



***POSITIONING THE
LUDINGTON
POLICE
DEPARTMENT AS
A KEY
CONTRIBUTOR
IN THE
COMMUNITY -
IMPROVING
QUALITY OF LIFE
THROUGH
INNOVATION AND
PARTNERSHIP***

**LUDINGTON
POLICE
DEPARTMENT
2024 - 2026
STRATEGIC PLAN**

The Ludington Police Department 2024 - 2026 Strategic Plan is an evolving and living document which will be constantly reviewed, updated, and brought into line with the desires of the community. It is the result of a series of exercises all designed to ensure that the vision, mission, and objectives of the agency are successfully achieved. The plan ensures that the elements within this document are understood, supported, and reflects the expectations of the community from its police department. A result of this process is the enhanced ability to effectively manage resources, provide accountability through measured results and efficiently adjust to change. Successful planning requires an organization to change course when opportunities and community demands arise. Ultimately, it is the planning process itself that keeps the agency focused on what the organization wishes to accomplish and the best route to ensure success.

The strategic plan consists of four interrelated exercises:

- Citizen Survey:** For the first time, a community survey was conducted online in late 2023. The responses were limited, with only 132 respondents completing the full survey. Moving forward, annual surveys will be published, and our goal is to maintain a 90% + approval rating. The perceptions and desires of the community were relatively consistent, as it related to criminal and traffic concerns. A significant number of responses included concerns or comments related to issues either outside of our jurisdiction or based on wildly false assumptions. The next version of the survey will be more specific and more broadly publicized, to elicit a much larger number of relevant responses.
- SWOT Exercise:** Defining the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunity and **T**hreats from an internal perspective focuses upon the most defining element of an organization, the employees. The exercise attempts to gain insight from employees about their recommendations, suggestions for improvement and assessment of the management of the organization. It is designed to advance and ultimately determine what obstacles we face to achieve our collective goals.
- Citizen Planning:** It remains our goal to have a one-day planning session each year that is designed to gain insight from a diverse group of community clients regarding the direction the agency should focus upon.
- Fiscal Planning:** As diverse as ideas may be, funding will ultimately determine the level of services that the organization can provide. As we are in a challenging economic time, innovation, the detection of grants and other funding mechanisms must be aggressively explored, to include a partnership with the newly formed 501(c)3 – Friends of Ludington Police.

While this document articulates the goals that the agency plans to accomplish by the end of 2026 and provides a path to do so, while evaluating progress towards these goals, it is realistically a values document. These objectives are not just objectives but serve to remind the organization of what is important to us and where energy is needed to ensure we remain on the path that the strategic plan has created for the organization. It also evaluates the organization's success in achieving goals set in the previous year. Most importantly, it is designed to be an overview for the agency, allowing us all to work together developing strategies and objectives that support the plan. In the most basic sense, it is the roadmap for our future.

Methodology

While it may seem that the strategic plan does not change significantly over the years, the methodology remains constant. At the core of the Strategic Plan are a variety of steps; all designed to assist the organization in keeping "our eyes on the prize". Each *objective* is discussed and a definition or an explanation of the objective is provided. A *performance indicator* will be articulated and defined so that we may measure the status of obtaining the objective, as will *target* dates by which we hope to accomplish the task. Most importantly, numerous *strategies* will be employed, all designed to ensure success.

MISSION AND VALUE STATEMENT

Mission Statement

Through collaborative efforts and partnerships, the Ludington Police Department will protect life, property, and constitutional rights of all. We will pursue justice with compassion and respect for all our citizens to ensure a safe and secure community.

What we exist to accomplish is at the core of the mission statement. A mission statement also allows the organization to maintain direction, eliminate complacency and remain focused upon our goals.

Values Statement

The Ludington Police Department is proud of our dedicated and professional law enforcement team, who are committed to this community and focus on creatively solving problems. We believe in:

- ***Integrity in all aspects of our work;***
- ***Respect for ALL persons we encounter;***
- ***Commitment to our Community;***
- ***The pursuit of Justice with compassion;***
- ***The courage to do what is right, every time.***

The value statement informs the community of the manner in which we will conduct our business and deliver services. It is at the very core of who we are and serves as the organization's "moral compass". If we make a mistake, we will have the courage to acknowledge our mistake and act in a way that ensures it will not be repeated.

OBJECTIVES

Setting objectives for the organization converts the mission and values of the organization into targets and performance milestones. They represent a commitment to producing specific results in a specified time frame.

- ◆ Reducing criminal incidents in Ludington
- ◆ Increasing the quality of service and overall customer satisfaction
- ◆ Identification of grant funding and other alternative funding sources
- ◆ Maintain accreditation through Michigan Association of Chiefs of Police
- ◆ Comprehensive equipment replacement program
- ◆ Provide relevant and high-quality training for officers and staff
- ◆ Provide health and wellness enhancements for officers and staff

OBJECTIVE: REDUCING CRIMINAL INCIDENTS IN LUDINGTON

While crime remains our primary public safety issue, the challenges related to staffing and budgetary pressures have served to complicate the challenges for Ludington Police. Over the past several years, reduced staffing levels and increasing demands upon the services of the Ludington Police Department have been extremely problematic. The vacancies in patrol were due to resignations, retirements, and newly hired officers assigned to field training.

Regardless, the department has relied on the hard work of our officers and the formation of community and allied agency partnerships to keep the incidences of crime in Ludington at the lowest possible level. It is important to note that the Ludington Police will never be able to “arrest our way out of a problem”. Understanding that, we must utilize the implementation of effective enforcement methods, with the goal of high police visibility combined with education and prevention efforts.

We recognize that we will never be 100% successful in eliminating the impact of crime in Ludington, however, that is our goal. A few examples, the incidents of assault have decreased from 112 in 2021, to 83 in 2023, representing a 25% decrease. The incidents of burglary have decreased from 17 in 2021, to 12 in 2023, representing a 29% decrease. The incidents of larceny have increased from 56 in 2021, to 98 in 2023, representing a 75% increase. Finally, the incidents of malicious destruction of property have decreased from 73 in 2021, to 65 in 2023, representing an 11% decrease. While call for service location data information indicates that there are still challenges within certain areas of the city, that same data supports that we have been successful in our ability to detect and arrest persons committing criminal acts within the community. It is obvious that the organization is comprised of proactive officers who value this community and work very hard to make Ludington a safe place to live, work, and enjoy life.

Performance Indicator

Ludington’s overall crime rate, ranked lower than national and state averages, is not an indication of complete success. Ludington is a unique community that is not exempt from outside influences. Ludington experiences a large proportion of visitors annually that have no investment in the well-being of the community. Much of our success is due to county-wide law enforcement collaboration as well as the focus on Problem Oriented Policing and community engagement. The organization’s commitment to the philosophy that provides training, support and latitude for our officers to pursue criminal investigations as far as possible will be continued.

Targets

2024 - 2027 Work to ensure crime rates fall & stay below national averages, with clearance rates above the national averages.

Strategies

- Develop crime prevention programs particular to neighborhoods
- Continue to support the **P**roblem **O**riented **P**olicing strategy
- Continue forging partnerships through neighborhood forums
- Continue to support and encourage innovative problem solving
- Maintain a commitment to partner with non-law enforcement agencies
- Develop proactive patrols that detect issues within neighborhoods
- Empower officers to initiate crime prevention programs
- Train officers to initiate, process and successfully complete criminal investigations
- Identify narcotic trafficking patterns and strategies to combat
- Identify trends in criminal activity by employment of crime trend analysis
- Arrest and convict criminals in cooperation with prosecutors and other agencies
- Perform an annual review of the programs utilized, to detect refinements and enhancements that could foster growth and success.

◆ OBJECTIVE: INCREASING THE QUALITY OF SERVICE AND OVERALL COMMUNITY SATISFACTION

The Ludington Police Department evaluates our customer service under the prism of any contact, whether passive or active, between an employee of the Ludington Police and another person that may result in a negative or positive perception by that person. This focus on the philosophy of customer service results in improved service delivery designed to increase satisfaction with the police, reduce complaints, enhance interactions with the community, improve perceptions of police, and improved victim response. Additionally, community policing suggests a much broader mission for law enforcement that goes well beyond a focus on reducing crime and disorder, improving quality of life issues, and providing community services. The concept of community engagement brings with it the establishment and building of tangible collaborative relationships predicated upon mutual trust and respect, common interests, broader applications of procedural justice, and a sense of shared responsibilities. The goal of procedural justice is to reinforce police legitimacy, which is the public's perception that the actions of the police are just and in the best interest of the community. People who believe the police are procedurally just are more likely to trust them, see them as legitimate, and comply with them, without the need for force. The practice of procedural justice in community interactions entails making decisions transparently; allowing community members to voice their opinions; treating people respectfully, fairly, and impartially; and building trust with the community.

The reality of our profession is that the police organization is comprised of humans dealing with humans, often under great stress and/or anxiety creating opportunity for misinterpretation or misunderstanding. Even under conditions considered routine for police activity, the potential of placing employees in negative light exists with each encounter and activity performed. The reality is - police officers are often issuing traffic tickets and arresting offenders. However, the attitude of positive customer service must be sustained by being ingrained into the culture of the agency for us to be successful and complete our mission.

Performance Indicator

The most recent community survey was completed for the first time using an online survey tool. The response was lackluster at best, with only 132 responses from a community of approximately 8,000 residents. The limited responses (1.6% of total population) included:

- LPD's performance meets the needs of the community – 48% agree / 28% neutral / 24% disagree
- LPD treats everyone fairly – 53% agree / 16% neutral / 33% disagree
- I feel safe in my neighborhood – 62% agree / 19% neutral / 19% disagree
- I feel safe in the business district – 71% agree / 16% neutral / 13% disagree
- I feel comfortable talking to LPD officers – 62% agree / 14% neutral / 24% disagree
- LPD understands the unique needs of the community – 48% agree / 16% neutral / 36%

disagree

- Satisfied with service provided when I called LPD – 54% agree / 14% neutral / 32% disagree
- Satisfied with LPD’s communication & transparency – 48% agree / 21% neutral / 31% disagree
- LPD’s community outreach strengthens relationships – 74% agree / 11% neutral / 15% disagree

Notable responses identifying public concerns (criminal & traffic) included drugs, drunk driving, speeding, & domestic violence. Responses identifying public concerns (non-criminal / non-traffic) included more transparency, more training for officers (Crisis Intervention Training – “CIT”, conflict resolution, interacting with persons with mental illness, implicit bias, de-escalation), lack of officer visibility, officer accountability, homelessness, total LPD culture change.

In any scenario, our commitment to customer service and community engagement is and will remain the foundation of all that we do as an organization. The next community survey should be completed in the Fall of 2024.

Targets

- | | |
|------|---|
| 2024 | Analyze information derived from the survey and determine what strategies may be implemented to better serve the community. |
| 2025 | Develop and submit a new annual survey in cooperation the Chamber Alliance. |
| 2026 | Exceed customer satisfaction levels as indicated by the survey. |

Strategies

- Solicit input from internal (PD & City staff) and external customers
- Refine our survey methods ensuring relevancy and accuracy
- Research developing a random sampling method that will also reach those arrested or ticketed
- Utilize public forums as a mechanism that will allow for suggestions and provide guidance from the public
- Consider a revision to exiting social medial “no comments” policy

◆ **OBJECTIVE: IDENTIFICATION OF GRANT FUNDING AND OTHER ALTERNATIVE FUNDING SOURCES**

Grant funds, primarily from the State of Michigan and the federal government, are simply not readily available as in past years. The benefit of having a low violent crime rate is obvious, except as it relates to grant funding. This is the dilemma facing Ludington as we compete directly against communities who are plagued with crime, existing juvenile gangs, and other negative aspects of society. Fortunately, Ludington does not face these issues, yet has challenges centered upon the use and abuse of drugs, poverty, and the criminal activity that surrounds. Community policing programs are currently not the focus that they used to be, and there are few funding opportunities available for a community such as Ludington. However, it is important that whatever funding is available that may have a positive impact upon the problem(s) identified by residents of Ludington, that they be sought aggressively. Regardless of the purpose, all grant opportunities should be analyzed to ensure that the requirements of the grant would ultimately benefit the community and not require extraordinary matching expenditures.

Performance Indicator

While there are many different grants available through the federal funding scheme, grants for small agencies with lower violent crime rates are limited. LPD is not eligible for most stand-alone grants through DOJ, rather we must apply to the Michigan State Police, with many other smaller Michigan agencies, for “pass-through” grants. LPD will continue to apply for those pass-through grants for which we are eligible and have a need. LPD will also take advantage of grant funding through MMRMA, in order to increase Departmental training opportunities and enhance technological resources.

Targets

2024	Receive two (2) monetary grants from a variety of sources
2025	Receive three (3) monetary grants from a variety of sources
2026	Receive four (4) monetary grants from a variety of sources

Strategies

- Investigate potential funding sources by MACP and other resources
- Attend seminars that will inform Ludington officials of successful grant strategies
- Attend training that will assist in the development of grant applications
- Form partnerships with organizations that will enhance successful grant applications

◆ **OBJECTIVE: MAINTAIN ACCREDITATION THROUGH MICHIGAN ASSOCIATION OF CHIEFS OF POLICE & MICHIGAN LAW ENFORCEMENT ACCREDITATION COMMISSION)**

Accreditation is a progressive and time-proven way of helping law enforcement agencies calculate and improve their overall performances. The foundation of accreditation lies in the voluntary adoption of standards containing a clear statement of professional objectives. Participating agencies conduct a thorough self-analysis to determine which of their existing operations already meet some of the standards and/or how the procedures can be adapted to meet the standards and professional objectives. When the procedures are in place, a team of trained Commission assessors verifies that applicable standards have been successfully implemented and the agency is in compliance.

Accreditation status represents a significant professional achievement. Accreditation acknowledges the implementation of written directives, policies, and procedures that are conceptually sound and operationally effective.

Performance Indicator

The department continues to meet all targets in this category. The agency has been accredited under MLEAC, since June 29, 2022. Our focus is to institutionalize the standards as our culture, demonstrating our commitment to delivering professional, cost-effective services to the community. We anticipate this culture change will result in the agency being re-accredited for an additional three-years.

The future of on-site assessments has evolved whereby through PowerDMS, the MLEAC management system, the agency is assessed online, on an ongoing basis. Additionally, every three (3) years on on-site assessment occurs. Consequently, Ludington will next be visited by assessors in late 2025.

Targets

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| 2024 | Participate in mock assessment by a MLEAC assessor team designated by MLEAC, in preparation for the re-accreditation on-site visit by assessors |
| 2025 | Prepare for a re-accreditation visit by assessors, who will inspect the agency files and produce a report that will be reviewed by the full commission |
| 2026 | Maintain accreditation with documents and actions that demonstrate compliance |

Strategies

- Provide training for all department members ensuring compliance with standards
- Develop public forums that allow for interaction with the community ensuring compliance
- Proceed with self-assessment of agency methodology and policy
- Develop a plan that will assist the agency in successfully passing an on-site inspection
- Foster the philosophy of accreditation and institutionalize as our culture

OBJECTIVE: COMPREHENSIVE EQUIPMENT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

The Ludington Department is heavily dependent upon a variety of equipment that allows us to deliver services to the community. From communication equipment that affords retrieval of accurate and judicious information to the use of cell phones, computers and other technology. For the organization to be truly effective, it is critical that all of these components are working properly. To ensure that all of our required equipment is in a state of readiness, a structured and well-conceived equipment replacement strategy is critical. It is fiscally prudent to project and plan for purchases that will be required in the future while ensuring that the department is capable of continually delivering service to the community.

Performance Indicator

Our goal is to anticipate the need, research the best solutions, structure a payment strategy and evaluate for the future. It is critically important that the agency has a detailed and comprehensive plan in place evaluating and predicting the replacement needs for most equipment. For instance, it is understood that a police vehicle that operates 24 hours daily for 7 days each week, is challenged by fast starts, quick stops and continuous operation or idling, that the mechanical expectation of these vehicles is limited to four-years as a patrol division vehicle. Ludington Police Department operates five marked police units within the Patrol Division. This year the department was authorized to maintain an added patrol vehicle, a K9 transport vehicle, fully funded by the Friends of Ludington Police K9, bringing the marked fleet to six (6). It has been and will continue to be the goal to replace one patrol vehicle annually.

Targets

- | | |
|------|--|
| 2024 | Purchase one patrol vehicle, one K9 transport vehicle, and one Detective Bureau vehicle. Replace old in-car laptops with new models. Replace handguns and patrol rifles with fully department issued and uniform models. |
| 2025 | Purchase one patrol vehicle and one captain vehicle. Purchase five (5) new RADAR and one (1) LIDAR unit. Purchase new interview room furniture. Purchase new Simunitions© training gear. |
| 2026 | Purchase one patrol vehicle and one Polaris Ranger type UTV. |

Strategies

- Create an equipment inventory of police property and equipment
- Conduct a strategy meeting with staff to discuss needs of all segments of the agency
- Work with LPD Command Staff and City staff to develop a comprehensive Capital Improvement Plan
- Continue obtaining feedback from staff regarding equipment requirements and purchases.

◆ **OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE RELEVANT AND HIGH-QUALITY TRAINING FOR OFFICERS AND STAFF**

The implementation of a training committee has proved itself to be a win-win program that allows the police administration to determine relevant training that satisfies the need of the department while correlating the career development path of each officer. Additionally, exposing officers to the nuances of designing appropriate training is mentoring and coaching at its best! The committee continues to work diligently to establish goals and has been extremely successful in the detection and acquisition of grants, inexpensive training opportunities and other in-service opportunities that results in skilled officers providing high quality service to the community. While we continue focusing and maximizing training hours during the slower summer or winter periods when the necessity to fill vacant shifts is lessened due to workload demands, if quality free training is available, we will take advantage. Regardless, training remains a critical component of the agency's strategy to ensure high caliber programs are being provided to all staff members.

The sanctity of human life is paramount to the officers and is reflected in the values statement of the agency. Training in the policies governing the use of force by the officers of the Ludington Police will be enhanced and reinforced by the addition of a review and testing process administered bi-annually.

Performance Indicator

By meeting or exceeding all targets, the percentage of employees receiving specialized training will increase to 100%.

Targets

2024	Implement structured succession plan for individual employees. Provide 1000 hours of training
2025	Provide 1100 hours of training
2026	Provide 1250 hours of training, review Career development plan and succession training

Strategies

- Develop questionnaire for all staff members articulating individual career goals
- Develop and maintain relationships with organizations that will bring high quality training to Ludington reducing tuition, lodging and transportation costs
- Coordinate the use of the City of Ludington Community Room and LFD's training room for regional training of area police
- Investigate potential resources that can provide inexpensive, yet valuable training to staff

◆ **OBJECTIVE: PROVIDE HEALTH AND WELLNESS ENHANCEMENTS FOR OFFICERS AND STAFF.**

We view the most critical component of services provided by Ludington Police Department to be the officers and staff. Our perception within the community and our actual performance as an agency are fully determined by their words, actions, and values. As such, it is of utmost importance to ensure resources are available to maximize the health and wellness of officers and staff.

In looking at officer and staff wellness, we must include a review of resources and strategies employed by the organization, to include, but not limited to: training opportunities, employee assistance programs, evaluation practices, health & wellness screenings, and fitness opportunities. An additional factor to be considered is the workload of the employees in their various roles. All other resources may be present, but if the workload is not manageable, the results will not be favorable.

Performance Indicator

By providing proper health and wellness services to our employees, we will be better placed to retain healthy, happy, and productive employees. Those employees are more likely to adopt the culture and vision of the organization, better fulfilling our mission and more professionally serving our community.

Strategies

- Review workload assessments annually
- Engage and educate officers and staff in areas related to health and wellness
- Seek grants and other funding sources for fitness room equipment enhancements
- Maintain high level of communication with FOPLC and individual officers ensuring that, when able, roadblocks to optimal health and performance are removed
- Review personnel allocations ensuring that the use of resources is maximized

SWOT Exercise

The agency performed a SWOT exercise on and it will become an evolving exercise continuously subject to change after review of all staff. These steps ensure that the document is relevant and will serve to guide the agency. The essence of the evaluation is to determine the **S**trengths, **W**eaknesses, **O**pportunities, and **T**hreats of the organization. The identified topics will constitute a work in progress throughout the year and be updated as they are addressed.

Strengths

- Retention
- Relationships with other agencies
- Equipment
- Organizational culture
- Tools – new handguns & rifles, K9 etc.
- Community support
- Teamwork within the department

Weaknesses

- IT improvements
- Training available locally
- Limited training budget
- Limited opportunities due to agency size
- External agency support
- Fitness center / opportunities for fitness

Opportunities

- Friends of Ludington Police (501(c)3)
- Young & trainable officers
- Engaged community
- Partnership with LASD

Threats

- Increase in complex / involved complaints
- Budgetary limitations
- Technology

System for Review and Revisions

The written objectives, performance indicators and strategies for this plan will be formulated, updated, and evaluated annually. It is critical that the strategy for delivering police services to the citizens of Ludington involves as many segments of the community and those that influence the community, as reasonably possible. That includes the following:

Internal: Administration, Supervisory Staff, Patrol Staff, and Support Staff.

External: Annual Citizen Meeting / Forum, City Council, City Standing Committee(s), Citizen Survey, City Staff, Prosecution Staff, and Judicial Staff.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a long horizontal stroke with a loop at the end.

Christopher Jones
Chief of Police