

Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission (LETAC)

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Recommendation to Colorado Springs City Council regarding Promoting First Amendment Rights and Permitting Changes in Colorado Springs

Proposed: May 6, 2024

Voted on: June 3, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This memorandum addresses the imperative of promoting First Amendment rights, changing permitting processes, and reviewing current ordinances in conjunction with best civic and legal practices for growing cities. It emphasizes the significance of civic education, transparent engagement, and legal compliance to uphold constitutional principles. These issues are paramount to 21st-century policing. Colorado Springs has seen a plethora of demonstrations, protests, events, parades, and other expressions of First Amendment rights since its inception. Many of these events have been peaceful. There have been, however, several events that have led to increased resident and law enforcement interaction resulting in greater use of force instances. These uses of force often lead to the dehumanizing of residents demonstrating First Amendment rights. Acts of violence toward the police also dehumanize officers seeking to protect community members' rights. The Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission (LETAC) believes improved communication and information sharing by the City of Colorado Springs will improve future interactions between Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) officers tasked to protect resident rights and those Colorado Springs residents exercising rights. These changes will benefit the preparedness of the City of Colorado Springs as it becomes Colorado's largest projected city.

Recommendations:

- 1) **Civic Education:** Expand the Civic Superhero page on the City's website to include comprehensive civic education, providing residents with pertinent local information, links, and services to enhance awareness and engagement with their constitutional rights.
- 2) **Changes to the Permitting Process:** Conduct changes through comparisons with other cities, not limited to those proposed, to ensure residents seeking permits for events, parades, demonstrations, protests and other lawful acts of peaceable assembly are accessible, timely, monetarily proportionate, standardized, objective, and clear.
- 3) **Legal Review of Ordinances:** Conduct a legal review of Colorado Springs City Ordinance 9.2.104 "Obstructing Passage or Assembly" and Colorado Springs City Ordinance 9.3.101 "Resisting, Interference with Public Official" to identify and rectify any potential First Amendment obstructions, ensuring alignment with constitutional standards.

Goals:

Enhanced Civic Engagement: The expansion of civic education aims to empower residents with the knowledge and resources necessary to actively participate in civic affairs, fostering a more engaged and informed citizenry.

Clear Communication and Conflict Resolution: Through an improved permitting process and legal review of ordinances, the recommendations seek to establish clear guidelines and procedures, reducing ambiguity and potential conflicts between demonstrators, city officials, and law enforcement.

Upholding Constitutional Principles: Ultimately, the goals of these recommendations are to uphold

the core principles of the First Amendment and ensure that the City of Colorado Springs remains a beacon of democratic values and constitutional integrity. This is standard for a growing city. It will ensure residents' rights are better served while safeguarding the public safety of all residents.

These recommendations do not direct a specific manner or timeframe for completion.

Recommendation 3 does not include budgetary requests as it assumes the City of Colorado Springs legal team can perform such a review.

FULL REPORT: Recommendation to Colorado Springs City Council regarding Promoting First Amendment Rights and Permitting Changes in Colorado Springs

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Goals and Justification:

Civic Education and First Amendment Rights: The Supreme Court, in *Board of Education v. Pico* (1982), recognized the fundamental importance of education in promoting democratic values and citizenship. Moreover, in *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* (1967), the Court emphasized the significance of ensuring citizens understand their rights to effectively participate in democratic processes.

Conflict Resolution and Legal Compliance: Clear information on First Amendment rights not only aids in conflict resolution but also mitigates potential legal issues. In *Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District* (1969), the Court affirmed that students' First Amendment rights are not shed at the schoolhouse gate. The same holds during demonstrations or other events. Similarly, in *Ward v. Rock Against Racism* (1989), the Court emphasized the government's obligation to regulate speech in a content-neutral manner to avoid First Amendment violations. To this point, LETAC does not recommend specific language, rather than the vague language used in Ordinance 9.2.104, be codified around demonstrations, protests, or First Amendment-protected actions within the Colorado Springs City Charter. *Grayned v. City of Rockford* (1972), *Reed et al. v. Town of Gilbert* (2015), *McCullen v. Coakley* (2014), *Snyder v. Phelps* (2011), among other cases, that sought to codify specific language around protests, even if in good faith, were ultimately struck down as unconstitutional.

Transparency and Community Engagement: Providing resources on First Amendment rights demonstrates transparency and a commitment to constitutional principles. This aligns with legal precedents such as *Edwards v. South Carolina* (1963), which underscored the importance of protecting peaceable assembly. This applies to local government and the important task of civic education and protecting residents' rights.

Legal and Practical Analysis of Proposed Actions: As the City of Colorado Springs becomes the largest city in Colorado, by geography and populace, LETAC believes it is in the best interest of the City of Colorado Springs and CSPD to continue to be critical and proactive around planning and addressing public safety concerns of large protests, common in cities across the US, while maintaining residents rights. LETAC Commissioners express appreciation to CSPD for proactively teaching, above and beyond POST

requirements and in and out of CSPD Academy settings, the importance of constitutional policing while acknowledging areas for growth. The burden of civic education is not on a city's police department.

Providing a Civic Engagement Information Page: The establishment of a Civic Engagement Information Page on the City website aligns with legal precedent and serves the public interest. The Supreme Court, in *Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union* (1997), recognized the internet as a unique platform for the dissemination of information and protected speech. Providing a dedicated place where the City of Colorado Springs educates residents on civic engagement is vital to reduce miscommunication that can and does impact how the City of Colorado Springs engages its residents. LETAC recommends the City of Colorado Springs expand its Civic Superhero page, or relevant page, to include Civic education on the constitutional rights of residents with pertinent local information, links, and services, to better serve, educate, and engage residents. For example, creating a more streamlined application process for events, demonstrations, or other First Amendment-protected actions that reduces confusion, minimizes undue burdens on residents, allows for timely approval, and clearly articulates ways in which First Amendment rights may no longer be considered lawful (i.e., blocking a roadway without a permit or defacing public property). These are small changes that can provide better communication and expectations for residents.

Changes to the Permitting Process: The rights of peaceable assembly, protected under the U.S. Constitution, must be preserved while maintaining public order and safety. The permitting process is an effective tool to ensure a balance of individual rights and public safety. Permitting processes excluding keywords, like "protest" or "demonstration", limit access through time restraints or monetarily unproportionate fees, and lack clear and objective criteria for the acceptance or rejection of permits create unnecessary conflict and limit applicant rights. The law is clear regarding permitting processes that allow city officials unbridled discretion to deny permits for First Amendment activities is unconstitutional (*Shuttlesworth v. City of Birmingham* (1969)). *Forsyth County v. Nationalist Movement* (1992) and *Cox v. New Hampshire* (1941) also highlight the legal requirement for content-neutral and non-discriminatory application of permits and permit fees. It is important to note while creating standard criteria for permits that City ordinances do not always have the legal authority to deny submitted permits, but First Amendment expression is subject to reasonable time, place, and manner restrictions (*Hague v. Committee for Industrial Organization* (1939), *Clark v. Community for Creative Non-Violence* (1984)). It is in the best interest of the City of Colorado Springs, its residents, and its police department, to initiate changes to the existing permitting process that standardizes fees and criteria, offers expedited processing, improves public communication, ensures the online permit portal is easily accessible, i.e., included as a link in civic education page and GoCOS App, and allows for regular reviews and pertinent updates.

Review of City Ordinance 9.2.104 "OBSTRUCTING PASSAGE OR ASSEMBLY" and 9.3.101 "RESISTING, INTERFERENCE WITH PUBLIC OFFICIAL (Items B/C)": Legal review of Colorado Springs City Ordinance 9.2.104 "Obstructing Passage or Assembly" and Colorado Springs City Ordinance 9.3.101 "RESISTING, INTERFERENCE WITH PUBLIC OFFICIAL", items B/C, for potential Constitutional 1st Amendment obstructions. We recommend this be done by a lawyer or law firm who is a member of The First Amendment Lawyers Association (FALA), or a similar association.

Promoting civic education and ensuring a more accessible and unbiased permitting process in Colorado Springs are commendable initiatives that align with established legal principles. By fostering awareness of constitutional rights and the permitting process, with relevant exceptions, the city can enhance community engagement, mitigate conflicts, and uphold the democratic values of residents, regardless of civic, religious, political, or other First Amendment-protected expressions. The police department will benefit from clearer suggested guidelines, processes, and information for residents seeking to express civic rights.

Best Practices for Permitting Processes

Accessibility and Timeliness:

- Ensure that the permitting process is accessible both physically and electronically.
- Provide clear timelines for application review and decision-making to avoid unnecessary delays.
- Example: New York City requires that permit applications for parades and public demonstrations be submitted at least 45 days in advance but also provides for expedited processing in certain situations (<https://www.nyc.gov/site/nypd/services/law-enforcement/permits-licenses-permits.page>).

Monetary Proportionality:

- Fees should be reasonable and proportionate to the administrative costs incurred by the city in processing the permit.
- Example: San Francisco has a fee schedule that reflects the size and nature of the event, ensuring smaller events are not overburdened with high fees (<https://www.sfmta.com/permits/special-event-street-closures>).

Objective and Clear Criteria:

- Develop and publish clear, objective criteria for permit approval or denial to prevent arbitrary decision-making.
- Example: Chicago outlines specific, objective criteria for permit applications, such as traffic considerations, public safety, and conflict with other scheduled events (<https://www.chicago.gov/content/dam/city/depts/dps/ContractAdministration/StandardFormsAgreements/BidProtestRules12302013.pdf>).

Transparency and Communication:

- Maintain transparent communication with applicants throughout the process, including reasons for any delays or denials. This expectation must be clearly written on the City's website page.
- Example: Los Angeles provides a detailed guide on their website explaining the permitting process, criteria, and expected timelines (<https://www.ladbs.org/services/core-services/plan-check-permit/types-of-plan-checks-permits/special-event-permit>).

Content-Neutral Regulations:

- Ensure that all regulations and decisions are content-neutral, focusing on time, place, and manner rather than the content of the speech, type of event, or content of the permit submission.
- Example: Washington, D.C. explicitly states in its regulations that permit decisions cannot be based on the content of the proposed speech (<https://www.nps.gov/nama/planyourvisit/demonstrations.htm> ; <https://mpdc.dc.gov/service/get-permit-special-event>).

Additional Examples of Cities with Effective Permitting Processes

Seattle, Washington (<https://www.seattle.gov/special-events-office/handbook/free-speech-events-and-activity>):

- Seattle's Special Events Office provides a comprehensive online portal for permit applications, clear guidelines, and a tiered fee structure based on event size and complexity.
- The city ensures timely responses and provides resources for event organizers to comply with public safety requirements.

Portland, Oregon (<https://www.portland.gov/transportation/permitting/portland-streets/apply-special-event-permit>):

- Portland offers a streamlined process for permits, with an online application system and clear instructions.
- The city emphasizes minimal fees for small or nonprofit events and helps to navigate the permitting process.

Austin, Texas (<https://www.austintexas.gov/department/sidewalk-protests-and-demonstrations>):

- Austin's Special Events Ordinance is designed to be transparent and user-friendly, with clear criteria and a focus on ensuring public safety without impeding First Amendment rights.
- The city provides a detailed event planning guide and maintains open lines of communication with event organizers. There is also an informational page for non-permitted activities.

Legal Citations

1. Board of Education v. Pico, 457 U.S. 853 (1982).
2. Keyishian v. Board of Regents, 385 U.S. 589 (1967).
3. Tinker v. Des Moines Independent Community School District, 393 U.S. 503 (1969).
4. Ward v. Rock Against Racism, 491 U.S. 781 (1989).
5. Grayned v. City of Rockford, 408 U.S. 104 (1972).
6. Reed at al. v. Town of Gilbert, 576 U.S. 155 (2015).
7. McCullen v. Coakley, 573 U.S. 464 (2014).
8. Snyder v. Phelps, 562 U.S. 443 (2011).
9. Edwards v. South Carolina, 372 U.S. 229 (1963).
10. Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union, 521 U.S. 844 (1997).
11. Shuttlesworth v. City of Birmingham, 394 U.S. 147 (1969).
12. Forsyth County v. Nationalist Movement, 505 U.S. 123 (1992).
13. Cox v. New Hampshire, 312 U.S. 569 (1941).
14. Hague v. Committee for Industrial Organization, 307 U.S. 496 (1939).
15. Clark v. Community for Creative Non-Violence, 468 U.S. 288 (1984).

Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission (LETAC)

Colorado Springs, Colorado

Recommendation to Colorado Springs City Council regarding CSPD Division-Level Hands-On Training for Perishable Arrest Control

Approved: August 5, 2024

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

“We don't rise to the level of our expectations; we fall to the level of our training.” – Archilochus

As of 2021, before the new model for training academies was implemented, the Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) exceeded the arrest control training requirements established by the Colorado Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Incumbent CSPD patrol officers and patrol sergeants have expressed a need for additional training in perishable skills, specifically hands-on arrest control tactics. Martial arts training (MAT), de-escalation training (DT), self-defense training, and other related hands-on training are crucial for ensuring the safety of law enforcement officers and citizens during arrest encounters that require physical force. While POST mandates 66 hours of arrest control training, CSPD provides 107.5 hours during its recruit academy, surpassing the requirement. POST also requires 24 hours of in-service training annually for incumbent peace officers, 12 of which must cover perishable skills (CSPD Use of Force Presentation, III, 2021). At least one hour of the 12 required hours must be used for driving, arrest control, and firearms to maintain POST standards. Based on officer input and research by the Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission (LETAC) Use of Force Committee, there is sufficient reason to recommend: CSPD should provide at least one hour of duty time every two weeks for incumbent officers to train on perishable hands-on arrest control tactics, including MAT-specific training and other related CSPD training and policy-approved defensive hands-on tactics at the division level, including permitted off-site facilities, using approved experts and train-the-trainer formats.

Recommendation:

At a minimum, provide one hour of duty time every two weeks for incumbent officers to train on perishable hands-on arrest control tactics, including martial arts training (MAT), de-escalation training (DT), self-defense-specific training, and other related CSPD training and policy-approved defensive hands-on tactics. This training should occur at the division level and include permitted off-site facilities, utilizing approved experts and train-the-trainer formats, implemented department-wide.

Goals and Justification:

The goal of this recommendation is to address the concerns and needs of patrol officers and relevant command staff. LETAC believes this will provide Colorado Springs residents with the best-trained patrol peace officers, potentially mitigating controllable negative outcomes in use-of-force incidents or resident contacts. CSPD patrol sentiment reflects a desire for consistent hands-on training. All patrol officers favor increased allowable training hours for MAT, DT, or related training and prioritize this over other uses of duty time, including gear maintenance. Research indicates that consistent MAT, DT, or related training results in statistically significant decreases in use-of-force incidents, increased officer confidence, and reduced harm to officers and arrestees during encounters where force is used (Gonzalez, 2023; Holmberg & McGinty, 2020; Freeman & White, 2018). LETAC did not conduct an exhaustive literature review on these training programs but believes CSPD is well-positioned to determine its own qualified hands-on training program and partner agencies as needed. Regular training on perishable skills will also help foster a work environment of mastery, which has been shown to aid in employee retention.

The existing literature supports that comprehensive training programs—whether focused on practical skills, de-escalation techniques, or defensive tactics—effectively enhance law enforcement officers' confidence and improve their use-of-force outcomes. Improved skills and attitudes resulting from such training can lead to more effective and less aggressive handling of confrontational situations. Regular training also fosters a mastery-oriented work environment. When employees perceive their work environment as supportive of their personal growth and skill development, they are more likely to remain with the organization (Lima et al., 2020). A positive mastery climate significantly influences employees' intention to stay.

FULL REPORT: Recommendation / CSPD Division-Level Hands-On Training for Perishable Arrest Control

Recommendations:

At a minimum, provide one hour of duty time every two weeks for incumbent officers to train on perishable hands-on arrest control tactics, including martial arts training (MAT), de-escalation training (DT), self-defense-specific training, and other related CSPD training and policy-approved defensive hands-on tactics. This training should occur at the division level and include permitted off-site facilities, utilizing approved experts and train-the-trainer formats, implemented department-wide.

Goals and Justification:

The Peace Officer Standards and Training Department (POST) requires 66 hours of arrest control training. CSPD provides 107.5 hours of arrest control training during its recruit academy, exceeding this requirement as of 2021. POST mandates 24 hours per year of in-service training for incumbent peace officers, with 12 of these hours dedicated to perishable skills (CSPD Use of Force Presentation, III, 2021). Arrest control includes subjects such as physical control of subjects, proper searches, handcuffs, OC/TASER, custodial care, sudden custody death syndrome, weapon retention and retrieval, escort control, ground fighting, and scenario training. Officer sentiment strongly supports additional hands-on use of force training for patrol units at the division level and at approved off-site facilities. Officers are updated annually, per CSPD policy, on Use of Force policy and legislative changes (CSPD Use of Force Presentation I, 2021). CSPD has well-established policies on firearms and other non-lethal use of force tools (CSPD Use of Force Presentation II, 2021). Despite this, officers feel there is still a need for more regular training in the application of these available tools. The Transparency Matters LLC Use of Force Study (2022) reports that 74% of officers want additional use of force-related training. Only 20-30% of officers feel CSPD provides adequate hands-on training, pre- and post-pandemic, with 90% seeking more shoot/don't shoot interactive training and 80% specifying the need for additional non-lethal weapons and defensive tactics training. Additionally, LETAC has received feedback directly from 12 patrol officers regarding this recommendation. LETAC serves as a conduit for concerns from both residents and CSPD officers, per its charter. The following are the goals and further justification of this recommendation:

1. The goal of the recommendation is to address the concerns and needs of patrol officers and relevant command staff. LETAC believes this will provide Colorado Springs residents with the best-trained patrol peace officers, potentially mitigating controllable negative outcomes in use-of-force incidents or resident contacts.

In addition to the officer survey conducted by Transparency Matters, LETAC has gathered additional feedback directly from patrol officers and sergeants. CSPD patrol sentiment indicates a desire for consistent hands-on training. All patrol officers favor increased allowable training hours for MAT, DT, or related training. LETAC has spoken with several officers, with five willing to provide statements for this recommendation. All statements have been kept anonymous at the request of certain officers, although some were willing to be quoted by name. The statements from three patrol supervisors and two patrol officers are as follows:

- “If they [CSPD] will give me 0.5 hours of pay per period to maintain my gear, I’d rather give that up to be given 1.0 hours to train hands-on each period.” - Patrol Sergeant A
- “[I] overwhelmingly support this. This has been discussed in line-ups and all officers want more hands-on training.” - Patrol Sergeant B
- “Anything we would do is more than what we do now. [I] definitely support.” - Patrol Sergeant C

- “Absolutely [supporting this recommendation]. Regular DT training was recommended by the Use of Force Committee and was never followed up on.” - Patrol Officer A
 - “Regardless of whether we [CSPD Officers] use BJJ, FBI PPT, Judo, or whatever, it’s worthless if we only train on it once a year; it must be trained regularly.” - Patrol Officer B
2. Research shows that consistent MAT, DT, or related training results in statistically significant decreases in use-of-force incidents, increased officer confidence, and reduced harm to officers and arrestees during contacts where force is used (Gonzalez, 2023; Holmberg & McGinty, 2020; Freeman & White, 2018). While LETAC did not conduct an exhaustive literature review on MAT, DT, or related hands-on training programs, it believes CSPD is well-positioned to develop its own qualified hands-on training program and partner agencies as needed. Regular training on perishable skills will also foster a work environment of mastery, which has been shown to aid in employee retention.

The literature supports that comprehensive training programs—whether focused on practical skills, de-escalation techniques, or defensive tactics—effectively enhance law enforcement officers' confidence and improve their use-of-force outcomes. As there existed no conflicting literature on the outcomes of increasing regular hands-on training-related tactics among officers and officer performance and use of force outcomes, LETAC has selected two peer-reviewed journals and an academic dissertation that highlights academic findings. Gonzalez (2023) investigates the efficacy of hands-on training programs on the outcome of officer confidence finding that effective programs have a strong association with confidence in ability. This reduces inappropriate uses of force and increases the safety of officers and residents through well-structured training programs using defensive tactics (Freedman & White, 2018). Coupling regular hands-on training and defensive tactic programs with frequent PERF-approved de-escalation training reduces the frequency for the need of any use of force encounters (Holmberg & McGinty, 2020). All three studies show there is a positive association with officer confidence in hands-on training, defensive tactics, and de-escalation. The outcomes of each study strongly suggest measured, controlled, and reduced uses of force due to the increase in officer confidence, skill, and habitual training, improving officer performance of resident-officer contact outcomes. While the skills and abilities of CPSD officers are often above the standard of other agencies, comprehensive training programs, whether focused on practical skills, de-escalation techniques, or defensive tactics, can effectively enhance law enforcement officers' confidence and improve their use of force outcomes. Improvements in officers' skills and attitudes from such training can lead to more effective and less aggressive handling of confrontational situations. Regular training also cultivates a mastery-oriented work environment. When employees perceive their work environment as supportive of their personal growth and skill development, they are more likely to remain with the organization (Lima et al., 2020). A positive mastery climate significantly influences employees' intention to stay.

References and Supporting Material:

Gonzalez, E. (2023). "The Impact of Hands-On Training on Law Enforcement Officer Confidence and Use of Force Outcomes: An Evaluation of Training Programs." ProQuest Dissertations & Theses. <https://www.proquest.com/openview/2ed20a7585e5c1a8873e52082e455c5b/1?pq-origsite=gscholar&cbl=18750&diss=y>

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Transparency Matters LLC (2022). "Assessment of Colorado Springs Use of Force." Prepared for the City of Colorado Springs and the Chief of the Colorado Springs Police Department. P. 188-190.

Colorado Springs Police Department (2021). "Use of Force Presentation I". Presented to LETAC by Officer Harvell, Lt. Thompson, Lt. Hutchison, and Cmdr. Velasquez. April 19, 2021.

Colorado Springs Police Department (2021). "Use of Force Presentation II". Presented to LETAC by Officer Harvell, Lt. Thompson, Lt. Hutchison, Sgt. Snuggs, and Cmdr. Velasquez. May 17, 2021.

Colorado Springs Police Department (2021). "Use of Force Presentation III". Presented to LETAC by Officer Harvell and Lt. Hutchison. June 07, 2021.

Colorado Springs Police Department (2021). "Use of Force Presentation IV". Presented to LETAC by Cmdr. Mandel, Lt. Thompson, Lt. Chanza, Ms. Terrel-Orr (Research and Development Specialist), and Cmdr. Velasquez. June 21, 2021.

Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission's (LETAC) 2025 Colorado Springs Police Department Budget Considerations and Recommendations

Background: Per the Commission's stated objectives, the endeavor to provide input to the annual Colorado Springs Police Department (CSPD) budget development process is provided via this correspondence. To codify and articulate the Commission's input, three (3) working priorities were developed. These priorities were formulated using a methodology based on community feedback, periodic CSPD reporting, Commissioners' observations, and a review of CSPD's 2024 Budget, to include the Mayor's proposed 3.4% budget reduction for each City department. As for the CSPD, Chief Vasquez spoke on behalf of the Department's reduction, stating that he was "... comfortable with Department's planned spending reductions. He stated that he did not feel the cuts would have a negative impact to resident safety or the services the department provides." The Commission, without working knowledge of the Department's 2025 Budget Development and Planning Assumptions and Priorities, is left with the aforementioned methodology and analyses for developing its priorities, which are necessary to formulate useful and informed budget considerations and recommendations.

LETAC Recommended Budget Priorities: The following priorities are forwarded for consideration and will serve as the basis for the Commission's 2025 budget recommendations to the City Council and CSPD.

1. Fill current and projected sworn officers and operational systems experts' vacancies. In doing so, allocate funding for enhanced recruiting and retention incentives.
2. Improve and enhance Response Times to include ensuring the appropriate team of experts are dispatched in response to calls for service.
3. Acquire and operationalize state-of-the-art technology, along with qualified personnel to optimize systems and operational functionality.

Priorities with Justification and Corresponding General Fund Account number(s):

1. Increase the number of sworn officers and operational systems experts to meet or exceed current and projected personnel vacancies.
Justification: As of June 24, 2024, CSPD employs 722 sworn officers and has 65 recruits in the Recruit Academy (total=787) of 819 authorized sworn positions. Due to attrition, the number of sworn officers and recruits changes frequently, so this is only true as of 24 June. As of this date, 96% of the budgeted sworn positions are filled. As noted, and appropriated in the 2024 Budget, the 2025 Budget must continue the funding for increased sworn officers and the required Specialized Experts necessary for the functional (operational) and support needs to expertly execute the CSPD mission. Sworn Officers

Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission's (LETAC) 2025 Colorado Springs Police Department Budget Considerations and Recommendations

and the requisite Technical Experts are fundamental to CSPD's ability to execute its core competencies and cultivate a safe and secure City. General Fund Account Numbers: Specifically, the 51000 series of General Fund Account numbers should receive priority funding commensurate with filling current and projected vacancies.

***Moreover, considering CSPD received a 3.4% 2024 budget reduction, which equated to a \$4.5 million reduction in 2024 spending for CSPD, it is reasonable to assume that although key and essential mission tasks were not adversely impacted, there were few opportunities to enhance and broaden capabilities through leveraging and incorporating new technologies. For example, Chief Vasquez, at the time, proposed allowing only "operationally necessary expenses" for the year (2024), such as important maintenance and repairs to facilities; only replacing uniforms in serious disrepair; cutting back on approved overtime hours in ways that don't affect public safety; and maintaining existing equipment but not expanding programs, as actions to meet the proposed budget reductions. Therefore, another year of budget reductions will create a tenuous situation in which the Department will be unable to keep pace with mission demands, while exploiting operational efficiencies, due to the lack of investment funds.

2. Improve and enhance 911 and non-emergency Response Times to include ensuring the appropriate responders are dispatched accordingly. Justification: In keeping with CSPD's Strategic Plan, Initiative 4.1, *Improve public safety response*, this Priority remains a work in progress, as indicated by the Strategic Plan update that was submitted with the 2024 Budget. Additionally, per the May 2024 Community Response Team (CRT) and Alternate Response Team (ART) Progress Update to the Commission, these teams have created a synergy that provides an enhanced response to mental and behavior calls, thus, reducing the out-of-service time for Police Officers. General Fund Account Numbers: Various Account Numbers throughout the Budget allocate funds that support and resource the Operations Support Bureau, specifically the Communications Center. Thus, the prioritized funding for personnel recruitment, training, retention, and relevant equipment for this vital function should continue until personnel authorized strength and performance standards are achieved. Further, recognizing that CSFD funds the Alternate Response Team concept, CSPD should intensify collaboration efforts towards fully funding at least one more Team during 2025.
3. Acquire and operationalize state-of-the-art technology, along with qualified personnel to maximize efficiency and service. Justification: Per the CSPD's Strategic Plan Update, 4.1 *Improve public safety*

Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission's (LETAC) 2025 Colorado Springs Police Department Budget Considerations and Recommendations

response, Performance Measures 4.17.3 Develop and implement a comprehensive strategic technology plan by 2022 and 4.17.4 Implement an intelligence-led policing model as a crime prevention and crime reduction tool by 2022. Correspondingly, the Strategic Plan Update as of 2024, reflects that these two Performance Measures are complete, however, even though completed, a priority emphasis will need to be continued and sustained to ensure full implementation and consistency of service, well into 2025 and beyond. Moreover, such technological advancements are required to maximize Operations and Communications networks, which will aid in optimizing Response Times and efficient effective command, control, communications, and intelligence (C3I) functions. General Fund Account Numbers: Budget Account Numbers that allocate and appropriate funding for the Operations Support Bureau, comprised of the Professional Standards Division, Communications Center, and Management Services Division requires priority funding commensurate with stated goals and objectives. Specific Account Numbers are numerous and are interwoven throughout the Budget.

Recommendations: The Law Enforcement Transparency and Advisory Commission submits three (3) recommendations.

1. Efforts to increase the number of sworn officers and Dispatchers should continue to receive priority funding, to include the funding across functional areas that will aid in the recruitment, training, and retention of operational personnel.
2. Budget for specific measurable operational enhancements that will improve Response Times within Calendar Year 2025.
3. Review current Information Technology systems and software upgrades to ensure all relevant data and information sharing systems are replaced and/or upgraded in concert with the latest technological advances. Accordingly, allocate corresponding funding to acquire the necessary personnel and training to support hardware and software evolution.

Brent Windebank
Chair
Colorado Springs Law Enforcement
Transparency and Advisory Commission