



**Community Forum – April 28, 2022**  
**Questions from Criminal Justice session**

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**Does the police have any intentions to share some of its budgets with programs that need it more?** Yes. FCPS has provided funding to support additional staffing at Outreach Fort Collins, a non-profit service provider that works with people experiencing homelessness in our community. As a result, FCPS is able to transfer some calls for service about non-criminal disruptive behaviors to the Outreach Fort Collins team instead of sending a police officer. More information about Outreach Fort Collins can be found here: <https://outreachfortcollins.org/> Additionally, FCPS funds were allocated for the Housing Coordinator, to assist the municipal court's Restorative Justice program, and to support wages in the Sustainability Team.

**How can an officer use the Vitals App if they get a call about a person whose name isn't reported when someone calls 911?** If a person is carrying a Vitals beacon, officers will get a push notification on their phone when they come within 80 feet of the person. The notification will share the person's Vitals profile. More information can be found here: <https://thevitalsapp.com/fort-collins-police-services/>

**How can citizens best support FCPD in increasing resources for mental health, homelessness, to appropriate folk?** We are fortunate to live in a community that values public safety and supports initiatives around mental health and homelessness through the city's Budgeting for Outcomes process. There are opportunities for community members to engage throughout the budget process. More information can be found here: <https://www.fcgov.com/citymanager/budget.php>

**In regards to criminal justice, what are the top issues the city is working to fix?** FCPS has been innovating, improving, and investing in programs to address the complex intersection of mental health, substance use, and criminal justice. Examples include the co-response program which evolved into a full Mental Health Response Team in partnership with UHealth. Details can be found on our website at: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/mental-health>

**Is there any student arrest data included in this data provided in the packets?** Data related to Poudre School District student interactions can be found on our School Resource Officer webpage under the Reporting section: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/school-resource-officers>

College student information isn't captured uniquely in our reporting system. However, we do work closely with the Student Resolution Center at CSU, and they may be able to provide insight about the law enforcement interactions and outcomes related to their student population: <https://resolutioncenter.colostate.edu/>

**Now the budget is finalized, how do we work towards the goals?** The City's Budgeting for Outcomes process results in a detailed budget with actionable goals associated with funding. More information can be found at <https://www.fcgov.com/citymanager/budget.php> FCPS and the other city service areas have ongoing Strategy MAP discussions where leaders report to the city's executive leadership team on program/initiative progress and efficacy.

**On the infographic, why are white and Hispanic demographics grouped together?**

Hispanic is an ethnicity, not a race, as defined by the U.S. Census.

**How do you see us moving from conversation to action? Are we actually following through with the actions we are discussing?**

Yes. We value ongoing dialogue with our community, but we also want to see action beyond the conversation. Examples include the ongoing expansion of our Mental Health Response Team, dedicated police funding (that goes to Outreach Fort Collins, a housing coordinator, and restorative justice), proactive communication around issues of community concern, internal accountability systems and external oversight through the Citizen Review Board, and visibility on our policies, training, and data through the Transparency page.

**Are we addressing criminal justice as a systemic issue or a local one?** The City of Fort Collins, as an organization, has created an intentional focus on addressing systemic challenges that affect our community members. FCPS engages in these discussions and works to align our policies, practices, and programs to improve outcomes for all impacted. Examples include partnering with local service providers and justice system professionals to build and support programs like Adult Diversion, Wellness Court, and other avenues that facilitate long-term success. We share our practices and findings at the regional, state, and national level in the hopes that we can help pave the larger path for a system that's more inclusive and equitable. The City of Fort Collins is also an active member of the Government Alliance on Race and Equity (GARE) and FCPS employees participate in annual GARE training.

**How do officers feel about body cameras?** Officers support the use of body cameras as this technology provides accountability for all and a clearer picture of their interactions within the community. FCPS was an early adopter of body cameras and began using them in our District 1 (downtown) unit in 2012, long before they were required by law or even considered in many law enforcement agencies. By 2018, all uniformed FCPS officers were equipped with body cameras. As of 2022, all routinely non-uniformed officers (i.e. detectives, administrative positions) have also been issued body cameras. For details about our program policy and history, visit our Transparency page and click on the *Body Worn Camera* section:

<https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**What do the police do when they are working with a person who only speaks Spanish? Is there a Spanish line that Spanish speaking residents can call that aren't emergencies?**

We have several officers who can speak Spanish and, when they're working and available, respond to calls with Spanish speakers. FCPS also uses Voiance language services, which provides real-time telephone interpretation in over 200 languages. Dispatchers and officers use this program to make sure community members get the help they need in any situation.

The Larimer Emergency Telephone Authority (LETA) also recently began supporting the Reachwell app, which allows community members to receive emergency notifications on their phone in the language of their choice. Community members can download the Reachwell app, accept push notifications, select their preferred language, and add NOCO Alert (LETA911) to opt in to Larimer County Notifications.

**Are school officers focused on teaching and supporting healthy learning or on disciplining?** SROs fulfill three roles as a part of their job: Teaching, Informal Counseling, and Law Enforcement. They teach, counsel, and enforce around issues related to internet safety, drug/alcohol awareness, Safe2Tell, restorative justice, welfare checks, child abuse, response to school violence training, assessing student threat/risk behavior, providing victim

assistance/referrals, and conducting facility assessments/safety recommendations.

School Resource Officers also help coordinate wrap-around services such as SAVA/DHS, CAYAK/SummitStone, Center for Family Outreach, Juvenile Recovery Court, Mediation, Deferments, and the Juvenile Justice System. Our local system aims to provide justice-involved youth with resources and services that support a healthy future.

**Have you had much pressure from 'defund the police' folks?** Like many other communities, Fort Collins engaged in discussions as the 'defund the police' movement gained momentum in 2020. We had, and continue to have, healthy, open dialogue about the role of law enforcement and the best use of community resources. As an agency, we are well-funded and supported by our residents and City Council.

**Can we bring back active neighborhood watches?** Our Neighborhood Engagement Team (NET) can help groups interested in setting up a neighborhood watch program. Resources are also available on our website at <https://www.fcgov.com/police/neighborhood-watch.php>

**How do we bridge the gap between officers and the community? How can a citizen get involved with the police department?** We have many opportunities for community members to get involved and develop meaningful connections with officers:

Community Police Academy – an in-depth program that brings people behind the scenes each fall to learn about FCPS policies, practices, and operations. More information: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/community-academy>

Youth Police Academy – a weeklong experiential program for teens interested in learning about law enforcement. This takes place each summer. More information is available through School Resource Officers or school counselors.

Ride-Along/Sit-Along Program – Spend a few hours with an officer or dispatcher to get a firsthand perspective of policing and public safety in Fort Collins. More information: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/ride-along.php>

Victim Services Volunteers – our Victim Services Unit has a team of volunteers who receive training to offer emotional support and crisis intervention to crime victims and families. More information: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/victims-assistance.php>

Explorer program – volunteer opportunity for people aged 15-20 to learn about law enforcement, assist officers, and gain hands-on experience. More information: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/explorers.php>

Reserve Community Service Officer program – volunteer opportunity for people aged 21+ to assist officers, conduct traffic control, crime scene security, and more. More information: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/auxiliary.php>

**Is there a task force on homelessness?** There is not a formalized task force. However, several City service areas, including Fort Collins Police Services, Social Sustainability, Parks, Natural Areas, and others, partner with local homeless service providers to address challenges and meet the needs of our community.

**What are you doing for Transparency about follow-up of very public events such as when the lady was slammed to the ground?** Over the last several years, FCPS and Chief Swoboda have increased transparency by openly addressing and discussing incidents via social media and in person, releasing body camera footage when appropriate, and providing timely updates as new information becomes available.

**How do we ensure true equity in the hiring process? How can the police department structure and be more inclusive of the recruitment process? Do we understand all the barriers in that process?** We have a diverse recruitment team that administers an open and inclusive application, testing, and hiring program. Unit members travel around the country to recruit new members from a wide variety of communities and locations. Additionally, we continually seek in-roads with segments of our population, and those in other areas, by partnering with members. We welcome partnerships to reach the best candidates.

**Is diversity training being done and by who?** Yes, we have a *Core Character* program with many facets. We've directly invested in diversity training and implicit bias education for over 20 years. Details can be found on our Transparency page under *Anti-Bias Training & Expectations*: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**How does Fort Collins data compare to other cities/communities?** FCPS is part of a benchmark cities group that compares a variety of programs and statistics among 29 other cities of similar demographics. The most recent Benchmark Cities report can be found online at <https://www.opkansas.org/city-services/police-fire-safety/police-special-services/benchmark-cities-survey/>

**What are you doing to be transparent about complaints about specific officers? Can you make the individual complaints public?** We currently include a breakdown of complaints on our Transparency page under the *Conduct + Complaints* section: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>. Our Professional Standards Unit has also been working on ways to provide even more visibility into our accountability systems.

**What is your training pertaining to use of force during arrests, and how does the data you've collected influence that?** Extensive information about training and data can be found on our Transparency page under the *De-Escalation & Response to Resistance* section: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**What is the amount of training the police force is getting (re: diversity, equity, inclusion, justice)? What type of training are officers receiving prior to entering different communities?** Through our *Core Character* program, FCPS officers receive extensive and well-rounded training that exceeds state requirements. More information can be found on our Transparency page under the *Training* section: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**When you have an officer shortage, how do you hold high standards for new hires so you don't hire folks who will be violent or discriminate against community members?** FCPS has high standards for hiring and uses a rigorous process to ensure that qualified candidates with high integrity join our agency. The officer hiring process takes approximately 6 months to complete. We do not lower our standards to meet staffing levels. We believe investing heavily in the hiring process is a necessity to meet the standards of our agency and community expectations. More information about our hiring process can be found on our Transparency page under the *Hiring Process & Standards* section: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**Why is number of people of color arrested disproportionate to the city demographics? (as a city with a white majority).** The Equity Indicators Report provided us with a high-level insight that has helped direct additional analysis and improvement that's effective, not simply checking a box. We know that City of Fort Collins is a destination for students, workers, and recreational visitors. While the population demographic percentage in these tables is based upon U.S. census groups, we recognize that police services and interactions extend to all who are in our city, including those who may only be here for part of their week, the workday, or an evening. With over 1.2 million visitors annually and a daily worker influx of 12,500 above those leaving to work elsewhere, the temporary demographics of the city change and therefore may affect perceptions of this data. Knowing this, our crime analysts are working to better understand who we're contacting, why we're contacting them, and whether they're residents or visitors.

**Where is the city of Fort Collins at implementing RIPA (Racial and Identity Profiling Act)?** While RIPA is California legislation, FCPS does have processes and programs in place to prevent racial profiling behaviors, including rigorous hiring standards, implicit bias training, formal policies, as well as internal and external accountability systems. More information can be found on our Transparency page: <https://www.fcgov.com/police/transparency>

**What are they aiming for using equity instead of equality? How is that being implemented? What is one example of a data point dealing with equity, and what are you doing with this data?** Instead of simply providing the same resource to everyone, equity identifies disparities and removes barriers that may inhibit success among particular groups. One data point is the demographics of sworn officers at FCPS. The agency's Personnel and Training Unit has made an effort to recruit more racial and gender minorities by seeking out opportunities to connect with underrepresented populations at job fairs and through advertising that resonates with these groups.

**How are we trying invite the impacted communities into the conversation?** Chief Swoboda launched a Community Advisory Committee in 2021 that includes a diverse group of individuals who represent various populations within our community. The agency has also planned events and outreach in partnership with impacted group leaders to engage in meaningful discussion that's co-lead by representatives from the group.

**What collaboration efforts are happening between the CSU police and the city police? Are the policies and procedures the same?** FCPS works in partnership with CSU Police but do not have the exact same policies. We do collaborate frequently with CSU and CSUPD to ensure that we're serving the needs of students consistently and effectively.

**What is the city doing to make sure that the reporting of criminal activity is equally reported for women as for men? (Spanish)** We have policy that dictates we treat all victims fairly and justly. Reporting can be particularly tough for victims of crimes like domestic violence and sexual assault, and this can be further exacerbated by cultural norms that discourage reporting. We work with and refer people to organizations like the SAVA Center and Crossroads Safehouse that can provide support services for individuals who may not be ready to report to police.

**What kind of impact did the George Floyd event have locally?** The murder of George Floyd sparked many uncomfortable but important conversations within our community. We saw a number of protests in our city in the summer of 2020, and the vast majority were peaceful and non-destructive expressions of first amendment rights. George Floyd's death raised a lot of

questions and concerns from our community about police operations here in Fort Collins, which prompted us to create easier avenues to access our policies, practices, and operational data. The Transparency page is one example, and we welcome any opportunity to engage in community dialogue about these issues or anything of community concern.

**How has this new approach (communication & openness) seen differences for those in underserved communities? Particularly the youth within them.** We've continued to see positive results from engaging community members in ways that are meaningful and mindful of the specific group's concerns/needs. We are always willing to host people at FCPS or attend community gatherings in places where people feel most comfortable.

**Can we expand restorative justice programs?** FCPS supports the Fort Collins restorative justice program, including through a recent funding injection and by directly participating in the RESTORE program. Officers have also supported the development of an "impact of crime panel" through the Larimer County Juvenile Gun Safety Coalition, which connects justice-involved youth with individuals who have been impacted by gun violence.