

Chapter 9

Public Safety

A primary responsibility of the city is to ensure public safety to serve and protect the community. The agencies providing these services will continue to respond to changes in demographics, population growth and new technology.

Core Services

The city departments that are charged with public safety are the police, fire, and building departments. They receive support from and work cooperatively with other departments including public works, water, wastewater, and community development.

Police and Municipal Court

The Salida Police Department is responsible for the peace and safety of our residents and businesses. They are accountable for enforcement of the Salida Municipal Code, State and Federal Laws. Police protect the safety and welfare of the citizens of the community with their day to day operations that involve crime prevention patrols, traffic control, investigations, Municipal Court security, and answering calls for service. The police also provide Code Enforcement which includes animals, parking, code violations and enforcement of Property Maintenance violations.

The police work in partnership with many of the community's social organizations to promote open communication, education, problem solving, cooperation, and fair and equal treatment, to improve the quality of life, promote unity, and make Salida a safe community. Officers have a variety of skills, along with the knowledge and ability to prepare for and handle virtually every aspect of public safety. Duties include crime reduction, prevention strategies, and problem solving which requires a proficiency in oral and written communications and specific law enforcement training.

Municipal Court is also administered through this department. Due process, the right to a fair trial and proper representation are core values that the department believes every citizen should have when being

prosecuted for a crime against the laws of the city.

The men and women of the Salida Police Department are committed to and responsible for reflecting these values in their personal and professional lives: Loyalty, Integrity, Fairness, & Excellence. The department strives to be visible, friendly and approachable with the overall objective of "community service above all".

Fire

The mission of the Salida Fire Department is to provide the highest level of professional service and protection of life and property to the people who live, work and visit the City of Salida. They also provide the same level of service to other agencies through contract or mutual aid agreements. The department is charged with providing essential public safety services that include fire suppression and response to structural, wildland and urban interface fires, motor vehicle collisions, hazardous materials incidents and mitigation, swift water and ice rescue, and confined space entry and rescue.



Salida Fire Department training burn

The Salida Fire Department works in partnership with the community to provide fire prevention education, commercial and residential fire inspections, smoke alarm checks and installations, and special events inspections. The annual Fourth of July firework display is put on by the department as well as numerous events including hosting an annual Fire Prevention week for residents of the community

including an open house.

The department works cooperatively with the Building and Community Development Departments to review new construction projects for compliance with the International Fire Code.

Salida Fire strives to be a premier fire department that sets an exemplary standard in public safety and community relations through professional leadership and relationships with outside agencies and with the commitment to organizational values and ethics.

The South Arkansas Fire Protection District (“SAFPD”) is a special district surrounding the City of Salida funded through property tax revenue. The City of Salida has a cooperative agreement with the SAFPD to provide fire protection services. The Salida Fire Department responds to all calls within the SAFPD. The fire station is owned in part by the SAFPD and in part by the city. Some equipment is the property of the SAFPD and some belongs to the city, although staff utilizes the appropriate equipment when responding to a call regardless of which entity is the owner.

Building

The City of Salida contracts with the Chaffee County Building Department (“CCBD”) to administer the International Building Codes for all construction in the city. The Community Development Department works directly with the CCBD to ensure zoning and use compliance with all new construction. The CCBD reviews all building permits for compliance with the building code and to eliminate any potential life safety hazards that may be created with new construction. They also conduct building inspections throughout the building process to ensure that new construction meets the building code. On large scale commercial, multi-family or industrial projects they work with the Salida Fire Department to ensure compliance with the International Fire Code.

Regional Partnerships/ Mutual Aid

The various public safety agencies in the Salida region work collaboratively to provide the highest level of service to the citizens in times of major emergency events. The added manpower provided by regional partnerships and mutual aid agreements that help emergency personnel respond to major events is imperative to provide adequate emergency services in small rural communities such as Salida.

The Salida Police Department has several regional partnerships with surrounding agencies including Chaffee County Sheriff’s Department including dispatch, Buena Vista Police Department, Colorado Department of Corrections, and the Canon City Police Department under the Central Mountain Regional Response Team. Included in these partnerships is Salida’s ability to help with other agencies while maintaining a basic level of service in the city and other agencies availability to assist the Salida Police Department.

The Salida Fire Department works collaboratively with Chaffee County Emergency Medical Services to provide advanced and basic life support first response within the city and SAFPD. Partnerships with the Colorado State Forest Service and the United States Forest Service provide additional staffing and equipment as a cooperator for local, state and national wildland fire response. Also the partnership with the Colorado State Patrol Hazardous Materials allows for additional equipment and personnel to assist with hazardous materials incidents in Chaffee and Western Fremont County within the CSP response areas. The partnership with the South Central All Hazards Region allows Salida to provide personnel and equipment to support hazardous materials response through a cooperative agreement with Lake, Park and Chaffee Counties. Lastly, mutual aid agreements with the Buena Vista Volunteer Fire Department, the Chaffee County Fire Protection District, and the fire agencies of western Fremont County allow Salida to assist with additional manpower and equipment in regional public safety emergencies and to call on their resources if the need arises.

Emergency Preparedness

Beyond maintaining fulltime Fire and Police Departments to deal with day to day public safety issues, the City of Salida has implemented several programs to help prepare for large scale emergencies.

On June 19, 2006, the City of Salida adopted Resolution 2006-34 authorizing the use of the National Incident Management System (“NIMS”) which provides a systematic, proactive approach to guide city departments to work seamlessly to prevent, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate the effects of incidents in order to reduce the loss of life and property or harm to the environment. The city maintains 100% compliance with this federal requirement. This ensures the city is meeting national standards in preparation and training in accordance with national standards and remains eligible for federal grants. All full time city personnel are certified to have the basic level of NIMS training. City personnel that are directly involved with public safety in the community continually receive advanced training and annual NIMS certifications.

The city has implemented an Emergency Operations Plan to ensure staff is prepared to provide essential services and recovery during and after a significant emergency or disaster. The city’s emergency management plan is an annex of the Chaffee County Emergency Operations Plans as the county maintains overall responsibility for emergency preparedness in accordance with Colorado Statutes. The Colorado Division of Emergency Management (within DOLA) has statewide emergency preparedness and management responsibilities and provides support to Chaffee County and thus the City of Salida. The city has also opened a “City Emergency Operations Center” at the Touber Building to conduct emergency training and this center will serve as the headquarters for coordinating emergency relief efforts during a natural disaster or large scale emergency.

Yearly large scale emergency response drills are conducted by the city and other regional agencies and governments to help prepare for large scale relief efforts. These drills aim to improve communication lines, help to reduce redundancy in emergency response and raise the level of emergency preparedness.

Public Outreach/Prevention

Maintaining a positive presence in the community that is approachable and visible is a major goal of the public safety agencies in the city. These agencies engage the public throughout the year by offering a variety of events for the community.

The Police Department is active in prevention education with the youth of the community offering several programs through the school year including bike safety programs, Halloween safety, and High School Alcohol Awareness programs. They also help with the Touch a Truck program and provide a yearly Bike Rodeo to teach bike safety in the community. Police also take an active role in the community by providing “Community Oriented Policing” which allows them to be approachable and proactive in helping citizens solve problems in the community.

The Fire Department offers a variety of programs to help with fire prevention in the community. They host a fire prevention week and visit with local schools to provide fire education to the community. The department is active in providing business fire and life safety inspections and fire extinguisher training for medical facilities and businesses. The department offers residential smoke detector installations and voluntary residential inspections.



Police work with the youth in the community through community policing

Fiscal Responsibility

Providing adequate levels of public safety services at a reasonable cost to the community is a goal of the city. Every fiscal year each department establishes goals on how to provide the highest level of service and place a minimum tax burden on the citizens.

Each department actively seeks grants and assistance from State and Federal agencies to provide support for additional funding for public safety services.

Long range fiscal planning for major capital improvements and expenditures to update facilities and equipment need to be routinely updated. Each request needs to be evaluated to ensure that there is a significant benefit to the community. Long range fiscal planning is an important tool to allow for routine equipment replacement and the necessary upgrades to ensure proper response to future emergencies that may arise.

Large scale emergencies or disasters require plans for how emergency funds will be allocated effectively to allow the chain of command to respond to an event. The lasting effects that these events can have on city infrastructure and budgets can be devastating. Proper planning for a major emergency or disaster can help mitigate the costs these events will have on the citizens and on the city budget.

As the city continues to grow and evolve so must the level of services provided. Demographics in the community will change how the city will need to provide public services. Each fiscal year will allow departments to address these changes and create new goals on how to provide the highest level of service at the best possible price to the community.

Principles / Policies / Action Items

Principle PS-I. Core Services

Public safety services will be readily available to serve and protect the community with a continually adapting understanding of the needs of its changing population.

Policy PS-I.1 – Continue prevention and education within the community administered through the public safety agencies to protect residents of the City.



Action PS-I.1.a – Pursue the placement of a full-time School Resource Officer (SRO) in the public schools. Current Police staff is certified in the SRO model.

Action PS-I.1.b – Continue to work with the community on Community Education Through Environmental Design (“CEPTED”) projects. Partner with the Community Development Department on development of new construction standards for public spaces.

Police hosting a local community safety event for Middle School students on the dangers of drunk driving

Action PS-I.1.c – Provide continuing education to police officers to maintain effective safety programs in the schools and community.

Action PS-I. 1.d – Work within the city budget to increase Fire Department staffing to 4 per shift to meet national staffing standards for fire response and hazardous materials response (2 In - 2 Out).

Policy PS-I.2 – Proper training and continued education of the city’s emergency response personnel allow for the best response for possible emergencies in the community.

Action PS-I.2.a – Expand hazardous materials response capabilities through equipment and training.

Action PS-I.2.b- Maintain training and equipment to meet an expanding scope of services and utilize new technology through continuing education and capital replacement plans.

Policy PS-I.3 – Public safety providers should maintain an approachable, visible presence within the community for the prevention of crime, fire, and building safety.

Action PS-I.3.a – Continue to use the model of ‘Community Oriented Policing’ in working with the community to help reduce crime and develop safer neighborhoods.

Action PS-I.3.b – Partner with community groups who help promote safety and crime prevention.

Action PS-I.3.c – Fill the vacant Fire Marshall position to expand business inspection programs to meet

national standards.

Principle PS-II. Regional Partnerships/Mutual Aid

Form public/private partnerships that help provide the highest level of public safety and emergency preparedness for the citizens of Salida and the surrounding communities.



Multi agency response to crash in the Big Horn Sheep Canyon

Policy PS-II.1 – Continue to pursue regional partnerships and mutual aid with the surrounding communities in the Arkansas Valley.

Action PS-II.1.a – Annually revisit agreements between the City of Salida and other organizations and government agencies to ensure they provide the best public safety coverage for the residents of Salida.

Action PS-II.1.b – Continue to work with regional public safety agencies to prepare plans for large scale disasters or emergencies and to have the best possible

lines of communication between departments.

Action PS- II.1.c – Continue to pursue supplemental funding opportunities through region-wide grant applications.

Policy PS-II.2 – Promote awareness of available public safety services offered by the city and through its mutual aid agreements with other agencies.

Action PS-II.2.a – Work with other agencies to provide education and expand awareness on regional public safety.

Principle PS-III. Emergency Preparedness

The city should strive to be prepared for a high level of response to any possible disaster or emergency in the community.

Policy PS-III.1 – Maintain training and communication between all the departments responsible for providing public safety to provide the highest level of response and to continue to evolve to be able to respond to any possible disasters or emergency in the community.

Action PS-III. 1.a- Require all full-time city personnel to complete the basic level of NIMS training and require administrative and public safety personnel to have advanced certification.

Action PS-III.1.b – Create training opportunities and yearly emergency preparedness drills that help staff best utilize the new operation center in the time of a large scale emergency.

Action PS-III.1.c – Train for possible school emergencies and continue to provide public outreach, training and awareness to the school district and its employees.

Policy PS-III.2 – Implement City/County joint Emergency Operations Center at the Touber Building to pro-

vide expanded emergency response and management capabilities.

Principle PS-IV. Public Outreach/Prevention

The city’s public safety departments should strive to provide education and prevention events that maintain a healthy and safe community.

Policy PS-IV.1 – Continue to work within the community to provide awareness and education.

Action PS-IV.1.a –Maintain our current “Alcohol Awareness” programs in the Salida High School.

Action PS-IV.1.b – Seek grants to help offset the expense of current safety programs and to develop new programs.

Action PS-IV.1.c – Continue partnerships with local businesses to help provide materials for youth safety programs.

Action PS-IV.1.d – Promote fire prevention awareness with fire prevention week activities, community programs and additional education in the classrooms of the school district.

Action PS-IV.1.e - Develop and implement special needs identification and response plan.



Salida Police Department and Chaffee County Sheriff Department shop with a Cop with local fourth graders

Principle PS-V. Fiscal Responsibility

The city should provide the highest level of public safety service at the best possible price and evaluate the services provided to the community as the demographics and community change over time.

Policy PS-V.1 – Continue to provide fiscal responsibility in public safety.

Action PS-V.1.a- Utilize aggressive grant research and application, responsible capital replacement plans and interagency cooperation.

Action PS-V.1.b- Consider consolidation of some of the regional agencies (SFD, SAFPD, CCEMS, CCFD) to provide more cost effective and cohesive service to the community.