

ST. PAUL POLICE

Trusted service with respect



21st Century
Vision for the
Saint Paul Police
Department





Photo by Dawn Brandt

Dear Friends,

There are moments when police officers must make difficult decisions—decisions that affect people in profound ways.

Some are split-second decisions, others provide opportunities to take a longer view about how officers' actions can improve the lives, neighborhoods and city in which they work.

The Saint Paul Police Department is a great agency—and now we have made the conscious decision to become even better.

We have started our work to better align our policies, procedures and practices with those laid out in the “President’s 21st Century Policing Report,” which was commissioned by President Obama to identify proven strategies to strengthen community policing and trust among police officers and the people they serve.

While I am happy to report that the Saint Paul Police Department already achieves a vast majority of the recommendations included in the report, I am determined and committed to doing even better.

Trust and transparency. Engagement and empowerment. Partnership and community policing. These are the guiding principles that will lead us into the future.

We are not simply the police department, we are your police department—and we can only meet your needs if we are consistently evaluating our performance, working to improve at every level and creating opportunities for you to join our efforts to ensure that Saint Paul remains the most livable city in America.

This report outlines my 21st century vision for our department and the steps we will take to strengthen our position as a national model of excellence. I hope you will join us in making an already great organization even better.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Todd Axtell".

Todd Axtell
Chief of Police
Saint Paul Police Department

The President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing

Trust. It’s critical to the stability of our city, the safety of the people we serve and protect, and the criminal justice system. In 2014, President Barack Obama brought together a task force to identify best practices and recommendations for how police departments can promote effective crime reduction while building trust.

The task force developed recommendations, each with action items around six main “pillars.” The recommendations are widely lauded as the gold standard of policing for the 21st century.

With a strong foundation of transparency, trust and service with respect, the Saint Paul Police Department will use these pillars to build an even better department—a model police department for the 21st century. The time for change is now. You have spoken, and we have listened. We’re going to do things differently, because at the end of every day, we all want the same thing: a safe city where all can thrive.





1 Pillar One: Building Trust and Legitimacy

The Saint Paul Police Department delivers trusted service with respect—every day, without exception—through proactive problem-solving, community outreach and collaboration with residents and community groups.

2 Pillar Two: Policy and Oversight

The Saint Paul Police Department actively engages the community to develop policies and oversights to ensure that officers are safe, receiving proper resources and held accountable to the highest standards.

3 Pillar Three: Technology & Social Media

The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to using the latest technology, including body cameras and social media, to be transparent, provide exceptional service and communicate accurate, timely information about issues related to public safety and the department's activities.

4 Pillar Four: Community Policing and Crime Reduction

Community policing is part of the Saint Paul Police Department's DNA, and officers partner with residents, businesses and organizations every day to reduce crime, build trust and build a better future for the city.

5 Pillar Five: Training and Education

The Saint Paul Police Department has a robust training program focused on officer safety, service with respect and best practices around de-escalation, crisis intervention, implicit bias and developing leadership skills.

6 Pillar Six: Officer Wellness and Safety

The Saint Paul Police Department understands that officers who have exceptional training, skills, knowledge, resources and support are better prepared to keep our community and each other safe.

Learn more about how we are working to use the pillars to build an even better department at stpaul.gov/police.



“Violent crime is substantially lower today than it was 10 years ago ... and that’s not an accident. That’s in part because police departments around the country have gotten really smart about preventing crime and are working with communities in all kinds of smart ways.

And we can build on that progress, but it’s going to require us trying to figure out how we can work together to ensure that our police departments and our communities are aligned in what we all want.”

– President Barack Obama

More than the police department ... your police department

Building trust and legitimacy

Sometimes being an effective police officer isn't about making arrests. It's about getting out of the squad car, shaking hands and sharing smiles, ideas and meals. It's about building trust and empowering the people we serve to prevent crime.

The Saint Paul Police Department has a long, rich history of not just reaching out to our community, but being part of it. We do this through youth police academies, our Police Activities League, hosting Safe Summer Nights community cookouts every Thursday throughout the summer and dozens of other programs.

And we're going to do more.

We recently created the Community Engagement Unit, which focuses on finding even more ways for police officers to build meaningful connections with the people they serve and protect. We're going to galvanize our current partnerships and create new ones. We're going to work harder than ever to keep kids in school and out of the criminal

justice system. We're going to empower our community members to keep themselves safe, prevent crime and help us hold criminals accountable.

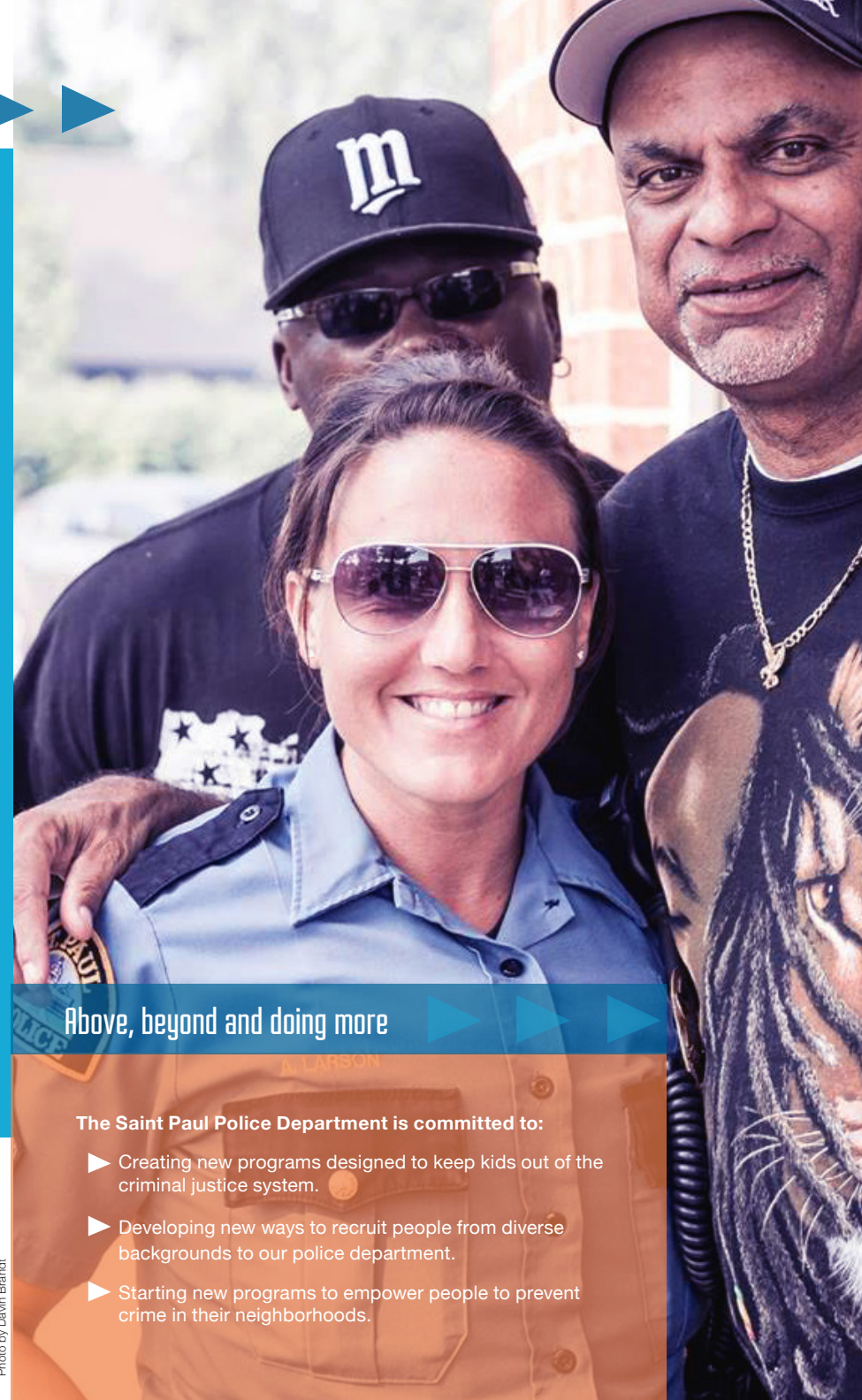
Our goal is to significantly increase the number of positive contacts between police officers and community members every year.

Officers will be even more proactive about checking in on businesses large and small, attending community meetings, getting out of their squad cars and into the neighborhoods we patrol.

We'll hold ourselves accountable for being approachable, accessible and engaged. And when we reach our goal, we'll be better positioned to identify young people who need assistance staying away from gang and gun violence. We'll connect with even more people who might want to someday become police officers. And we'll build trust and legitimacy.

"I am a big believer in making regular deposits into the bank of trust through positive community-police interaction, so when controversies arise, residents will have faith in their police department, its leaders and the actions we take to keep our city safe."

– Chief Todd Axtell



Above, beyond and doing more

The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Creating new programs designed to keep kids out of the criminal justice system.
- ▶ Developing new ways to recruit people from diverse backgrounds to our police department.
- ▶ Starting new programs to empower people to prevent crime in their neighborhoods.

Dedicated to diversity

We can do better.

This simple statement has the power to drive innovation. And it drives our efforts to diversify the police department.

Saint Paul is among the most diverse cities in Minnesota. The people who live, work and play in Saint Paul come from an array of backgrounds and cultures. The languages they speak, the way they view the world and their personal experiences create a rich tapestry that makes Saint Paul such a beautiful place.

It also means we, as the city's police department, need to be culturally competent, respectful of different perspectives and able to effectively work with everyone we serve.

That's why we strive to recruit officers from a variety of backgrounds, those who are fluent in the languages spoken in our community and those who truly understand and value diversity.

Above, beyond and doing more

The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Exceeding state requirements and federal recommendations by training every officer in crisis intervention.
- ▶ Doing the right thing by training every employee—sworn and civilian—on recognizing implicit bias.
- ▶ Being more accessible and transparent by increasing access to our department through translation services.
- ▶ Ensuring that our culture values and supports diversity.



And we're committed to doing better.

Over the next three years, we will recruit and support the training of 100 future law enforcement officers. We'll explore a partnership with local colleges to make it easier for people from diverse backgrounds achieve their dreams of becoming police officers in the capital city.

Of course, diversity isn't exclusively about race. It's about appreciating differences in gender, age, national origin, physical abilities, sexual orientation, education, religion, socioeconomics and more.

We will work to be more inclusive, understanding and better prepared at every level of the department to serve everyone.

We will build on our current culture, which is mindful of and dedicated to diversity in its many forms.

Saint Paul—where all voices can be heard



Community policing and crime reduction

Change does not happen without energy. That's why the Saint Paul Police Department works tirelessly to ensure that all voices can be heard in our capital city.

Our officers are committed to ensuring that victims of crimes have a voice and helping them get justice. That's why officers actively listen to victims, tenaciously investigate crimes and connect those in need with the people and organizations in our community that can provide comfort and support.

By giving victims a voice—by sympathizing with their experiences—we gain deeper insight into gaps in our responses, services for crime victims and the safety measures that could be put in place to prevent and reduce crime in the future.

That's how we affect change, and we're working with those who wish to do the same.

As the seat of state government, engaged and energetic people come to Saint Paul from across the state and country to make their voices heard. They gather in our city to demonstrate, protest and exercise their First Amendment rights, and the Saint Paul Police Department helps them do so safely, lawfully and effectively.

Our goal is always to strike the right balance between facilitating free speech and ensuring public safety. That's why we have created a unit focused on ensuring our officers are highly trained, highly skilled and applying evidence-based practices while protecting the constitutional rights of demonstrators as well as the safety of citizens and their fellow police officers.





Above, beyond and doing more

The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Becoming the best department in the state with a team of experts dedicated to helping you make your voices heard through demonstrations and protests.
- ▶ Training officers in best practices for protecting free speech.
- ▶ Listening to our community and providing more ways for all to share their questions, concerns, ideas and energy.



Our kids, our future



Training and education

It has been said that children are one-third of our population and 100 percent of our future. Saint Paul has no greater resource than its children, and that's why the Saint Paul Police Department works so hard to keep them engaged in positive activities and out of harm's way.

It's what our officers are expected to do, and it's what they do instinctively.

It's stopping by the park for a game of hoops. It's teaching swimming lessons to girls who have never been in a pool before. It's providing advice when it's most needed. It's taking a kid fishing and delivering gifts to children in the hospital. It's handshakes, high-fives and hugs. It's being a positive presence in the schools.

We've had school resource officers working in Saint Paul's public schools for decades. Their primary focus is maintaining safe and secure educational environments, and they excel in this area. Our officers don't want to arrest kids; they want to help find new ways for kids to create brighter futures for themselves.

This year, we've committed to expanding the role of our school resource officers. We want them to keep our schools free of crime and safe from danger, and we want them to serve as mentors, advocates for students who need support and even teachers so that children can grow up understanding how and why police officers do their job—and why it's so important that we all work together to keep our city safe.

We all want our children to have safe, secure environments in which to learn. So this year we've made some changes in the way our school resource officers do their jobs.





There is no greater resource than our children. That's why we protect them, care for them and help provide structure. It's at the core of everything we do.



Above, beyond and doing more

The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Meeting with students, teachers and staff on a monthly basis to share ideas, concerns and information about how we can maintain safe and secure learning environments.
- ▶ Teaching "Police and Community" in the high schools.
- ▶ Aligning the police department behind school initiatives designed to help all students succeed.



Holding ourselves to higher standards



Policy and oversight | Building trust and legitimacy | Community policing and crime reduction

It's common for police departments to use crime statistics to measure their success. We do that here in Saint Paul. After all, nobody wants to live, work and play in a city with high crime rates.

But we're going to hold ourselves to even higher standards.

From now on, we're going to measure our success by both our ability to respond to and deter crime and our ability to deliver trusted service with respect.

When our officers respond to calls for service or engage in proactive police activity, they'll provide the people they meet with a number of ways in which people who receive our services can provide feedback on their experiences.

We will focus on measuring the professionalism, respectfulness and the overall level of service our

officers provide. We'll post the aggregated results we receive online for our community to see. We'll use the data to begin conversations with community members, officers and other stakeholders to ensure we're measuring up to our expectations as well as the expectations of those we serve.

It's about transparency. It's about aligning our department with community values. And it's about holding ourselves to higher standards.

We know some people won't always agree with what we have to do or the decisions we make, but we want to be sure that we are always delivering trusted service with respect.

It's the Saint Paul way.

"I will always support our officers as long as their actions are reasonable, necessary and done with respect."

– Chief Todd Axtell



Above, beyond and doing more



The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Putting our community first by considering the impact of every planned police operation on our community.
- ▶ Changing our policies to better reflect the needs of our community.
- ▶ Finding funding that allows us to study 21st century policing techniques, crime trends and how we can better respond to calls that can lead to officers using force, such as calls involving emotionally distressed individuals.



Protecting the guardians

Officer health and safety | Policy and oversight | Technology and social media

The Saint Paul Police Department Policy Manual is a robust document that covers everything from use of force to training to equipment to deployment. The document is 469 pages, posted online and incredibly detailed.

It's also a living document.

We hear from people on social media all the time who have questions, concerns and ideas about making the police department better. We're listening. And we want to keep the conversations going.

So starting this year, the Saint Paul Police Department will partner with our community to conduct a thorough review of its policy manual to ensure that it is consistent with our mission to deliver trusted service with respect—with no exceptions.

Our goal is to have policies that give officers the tools, resources and support they need to serve our community. When the department delivers clear policies, exceptional training, the best equipment and

the right deployment strategies, our officers are better prepared to succeed.

It's easy for some to forget that officers are people with families, outside lives and everyday pressures. They need regular work schedules, training opportunities and the support of the department and their community when they do their job the right way.

We want to provide officers with clear direction about expectations, practices and procedures. We also want to ensure that we are holding ourselves accountable to the highest possible standards; if something isn't right for our officers or our community, we want to fix it.

We want policies that allow officers to make the right decisions in difficult circumstances, set high standards and reflect the shared values of the community we serve. Our officers and our community deserve it.

Above, beyond and doing more



The Saint Paul Police Department is committed to:

- ▶ Re-evaluating deployment to ensure that officers are properly rested, prepared and safe while on duty.
- ▶ Investing in the best training available for every officer.
- ▶ Understanding that officers will make mistakes, holding ourselves accountable to the highest standards and identifying areas in which the department can provide enhanced training and clearer direction.

Join us. ▶▶▶

Saint Paul is a safer, healthier city when police officers and the people they serve work together. We want your energy, ideas, questions and concerns. We want to fight crime—together. We also know that not all challenges can be addressed by the police department, so we're asking you to join us.

Join us in making our vision for the 21st century Saint Paul Police Department a reality. We are committed to becoming a better police department—and being transparent about our progress. In 2017, we will publish our plan for the 21st century Saint Paul Police Department—along with a report card—online.

We have the vision—now we need you.

Ways to get involved:

Citizens Police Academy—Offers Saint Paul residents an in-depth look at their police department while gaining practical wisdom through classroom discussions, hands-on activities and opportunities to share ideas and ask questions.

Police-Civilian Internal Affairs Review Commission—Reviews complaints made against officers or the department and recommends appropriate action to the chief of police.

Community Meetings—Each of our three districts holds community meetings during which are discussed crime trends, safety concerns and ideas about how to keep all of Saint Paul's neighborhoods safe.

Safe Summer Nights—Free, public cookouts held every week, all summer long, in neighborhoods across Saint Paul offer community members opportunities to share meals, participate in fun activities and get to know one another.

National Night Out—Each year, hundreds of neighborhood block parties, cookouts and picnics offer the community a chance to get to know their neighbors and officers while sharing ideas to keep their community safe.

Explorers Program—Provides young adults ages 14-21 with hands-on experience, skills and opportunities to explore careers in law enforcement.

Police Activities League—Promotes youth engagement through a variety of after-school and summer recreational activities, including soccer, basketball, baseball, fishing and trips to the zoo, water parks and museums.

Volunteer Services—Offers the public opportunities to volunteer with the police department as chaplains, police reserves and members of the Saint Paul Police Band.

Learn more about these opportunities and more at stpaul.gov/police.

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367 Grove St.
Saint Paul, Minn. 55101

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The Most Livable
City in America