law Enforcement Records assists both RPD and OCSO processing data requests and background checks.

RPD also benefits from the support of an active body of citizen volunteers.

With commitment from City officials and citizens, RPD is deeply engaged in community, problem-oriented and intelligence-led policing activities. We continue to work in close collaboration with a wide variety of stakeholders, including community groups, schools and faith-based organizations.



## MISSION & CORE VALUES

### Mission

To provide exceptional service and superior protection by reducing crime and enhancing the quality of life of the first class community we serve.

### Core Values

#### INTEGRITY

We will conduct ourselves with the highest level of integrity which merits the trust of the people we serve. We will strive for honesty and transparency. Our actions will be consistent with our core values, code of ethics and the Constitution. We will maintain our commitment by having respect for the law in both our personal and professional lives.

#### RESPECT

We will treat everyone with fairness and impartiality. We are committed to respecting individual rights, human dignity and the value of all members both in the community and within our department. We will cherish, defend and protect the rights and liberties guaranteed by the Constitution. By demonstrating respect for others we will earn respect.

#### SERVICE

We are dedicated to delivering the highest quality of service to safeguard lives and property, reduce crime and enhance public safety. We value proactive problem solving and enforcement in order to reduce crime and the fear of crime. We will engage with the community to build relationships and work together to resolve problems. We will be responsive to the needs of those we serve as we provide exceptional safety and security to our diverse community.

#### COMPASSION

Compassionate service is essential to human relationships and indispensable to the foundation of a just and peaceful community. We will show concern and empathy for the victims of crime and treat violators of the law with fairness and dignity. We will exercise our law enforcement authority with diligence, empathy and compassion as entrusted to us by the community we serve.

#### INNOVATION

We recognize that improvement is a continuous process. We support creativity and proactively seek opportunities to improve our level of service. We encourage new and more effective ideas that support the fulfillment of our mission. We will seek out and apply innovative approaches in providing the best service to our customers. Through continuous improvement, teamwork, and innovation we will strive for personal, professional and organizational excellence.

## VISION

We, the Rochester Police Department, are dedicated to becoming the **premier law enforcement** agency in Minnesota, one that is **reflective of and responsive to the community** that we serve.

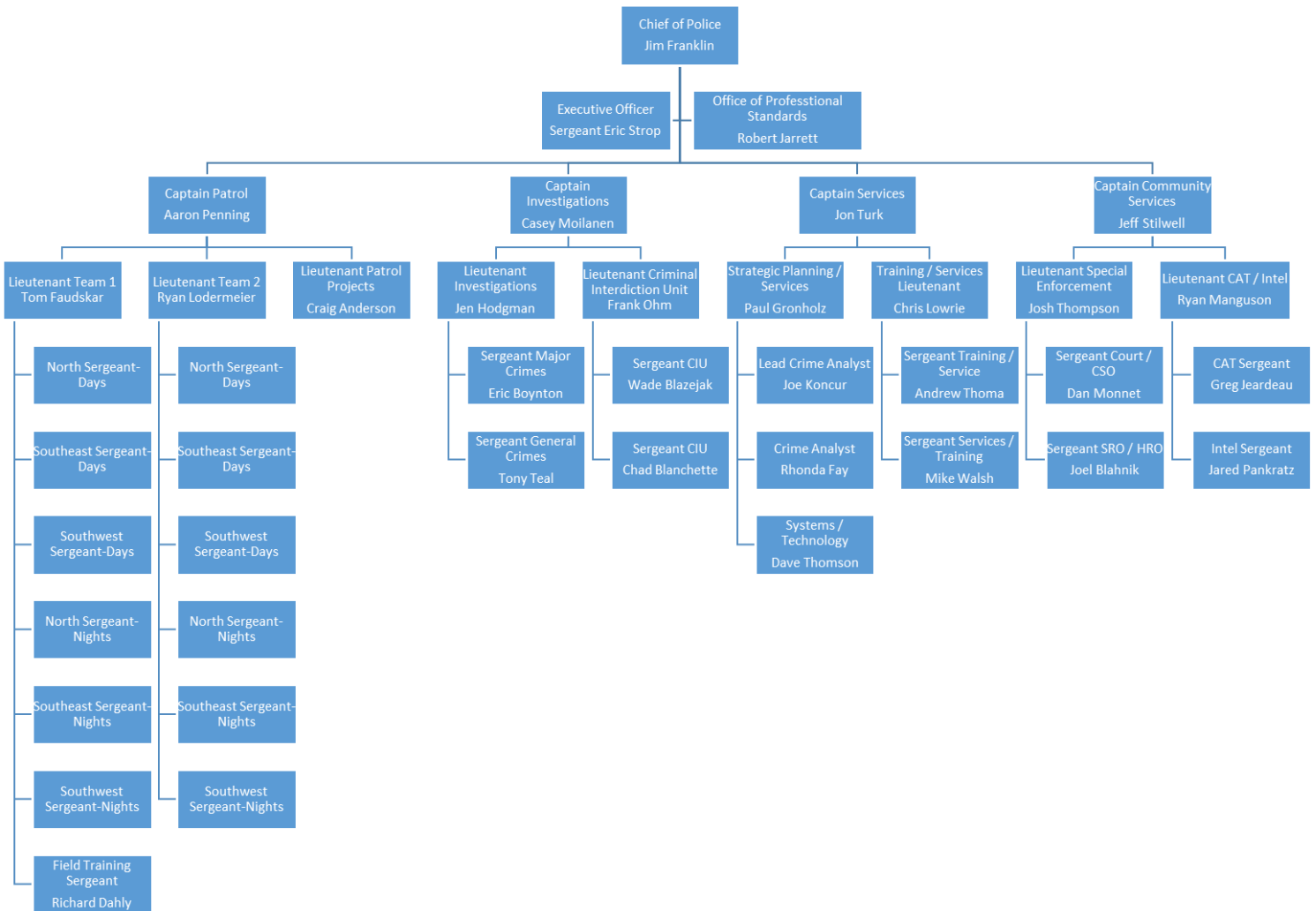
We will accomplish this through the following commitments:

- We will cultivate a culture of accountability with a dedication to improvement.
- We will hire and promote talented officers and professional staff, who will adhere to the **highest standards of performance**, strive to achieve **best practices in policing**, **embrace accountability** and **emulate the values** of the first-class city we serve.
- Our actions will reflect **human dignity and sanctity of life values**: compassion, fairness, diversity, human rights and justice. These values will be at the forefront of the RPD as it fulfills its public safety mission.
- We will employ policing strategies and tactics driven by accurate, timely and reliable information and data supplied by current and emerging technologies and supported by the department's systematic application of **intelligence-led policing**.
- We will maintain the trust of Rochester community members by **actively engaging** the neighborhoods, businesses and social organizations to the highest possible level.
- We will **aspire to unite** the people of our communities and members of our police department towards a collective commitment to **addressing crime, violence** and **quality-of-life issues** through **engaging one another** and all city agencies in **collaborative problem-solving partnerships**.

To make this vision a reality, our agency must reward the hard work, **innovation** and resourcefulness exhibited by our employees and must offer state-of-the-art **training**, **professional development** and **career opportunities** for advancement and retention. This will ensure that employees see RPD as a destination organization and strive to become the department's next generation of leaders.

# DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

1	Chief
4	Captains
9	Lieutenants
25	Sergeants
107	Sworn Officers (approx.)
65	Support Staff (approx.)
211	TOTAL STAFF (approx.)

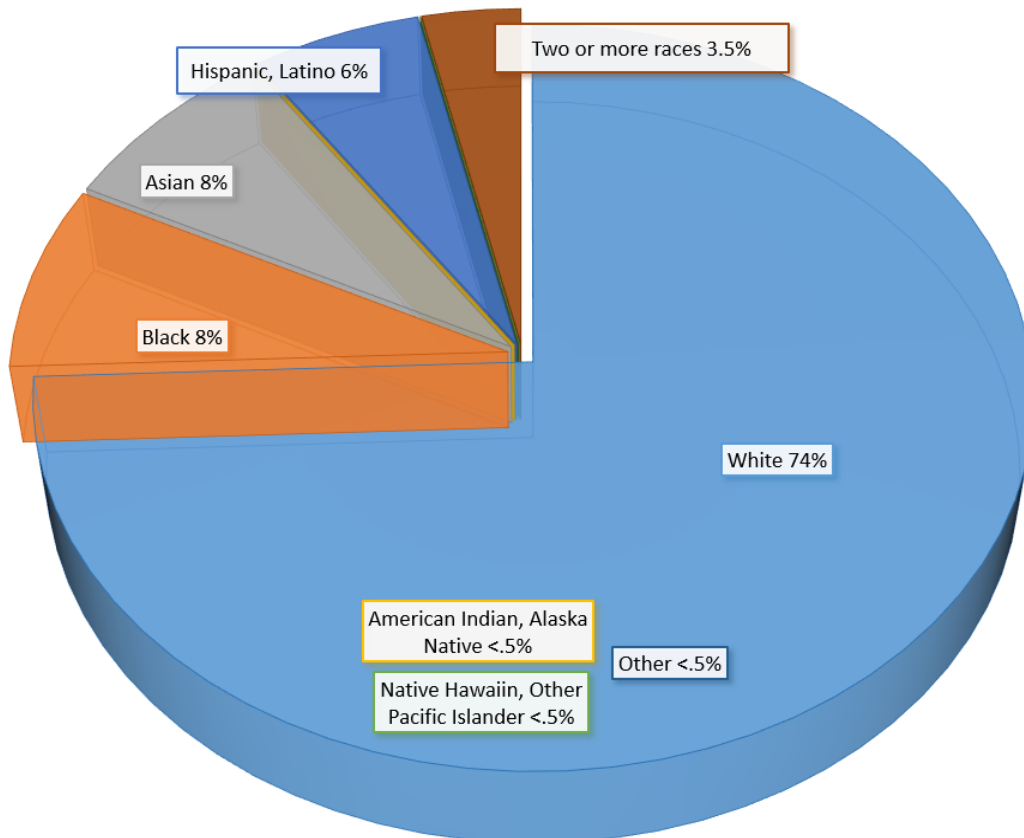




# CITY DEMOGRAPHICS

CITY OF ROCHESTER	TOTAL %	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
ALL		58,501	60,423	<b>118,924</b>
WHITE	74%			87,726
BLACK	8%			9,479
ASIAN	8%			9,394
AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE	< .5 %			246
HISPANIC OR LATINO	6%			7,235
NATIVE HAWAIIN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	< .5%			441
OTHER RACE	< .5%			139
2 OR MORE	3.5%			4,222
<b>MINORITY TOTAL</b>	<b>26%</b>			
<b>GENDER PERCENTAGE</b>		49%	51%	

2019 American Community Survey Demographic Estimates, U.S. Census Bureau

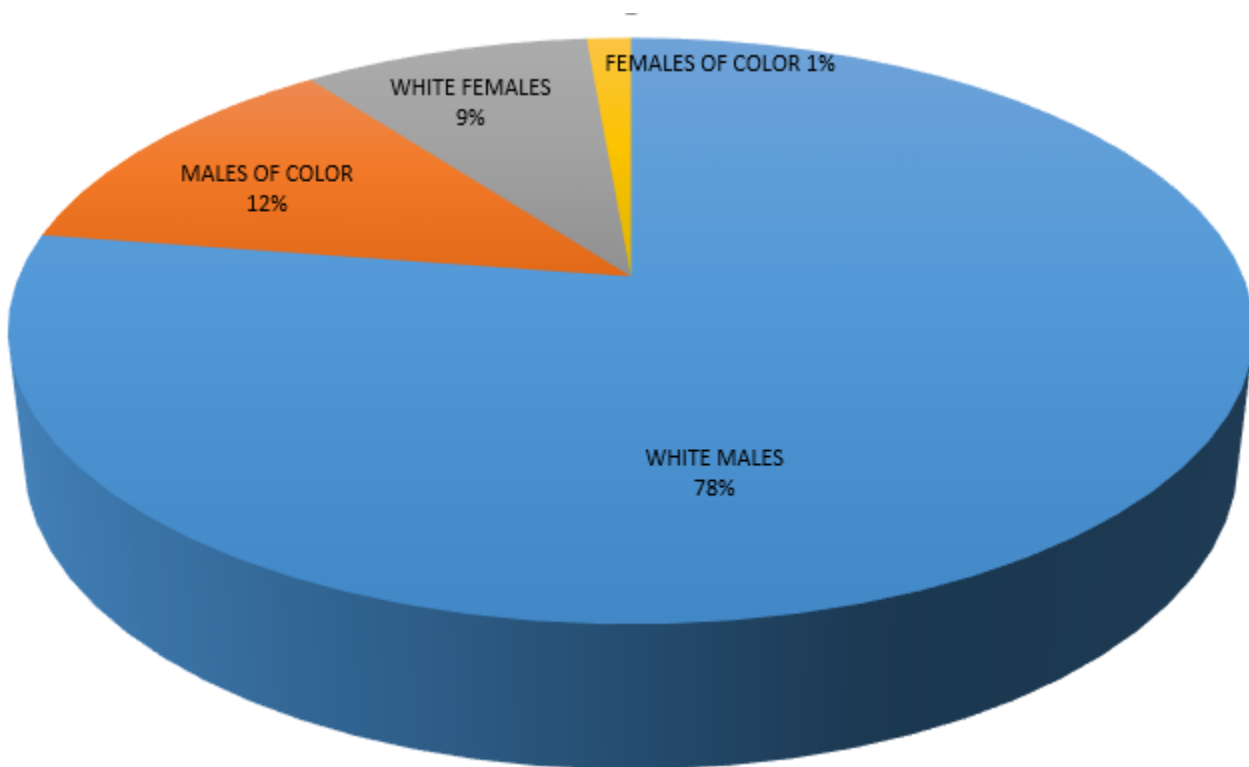


# DEPARTMENT DEMOGRAPHICS

1/2023

An estimated 26% of the City of Rochester’s population are minorities, and RPD strives to reflect the community’s diversity. Changes to our hiring practices have helped us become one of the most diverse police departments in southeastern Minnesota. Approximately 22% of RPD’s full time sworn officers are women and people of color. Additionally, our officers speak 17 different languages.

FT Sworn Only	TOTAL %	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL
ALL		131	15	146
WHITE	86%	113	13	126
BLACK	4%	6		6
ASIAN	2%	3		3
NATIVE AMERICAN	1%	2		2
HISPANIC	3%	4	1	5
2 or more	3%	3	1	4
<b>MINORITY TOTAL</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>GENDER PERCENTAGE</b>		<b>89%</b>	<b>11%</b>	

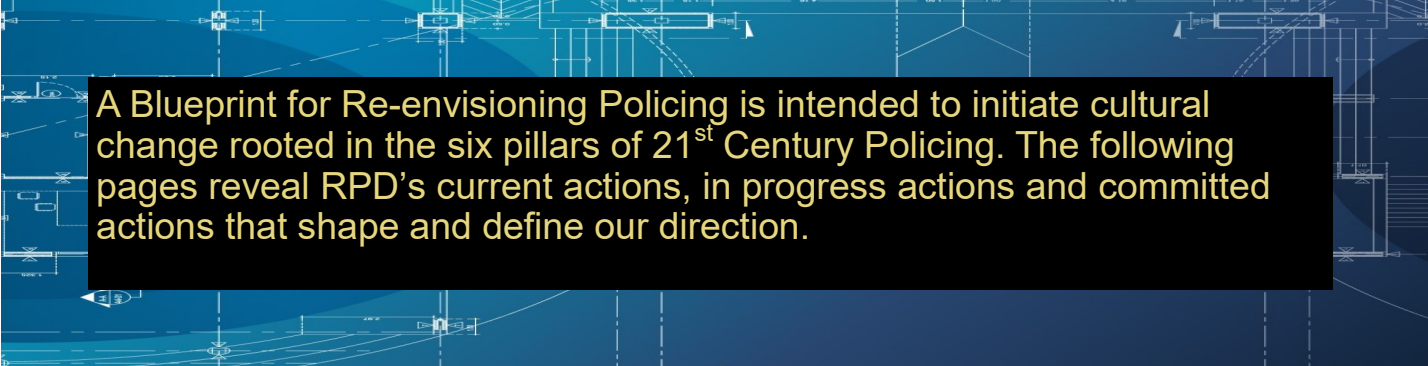




## Crime Statistics

	2022	2021	2020	2019
MURDER AND NON-NEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER	1	1	6	2
NEGLIGENT MANSLAUGHTER	1	1	2	2
JUSTIFIABLE HOMICIDE	1	0	0	0
KIDNAPPING	10	19	22	22
SEXUAL ASSAULT	137	171	151	153
ROBBERY	32	45	46	36
AGGRAVATED ASSAULT	194	245	189	191
SIMPLE ASSAULT	524	627	622	562
INTIMIDATION	140	166	121	108
ARSON	5	6	7	3
EXTORTION/BLACKMAIL	10	8	1	5
BURGLARY	256	310	285	286
OTHER THEFT/STOLEN PROPERTY	732	757	744	731
SHOPLIFTING	665	627	657	860
THEFT FROM MOTOR VEHICLE	356	506	453	329
THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS	170	199	93	44
STOLEN VEHICLE	149	167	170	138
FORGERY/COUNTERFEITING	113	89	97	98
FRAUD/EMBEZZLEMENT	510	631	639	548
VANDALISM	639	751	736	651
DRUGS/NARCOTICS	358	314	352	397
DRUG PARAPHERNALIA	231	200	198	214
WEAPON LAW VIOLATIONS	117	105	88	78
DISORDERLY CONDUCT/PUBLIC PEACE	709	740	757	740
DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE	300	242	263	192
TRESPASS	272	184	206	179
ALL OTHER OFFENSES	1402	1319	1270	1521

RPD shares crime counts with the Minnesota Bureau of Criminal Apprehension (BCA). Data from RPD and the BCA will differ slightly for various reasons, including delayed reporting of crimes by victims.



A Blueprint for Re-envisioning Policing is intended to initiate cultural change rooted in the six pillars of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing. The following pages reveal RPD's current actions, in progress actions and committed actions that shape and define our direction.

**Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy**

When police departments establish trust and legitimacy with their communities, people more fully engage with law enforcement and better outcomes are more likely during a critical incident. Trust and legitimacy is enhanced when everyone is treated with dignity and respect and police operate with transparency.

**Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight**

Policies and procedures need to reflect the department's core values as well as the community's values. Police departments must be open to community input and review policies and procedures often to ensure they are current with best practices and new legislation.

**Pillar Three: Technology and Social Media**

Technology and social media must be embraced to increase transparency, accountability and engagement. As people become more reliant on social media for news and information, police departments should utilize platforms to share information in a timely and open manner.

**Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction**

Police departments must foster relationships with people throughout the community. Relationships need to grow from a culture of respect and honor the dignity of every person. Partnerships and collaborations with community groups can help law enforcement identify problems before they become unmanageable.

**Pillar Five: Training and Education, Recruiting and Hiring**

More is being asked of our police officers as our society grows increasingly complex. Training and education must encompass these evolving needs. Additionally, police departments must embrace training that assists with mental health issues.

**Pillar Six: Officer Wellness & Safety**

A police officer's physical and emotional health is key not only to the officer's well-being, but also the officer's ability to safely and effectively handle the demands of working in law enforcement. Police departments must not only provide suitable protective equipment, but also mandate that safety equipment be used by all members of the department.



## Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Community liaison program known as the Community Engagement Response Team (C.E.R.T.) leverages relationships and build connections with communities of color.
- Non-sworn professional standards manager (PSM) conducts all internal complaint investigations.
- Office of Professional Standards and Accountability (OPSA): OPSA works to maintain RPD's professional standards, add transparency and ensure professional accountability. A lieutenant works in conjunction with PSM. OPSA promotes trust and integrity of the RPD through its commitment to continuous improvement.
- New Americans Academy: RPD, Rochester Fire Department, Olmsted County Sheriff's Office, Olmsted County Attorney's Office, Office of the Public Defender, Victim Services, Intercultural Mutual Assistance Association, Hawthorne Education Center and others held a New Americans Academy and is coordinating future academies. New Americans Academy consists of workshops designed to give community members not born in the United States an opportunity to learn about local law enforcement and the criminal justice system. The intention is to enhance communication, understanding and trust between law enforcement officers and Rochester's immigrant community.
- Police Assisted Recovery (PAR) program: PAR provides non-arrest pathways to treatment and recovery for individuals struggling with addiction. RPD, Zumbro Valley Health Center, Doc's Recovery House, Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge, EmPower CTC and Olmsted County Adult Behavioral Health collaborate on the program. In 2019, PAR received [Mayo Clinic's Shared Value Award](#). [Click here](#) to watch a short video on the program.
- Trust is built into the RPD Policy Manual and referenced more than a dozen times.
- Ongoing participation in community forums.
- Daily media briefing: RPD and Olmsted County Sheriff's Office hold in-person meetings weekdays to brief local media on notable incidents. These briefings provide enhanced communication with the community.
- Provide transparency with a published annual report summarizing the department's activities for the last 12 months.
- Volunteers in Public Safety (VIPS) program.
- Outreach with businesses and nonprofits including: Rochester Downtown Alliance, Women's Shelter and Support Center, Bear Creek Services, MN Adult & Teen Challenge, Hope Fuse, Boys and Girls Club, Ronald McDonald House, Salvation Army, faith based organizations and many others.

### IN PROGRESS ACTIONS

- Collaborate with other agencies on work groups, including Domestic Violence Collaborative Workgroup, Sexual Assault Inter-Agency Council (SAIC) and Children and Family Advocacy.
- Expanding community engagement initiatives.
- Create a Police Academy for City Leadership and newly-elected officials. Academy includes scenarios that expose officials to issues facing law enforcement today such as use of force, use of deadly force, de-escalation and duty to intervene.

## Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Body camera video audits: Supervisors are regularly assigned video to review to ensure compliance with body camera policy.
- Required training bulletins provide officers ongoing policy training.
- Police Policy Oversight Commission (PPOC): Citizens serve as commissioners and review and comment on the policies, practices and procedures adopted or to be adopted by police administration as they relate to the legal requirements of state and federal law and the expectations of the community.
- Banning of neck restraints.
- Banning of warrior-style training.
- Sentinel event review process: This new process for evaluating internal and external critical incidents is designed to conduct a process similar to the National Transportation Safety Board's review of transportation accidents. The goal is to identify underlying weaknesses in policies, training or practices. These reviews are conducted by the OPSA.
- Duty to intervene and report enacted into policy.
- Transitioned to [Lexipol](#) policies, which are based on nationwide standards and best practices while also incorporating state and federal laws and regulations.
- Added sanctity of life values to policy.
- A response to resistance report is required following every use of force.
- Uphold [#8cantwait campaign](#) practices.
- Police Civil Service Commission: Citizens serve as commissioners and meet monthly determining policy to direct and guide the department.
- Collaboration with the Government Alliance on Race and Equity.
- Refer cases involving police department employees to outside agencies to avoid conflict of interest.
- Policy prohibiting consent searches of motor vehicles.
- Administrative services manager communicates changes in the law to staff.
- Leverage City of Rochester's legislative liaison to influence law enforcement issues at the state capital.
- All sworn staff receiving Active Bystandership in Law Enforcement (ABLE) training to empower all officers to intervene when they observe behavior that threatens to uphold the sanctity of life.

### IN PROGRESS ACTIONS

- Developing long-term RPD Strategic Plan.

### COMMITTED ACTIONS

- Analyzing calls for service to look for opportunities to improve our public safety response and outcomes.





## Pillar Three: Technology and Social Media

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Utilize a Real Time Information Crime Center to monitor activity in downtown Rochester.
- [Accountability Dashboard](#) on RPD website: Continually working to making it easier to find/read the department's most searched data.
- Early Intervention System: To enhance accountability, RPD has implemented a system within our professional standards software that tracks all use of force incidents, citizen complaints and other factors to identify any police officer in need of additional training. The system is monitored and administered by the Office of Professional Standards and Accountability.
- Leverage training and use of less lethal weapons, including pepper balls and 40 mm foam projectiles.
- Body worn camera deployment: All RPD officers are required to wear cameras when interacting with the public, enhancing safety for everyone by promoting transparency and helping document incidents.
- Squad cameras in all police vehicles.
- Crime Prevention & Communications Coordinator position to manage social media platforms and serve as public information officer.
- Facebook: @RochesterMNP
- Twitter: @RochesterMNP
- YouTube: City of Rochester, MN Police Department
- Utilize [I am Responding notification and response app](#) to improve response times and communication.
- Online form to report traffic concerns helps identify locations in need of attention.

### IN PROGRESS ACTIONS

- Enhancing body worn camera usage for training purposes.

### COMMITTED ACTIONS

- Online community feedback form.
- Support legislation for a nationwide database or tracking system of officers dismissed or fired for cause.

## Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Downtown Resource Officer program.
- Hospital Resource Officer program.
- Embedded social worker program: RPD was one of the first law enforcement agencies in Minnesota to implement a co-responder model with an embedded social workers known as the Community Outreach Specialist Team. In collaboration with Olmsted County, the team has expanded from one to four social workers.
- Established a Community Services Unit with a dedicated captain.
- [Safe City Nights](#) program: RPD designed Safe City Nights to provide opportunities for people in all wards of the city to get to know officers over a meal rather than a time of trouble or need. The initiative was launched with the intention of building, nurturing and strengthening positive relationships. Approximately 5,400 people attend the gatherings each summer. [Click here](#) to watch a short video from the launch of Safe City Nights.
- [Homeless Outreach Plan](#): RPD is working with stakeholders in both public and private sectors to adopt problem-solving approaches to homelessness.
- Lights On Campaign: To make roads safer for all, RPD is helping drivers replace broken headlights/taillights. Instead of tickets, RPD is giving drivers vouchers to get their light(s) repaired free of charge. This program is possible thanks to a partnership with a non-profit agency and Rochester Motorcars.
- Monthly Cops and Coffee events with 125 Live.
- Badges and Board Games.
- School Resource Officer (SRO) program: RPD has partnered with Rochester Public Schools for approximately 30 years. Officers in the schools build positive relationships and promote a safe learning environment.
- Member of Drug Court evaluation team.
- Cops & Kids Community Bike Program: Officers engage with children and promote bicycle safety by hosting events (bike rodeos, organized rides, fix-it clinics). In certain circumstances, the program provides bikes and helmets to community members.
- Shop with a Cop: This program pairs children identified by Rochester Public Schools with law enforcement for a fun-filled day of holiday shopping and relationship building. On the day of the event, uniformed officers volunteer their time to take kids to buy presents for family members.
- Skate City Nights: RPD organized Skate City Nights as an expansion of Safe City Nights. The free roller skating events foster engagement with the community while promoting public safety.
- Police Athletics/Activities League (PAL): This non-profit organization is dedicated to reducing juvenile crime and violence by giving kids a safe place to play, positive role models and creative activities to engage in. RPD sponsors a football each year.
- Night to Unite (formally known in Rochester as National Night Out): This annual event promotes police-community partnerships and neighborhood safety.
- RPD is partnering with Project ChildSafe to distribute free gun locks to enhance safety.
- Student Driving Mentorship Program: Officers volunteer as behind-the-wheel mentors for students who might not otherwise be able to complete license requirements.
- Compassion Card Program: When an officer observes someone who is struggling and in need of assistance, they can use a pre-paid credit card (Compassion Card) to purchase groceries, a tank of gas or other necessity for the person.



## Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction

### IN PROGRESS ACTIONS

- Collaboration with City of Rochester's Diversity, Equity and Inclusion director.
- Integrating Mayo Clinic Health System's Community Paramedic Program with co-responder model for non-emergent medical calls.

### COMMITTED ACTIONS

- Expand Community Action Team (CAT).
- Future collaboration with crisis center.
- Enhance collaboration with mobile crisis response team.



## Pillar Five: Training and Education, Recruiting and Hiring

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Active Bystandership in Law Enforcement (ABLE) training to empower all officers to intervene when they observe behavior that threatens to uphold the sanctity of life.
- Forensic Experiential Trauma Interview (FETI) training.
- [Virtual reality simulator training](#): This immersive training can be custom-designed for scenarios specific to RPD, bringing officers as close to a real-life experience as possible.
- Fair and Impartial Policing (FIP) training agency wide: RPD required all officers to attend FIP classes beginning in 2018, long before it became part of the national narrative common today.
- Implicit Bias Training: Officers receive training in recognizing and valuing community diversity and cultural differences to include implicit bias. [Click here](#) to see the training objectives.
- Conflict management/mediation: RPD provides in-service training in conflict management and mediation [Click here](#) to see the training objectives.
- Training based on [Integrating Communications, Assessment and Tactics](#) (ICAT) model: ICAT is designed to fill a critical gap in training police officers in how to respond to volatile situations in which subjects are behaving erratically and often dangerously but do not possess a firearm.
- Comprehensive police academy and field training program: RPD's robust training unit conducts a ten-week in-house policy academy for new officers. Once officers complete the academy they participate in an 18-week field training program.
- Crisis Intervention Training (CIT) for all of sworn staff: Officers are trained in de-escalation techniques and how to manage a person going through a mental health crisis. [Click here](#) to see the training objectives.
- Training emphasizes preservation of life with sanctity of life at the core.
- Officers trained on and equipped with automated external defibrillators and Narcan.
- Officers trained in the area of human trafficking.
- Investigators trained by [CornerHouse](#) on child forensic interviewing.
- Training on how to handle incidents where a person tells the officer they can't breathe.
- Ryan Dowd's Homelessness Training for Local Governments.
- Beyond the Badge program: New recruits spend a day volunteering with a local non-profit to establish connections with key resources and gain a greater understanding of community needs.
- Cadet Program for students studying law enforcement.
- Explorer Program for teens interested in learning more about policing profession.
- Revised hiring process focused on character-based hiring.

### IN PROGRESS ACTIONS

- Integrating sanctity of life concepts directly into scenario-based training.
- Sanctity of life rendering of first aid after use of force.
- Require officer training on how to recognize and interact/respond to people with autism spectrum disorder.



## Pillar Five: Training and Education, Recruiting and Hiring

### COMMITTED ACTIONS

- Advocate for uniform standards for police training and education on a statewide level.
- Training from medical personnel on recognizing when people may be experiencing a medical emergency.



## Pillar Six: Officer Wellness & Safety

### CURRENT ACTIONS

- Minimum of one mental health check-in with a licensed therapist annually.
- Partnering with local medical organizations to provide functional fitness training.
- Fitness facility located at the North Station.
- Critical incident stress de-briefings.
- Tactical training workouts with trainers from Olmsted Medical Center — Sports Medicine and Athletic Performance.
- Chaplain support from [Salt & Light Partners](#).
- FROGs: Family Resource and Outreach Group to provide support to officers as well as their loved ones.
- Wellness newsletter shared with department regularly.



We may wear the badge, but we police with the heart. Like you, we are parents, siblings, friends, neighbors and volunteers. Like you, we care deeply about our community, which is why we always strive to do better.

Police Chief Jim Franklin

A Blueprint for Re-envisioning Rochester Police Department reflects our dedication to continuous improvement. Simply put, it provides a clear picture of our department, where we are and where are going. With this as our guide, we aspire to move forward in partnership with our community.



## SOURCES

**A Blueprint for Re-envisioning Policing** is derived from a variety of sources including data collection and analysis of national best practices and standards.

Sources include:

- ◆ 2015 [President's Task Force on 21<sup>st</sup> Century Policing](#)
- ◆ 2020 US Conference of Mayors [Report on Police Reform and Racial Justice](#)
- ◆ The five organizational management pillars of law enforcement – Gordon Graham
- ◆ [Sir Robert Peel's Policing Principles](#)
- ◆ Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) [Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics](#) (ICAT)
- ◆ [MN POST Board Standards and Training](#)
- ◆ Input from community forums and listening sessions
- ◆ One-on-one conversations with community members

