Community Engagement Strategic Plan

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A MESSAGE FROM SHERIFF YOUNGBLOOD

During my career as your Sheriff, I have been and continue to be a proponent of community policing, as a problem-solving philosophy. I expect all members of the Kern County Sheriff's Office to consider themselves as problem solvers. It's easy to point out a problem, but not so easy to find solutions. I have consistently emphasized the phrase, "We can't do it because…" is unacceptable and must be dismissed. I have encouraged and empowered all members of the Sheriff's Office to figure out how we can.

To that end, our Mission statement involves working in partnership with our community to provide effective public safety services:

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.

The public we serve is an essential part of that equation, and we cannot solve the problems facing our community alone. We have long believed the public should take an active part in solving problems facing our community. Over the years we have tried various ways to solicit community feedback with varying degrees of success, such as holding Community Academies, hosting National Night Out events, and participating in many other community events throughout our great county. However, none have been as successful as our partnership with the Community Advisory Council (CAC).

In 2020, the CAC began as a series of informal discussions about law enforcement and slowly transformed into a structured CAC that it is today. Since that time, we have met on a monthly basis with a committed group of community stakeholders, where we have engaged in meaningful dialogue about various topics. The CAC was founded to bring us closer to the people we serve and provide a credible voice the community can trust. With the implementation of the Stipulated Judgment, we agreed to formally incorporate the CAC, which demonstrates our commitment to improve public safety services and strengthen community trust. The mission of the CAC is to "bridge the gap between the County's diverse communities and the Kern County Sheriff's Office," and its vision is to "strengthen communication, generate mutual trust, and promote understanding for a more cohesive and safer Kern County."

I would like to thank all of the CAC members, and the communities they represent, for their interest and input. I am looking forward to continuing to work together with the CAC to increase transparency and providing a forum for our community members to have a voice in our processes. Only by working together can we effectively identify problems and develop lasting solutions.

Sincerely,

Sheriff Donny Youngblood
County of Kern

KERN COUNTY SHERIFF'S OFFICE MISSION STATEMENT

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.

PURPOSE OF PLAN

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is dedicated to strengthening trust within the communities we serve through community policing.

IDEAL CANDIDATE PROFILE

The Kern County Sheriff's Office has identified seven characteristics necessary for employees for a successful career serving our diverse community. It is imperative that every KCSO employee incorporate these characteristics in providing law enforcement services to the community.

- INTEGRITY/ HONESTY
- DECISION MAKING / JUDGEMENT
- BIAS / SOCIAL & CULTURAL SENSITIVITY/ TOLERANCE
- STRESS TOLERANCE
- CONSCIENTIOUSNESS
- INTERPERSONAL SKILLS
- COMMUNICATION SKILLS

KCSO Community Engagement Strategic Plan: Summary

The Kern County Sheriff's Office is committed to work in partnership with our community to enhance the safety, security, and quality of life for the residents and visitors of Kern County through professional public safety services.

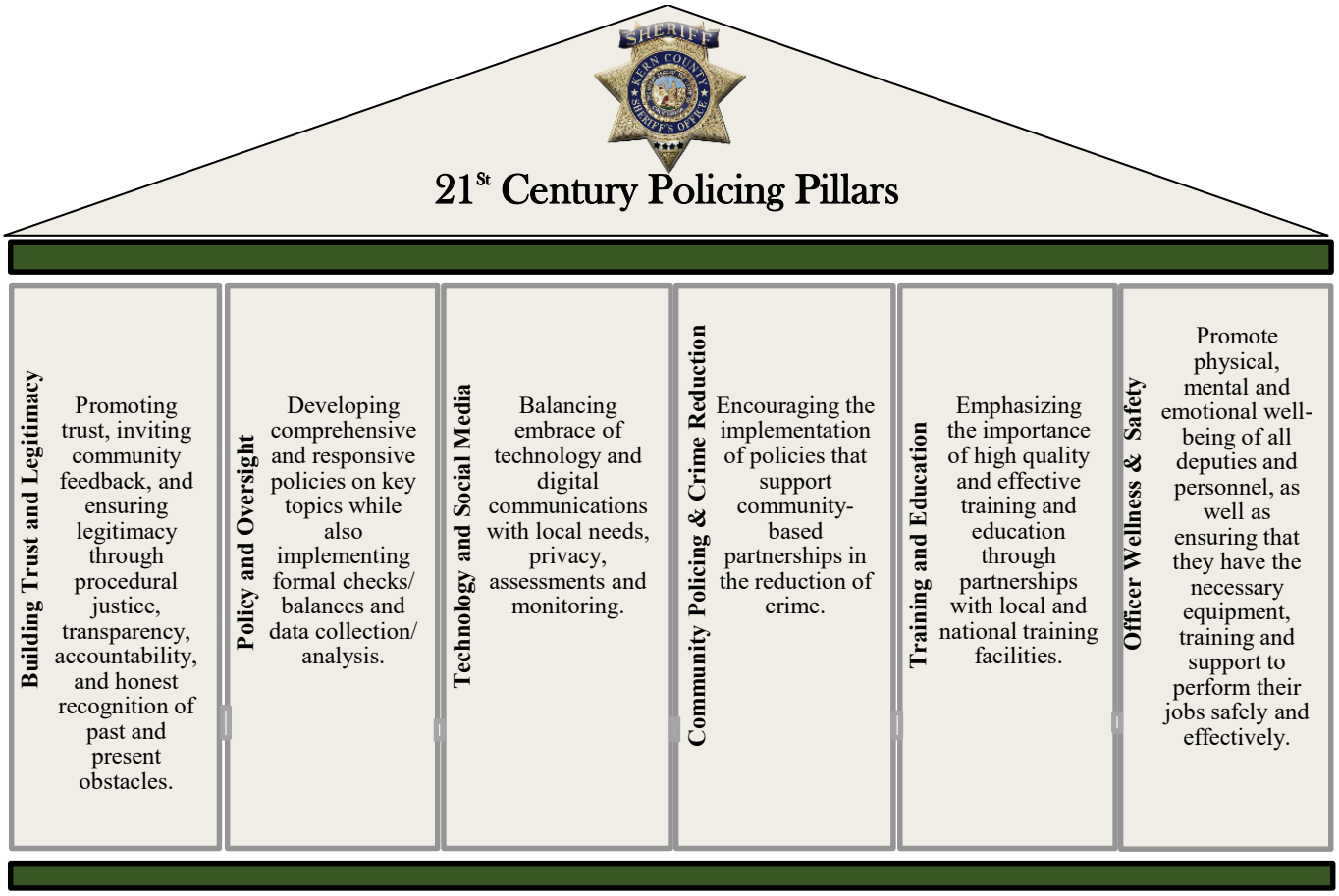
This plan outlines how we will fulfill that commitment in the coming years. The goals and activities in this plan align with our overarching strategy of strengthening trust between our office and our communities through our public safety approaches. Each element of this plan also aims to operationalize our department's core values of compassion, professionalism, and accountability.

We hope this plan supports a welcoming environment and a strong relationship between our office and all who live, work, learn, and play in Kern Co. Please give us your thoughts and feedback by contacting this office at www.kernsheriff.org/Contact

Our Plan:

1. **Enhance our Community Connections**
   We'll achieve this through
   - Expanding our in-person community participation in meetings and events in all areas of the county, especially in neighborhoods which are home to people who are underrepresented in public meetings and offices
   - Creating new channels for community feedback on our website, through our app, and through other digital media
   - Increasing the level of transparency and information sharing that our office provides for communities
   - Creating new opportunities for positive, non-enforcement interactions and connections with community members through these three channels (in person, digital, and presentations)
2. **Collaborating with the Community**
   We'll achieve this through
   - Convening forums and offering training on law enforcement policies, practices, and laws
   - Offer community members the opportunity to participate in police academy and in-service training
   - Work with the CAC and other partners on implementing community policing components of the strategic plan
3. **Maintain, Promote, and Enhance Youth and Diversion Programs**
   We'll achieve this through
   - Continuation of our Cadet Academy and SAL programs
4. **Utilize Community Survey & Collaborate with CAC to Drive Engagement**
   We'll achieve this through
   - Bring engagement strategies to CAC for review and modification
   - Obtain community feedback through surveys and meetings

The KCSO strategic plan is our road map to fulfilling our goal in accordance with the 21st Century Policing Pillars. The purpose of the plan is to develop realistic goals accompanied with various measuring components. This plan has been developed through the emergent relationship between KCSO personnel, and the KCSO Community Advisory Committee (CAC), a group of various community stakeholders meeting monthly since 2020 to create this kind of guiding partnership.



We are committed to building on the 21st Century Policing Pillars to achieve the department's mission. This plan outlines our commitments in the areas of Building Trust and Legitimacy and Community Policing and Crime Reduction, though there are implications for other areas of our work, such as training, policy, and the use of technology and social media. Information on other areas of our organization can be found by visiting our website at kernsheriff.org, our monitoring website at kcsomonitoring.info, and the CAC website at KernCAC.org.

"Community Oriented Policing, 21st Century Policing, Procedural Justice, and Principled Policing exist to serve as a pathway to establishing and reestablishing public trust, police legitimacy, and the safety of law enforcement professionals and members of the public."

California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training. (2020). *DE-ESCALATION: Strategies & Techniques for California Law Enforcement*. https://post.ca.gov/

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 1:

BROADEN COMMUNITY MEETING EFFORT

Seek to promote trust and police legitimacy through increasing transparency, accountability, and recognition of past and present obstacles to true partnership with community residents. Together, the CAC and KCSO have outlined the following goals, the activities to achieve them, and metrics for our progress.

GOALS:

Build community trust in KCSO	Proactively increase the number of events held to serve the community by hosting engagement and dialogue meetings to gain community participation at events	Build trust with various organizations while working toward safety, security and quality of life in Kern County

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF MEETINGS WITH AN ESTIMATED NUMBER OF ATTENDANCE
- NUMBER OF SURVEY RESPONSES INDICATING KCSO IS ENGAGING
- ENGAGEMENTS WILL BE ENTERED INTO COPS LOG

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 2:

DEVELOP COMMUNITY FEEDBACK PORTALS

Providing the community with the ability to interact with KCSO across all facets of policing will give a better understanding of the community's expectations. Community feedback portals and contact information for Divisional Commanders are available online under the "contact us" tab on kernsheriff.org and kerncac.org.

GOALS:

Increase the number of engagement conversations and interactions through various methods	Generate programs/events based on community needs

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF EVENTS/PROGRAM REQUESTS RECEIVED BY CRIME PREVENTION
- NUMBER OF EVENTS/PROGRAM REQUESTS ATTENDED BY CRIME PREVENTION
- NUMBER OF COMMUNITY INTERACTIONS ENTERED INTO COPS LOG
- NUMBER OF MEETINGS WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 3:

PURPOSEFUL ENGAGEMENT WITH UNDERRECOGNIZED GROUPS

Particular groups in the community may be marginalized or unheard. Identifying locations throughout the County where underrecognized groups reside and seeking to engage them in their areas of safety can help create safer communities, improve relationships through communication, and build trust through transparency.

GOALS:

Increase the number of events held in underrecognized areas	Improve relations and trust with underrecognized groups	Create directed engagement to discuss aspirations and the challenges faced within the community

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF EVENTS IN UNDERRECOGNIZED COMMUNITIES
- CRIME PREVENTION TO ARCHIVE NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS CONTACTED DURING EVENTS
- NUMBER/TYPES OF MEETINGS HELD ANNUALLY FOR EACH RESPONSE AREA
- EVALUATE COPS LOG AND MY90 RESPONSES

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 4:

UTILIZE COMMUNICATION CHANNELS AND STRATEGIES TO REACH THE COMMUNITY

A focus on transparent and timely communication that provides information regarding department policy, upcoming events, safety tips, and general information to the community can increase mutual understanding.

GOALS:

Review data shared on social media platforms	Broaden audience reach by increasing social media posts and interactions	To reach more members of the community and increase the number of followers

MEASURED BY:

- REVIEW DATA POSTED ON SOCIAL MEDIA PLATFORMS
- NUMBER OF POSTS FROM YEAR TO YEAR
- NUMBER OF FOLLOWERS REACHED
- AMOUNT OF VISITS TO THE PUBLIC WEBSITE (kernsheriff.org)

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 5:

INCREASE TRANSPARENCY OF DATA, POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The KCSO transparency page will allow community members to view a variety of statistics and documents in one easy-to-find location.

GOALS:

Keep statistics updated on officer involved shootings and in-custody deaths	Update statistics in compliance with state law	Post annual reports, critical incident videos, and community crime statistics

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF ANNUAL REPORTS POSTED
- STATISTICS POSTED ON WEBSITE
- NUMBER OF PEOPLE WHO VISIT THE TRANSPARENCY PAGE
- NUMBER OF UPDATES TO KCSO TRANSPARENCY PAGE (kernsheriff.org/Transparency)

ENHANCE COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS
OBJECTIVE 6:

INCREASE POSITIVE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Some areas of law enforcement deal with serious and oftentimes traumatic events. By increasing the number and frequency of positive interactions with community members, KCSO hopes to foster mutual respect, relationships, and trust.

GOALS:

Increase the number of positive engagement events throughout the community	To create an environment where KCSO employees and community members can have meaningful dialogue	To increase legitimacy and public trust through encounters with KCSO personnel

MEASURED BY:

- TYPES/ NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEETINGS HELD IN EACH RESPONSE AREA
- NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS/ PERSONNEL AT EACH
- NUMBER OF POSITIVE EVENTS FROM CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM REQUESTS
- NUMBER OF POSITIVE MY90 SURVEY RESPONSES
- NUMBER OF POSITIVE EVENTS IN COPS LOG

MUTUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
OBJECTIVE 1:

COLLABORATE WITH COMMUNITY ON PROCESSES, PROBLEMS AND POLICIES

Effective community policing strategies share responsibility for community safety between police and community members. KCSO will collaborate with the community to work side-by-side and create and maintain safe, vibrant neighborhoods.

GOALS:

Educate the public about KCSO via community academies	Utilize KCSO personnel to safeguard the community by partnering with residents on crime prevention strategies and POP projects	Engage with the Community Advisory Council to provide a voice to the community in KCSO processes

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS ATTENDING COMMUNITY ACADEMY
- NUMBER OF CAC MEETINGS HELD AND TOPICS DISCUSSED (CAC MINUTES)
- NUMBER OF POP PROJECTS

MUTUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
OBJECTIVE 2:

HAVE COMMUNITY MEMBERS PARTICIPATE IN ACADEMY INSTRUCTION AND IN-SERVICE TRAINING

Community members and community organizations possess extensive subject and neighborhood-specific expertise that KCSO should incorporate into its training curriculum. Bringing in diverse voices from outside the department plays a vital role in officer development and understanding of community issues.

GOALS:

Partner with community leaders to increase the number of members participating in trainings

Partner with the community to develop new training

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS WHO PARTICIPATED IN TRAINING
- NUMBER OF COURSES DEVELOPED IN COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS
- NUMBER OF COURSES ATTENDED IN COLLABORATION WITH COMMUNITY MEMBERS

MUTUAL LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES
OBJECTIVE 3:

IMPLEMENT AND REINFORCE THE COMMUNITY POLICING COMPONENTS

Implementing and reinforcing the community policing components will ensure that community feedback is received, gathered, and analyzed by KCSO. The three components of community policing are: community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem solving.

GOALS:

Maintain and regularly meet with CAC to solicit and incorporate community feedback, when appropriate	Hold community meetings at least four times a year	Enhance internal processes to reinforce the community policing philosophy

MEASURED BY:

- TOPICS DISCUSSED WITH CAC (CAC MINUTES)
- AMOUNT OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED FROM THE COMMUNITY (CAC WEBSITE)
- AMOUNT OF FEEDBACK RECEIVED THROUGH MY90 SURVEYS
- NUMBER OF MEETINGS HELD WITH CAC ANNUALLY

MAINTAIN/ PROMOTE/ ENHANCE DIVERSION & YOUTH PROGRAMS

OBJECTIVE 1:

CONTINUE CADET ACADEMY AND SAL PROGRAM

These programs provide opportunities for young people and officers to engage at a level where mutual respect and relationships are formed.

GOALS:

Spread awareness of KCSO programs to increase the partnership with our local youth	Build relationships with our community to increase youth participation in programs	Collaborate with other community organizations focusing on youth	Provide structured training and educational activities to cadets/ SAL

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE SAL PROGRAM
- NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN THE CADET PROGRAM
- NUMBER OF RECRUITMENT ACTIVITIES FOCUSED ON YOUTH PROGRAMS
- NUMBER OF EVENTS ATTENDED WITH OTHER YOUTH RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

UTILIZE COMMUNITY SURVEY & COLLABORATE WITH THE CAC TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE 1:

WORK WITH CAC TO REVIEW COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGIES

Utilizing various perspectives and experiences is important to being a well-rounded, accountable, and transparent law enforcement organization. The CAC will provide KCSO with insights and recommendations in all areas of its operations.

GOALS:

Collaborate with the CAC to increase strategies for community engagement	Partner with CAC in an ongoing effort to cultivate a greater community audience at local events through their recommendations	Partner with CAC to provide a community voice into KCSO processes

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF POLICIES/DOCUMENTS REVIEWED BY CAC
- NUMBER OF EVENTS PLANNED WITH CAC
- NUMBER OF EVENTS ATTENDED WITH CAC

UTILIZE COMMUNITY SURVEY & COLLABORATE WITH THE CAC TO DRIVE ENGAGEMENT

OBJECTIVE 2:

OBTAIN COMMUNITY FEEDBACK THROUGH SURVEY

Community oriented policing is founded on the principle of partnering with the community to solve problems. KCSO utilizes community input from survey information completed by community members who have received services from KCSO.

GOALS:

Use information gathered to solve problems and/or build upon practices	Encourage the participation of survey completion by community members	Engage and learn from survey responses to build relationships and trust

MEASURED BY:

- NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS
- NUMBER OF MY90 RESPONSES AND COMPLIMENTS
- NUMBER OF SURVEYS COMPLETED BY COMMUNITY MEMBERS

CONNECT WITH KCSO:

Kern County Sheriff's Office Headquarters

1350 Norris Rd. Bakersfield, CA 93308

Phone: (661) 391-7500

Fax: (661) 391-7515

www.kernsheriff.org

Facebook.com/Kernsheriff

Youtube.com/KernCountySheriff

Instagram.com/KernSheriff

Twitter.com/KernCoSheriff

Kerncac.org

Phone Numbers:

ALL EMERGENCIES: 9-1-1

Dispatch: (661) 861-3110

Toll-Free: (800) 861-3110

Narcotics Hotline: (661) 392– 6003