



MOUNTAIN HOME POLICE DEPARTMENT

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Chief Scott Conner

Comprehension Plan Draft 2019



The Mountain Home Police Department is a professional, well-organized, progressive, community-oriented police organization that provides around-the-clock law enforcement in the city of Mountain Home. The department serves the full-time residents but is also impacted by the fact that Mountain Home serves as the county seat of Elmore County, has a United States Air Force Base with a population of 3,238 people 12 miles southwest of Mountain Home, and has four state highways and one interstate which run through the city limits. In 2018, Mountain Home Police responded to 14,490 calls for service, worked 2,746 cases, issued 991 citations and made 633 adult and 55 juvenile arrests.

The Mountain Home Police Department currently enjoys a high degree of cooperation and partnership for the detection and apprehension of criminal offenders with the Elmore County Sheriff's Office, United States Air Force Office of Special Investigations, United States Air Force Security Forces, Idaho State Police, Internet Crimes Against Children and the Federal Bureau of Investigation. Accordingly, this Comprehensive Plan encourages the continuation of the cooperation and partnership between these law enforcement agencies. Such cooperative efforts make the City of Mountain Home and Elmore County a safer place in which to live, raise a family and conduct business.

The Mountain Home Police Department currently employs 29 commissioned officers (a ratio of 2.03 officers per 1,000 population, below the national average of 2.4) and nine civilian employees. Our department is led by a Command Staff consisting of the Chief of Police and three Lieutenants. The department consists of three divisions: Patrol, Investigations, Administration and also oversees the Animal Shelter. These divisions are diverse and offer a multitude of programs and services. In addition, the department maintains an active Reserve unit with Idaho POST-certified volunteers who contribute time to the department. The department has also developed a volunteer Citizens on Patrol (COP) Program that currently has 19 volunteer members.

The Patrol division serves day to day law enforcement needs. It is also the department's largest division consisting of several units including Patrol, Traffic Enforcement (Motors), K9 Narcotic Support, Community Services, Professional Standards and Training, School Resources, D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) Program, Reserves, COPs, Police Chaplain Services, and the Animal Shelter.

Our patrol and school resource officers are equipped with body cameras to offer potential advantages in keeping officers safe, enabling situational awareness, improving community relations and accountability, and providing evidence for trials. In addition to body cameras each patrol vehicle is equipped with an in-car camera system for the same purpose. Patrol vehicles are also equipped with a suite of our records management system allowing them to run individuals, vehicles and property through a state and national criminal databases. By utilizing the computer systems in the vehicles, we are able to ensure that officers stay mobile maximizing their time on-duty, remain visible to the public and maintain extremely low response times to calls for service. The department has been strategically planning and updating our vehicle fleet by maximizing our budget the best we can. By doing this we can replace older, high maintenance vehicles with new ones with the ultimate goal of providing a take-home unit for each member of patrol, lowering vehicle maintenance expenses and vehicle-out-of-service times.

The Police Chaplain serves the needs of department personnel and citizens through ministry. Duties of the police chaplain in the community include assisting officers with families on suicide calls, counseling with families in times of grief and loss, and working with families during and after domestic disturbances.

The Mountain Home Animal Shelter is operated from a new state-of-the-art building located at 295 Elmcrest Street that was built in late 2014/early 2015 and opened on March 19, 2015, using funds endowed to the shelter by a philanthropic citizen. This facility was designed and built to serve the needs of our community for decades to come. The shelter is operated by the Animal Shelter Manager and overseen by the Community Policing Sergeant. The mission of the Mountain Home Animal Shelter is to provide compassionate care for stray impounded animals and responsible enforcement of



State and local laws, creating a safer and more desirable community for the citizens of Mountain Home. In 2018, staff responded to 1,092 calls for service, issued 51 citations and 244 warnings, sold 133 licenses, returned 478 animals to their owners, and adopted out 200 cats and dogs. The animal shelter also partners with Elmore County to assist within a designated area of impact. The animal shelter has four full-time employees, including the manager, and utilizes the assistance of many volunteers.

The Investigations division is responsible for investigating crimes against persons, children and property, financial crimes, drug-related cases, and background investigations of police department and animal shelter applicants. The Investigation division has updated electronic equipment for tracking suspects and conducting surveillance. We currently have four trained and certified unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV)

pilots and a state-of-the-art drone for investigation and public relations purposes. Investigators maintain an excellent working partnership with the staff at local pawn shops to track and review pawned property for stolen property within our jurisdiction.

The Investigations Sergeant is a fully trained and certified polygraph examiner that conducts all pre-employment and criminal polygraphs for our agency and the Elmore County Sheriff’s Office. We also have a fully trained and certified Drug Recognition Expert and phlebotomist to minimize call out times from outside agencies and hospital staff. Our agency has three active members on the Twin Falls Crisis Response Team in which we partner with for all high-risk emergency calls.

The Administrative division consists of a Records Supervisor/Executive Assistant and two full-time and one part-time Administrative Assistants. Our administrative staff provides all clerical and administrative work for the department including budget-related processing and tracking, grants, national, state and local crime statistics reporting, support to the officers and completes all public information requests, inquiries and requests for service. We employ a full-time property and evidence technician within the administrative division to ensure all statutory record keeping mandates and requests are fulfilled while ensuring proper handling, storage, return and destruction of all property and evidence.

Mountain Home Police participate in dozens of community-related events each year to help the community thrive and strengthen our personal bonds with the children and citizens of our community. One example of proactive community support is that we maintain a prescription drop-off box program where citizens can safely and conveniently dispose of their old and unwanted prescriptions and over-the-counter medications properly. The police department has collected over 3,500 pounds of unused prescriptions and over-the-counter medications since 2011 when the program was implemented.

As the Mountain Home Police Department looks to the future and prepares to serve continued growth within the community, changes will need to be made. Between 2014 and 2018 our calls for service increased by over 38%. If we continue to respond to calls in the same manner as we have, by 2028 we could reach as many as 28,000 annual calls for service. As this occurs, it will be necessary for Mountain Home Police to expand the current sworn officer staffing to match the safety needs of the community and the citizens it serves.

| Mountain Home Police Department Activity Statistics | | | |
|---|--------|--------|--------|
| | 2014 | 2016 | 2018 |
| Calls for Service | 10,484 | 13,966 | 14,490 |
| Cases | 2,065 | 2,235 | 2,746 |
| Citations | 1,222 | 1,150 | 991 |

Public Safety Goal 1:

Provide for a safe and secure community.

OBJECTIVE: To provide the highest possible level of public services in a professional, efficient and economic manner in order to preserve, protect and enhance the safety and welfare of the residents and visitors of Mountain Home.

Strategy 1: Ensure the provision of police services to the community by maintaining adequate facilities, equipment and well-trained personnel.

Strategy 2: Maintain and improve existing level of services and response times through periodic reviews.

Strategy 2: Guide day-to-day operations with department directives and priorities.

Strategy 3: Review police policies to determine if modifications are needed.

Strategy 4: Review and update city ordinances as needed.

Strategy 5: Explore additional ways to team build and administer collaborative programs to ensure open channels of communication with implementation partners including city departments, Elmore County, Idaho State Police, Mountain Home Air Force Base, Homeland Security, Emergency Management Services, various state agencies and the Federal Bureau of Investigation furthering the efficient delivery of public safety services to the community.

Strategy 6: Continue to support community policing with pro-active approaches to law enforcement methods by creating and fostering community partnership programs.

Strategy 7: Partner with various state and federal organizations for grant opportunities by providing reimbursable overtime opportunities to officers to implement effective programs to reduce traffic safety problems that result from individuals driving while under the influence of alcohol, drugs, driving while distracted, and implement effective programs to reduce the number of single and multi-vehicle crashes.



Strategy 8: Government leaders will evaluate public opinion and take actions to maintain high quality services in the community.

Public Safety Goal 2:

Ensure police services expand to keep pace with proper growth.

OBJECTIVE: As the community grows, law enforcement must be able to respond to changing needs in order to efficiently and effectively provide public safety services.

Strategy 1: Expand current sworn officer staffing to at least 2.29% ratio per 1,000 population by 2025 to match the needs of our growing population and allow for one additional officer per team. This will allow four additional officer and provide us with the ability to add a corporal to each patrol shift.

Strategy 2: Reduce the number of issues that we have with certain public housing by having regular meetings with management and owners and discussing the issues that both sides are having and how best to deal with those issues, particularly as the population grows.

Strategy 3: Continue to improve the department's social media to effectively communicate public safety information, maintain a personal approach with members of the community, connect with new members of the community and humanize officers.

Strategy 4: Support in implementing capital improvement planning efforts.

Public Safety Goal 3:

Ensure proper staffing, training, and a commitment to excellence in service to the community.

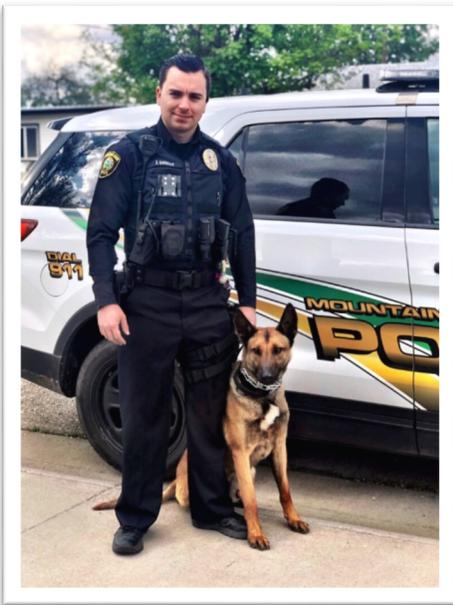
OBJECTIVE: To provide advanced training of police officers and encourage the acquisition of modern crime prevention and investigation equipment within the bounds of economic conditions.

Strategy 1: Continue to employ the most productive, courteous and efficient staff and compensate them appropriately in an effort to remain competitive with surrounding agencies' benefit packages and retain our staff.

Strategy 2: Maintain a high level of knowledge and experience among staff and encourage longevity through the annual review of fringe benefits, wage evaluations, and promotional processes.

Strategy 3: Focus on officer recruitment by offering hiring incentives, focus on lateral transfer candidates, attend career fairs at colleges and military installations, and produce a recruitment video to attract candidates to our organization and community.

Strategy 4: Provide annual training to ensure officers perform to established competency levels and stay informed on current case law and police practices. Invest heavily in advanced, specialized training to recognize and cultivate individual interests, encourage individual career development and retain personnel.



Strategy 5: Encourage and promote overall health and wellness by offering annual wellness benefits, providing access to a training center, and incentivizing healthy choice programs such as smoking cessation and weight loss programs for staff who meet or exceed health goals to combat health hazards such as physical and mental stress.

Strategy 6: Institute a program to raise awareness around the importance of officer mental wellness. Provide corresponding resources and skill sets to help individuals recognize and manage known stressors and incidents that can be immediately applied to everyday life and strengthen one's ability to overcome adversity and challenges, manage stress, maintain peak performance and thrive in their personal and professional life while ensuring their own mental wellbeing.

Strategy 7: Upgrade vehicle fleet to replace older, high maintenance vehicles with new ones to reduce vehicle maintenance expenses and vehicle-out-of-service times. Provide take-home units for each member of patrol as a hiring incentive, increase visibility and maintain a constant presence within neighborhoods in our community.

Strategy 8: Partner with Idaho Department of Transportation for grant opportunities by providing statewide electronic ticketing systems for our patrol division.

Strategy 9: Partner with various state and federal organizations for grant opportunities to acquire advanced equipment for the investigation of criminal activity, tactical equipment and special operations equipment.