

Aurora Police Department Community Relations Section

2023 - 2024

Strategic Plan





Our Plan



This strategic plan is a product of the Aurora Police Department's Community Relations Section (CRS) and is supported by the Office of the Chief of Police. It will be used to guide the 2023-2024 community outreach efforts of the department with the goal of:

- Building trust through improved communication, direct community outreach, and youth programming
- Fostering new relationships with community members as well as partnerships with businesses, places of worship, and local organizations to increase neighborhood safety
- Providing educational engagement opportunities to connect community members with officers that serve their neighborhoods

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Vision, Values, and Goals

Aurora Police Department is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, and vibrant community through programming that enhances police-community relations through education, partnership, and outreach efforts. CRS embraces values that build trust and legitimacy.



Respect

- We respect the cultures and histories of the neighborhoods and communities we work in.
- We treat all people equally and with dignity, without regard to actual or perceived race, color, ethnicity, national origin, age, religion, gender identify, or expression, sexual orientation, people with disabilities, socioeconomic status, or any other trait.

Partnership

- We proactively nurture relationships with and empower Aurora community members to take an active role in public safety and find solutions to local issues.

Honesty and Transparency

- We foster honest and transparent communication with the communities we serve.

Responsibilities and Accountability

- We take responsibility for our actions and hold ourselves accountable.

Goal Overview



Goal 1: Problem Solving

Increase safety through collaborative working partnerships between APD, community members, and organizations to identify and address local topics of concern.

Goal 2: Communication

Honest, transparent, and empathetic dialogue to build and sustain authentic and meaningful communication to ensure all parts of the community are represented, particularly those with differing viewpoints or underrepresented voices.

Goal 3: Relationship Building

Build strong, trusting, and respectful relationships between community members, and internal stakeholders to better connect APD leadership and officers with the community they serve. Support and amplify city youth outreach initiatives.

Goal 4: Education

Create and support internal and external educational programming that improves trust and facilitates positive engagement and resiliency between the Department and the community.

Goal 1:

Problem Solving



OBJECTIVE: Aurora Police Department is committed to promoting a safe, healthy, and vibrant community through programming that enhances police-community relations through education, partnership, and outreach efforts. CRS embraces values that build trust and legitimacy.

Planned activities to achieve objective:

District Commander Forums

Monthly meetings will be hosted by district command staff to engage with neighborhood communities, provide crime updates, and distribute free safety resources. A monthly report will be provided to District command staff for distribution to officers to raise awareness of neighborhood concerns.

Community Academy

CRS will create traditional and non-traditional classes to maximize engagement and education within the community. We will work with groups that support communities of color, immigrants, and refugees to facilitate a series that discusses community members' rights, what to expect when contacted by a police officer, and how to access police resources. Post-academy feedback will be gathered from participants to ensure the curriculum is educational and meaningful.

Collaborative Partnerships

AURORA PUBLIC SCHOOLS & CHERRY CREEK SCHOOL DISTRICTS

With more than 93,000 K-12 students in Aurora, partnership with both school districts is vital in building trust with youth and parents while also increasing community safety. We will work with the School Resource Officer Unit and the city's Youth Violence Prevention staff to amplify youth outreach efforts. CRS will provide as-needed updates to the Chief's Office.

PUBLIC SAFETY EVENTS

In collaboration with the Police Area Representatives (PAR) and Crisis Response Teams (CRT), we will plan events that inform the community on mental health resources, youth programming, and crime prevention measures to provide positive non-enforcement and collaborative engagement with officers.

A-TEAM (VOLUNTEER PROGRAM)

CRS welcomed volunteers back in 2022 in a limited capacity as COVID restrictions eased. A-Team volunteers currently support a wide-range of needs to include Special Victims Unit, Crime Analysis, Training Center, and Community Relations. In 2023, CRS will onboard a Volunteer Coordinator to officially relaunch APD's volunteer program with updated SOPs and formalized recognition. We will seek to increase volunteer participation throughout APD. Volunteer training opportunities will also be introduced, providing volunteers with increased knowledge, best practices, and new tools to be more effective in their roles.



Goal 2:

Communication

OBJECTIVE 1: Respond to requests for information and engagement opportunities in a timely and transparent manner.

Planned activities to achieve objective:

Strategic allocation of resources

Event participation will be focused on relationship-building, not transactional, opportunities for sworn personnel and the community. Financial resources will be allocated to maximize agency impact. If unable to support a request, CRS will facilitate alternative opportunities to support or engage with the requester. Weekly meetings with the Chief of Staff, Program Manager and Commanding Officer will provide an opportunity to assess requests and determine feasibility.

Community Partner List

CRS will maintain and share a community partner list to include schools, nonprofit organizations, places of worship, and businesses to provide accurate and timely Department information to community stakeholders. CRS will work in partnership with the Public Information Office (PIO) to coordinate distribution of public facing updates in addition to CRS communication, event information.

OBJECTIVE 2: Effectively communicate with our community about agency initiatives to create understanding of policing and public safety issues within Aurora.

Planned activities to achieve objective:

Second Language Program

We enhance customer service and create a more inclusive culture by improving the agency's ability to engage and communicate with non-English speaking community members, business owners, and visitors. With support from the Chief and city management, CRS will formalize a policy that includes financial incentives to encourage and recognize employees fluent in a second language.

Collaboration with Public Information Office (PIO)

Weekly media strategy meetings to identify and promote upcoming events and outreach efforts; increased communication with PIO will help to tell the agency's story through a different lens – one that helps to put the person (officers) first, not their badge.

Goal 3:

Relationship Building

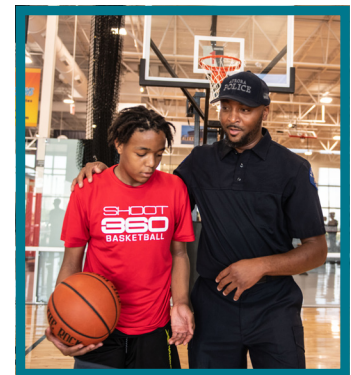


OBJECTIVE: Increase officer presence and proactive, positive engagement with community members within and outside of calls for service.

Planned activities to achieve objective:

Community Events & Cultural Celebrations

CRS will participate in community events and cultural celebrations to distribute resources and provide opportunities for officers to build relationships with community members and youth. Examples may include Aurora Youth Night, Juneteenth, Día de Los Muertos, July 4 Spectacular, and National Faith & Blue Weekend. CRS will partner with the City of Aurora Youth Violence Prevention Program, Office of DEI, & Community Engagement Division to leverage resources, supplement staffing, and reduce duplication of services.



Summer Youth Programming

In 2022, officers engaged with more than 10,000 Aurora youth via the FIVE-0 Gaming Trailer, summer camps, movie nights, and sports leagues. Creating positive opportunities for youth to engage with officers helps lay the groundwork for improved relationships and trust. Feedback from youth and parents highlights the need for ongoing and increased engagement. Along with agency units and local nonprofits, CRS will create or support programming that provides youth with a unique opportunity to engage directly with officers in nontraditional spaces.

Community Police Academy & Alumni Association

APD's Community Police Academy has been inactive since 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the Alumni Association dissolved over the course of the pandemic. Both the Academy and the Association provide community members with a wide range of hands-on learning opportunities related to administration, field work, unit support. In return, it creates Department advocacy within the community. CRS will relaunch Community Police Academy in April 2023. CRS will advocate for the relaunch of the Alumni Association to provide the agency with a pool of well-trained volunteers who can assist with various educational programming to include Global Teen Academy and Community Police Academy.

Explorer Post 2024

APD's Explorer program continues to provide one-of-a-kind training and learning opportunities for youth, 14 – 19, interested in a career in law enforcement. Explorers receive training in personal safety, crime scene investigations, ethics, traffic stops and more. While enrollment in the Explorer programs remains diverse, particularly among young females, CRS will seek to increase participation by underrepresented communities and remove barriers to participation. There will be an increased focus on recruiting youth and amplifying the efforts of the Explorer program through working with the PIO.

Aging Adult Outreach

CRS will provide targeted outreach to Aurora's aging adult community to include scam/fraud workshops, senior center visits/engagement opportunities, and programming aimed at increasing personal and home safety.

Collaborative work with Police Area Representatives (PAR)

CRS will work in collaboration with the agency's Police Area Representatives to identify opportunities to provide strategic crime prevention and police outreach to neighborhoods, maximize resources, and reduce duplication of services.



Internal Relationship Building

CRS seeks to build a culture of community engagement within the Department. In 2023, team member engagement directly with officers will include: monthly ridealongs, attending district briefings and trainings, and fostering new relationships between community partners and officers.

City of Aurora, Office of Immigrant and International Affairs (OIIA)

CRS will work alongside OIIA to build authentic relationships among the city's immigrant and international community members. CRS will seek out the input of these communities to determine what public safety needs exist and how to best fulfill these needs. Targeted outreach may include special events, leadership round tables, community members town halls, and translation of the agency's public facing materials in a second language such as Spanish.

Faith Leader Academy

As part of CRS' yearly National Faith & Blue Weekend, the unit will host its first-ever, two-day Faith Leader Academy. Twenty-five faith leaders from throughout the Aurora community, representing various beliefs, will experience training and classroom instruction to gain a better understanding of the police profession and the agency. Faith leaders will also have an opportunity to complete a ride-along experience with patrol officers. Providing faith leaders with an opportunity to learn firsthand what officers experience – both on patrol and in training environments – will increase partnership, open communication, and allows faith leaders to better understand department policies and practices while also meeting officers in their community.



Goal 4:

Education

OBJECTIVE: Create an informed community and empower officers to engage in a non-enforcement capacity with the community we serve.

Planned activities to achieve objective:

Divisional Training

CRS will attend and present at divisional trainings to provide leadership and officers with an overview of CRS' mission, vision, and goals, how the unit work is accomplished via partnership and collaboration, receive feedback on how to improve engagement with the community to promote relational policing.

Basic and Lateral Police Academy

CRS will be incorporated into the police academies to create the expectation of community engagement from the onset of joining the Aurora Police Department. CRS will work with academy leadership to participate in existing curriculum and the modification of new training. CRS will create opportunities for cadets and officers in field training to attend community events during these phases.

Aurora Police Department FYI Toolkit

CRS will develop an APD FYI Toolkit that educates the public on laws, policies, rights, and police engagement. The toolkit will be translated into the top 10 languages in Aurora, with APD information, resources, and safety prevention tips. CRS will work in partnership with the Office of Immigrant and International Affairs & Housing and Community Services to include additional city resources helpful to new community members.

Community Conversations

CRS will plan meetings with community members and officers in a safe, non enforcement spaces. CRS ensure officers are prepared and that the conversations are appropriately moderated. There will be an emphasis on outreach to underrepresented voices. Hosts may include places of worship, multi-family housing communities, and schools. Monthly report shared with Chief's Office regarding reoccurring themes, concerns, and emerging community trends.

Community Relations Section

Org Chart – 2023



