



**Elon Police
Department**

2022-2025 STRATEGIC PLAN





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The Strategic Planning Journey

In the Fall of 2021, as part of the Elon Police Department's (EPD) efforts to develop a strategic plan for the agency, the Elon Police Department Police Chief, Kelly Blackwelder, began working with the National Criminal Justice Association (NCJA) to develop a community/stakeholder survey to gather feedback from the Elon community and agency stakeholders to better inform the development of a new strategic plan in the first quarter of 2022. The stakeholder survey was accompanied by an internal officer wellness survey completed by all Elon Police Department staff. The two surveys were used to establish priority areas within the agency and for the agency's role in the broader Elon, North Carolina community.

Working with the NCJA, EPD Command staff created each survey. They were disseminated via survey monkey by NCJA to ensure staff did not feel compelled by agency leadership to complete the survey and to promote anonymity for our community members. The results were used to guide the EPD Strategic Plan Management Team, comprised of a cross-section of the department members, in developing our agency priorities and goals. While the final draft of the EPD Strategic Plan will be published soon, here is the feedback we received from the Elon Community Stakeholder Survey completed in September 2021. Again, the feedback was a driving force in shaping and defining our agency priorities and goals.

The process has been a daunting undertaking for our small agency but an essential step toward growth. We thank all those who voiced their concerns for our Town and Police Department. Elon Police Department extends a special thank you to the National Criminal Justice Association for their work on this project. To view the results of our Community Stakeholder survey please scan the QR code below or visit: <https://www.townofelon.com>





MISSION STATEMENT

It is the mission of the Elon Police Department to enhance the quality of life and promote public trust through community service and engagement. We are dedicated to impartial law enforcement practices to reduce crime and we strive to remain attentive to our community's changing needs and expectations.

VISION

The Elon Police Department will strive to be an exemplary model of law enforcement excellence by providing the highest quality of police services through the use of innovative problem-solving, employee development, and strong leadership.

LEADERSHIP STATEMENT

The leadership of the Elon Police Department will act with a selfless mindset, encourage diversity of thought, create a culture of trust, and foster leadership in others. We will continue to prioritize our team's professional development, personal growth, and leadership succession. Supervisors will promote decision-making at the lowest level and utilize constant mentorship to maximize success. Discipline will be fair, consistent, and focused on strengthening individuals and the overall team. Rank is not about privilege. It is about the responsibility we have to others.

Our Core Values

- **Honesty and Integrity**
- **Altruism**
- **Professionalism**
- **Leadership**
- **Diversity**
- **Teamwork**
- **Compassion**

**CORE VALUES SHAPE OUR CULTURE.
THEY ARE OUR FOUNDATION &
SERVE AS A NAVIGATIONAL COMPASS
WHEN DECIDING OUR COURSE.**

Chief Kelly Blackwelder, Elon Police Department



Our Core Values Defined

Honesty and Integrity – We believe these are fundamental to the effective delivery of law enforcement services. They are critical to establishing and maintaining community trust. It will be the practice of the Elon Police Department to act in a transparent, and honorable manner that earns the respect of our co-workers and citizens. Our agency will strive to be an exemplary model for all other law enforcement agencies.

Diversity – We value the differences in the lived experiences of our co-workers and community members. Our agency is comprised of staff that is diverse in education, experience, race, gender, and cultural backgrounds. Our community is just as diverse and the members of the Elon Police Department are committed to the fair, respectful, and impartial treatment of those we serve, regardless of our differences.

Altruism – All members of the Elon Police Department are dedicated to the service and protection of our community. We believe our highest duty is to protect the lives of others even at the cost of our own. We are prepared and willing to put ourselves in harm's way to shield our community from danger.

Teamwork – We recognize teamwork as essential to our organization. Our members believe the use of collective knowledge enhances the opportunity to reach our potential. Our team will encourage diversity of thought, independent action, and initiative while recognizing that our success rests on our ability to unite in order to realize our overarching mission. No one person or situation is bigger than the success of the organization.

Professionalism – Members of the Elon Police Department aspire for excellence in all that we do. We will conduct ourselves in a manner that is consistent with the standards of our mission, vision, and value statement. We will hold each other accountable for our actions and continue to provide quality services to our community. We shall maintain the trust and respect of those whom we serve.

Compassion – Members of the Elon Police Department value those we serve and work with. We believe demonstrating compassionate service through respect, sensitivity, and empathy is essential to building relationships and establishing trust.

Leadership – We entrust and demand our members to lead ethically and responsibly within the organization and in the community we serve. We will utilize innovative training and collaboration with our community partners to provide our team with the best education and resources available. We will engage in strategic planning and implementation of innovative law enforcement technologies. We will encourage and support others in leadership roles within our community. We will strive to resolve conflicts and embrace challenges together.

Our Priorities

1

Community Engagement

2

Increase Employee Satisfaction

3

Professional Development

4

Reduce Crime and Increase Efficiency

5

Employee Wellness

Priority 1

Create a Culture of Community Engagement through Education and Outreach

Goal 1 -Expand community outreach and COP programs

Action Items

1. Establish Town Hall style meetings with the Chief and PD staff.
2. Create a citizen academy to educate residents – “EPD Community College.”
3. Implement team COP projects annually.
4. Empower staff to be proactive, community problem solvers.

Goal 2 - Increase officer visibility

Action Items

1. Incorporate daily foot patrols for all officers including the administration.
2. Improve social media presence.
3. Create a PIO/Community outreach position.
4. Develop a COPS Team -Community Outreach and Problem-Solving Team.
5. Explore creating a flex position to function as a Downtown officer.

Goal 3 -Increase external communications

Action Items

1. Create a PD newsletter – digital and print for public circulation.
2. Establish protocols for follow-ups with citizens post-incident.
3. Continue publishing an Annual Report.
4. Create and maintain a strong and consistent social media presence.

Goal 4 - Engage stakeholders

Action Items

1. Explore a COPS advisory group to assist COPS TEAM.
2. Explore creating a citizen volunteer team to advise on COP outreach.
3. Elicit feedback from the community – Let’s Talk App/door-to-door survey.
4. Create relationships with businesses within the Town.
5. Create and enhance relationships with local landlords.
6. Create opportunities to engage with the Faith based communities in Elon.

Priority 2- Increase Employee Satisfaction

Expand our efforts to invest in our most valued asset: our employees.

Goal 1 -Enhance Internal Communication and Consistency

Action Items

- 1.Create and disseminate monthly updates from the Chief.
- 2.Increase command visibility and interactions (outside of the office).
- 3.Conduct regular staff meetings.
- 4.Develop a Chief/Staff Advisory committee.
- 5.Constant communication up and down the chain of command.
- 6.Department committees will meet regularly and encourage the exchange of information designed to increase effectiveness and job satisfaction across the organization.

Goal 2 - Retain Quality Employees

Action Items

- 1.Implement an award and recognition system for outstanding performance and employee milestones.
- 2.Continue to research incentivized strategies to remain competitive with the market.
- 3.Conduct internal exit interviews with officers that willfully separate.
- 4.Enhance comradery by instituting working retreats and team-building exercises.

Goal 3 - Enhance Recruitment Efforts

Action Items

- 1.Design a recruitment page for the Town Website and update it often.
- 2.Create a stronger social media presence geared especially toward recruitment.
- 3.Create recruitment videos, flyers, and signage.
- 4.Look for alternative advertising methods.

Goal 4 - Maintain and Enhance Culture of Accountability

Action Items

- 1.Encourage and support peer-to-peer critical conversations.
- 2.Promote and delegate decision-making to the lowest level.
- 3.Increase transparency, when possible, on matters that impact the agency.
- 4.Commitment from all ranks to (especially supervisors) address misinformation and rumor.

Priority 3- Professional Development

Nurture a culture that focuses on employee growth and developing skills to better serve our community.

Goal 1 -Expand and improve the EPD training program

Action Items

1. Implement more Scenario-based training.
2. Create more in-house training.
3. Expand our specialized instructor roster to include PT, SCAT, etc.
4. Explore hosting desirable and reputable training courses.
5. Communicate with officers when training is denied and find alternative resolutions.
6. Explore innovative training opportunities with community partners (e.g., non-traditional LE).
7. Partner with the Fire Department to conduct periodic joint training when applicable.

Goal 2 - Create a succession plan for leadership

Action Items

1. Implement a mentorship program.
2. Conduct quarterly leadership/supervisor training.
3. Incorporate new, complex, and high liability policy training into in-service training.
4. Re-establish job shadowing and cross-training program.
5. Prioritize transitional overlap for all new assignments.

Goal 3-Encourage and support continuing education for all members

Action Items

1. Add to the EPD "leadership library" and promote it heavily.
2. Advocate for staff to pursue their formal education.
3. Promote the reading of professional journals and periodicals to stay informed on the issues surrounding law enforcement and industry best practices.

Priority 4 - Reduce Crime and Increase Efficiency

Continue to develop strategies to deter crime, improve case solvability, and improve the quality of life in Elon.

Goal 1 - Improve department efficiency

Action Items

1. Explore new technology and equipment that will reduce downtime and improve officer safety.
2. Initiate additional public safety camera systems/ALPRS.
3. Launch the focused Patrol initiatives to address quality of life issues identified in the 2021 community survey.
4. Encourage officer participation in community groups and initiatives such as the neighborhood coalition.

Goal 2 - Conduct skill building training to strengthen and reinforce best practices

Action Items

1. Conduct roll call/team training during downtimes such as practice building searches, felony stops, and other officer safety training.
2. Conduct roll call training on new case law, legal updates, or other relevant policy-related articles, and videos.
3. Expand Department training to include more practical training.
4. Conduct After-action or debriefs consistently with officers.

Goal 3 - Demonstrate accountability and proactive cultures

Action Items

1. Recognition for innovation, hard work, and community impact (i.e., awards).
2. Peer-to-peer accountability (crucial conversations).
3. Supervisor to subordinate accountability by means of fair and accurate performance evaluations.
4. Intentional recruitment and hiring of motivated individuals with strong ethical character.

Priority 5 - Employee Wellness

Develop a holistic approach to positively impact our employee's physical, mental, emotional, and financial health.

Goal 1 - Improve mental health and resiliency

Action Items

1. Identify all town resources available to staff (e.g., EAP).
2. Develop an employee resource manual and make it readily available to staff.
3. Identify gaps in resources and explore solutions.
4. Explore peer support membership/participation.
5. Establish protocols for mandatory debriefing after critical incidents.
6. Explore rotation schedules to minimize negative effects on health.
7. Implement EAP bi-annual check-ins/education sessions.
8. Support work/life balance-encourage vacation and time off as staffing allows.
9. Create family-inclusive department events.
10. Provide education on flexibility, resilience, and change.
11. Seminars on stress management and financial health.
12. Develop and implement a relaxation/decompression area for officers.

Goal 2 - Improve the fitness level and physical health of staff

Action Items

1. Establish an incentivized mandated fitness program such as awards, incentives, and evaluation merit.
2. Provide education on healthy eating and nutrition.
3. Create fitness activities open to the public.
4. Provide healthy snack options for the department.
5. Establish health challenges to bolster comradery and friendly competition.
6. Establish an in-house PT instructor.
7. Identify resources within the Town available to help enhance staff fitness.

Acknowledgments

Chief Kelly Blackwelder recognizes the following people and organizations for their contributions to the Elon Police Department 2022-2025 Strategic Plan:

THE STRATEGIC PLAN MANAGEMENT TEAM

These staff members were instrumental in identifying our department's priorities, goals, and core values. They were thoughtful, deliberate, and thorough in their approach and execution of the strategic planning process.

Assistant Chief James Turney (co-facilitator)

Assistant Chief Lyle Anibal

Sergeant Scott Swink

Sergeant Stephen Greeson

Detective Steven Alderin

Administrative Assistant Sheila Lackey

NATIONAL CRIMINAL JUSTICE ASSOCIATION

The NCJA helped create and distribute the Stakeholder and Officer Wellness survey. They also conducted the data analysis from the survey responses and assisted me in presenting the feedback to our Town Council.

THE CITIZENS OF VISTORS OF THE TOWN OF ELON

The feedback you provided in the Stakeholder survey was vital to our strategic plan. Our Department appreciates your support, trust, and partnership. We are excited to continue our work (post-COVID) to strengthen our relationship.

MEMBERS OF THE ELON POLICE DEPARTMENT

Your unwavering commitment to this community is inspiring. I am honored to work alongside such a wonderful group of professionals who are dedicated to the pursuit of law enforcement excellence. Together we will accomplish great things.

