

2024
-
2025
Final

STRATEGIC PLAN



COLONIE POLICE DEPARTMENT
CHIEF JAMES J. GERACE

312 Wolf Road
Latham, New York 12110
518-783-2744





Chief's Message



The Colonie Police Department is home to a dynamic workforce, all of whom have sworn to protect and serve this great Town. Our members set the standard for continuous improvement. They are capable and consistent. Nobody does it better!

I am humbled to take command of this fantastic organization and lead our brave men and women as the eighth Chief of Police in Colonie's history.



Our officers truly stand on the shoulders of the giants that came before us. We have endeavored to honor our prior leaders by displaying their names and faces in the pages that follow. I pledge to continue their tradition of excellence as we make deposits in the "Colonie Bank of Community Trust" on our journey "Upstream" to solve community problems.

I owe a debt of gratitude to my predecessor, mentor, and friend, recently retired Chief of Police Michael D. Woods. He invested in my leadership development and his confidence in me never wavered. Thank you Mike; with this plan we are attempting to keep **moving the chains**.





I wish to express my sincere gratitude to Supervisor Peter Crummey and the entire Colonie Town Board for appointing me Chief of Police. This is a tremendous honor. Their support for Public Safety is second to none and it matters. Under Supervisor Crummey's leadership the Town of Colonie remains a beacon that signals to others what good government looks like.

Document's Purpose - *A blueprint for our future*

The Colonie Police Department has developed this plan for providing police service to the Town of Colonie in the forthcoming years. By managing the agency through planned, well defined activities, order and strategic direction are given to the entire organization.

This plan will continue to be an evolving and living document that is reviewed, updated and brought into line with the desires of our community.



James Gerace

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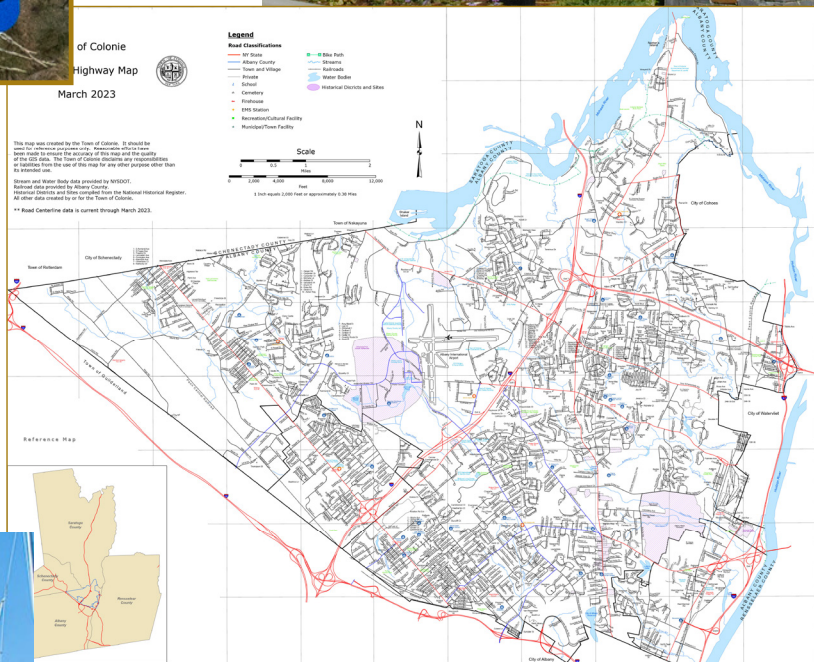


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Colonie Police Department Strategic Plan 2024 - 2025

Community Overview



Community Overview



The Town of Colonie is a large triangular suburb in New York's Capital Region that is nestled between the cities of Troy to the northeast, Schenectady at the western corner and the New York State capital, Albany at its southeastern corner. The Town is approximately 59 square miles and within its borders reside the incorporated Villages of Colonie and Menands as well as several hamlets.

The population of the Town is above 85,000. As commuters enter the Town for work and play, our population can swell to well over 100,000.

The Town of Colonie is host to the Albany International Airport, a major air center for Northeastern New York, Western New England and Southern Vermont.

Colonie is home to a number of parks including the Mohawk River Park and the Crossings of Colonie. Colonie is committed to revitalizing its park system and has recently adopted a Master Plan for comprehensive improvements to our 36-hole golf course.

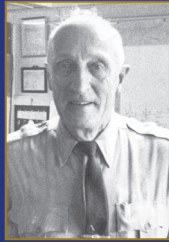
The Town is led by Supervisor Peter Crummey along with a six-member Town Board. Our Town government is seated at Memorial Town Hall in Newtonville. The Colonie Police Department is located at the Public Safety Center in Latham along with Colonie Emergency Medical Services and the Justice Court.





Organizational Overview

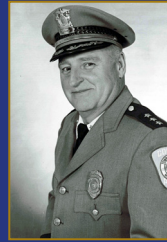
Department Chiefs of Police



Chief William
Armstrong
1934 - 1965



Chief George
Shortsleeve
1965 - 1971



Chief James
Flater
1971 - 1992



Chief John
Grebert
1992 - 2003



Chief Steven
Heider
2003 - 2015



Chief Jonathan
Teale
2015 - 2021



Chief Michael
Woods
2021 - 2024



Chief James
Gerace
2024 - Present

The Colonie Police Department is a New York State accredited, full-service police agency serving the Town of Colonie, New York. The Colonie Police Department was formed by a Town Board resolution on January 2, 1934. This resolution authorized the Police Department to hire a Chief and two Patrolmen – total budget \$2,500.00.

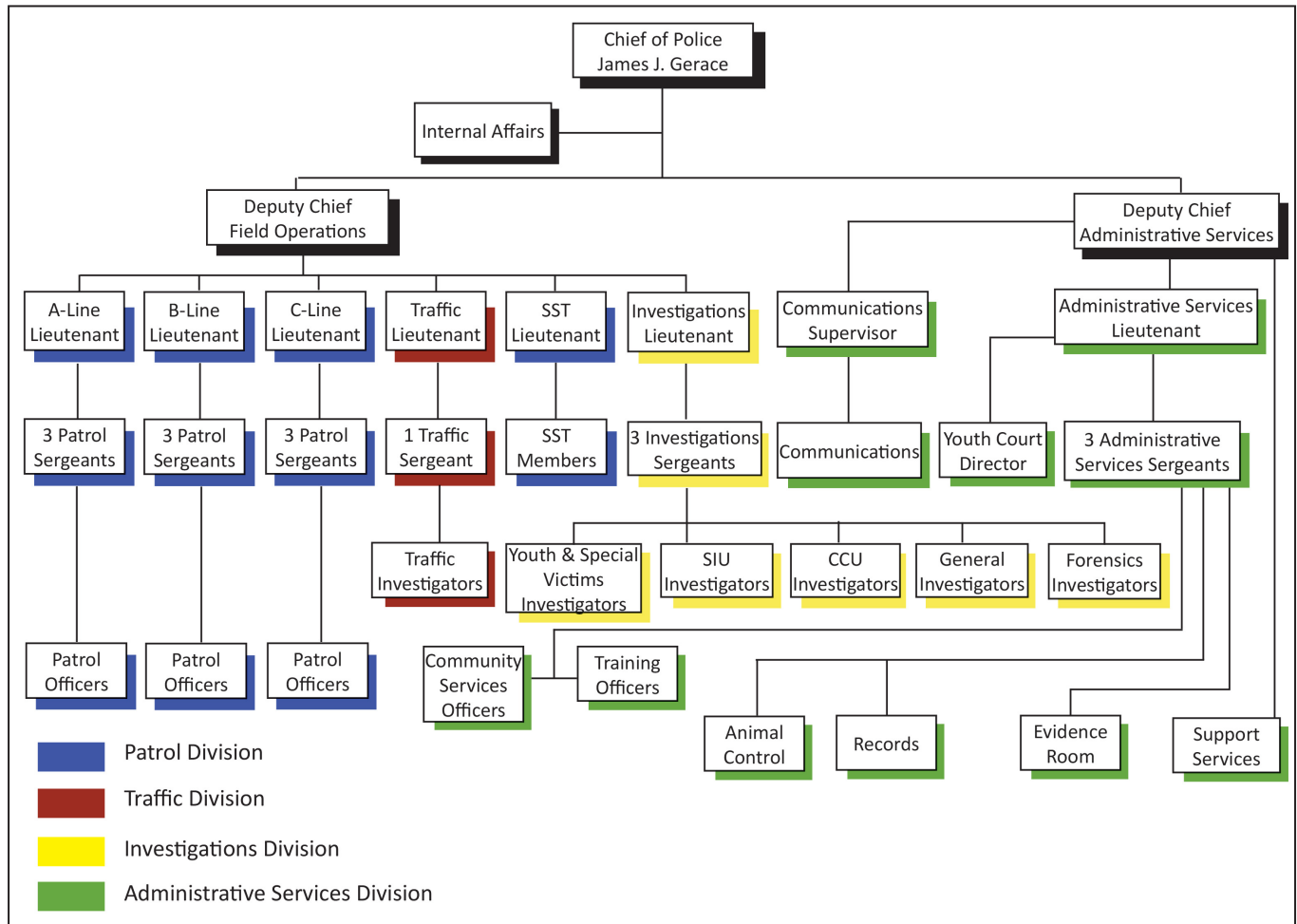
In 2024, the budget is approximately \$18 million which includes 115 sworn officers, 53 civilian support personnel and over 60 vehicles in the police fleet. Starting Officer's salary has risen from \$400.00 to approximately \$64,000.00. Although the population and related growth of the Town and the Police Department have both grown substantially, the Police Department maintains contact with citizens by promoting a Community Policing policy throughout the agency.

The Police Department is organized by role: Field Operations and Administrative Services. Field Operations is comprised of the Patrol Division, Investigations Division and the Traffic Safety Division. Administrative Services includes the Administrative Services Division which provides support functions such as Community Services, Training, Communications, Records and Support Services. Administrative Services is also responsible for Fiscal Management, Grant Management, Statistical Analysis, Accreditation and Animal Control.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Colonie Police Department is to protect and serve the residents, visitors, and businesses of the Town of Colonie.

Departmental Organizational Chart



Executive Command Staff

Deputy Chief Robert Winn
 Deputy Chief Daniel Belles
 Lieutenant Thomas Breslin
 Lieutenant Richard Villa
 Lieutenant Louis DiNuzzo
 Lieutenant Anthony Sidoti
 Lieutenant James Herbst
 Lieutenant Michael Warner



Department Management Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
GUIDE THE COLONIE POLICE DEPARTMENT
INTO AN ERA OF INTELLIGENCE DRIVEN - EVIDENCE BASED POLICING

Evidence-based policing is a law-enforcement perspective and philosophy that implicates the use of research, evaluation, analysis, and scientific processes in law-enforcement decision making.¹ The aim is to moderate subjective opinions about what works in policing and enhance our policy decisions with data and research evidence.²

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Learn more about using evidenced based policing research to guide our Problem Oriented Policing approach to crime and disorder.
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration

- Executive Leadership will learn more about this policing strategy through independent and group study.
- Executive Leadership will attend the 2024 Symposium “Hard Questions for Evidence-Based Crime Policy” at George Mason University’s Center for Evidence-Based Crime Policy.
- Contract with the University of Cincinnati’s School of Criminal Justice to conduct an evidence-based policing and problem solving training for department members.
- Executive Leadership will attend the NYS DCJS Public Safety Symposium.



Department Management Goals

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Integrate Crime Analysis into Patrol Work³
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration, Patrol Division, & Community Services Unit

Reviews of over 30 years of policing research show that the most effective policing strategies are those that are focused on areas, places, and offenders that contribute to a disproportionate amount of crime and disorder.^{4,5} The evidence suggests that when police target “hot spots” of crime, they can have a significant impact on overall crime levels.⁶

- Develop an Acute Flare Up notification system.
 - ◇ Notification of a sudden increase in call volume to a specific location will be delivered to the police administration. The purpose is to identify crime and disorder spikes before they become chronic problems.
- Develop a Residential Burglary Notification system to prevent Near Repeat Burglaries.⁷
 - ◇ Research indicates that once a home or apartment unit is burglarized, homes and units next door and/or very close by have a heightened risk of burglary for the following two weeks.
 - ◇ Deploy Community Services Officers to go door to door to warn neighbors of their heightened risk and suggest methods to harden their homes, including locking windows and basement/back doors; engaging their alarm systems regularly, and encouraging more guardianship of their neighbors.
- Engage the Capital Region Crime Analysis Center to explore their capabilities to deliver patrol relevant data to the police department useful for deployments to “hot spots”.
- Engage the Capital Region Crime Analysis Center to explore their capabilities as a “real time” crime center.



Department Management Goals



⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design CPTED
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration & Community Services Unit

Crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) is an approach to problem-solving that asks, what is it about this location that places people at risk, or that results in opportunities for crime? In other words, why here?⁸

- Determine who in the department should be trained in CPTED.
- Explore training opportunities to learn more about using CPTED in practice.





Department Management Goals

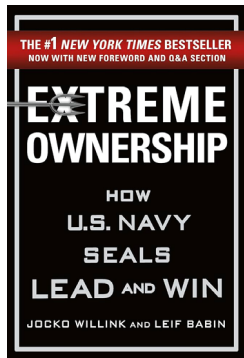
- FOCUS AREA GOAL - LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT

“Leaders must own everything in their world. There is no one else to blame.”

- Jocko Willink

The Colonie Police Department is committed to cultivating outstanding leaders, at every level of our organization.

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Train department members in the Extreme Ownership philosophy. ⁹
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration



- Distribute copies of the Extreme Ownership book to department members.
- Encourage members to take the “Extreme Ownership Framework” course available online.
- Contract with Echelon Front to provide leadership training for all Police Supervisors.



⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Use the relevant scientific literature to develop a training on, “What Motivates Employees?”
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration

- Conduct an executive level training for Command Staff on what the research evidence shows empirically works to motivate employees.

Department Management Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - *PREPARING FOR OFFICER INVOLVED CRITICAL INCIDENTS & USE OF FORCE*

How police officers exercise their unique power to use deadly force continues to be a topic of interest among academics and has recently become arguably the most visible public policy issue related to the criminal justice system in the United States. Academic interest in officers' use of deadly force includes attention to how officers make the decision to discharge their firearms during encounters with citizens.¹⁰

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE** - Reality Based Training for Officer Involved Shootings
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY** - Police Administration & Training Unit

In 2023 the Colonie Police Department conducted extensive training on Officer Involved Shootings. We will build upon that success and continue to train officers in the latest officer survival tactics and prepare for the aftermath of critical incidents. As a guiding principle, the Training Unit believes in the concept of "specificity of practice". The more closely our training scenarios resemble real events, the more transfer of learning will occur.

- The Training Unit will prepare reality based training scenarios dealing with officer involved shootings. Training will include officer down drills along with buddy and self care practice.
- The department will offer to all officers the opportunity to engage in continuing education online through the purchase of the Calibre Press online course, Advanced Patrol Tactics.
- The department will allow interested officers to attend supplementary training at the New York State Preparedness Training Center in Oriskany.¹¹
- The Police Administration will participate in media and press conference training as they relate to delivering information to the public after a critical incident.
- Executive Leadership will monitor the NYS Attorney General OSI reports for educational purposes and to uncover possible agency vulnerabilities.¹²



Department Management Goals

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE** - Develop a Digital Use of Force Report
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY** - Police Administration & Records Section

Currently the Colonie Police Department has a pen and paper use of force report. This method makes analysis of department wide trends difficult. Agencies cannot manage what they do not measure. The national conversation on police use of force has highlighted the need for improved data collection. Meaningful analysis is not possible without valid, reliable and comprehensive data. Detailed data is critical to understanding the circumstances in which police use force, as well as what types of interventions might prevent unnecessary uses of force.¹³

- Engage our strategic partner Axon to develop and implement a digital Use of Force Reporting system that translates our data into a format for relevant analysis.



Department Management Goals



⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Understanding Human Performance Factors as they relate to Use of Force
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration, Police Supervisors & Training Unit

The Supreme Court of the United States and other Federal Courts have said:

The "reasonableness" of a particular use of force must be judged from the perspective of a reasonable officer on the scene, rather than with the 20/20 vision of hindsight.¹⁴

"We must never allow the theoretical, sanitized world of our imagination to replace the dangerous and complex world that policemen face every day. What constitutes "reasonable" action may seem quite different to someone facing a possible assailant than to someone analyzing the question at leisure."¹⁵

In order for a Police Supervisor to determine if an officer's force was reasonable, it is imperative that they understand the actual human capabilities of an officer that was involved in a tense and rapidly unfolding situation.

- All Police Supervisors will attend a two-day training conducted by Paul Taylor Phd, University of Colorado, Denver. The training will focus on police decision-making, human error and resilience in the context of potential use-of-force encounters with an eye toward improving outcomes.
- At least one department member will complete the Force Science Certification Course.
- Select police executives will attend the Daigle Law Group Use of Force Summit.





Department Management Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
INCREASING DEPARTMENT EFFICIENCY

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Transition to an online overtime and time off management system
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration and Support Services

The Colonie Police Department still relies on a paper and pen time off and overtime management system. It is our intention to make this process more efficient with the procurement of web based digital personnel management system.

- Purchase a scheduling software system.
- Transition to this format by the end of 2024.

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Enhance Fleet Management Capabilities
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration

- Develop a method to better account for fleet repairs and scheduled maintenance.
- Have a forward facing database of the current status of each vehicle in the department's fleet.

Department Management Goals



- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Develop a Digital Domestic Incident Report
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration & Records Section

Currently, our Domestic Incident Reports are handwritten. This method of reporting makes analysis of domestic violence trends challenging. It also requires significant backend management by the department's clerical staff.

- Engage our strategic partner Pulsiam to develop a digital Domestic Incident Report.

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Investigate the feasibility of a dedicated station officer during times of peak call volume
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration & Patrol Division

Calls for service have steadily increased over the last several years.¹⁶ At peak times, non-emergency calls for service can be held for an extended time, resulting in citizen frustration. Early internal research shows that a large number of these cases can be handled over the telephone or video conference to the satisfaction of our citizens. One officer assigned to non-emergency telephone followup may be able to handle the report load of three patrol officers. Officer efficiency may also be increased when vehicle travel is eliminated from the response system.

- Begin a pilot station officer program on C-Line.
- Survey officers for feedback.
- Survey citizens for satisfaction feedback.
- Measure station officer report load vs. vehicle patrol officer report load.



Department Management Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
POLICE ACCOUNTABILITY AND TRANSPARENCY

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE** - Enhance the Officer Performance Evaluation Process
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY FOR DEVELOPMENT** - Police Administration
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY FOR IMPLEMENTATION** - All Police Supervisors

Annual evaluations have often been viewed by department members as a “check-the-box” exercise serving no useful purpose. Employees report that they rarely learn anything during this process. Furthermore, the employee is not involved in the assessment until the evaluation is already completed.

Some common problems identified with our current evaluation process include:

- Evaluation comments are repetitive year to year.
- Critiques or suggestions are vague and unclear.
- There is a potential to overrate average employees which may unintentionally reward mediocre performance.
- Employees report not being motivated to earn a good evaluation if other employees are rated highly for average performance.

What will improvements to the process look like?

- A collection point will be created in the Sergeant’s Office to capture copies (not original documents) of items a supervisor should consider for the annual evaluation. Each year, this collection point will be emptied and the Officer will start the next year with a “clean slate.” Officers will be encouraged to add things to this in-basket throughout the year, and not solely rely on the supervisors to do this. The supervisor will use the items in this file to justify their rating of the Officer.

Department Management Goals



- The new process will be participatory, and each Officer will be asked to submit a form or other documents (that are not already in the collection file) to their supervisor before the evaluation process begins. Officers will be a part of the process, and will have an opportunity for their voice to be heard regarding their yearly performance. The Officer contributions can include noteworthy incidents they were involved in, awards they received, training they attended, or any other significant professional achievement from that year. Officers are encouraged to detail their community engagement and problem oriented policing activities.



- The format will be simplified. Rating categories will be clearly described, and the Officer will be rated on a simpler scale with less room for discretion or subjectivity. If an Officer is deficient in any area, a detailed improvement plan will be created by the Supervisor, and the officer will be re-evaluated regularly to look for improvement.
- Specific and detailed goals will be set by the supervisor for each Officer, and there will be semi-annual check-ins with the Officer to determine if goals are being met.



Department Management Goals

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Management of the Department's Accreditation Process
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration & Accreditation Program Manager

The vision of the Town of Colonie Police Department Accreditation process is to ensure the Colonie Police Department stays within compliance of NYS DCJS standards for Accreditation¹⁷, and in doing so, make sure each member is within policy in their actions and words.

REASSESSMENT ACTION PLAN

RESPONSIBILITY - Accreditation Program Manager



- Meet with all personnel who are assigned to provide standard proofs, specific to their areas of leadership. Explain the Accreditation work zone and how to submit proofs.
- After markup and organization by Support Staff, the Accreditation Manager will review all proofs submitted to determine relevance and applicability.
- Schedule a mock accreditation for summer 2024 with DCJS evaluators.
- Remedy any issues with our proofs, interviews and site visit.
- Determine who will be most appropriate for interviews with Accreditation Assessors in the Fall/Winter 2024.
- Finalize all standards and proofs for reassessment.
- Conduct station inspection prior to evaluators arriving to ensure 100% compliance.

ACCREDITATION NEXT 5 YEARS

RESPONSIBILITY: Accreditation Program Manager


- The Colonie Police Department will have all Accreditation assignments laid out by leadership position at the end of 2024. Reassessment for the proper functioning of the Accreditation workflow starting with 2025, the first year of the next five year cycle.

Department Management Goals




⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Probationary Police Officers assigned to a Patrol Supervisor after Field Training
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Training Unit & Police Supervisors

- Develop a probationary training manual similar to the FTO training manual that includes critical tasks as identified by the Training Unit. The manual should also clearly spell out what will be evaluated at the monthly check-ins (report writing, traffic stops...) This process can be handled by the Training Unit with input from the Patrol Sergeants and FTO's.
- When the manual is complete, train all Patrol Sergeants on the manual, specifically the intent behind it and the expectations of the department.



Town of Colonie Police Department

"...with dignity, honor, and respect."



Colonie Police Field Training Officer Guidebook

Issued To:

Colonie Police Training Unit Updated 1/2024



Department Management Goals

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Upgrade the Property and Evidence Room
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration and Administrative Sergeant (Evidence Room)

- Permanently assign a new Administrative Sergeant to oversee the property and evidence room.
- Conduct a best practices analysis of local area property rooms.
- Conduct a review of available software programs.
- Move to a fully digital property report system.
- Enroll in courses taught by the International Association of Property and Evidence Inc (IAPE).
- Expand the size of the evidence room.
- Increase physical security of the evidence room.
- Target 2026 for Accreditation of the Property and Evidence room through the IAPE.







Department Management Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL - OFFICER WELLNESS

The vision of the Town of Colonie Police Department Wellness Program is to take care of its members' physical and mental wellness, promote resiliency and health, and educate on suicide prevention for the purpose of strengthening them in mind, body and soul. There is no greater investment an organization can have than to invest in their own people. The Wellness Program will directly invest in the officers that make this Department so great by providing training, support, equipment and resources needed to succeed.

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE** - Continue Building a Robust Wellness Program
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY** - Police Administration & Wellness Coordinator

- Use the \$48,000 grant funds from the NY CARES UP Wellness grant (\$30,000 for supplies, incentives, OT to backfill for training, travel costs, etc. and \$18,000 for training and trainers) to bring in resiliency and suicide prevention trainers.
- Add two additional members to the Peer Support Team to replace outgoing members.
- Research the possibility of implementing a Wellness Room at the Station.
- Map out a design for the Wellness Room, obtain prices and purchase furniture, supplies and games.
- Contact and schedule resiliency and suicide prevention trainings for our department using the CARES UP money, including with NYLEAP instructors as well as Dr. Jeff Thompson (NYPD).
- Finish work on Therapy Dog research and donation solicitations to give a program presentation to the Chief of Police.



Department Management Goals



- Send out a member survey to all sworn officers to receive their feedback on the current Wellness Program and what they would like to see in the future.
- Join the Albany County Suicide Prevention Coalition.
- Host at least one department-wide physical fitness challenge at Fitrinity, while continuing Coach Seniw's fitness classes at the Department gym. Potentially add Inv. Mink in as another Strength and Conditioning Coach once he completes his Crossfit Level 1 certification.
- Continue to send out a monthly Wellness email with ideas to maintain mental health and resiliency (Calcium heart test, sleep study, nutritionist, Life points, etc.).
- Apply for the 2024 LEMHWA grant to supplement all activities and training.





Department Management Goals

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE** - Mental Health Check-In Action Plan
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY** - Police Administration & Wellness Coordinator

Have at least 25% participation rate for a mental health check-in of all sworn officers within the next two years.

- Be able to offer annual or bi-annual mental health check-ins for all sworn officers by the end of 2024.
- PBA – Seek cooperation from the PBA for the implementation of this program.
- HR – Coordinate with HR to figure out how to have this billed confidentially, while also being able to track the number of officers utilizing the program.
- Clinician – Research, vet and select a clinician who will see our officers. Select multiple clinicians, if possible, to give officers a choice and to find the best fit for each officer. Be able to offer a telehealth version for officers who prefer that method.
- CDPHP – Confirm CDPHP will cover all of these initial appointments, as well as any follow up appointments, should our officers choose to seek further counsel. Secure secondary funding (COPS LEMHWA grant) in case CDPHP will not cover.
- Lead by example – Starting with the Chief, kick off the program by having leadership be the first to go.



Department Management Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION

Police agencies across the United States continue to report that they are losing officers faster than they can hire new ones.¹⁸ The Colonie Police Department is not immune to the hiring challenges affecting the police profession. Specifically, we face fewer people applying to become officers and a significant number of our current officers will become eligible for retirement in the next two years. Not all that long ago we were able to receive hundreds of applications for a small number of positions. Today, we face a job market that is very different from “the way things used to be.”

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Increase Applications For the Upcoming Police Exam
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** All of CPD

- Participate in the FBI’s annual Women in Law Enforcement recruiting event.
- Participate in local job fairs.
- Develop innovative recruiting strategies.





COLONIE POLICE



Colonie
Police Department



Community Services Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT


The Colonie Police Department is committed to meaningfully engaging with groups that affect or are affected by our activities.¹⁹ Engagement is more than an “informational” session with the public, it implies that the police department will consult, involve, and collaborate with the public.²⁰

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Community Feedback Forms

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration and Patrol Division


- The police administration will redesign the department’s incident referral cards to include a QR code that links to a community feedback survey.
- The intent of the survey is to allow victims and callers for police service to be able to provide feedback on their experience.
- All surveys will be read by the Chief of Police.
- Officers will be trained on the intended survey population and the department’s expectations for distribution.

Colonie Police Department
312 Wolf Road
Latham, NY 12110
colonie.org/departments/police
(518) 783-2744






Officer Notes:

Tell us how we did today!



COLONIE POLICE DEPARTMENT

 [coloniepolicedept](https://www.instagram.com/coloniepolicedept)  [@colonie_police](https://twitter.com/colonie_police)  [ColoniePD](https://www.facebook.com/ColoniePD)



Community Services Goals

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Social Media Excellence
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Community Services & Social Media Coordinator



The Colonie Police Department will utilize approved social media platforms to inform the public about police services in an effort to promote a positive image of the department. Posts should be made regularly and promote a genuine public safety interest while avoiding superficiality. Department training and initiatives in areas of high public concern, such as mental health and de-escalation should be distributed.

- Appoint one Community Services officer to serve as the department’s social media coordinator that shall work with the Communications Section to ensure Senior Dispatchers have access to department approved Public Notification Graphics (“Traffic Crash- Avoid the Area”) and understand their role in early public notification.

- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Community Notification After Special Services Team Activity
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** SST Commander & Community Services

- Community Service Officers will engage with residents after a Special Services Team Activation has occurred in their neighborhood.

Community Services Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - ELDER FRAUD

The Town of Colonie is home to a large senior citizen population. Sadly, the elderly are especially vulnerable to financial crimes committed by both strangers and caregivers. The U.S. Senate Special Committee on Aging continues to find that each year our seniors lose billions in scams and frauds of all kinds.²¹

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Elder Fraud and Abuse Outreach

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Community Services Unit

- Assign a Community Services Officer to serve as the department's Elder Fraud and Abuse Coordinator.
- This officer will conduct crime prevention activities directed toward educating our seniors and their caregivers.
- Engagement should occur with area stakeholders such as the Town of Colonie Senior Resources Department and Albany County Adult Services.





Community Services Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
ADDRESSING VULNERABLE POPULATIONS -
MENTAL ILLNESS AND OVERDOSES

The Colonie Police Department defines a vulnerable population as an individual or group at risk for poor physical, psychological, or social health. These populations often suffer from mental illness and substance use disorders. A call for service assessment has shown that a small number of individuals in the community consume a large amount of police and EMS resources.

A leading priority for the Colonie Police Department has been to engage those suffering from mental illness with care, compassion, and concern. We have made great strides in de-escalation training and our officers are recognized for excellence in the area of crisis intervention.

It should also be noted that overdoses are now the leading cause of unintentional injury death in the United States surpassing motor vehicle deaths.²²

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Vulnerable Populations Initiative

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Community Services Unit

- A team of officers will be assigned to coordinate the department's activities with vulnerable populations.
- This team will engage community stakeholders such as the Albany County Mental Health Department and Colonie EMS Department in order to find long term solutions for these individuals.
- Community Services will represent the department at Albany County's monthly psychiatric crisis services meetings.
- Community Services will be expected to keep department members abreast of available services and be a liaison between these services and patrol officers.
- Community Services will assist in outreach to Handle with Care registrants.

Community Services Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - SCHOOL SAFETY

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Enhance Department Active Shooter Preparation For Schools
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration, Community Services Unit & Training Unit

- 3 School Emergency Access tests will be performed each year during school break periods. Officers from the B and C Line patrol divisions will demonstrate their ability to use key boxes and building access cards to make emergency entry to schools during a lockdown.
- Send Non SST SRO's to the NYS DHSES training facility for supplementary active shooter training.
- SRO's will read and study the following active shooter tragedies:
 - ♦ Columbine High School Massacre, April 20, 1999
 - ♦ Red Lake Shootings, March 21, 2005
 - ♦ Sandy Hook Elementary School Shooting, December 14, 2012
 - ♦ Parkland High School Shooting, February 14, 2018
 - ♦ Santa Fe High School Shooting, May 18, 2018
 - ♦ Oxford High School Shooting, November 30, 2021
 - ♦ Robb Elementary School Shooting, May 24, 2022
 - ♦ Central Visual and Performing Arts High School Shooting, October 24, 2022
 - ♦ Covenant School Shooting, March 27, 2023
- SRO's will be required to demonstrate their understanding of these incidents by providing key takeaways to the Police Administration.
- A minimum of 2 round table/white board exercises will be conducted with the SRO's on AAIR principles
- Administrative Lieutenant will coordinate with the Investigations Division and Patrol Division to make a reference guide on the proper handling threats of school violence that are reported during off hours.



Field Operations Goals

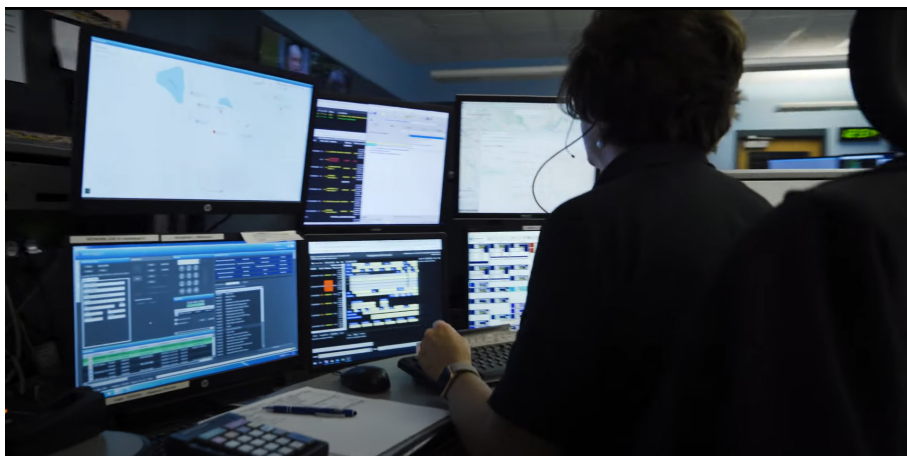
- FOCUS AREA GOAL - EMERGENCY MANAGEMENT

The Colonie Police Department has a role under the umbrella of the Townwide Emergency Management and Planning Department. The mission of the Town's emergency management system is to provide a proactive framework through the coordination of resources and activities and pre-planned mechanisms to effectively mitigate hazards, ensure efficient response and recovery efforts, to safeguard the lives and property and minimize the effects of emergencies and disasters on the residents and businesses within the Town of Colonie.²³

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Assess Preparedness Capabilities

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration

- The Police Department will assist with the identification of a suitable location and outfit said location with the necessary equipment, technology and supplies to address the Police Department's and the Town's needs during an emergency.
- During this process we will assess the Police Department's current and/or needed Incident Command System capabilities and test our abilities with a Tabletop exercise before the end of 2024.
- We will work collaboratively with the Emergency Management Committee Manager and anticipated stakeholders from the Fire Departments, Town Departments and partner agencies (particularly Albany County Sheriff who oversee the County Emergency Management).



Field Operations Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
PUBLIC ORDER MANAGEMENT - (PROTESTS & RIOT RESPONSE)

Perhaps there is no greater challenge for police officers in a democracy than that of managing mass demonstrations. It is here, after all, where the competing goals of maintaining order and protecting the freedoms of speech and assembly meet.²⁴

The demonstrations over the past few years indicate a need for the Colonie Police Department to prepare a proper response to these events. We will explore the need to establish a formal Public Order-Crowd Management team.

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Establish A Plan For the Upcoming Presidential Election
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Police Administration & Public Order Management Coordinator

- The Public Order Management Coordinator will attend training to learn about proper tactics and appropriate legal considerations.
- Inventory of all crowd management equipment will be conducted.
- Conduct a fall in-service training for operational personnel.
- Review department policies and examine for needed updates.
- Consult with the Unmanned Aerial Systems Coordinator and SST Commander for joint operations.



Field Operations Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL - POLICE K9 PROGRAM

The vision of the Town of Colonie Police Department K9 unit is to exemplify best in class canine teams in the Capital Region. Our highly trained officers are paired with high-drive, clear minded, courageous canine partners whose purpose is to keep our neighborhoods safe as well as build long-lasting relationships with the members of our community. Our canine teams will be held to the highest standard by well-regarded regional trainers and are expected to lead from the front as representatives of our department.

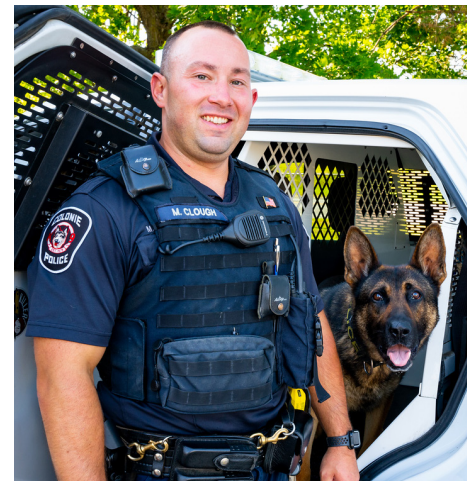
- ⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Expansion of the Police K9 Program
- ⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Canine Coordinator

Explosive Detection Canine – September 2024

- Research monetary K9 grant funding – 03/01/24
- Apply for any eligible grant funding – 04/01/24
- Purchase K9 kennel car insert/installation – 05/01/24
- Administrative Communication for interested candidates – 06/01/24
- Home interviews– 06/15/24
- Speak with family members to discuss their commitment level to having a Police K9
- Yard inspection to ensure safety of K9
- Safe space inside for below zero winter nights
- Interview/selection process – 07/15/24
- Yard kennel construction/purchase – 08/01/24
- K9 selection – 08/15/24
- K9 patrol school – 09/03/24
- K9 detection school – 01/06/25 – 02/28/25

Explosive Detection Canine – September 2026 (possibly January 2025 depending on the grant process)

- Repeat the selection and funding process



Field Operations Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - UNMANNED AERIAL SYSTEMS UNIT - DRONE AS FIRST RESPONDER (DFR)

Small, remotely operated Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS), also commonly referred to as drones, are an efficient and effective way of providing law enforcement critical information to respond to calls for service and emergency situations, or to conduct criminal investigations. Some examples include; providing an overhead view of an area or incident for ground personnel, safely clearing the interior of buildings, providing detailed documentation of crime and accident scenes, and searching for lost or missing persons.

Vision

As technology continues to advance the Colonie Police Department has a long term vision of establishing a Drone as First Responder Program. We recognize that cost and FAA regulations pose significant barriers to the program in the near term. However, with an “eye toward the sky”, we can continue to assess DFR viability annually.

DFR - What is it?

Drone as First Responder is a transformational method of policing that has demonstrated the ability to increase officer and community safety and reduce overall police response times. DFR provides the ability to see what is going on at an incident before emergency personnel arrive on scene. In addition to the overhead perspective that traditional air support has always provided, DFR allows a trained incident commander to “virtually” arrive on scene first, sometimes minutes before officers are in harm’s way. The drone has a powerful on-board camera that streams HD video back to the department’s real-time operations center where the teleoperator, who is a trained critical incident manager, not only controls the drone remotely, but communicates with the units in the field to give them information and tactical intelligence about what they are responding to. The system also streams the video feed to the cell phones of the first responders, supervisors, and command staff, so they can see exactly what the drone is seeing. The nationwide leader in this program is currently the Chula Vista Police Department in California.²⁵

⇒ STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE - Increase Patrol Forward UAS Deployments

- To increase our effectiveness for patrol deployments we will increase the number of certified pilots. Careful consideration will be given to ensuring that each patrol shift has UAS capabilities.
- Candidates will schedule an FAA part 107 knowledge test by May 1, 2024.
- Candidates will complete flight training by August 1, 2024.



Field Operations Goals

- FOCUS AREA GOAL - INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION ENHANCEMENTS

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Institutionalizing the Rapport Based Investigative Interviewing Method
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Investigations Division

- An investigator's ability to obtain information may be their single greatest asset in the search for “truth”. Research has shown that non-accusatory, empathy based interviewing decreases the risk of false confessions and yields more accurate and reliable information.²⁶
- Restructure the interview rooms in the Investigation Division in accordance with best practice guidelines.
- Continue to partner with Advanced Strategic Communications to conduct an onsite analysis of our facility and provide mentoring guidance to investigators.
- Ensure all newly promoted investigators receive training on the investigative interviewing method.



Field Operations Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
ADDRESSING ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT & SHOPLIFTING

Larceny is the most frequent crime reported to the Town of Colonie Police, with reported cases rising over 50% in the last 5 years.²⁷ This is a state wide trend. Governor Kathy Hochul acknowledged in her 2024 State of the State address that larceny offenses are rising across New York. She also laid out proposals to assist law enforcement in the fight against retail theft.²⁸ The volume of retail theft reports is staggering and continues to strain the resources of the Colonie Police Department.

<p>⇒ STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE - Develop A Self Reporting System For Shoplifting Offenses</p> <p>⇒ RESPONSIBILITY - Police Administration & Records Section</p>

- Engage our strategic partner Pulsiam to have the self-reported incidents automatically update into the Colonie Police Departments records management system.
- Determine the annual cost of this program for future budgeting concerns.
- Create a system that will easily add new businesses, as needed, to the self-reporting program.
- Begin researching and pilot testing a self reporting system for retailers with dedicated loss prevention teams to reduce the need to dispatch a patrol officer in a non-emergency situation.
- Determine which retailers to roll out this trial program and meet with their managers and loss prevention personnel for training and expectations.
- Determine the best/proper workflow for receiving the reports and having them inputted into our RMS system (Desk officer, Investigator, or Records Division).
- Create the fillable PDF that will be easy to determine and extract all of the pertinent information needed for a full and complete report.
- Allow for the store surveillance videos to be attached to either the PDF or the email, which can be imported into Evidence.com at the time the SIR is created by Colonie Police personnel.



Field Operations Goals

- Determine a trial period length of time to evaluate the number of calls officers were not needed to respond to, and the approximate amount of time saved and directed to other police enforcement/ activity.

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Dedicate Investigators To Focus On Retail Theft
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Investigations Division

- Streamline retail theft case assignments to eliminate inefficiencies.
- Target the most prolific repeat offenders for enforcement action.
- Identify and disrupt underground resale networks.



Field Operations Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL - TRAFFIC SAFETY

Traffic and highway safety is consistently a top concern from our residents. The Colonie Police Department is committed to improving the quality of life for the Town's residents by preventing loss of life, injuries, and property damage on Colonie's roadways that result from motor vehicle crashes and aggressive driving behavior.

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Educational Campaigns
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Traffic Safety Division & Community Services Unit

- Public awareness campaigns tied to traffic safety will be conducted by both the Traffic Safety Division and Community Services Unit.
- Each investigator in the Traffic Safety Division will be asked to become a subject matter expert in a critical traffic safety area (eg. drugged driving, motorcycle safety, first responder safety).



They will be tasked with delivering educational outreach on their area of expertise to the appropriate audiences.



- Community Services will educate parents on child restraint safety.
- Community Services will continue to host child safety seat inspection events throughout the year.



Field Operations Goals

⇒	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -	Addressing High Crash Locations With Data Driven Strategies
⇒	RESPONSIBILITY -	Traffic Safety Division & Community Services Unit

Aligning with our department management approach on using data analysis to provide for more informed policy decisions, the Traffic Safety Division will begin to implement a more informed approach to resource deployment.

- The Traffic Safety Division will research and explore the viability of implementing DDACTS 2.0 in the Colonie Police Department.²⁹
- The Traffic Safety Division will research and identify the ten highest frequency crash locations in the Town of Colonie.
- A contributing factor analysis will be conducted on these locations.
- Focused enforcement and engagement with stakeholders who possess the ability to alter the roadway environment (eg.NYSDOT) will be conducted.
- The crash data on treatment areas will be examined for measurement purposes, in an effort to determine effectiveness.

National Highway Traffic Safety Administration
Our Mission: Save lives, prevent injuries, reduce vehicle-related crashes

DDACTS
DATA-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO CRIME AND TRAFFIC SAFETY

Operational Guidelines

Integrating "hot spot" technologies to establish effective methods for deploying law enforcement resources through analysis of crash and crime data.

March 2014



Field Operations Goals



⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Sobriety Checkpoints

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Traffic Safety Division & Patrol Division

At sobriety checkpoints, law enforcement officials evaluate drivers for signs of alcohol or drug impairment at certain points on the roadway. Vehicles are stopped in a specific sequence, such as every other vehicle or every fourth, fifth or sixth vehicle. The frequency with which vehicles are stopped depends on the personnel available to staff the checkpoint and traffic conditions. Research shows that the best ways to reduce impaired drivers from our roadways are through the use of high-profile enforcement efforts, especially regularly conducted sobriety checkpoints.

- The Traffic Safety Division will conduct sobriety checkpoints annually.
- Through both social and traditional media the Colonie Police Department will publicize our commitment to removing impaired drivers from our roadways with sobriety checkpoints.





Field Operations Goals

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Focused Enforcement - Speeding Complaints

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Traffic Safety Division & Patrol Division

The Colonie Police Department receives frequent complaints about speeding vehicles in residential neighborhoods. A friendly officer that talks with residents and engages in high visibility deterrence often times is effective at maintaining community confidence and reducing concern

- The Traffic Safety Division will maintain and distribute to the patrol division roads where citizens have requested speed enforcement. This list should include the name and address of the resident so officers can interact and engage with them.
- Patrol Officers will be assigned to address these areas during patrol shifts.
- Make use of our high visibility portable radar trailer to areas of concern.
- Consider purchasing additional radar trailers for increased high visibility deterrence.

Field Operations Goals



- FOCUS AREA GOAL -
ADDRESSING DISORDER AT BUDGET MOTELS

In the Town of Colonie, certain motels generate significant numbers of service calls and consume inordinate levels of police resources. Problem motels are frequently hot spots for both nuisance activity, drug overdoses, and more serious incidents. The very nature of overnight lodging makes it conducive to crime and disorder. Because budget motels offer low rates, accept cash, and often have a relatively unrestricted environment, those with illicit or antisocial intentions find them particularly attractive.³⁰

⇒ **STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE -** Develop A Motel Outreach Program.

⇒ **RESPONSIBILITY -** Police Administration & Patrol Division

- A Police Lieutenant will be assigned to coordinate outreach efforts with local motel owners.
- Midnight shift officers will take ownership over their assigned motels.





Capital Improvements & Major Purchases

PATROL RIFLES

The rifles in our patrol inventory have reached end-of-life. Our rifles are exposed to varying cold, heat and humidity throughout the year which has aged the metal.

Plan - The Police Department requests funding to replace our patrol rifle inventory.

- Identify rifles of interest and extensively test and evaluate the performance of those rifles at the range. Select Patrol Officers should be involved to evaluate the “finalists” as their input should be part of the process.
- Evaluate costs and determine the rifle of choice collaboratively with police administration.
- Purchase rifles and all ancillary equipment (lights, slings, parts needed to modify vehicle mounts, etc.)

SST RIFLES

The Special Services Team maintains a separate inventory of tactical rifles. These rifles are monitored for round counts and barrel degradation. Under current operating conditions they are projected to reach end-of-life at the end of 2025 or early 2026.



Capital Improvements & Major Purchases



PORTABLE RADIOS

The Colonie Police Department maintains an inventory of approximately 150 portable radios. The emergency services community recognizes that portable radios for first responders have a useful life of 7 – 10 years.^{31 32} Two thirds of our current radios were acquired in 2017. The remainder were purchased in 2018 and 2019.

Excluding EMS, the Town of Colonie maintains an inventory of 38 Portable radios in various other departments. The radios in use by these departments have reached end of life status. Repairs and replacement parts are no longer available.

The Police Department seeks to replace our entire inventory of radios by 2028. Total replacement cost is projected to be \$1,500,000 in 2024 dollars.

Plan -

During FY 2025-Replace 38 portable radios at an approximate cost of \$500,000. (22 of these radios are enhanced and have multi-key encryption and dual band capabilities. They will be assigned to officers on our Special Services Team.) Once these radios are put in service, 38 radios in our current inventory would be turned over to other Town departments to replace their end-of-life radios. The remaining replacements will be spread over 2 to 3 years.

FUEL ISLAND - GAS PUMP

The Colonie Police Department is currently working with our Department of Public Works to replace the field island gas pumps at the Public Safety Building. The existing system has reached the end of its useful life. The pump is estimated to have been manufactured in 1991 and was installed at the Public Safety Center in 1993.

Over the past seven years the pump has had a history of sporadic failures and replacement parts are no longer being manufactured.

EXTERIOR ENTRANCE DOORS

Capital funding was approved in 2024 to replace exterior doors at the Public Safety Building.



Colonie Police Department Strategic Plan 2024 - 2025

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