

Community Advisory on Public Safety Commission

AGENDA

Thursday, 4:00 p.m., June 18, 2026

Kelly Conference Room (#155), Showers Building
401 N. Morton Street, Bloomington, IN 47404

The meeting may also be accessed at the following [link](#)¹

1. Roll Call

2. Approval Of Agenda And Approval Of Memoranda/Minutes

3. Reports (If Any)

- A. Co-Chairs
- B. Individual Members
- C. Staff
- D. Public / Public Comment

4. Old Business

- A. Discussion on the Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) Study and Status

5. New Business

- A. Flock Cameras and Contracts
- B. Drone Usage Within Bloomington Police Department and Response
- C. Review of City of Bloomington Public Safety Report issued on May 27, 2026
- D. Resident Health and Safety Issues
 - 1. Resident Death Outside
 - 2. Child Protective Services and Family Reunification Following Death of a Child
 - a. CPS Response Following Keera Braun Conviction

6. Topic Suggestions For Future Agendas

¹<https://bloomington.zoom.us/j/82433252101?pwd=B3a4BFrgNYUmQ8DC0CpJSbhk6EtmC.1>

Meeting ID: 824 3325 2101 Passcode: 829142

- A. Strategy and Planning for Common Council Deliberation Sessions on Public Safety
1. Deliberation Session 1: What is Public Safety on September 9 at 6:30 p.m.
 2. Deliberation Session 2: How Can the City Advance Public Safety on October 21 at 6:30 p.m.

7. Adjournment

CAPS Commission Goals and Purpose

- Perform research and gather data on the perceptions and preferences about public safety from community members, with specific focus on perceptions and preference data gathered from minority community members, individuals who are disabled, and other often marginalized community members
- Research evidence-based alternatives to traditional policing
- Identify best practices in public safety globally and evaluate the efficacy of such practices for implementation in Bloomington.
- Make recommendations to the Common Council, the Board of Public Safety, and/or the Mayor or the Mayor's designee on policies and programs that enhance public safety for all community members.

Bloomington City Committee on Council Processes meetings can be watched on the following websites:

- [Community Action Television Services \(CATS\)](https://catstv.net/)²
- [City's YouTube Channel](https://www.youtube.com/@citybloomington)³

[Materials for this meeting](https://bloomington.in.gov/council/public-safety-advisory/meetings?year=2026)⁴ are available on Council's website.

² <https://catstv.net/>

³ <https://www.youtube.com/@citybloomington>

⁴ <https://bloomington.in.gov/council/public-safety-advisory/meetings?year=2026>

Pursuant to Indiana Code 5-14-9-6, the following details are provided regarding the officers serving on this committee:

Committee Member	Appointed By	Appointment Date	Term
Kamala Brown-Sparks	Common Council	2/1/2025	2/1/2025 - 1/31/2027
Robert Freeman-Day (Co-chair)	Common Council	10/17/2024	2/1/2024 - 1/31/2026
Erin McNeil	Common Council	10/16/2024	2/1/2024 - 1/31/2026
Jason Michálek (Co-chair)	Common Council	2/1/2024	2/1/2024 - 1/31/2026
Karshin Nair	Common Council	4/2/2025	2/1/2024 - 1/31/2026
Birgit Newman	Common Council	4/2/2025	2/1/2025 - 1/31/2027
Cale Ulery	Common Council	4/2/2025	2/1/2025 - 1/31/2027
Vacant	Common Council		
Sharon Wainshilbaum	Common Council	10/16/2024	2/1/2024 - 1/31/2026

The City is committed to providing equal access to information. If you encounter difficulties accessing material in this packet, please contact the Office of the Common Council at council.bloomington.in.gov or 812-349-3409 and provide your name, contact information, and a link to or description of the document or web page you are having problems with.

Posted: June 16, 2026

Bloomington–LEAP

Scope of Work

Purpose

In the City of Bloomington, as in many jurisdictions, sworn officers serve as the default responders to the majority of 9-1-1 calls, including a significant number of low-priority, low-risk behavioral health and quality-of-life incidents. Many of these calls do not require an armed response and may be appropriately addressed by existing community-based partners operating within Bloomington.

The Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) will conduct an analysis and recommendations project focused on understanding Bloomington's current call data, learning from City staff, Dispatch, and community providers, and identifying how calls may be handled to the greatest extent possible by existing partners and without requiring additional resources.

This project will focus on leveraging Bloomington's current resources, national best practices, and operational realities to provide actionable recommendations. LEAP will review 9-1-1 police calls for service data and conduct research on Bloomington's existing resources, programs, and infrastructure to recommend how existing partners could provide 9-1-1 alternative responses, seeking to minimize additional resources required. If it becomes clear that existing resources cannot meet Bloomington's needs for 9-1-1 alternative response, we would outline what we believe to be the strongest and most realistic path forward for Bloomington.

Scope Summary

LEAP will create recommendations for the City of Bloomington by:

- Analyzing 9-1-1 calls-for-service data to identify call types that may be appropriate for response by existing partners
- Learning from Dispatch, City departments, and service providers about current practices, capacities, and constraints
- Researching lessons from similar programs and initiatives in other cities
- Identifying practical strategies to facilitate 9-1-1 Dispatch to existing Bloomington resources
- Providing recommendations to help anticipate and address:
 - Practical barriers to integration with 9-1-1/Dispatch
 - Public safety and responder concerns related to escalation risk
- Offering guidance that is data-informed, locally grounded, and aligned with national best practices, while remaining fiscally and operationally realistic

All recommendations will be framed to determine how calls can be handled by existing partners and to the greatest extent possible without requiring additional resources. However, if LEAP determines that existing resources simply cannot effectively provide the desired services, we would recommend what we considered to be the best solution for Bloomington.

Any recommendations product will clearly acknowledge that the content is only a recommendation and that all implementation decisions remain the responsibility of the City.

Project Context and Considerations

In shaping its analysis and recommendations, LEAP will explicitly consider:

- **Financial constraints**, including those resulting from Indiana SEA 1
- **Ongoing change management efforts within Dispatch**, including staffing shortages and workload pressures
- The City's parallel responsibility to continue working toward a fully staffed police department, alongside exploration of alternative response approaches
- The importance of minimizing administrative burden on City staff while maintaining transparency and accountability

Roles and Responsibilities

LEAP Will:

- Conduct analysis of Bloomington 9-1-1 calls-for-service data
- Research national best practices relevant to Bloomington's context
- Hold targeted conversations with City staff, Dispatch, and community providers
- Synthesize findings into clear, actionable recommendations
- Prepare a final written report and presentation summarizing findings and recommendations

The City of Bloomington Will:

- Designate a primary point of contact for coordination
- Facilitate access to calls-for-service data
- Assist with introductions to relevant City and community stakeholders
- Provide feedback on preliminary findings and recommendations
- Receive and consider LEAP's final recommendations

Timeline of Deliverables

The project is anticipated to begin in **April 2026**, pending completion of other LEAP commitments. The timeline below reflects a **seven-month total project window**, with the understanding that workload intensity will vary.

Months 1–2: Data Acquisition & Project Setup

- Acquisition of 9-1-1 calls-for-service data
- Data review and clarification of data questions
- Data-related introduction required from City contact

Months 3–4: Analysis and Stakeholder Learning

- Calls-for-service data analysis
- Targeted stakeholder conversations
- Identification of call types appropriate for existing partners
- Development of draft recommendations
- Stakeholder introductions required from City contact

Months 5–6: Preliminary Recommendations and Stakeholder Feedback

- Calls-for-service data analysis
- Targeted stakeholder conversations
- Identification of call types appropriate for existing partners
- Development of draft recommendations
- Strategy check-ins required from City contact

Month 7: Final Recommendations

- Incorporation of City feedback
- Final written report
- Presentation to City leadership and stakeholders
- Strategy check-ins required from City contact

Check-in meetings will occur approximately **once every three weeks**, and may be cancelled if there is no substantive agenda, to respect City capacity.

Cost

LEAP will provide all services described in this Scope of Work for an amount not to exceed \$10,000.



Public Safety Report

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A Letter From the Mayor

Dear Bloomington,

We can build housing, grow jobs, and invest in neighborhoods—but without public safety, those gains are fragile.

Public safety is a continuum. It starts with preventing harm when possible, then responding effectively when help is needed, connecting residents to resources, and working to ensure that crises do not repeat. In 2025, Bloomington’s public safety system experienced increased demand and responded with greater coordination. More residents contacted Police and Fire for emergency and non-emergency services, and use of our community resource navigation tools also rose sharply.

We’re also strengthening the foundation of our public safety system. The Bloomington Fire Department is fully staffed for the first time in nearly a decade and nearing the completion of critical facility buildouts. The Bloomington Police Department continues to make steady progress toward full staffing, and we are moving forward on our plans for a modern headquarters that better supports operations. In a constrained fiscal environment, we continue to strengthen our partnerships, expand alternative response models that connect people to the right kind of help, and invest in prevention so that fewer emergencies escalate and fewer crises repeat.

This report provides an inside look at what trends we are seeing, how our systems are responding, and where continued partnership and investment are needed.

Sincerely,



Kerry Thomson
Mayor of Bloomington

Safety By the Numbers

This report provides a snapshot of Bloomington’s public safety in 2025. It includes call data, staffing information, response trends, and updates on key initiatives. The sections that follow present both activity data and system context.

Calls for Service

- **2025 Fire calls:** 6,745 (up 4.4% from 2024 and 39% since 2020)
- **2025 Police calls:** 80,450 (up 5.9% from 2024 and 48.8% since 2020)

Public safety agencies receive calls not only for crimes, fires, and accidents, but also for medical emergencies, welfare checks, behavioral health crises, and general assistance.

Fire Calls Detail

- **Fires:** 240
- **Rescue/emergency medical services (EMS):** 2,891
- **Hazardous Conditions:** 278
- **Service Calls:** 768
- **False Alarms:** 1,382
- **Other:** 1,186

Note: The records management system updated call classification categories in December 2025, resulting in an increase in the “Other” category for that month (341 calls, compared to a monthly average of approximately 77).

Police Calls Detail

- **Priority 1 Calls** (Weapons, Robberies, Assaults, Welfare Checks, Shootings, Stabbings, Prowlers, Burglaries, Abductions, Abuse, Crash with Injury): 28,897
- **Priority 2 Calls** (Drugs, Thefts, Trespassing, Vandalism, Intoxicated Persons, Crash without Injury, Building Checks): 8,565
- **Priority 3 Calls** (Prior Assaults, Prior Robberies, Prior Restraining Order Violations, Civil, Prior Burglaries, Service Requested): 3,928
- **Priority 4 Calls** (Alcohol-Related Calls, Animal Calls, City Ordinance Violations, Prior Disturbances, Frauds, Prior Harassments, Motorist Assists, Prior Theft, Extra Patrols): 38,822

Crime Statistics

Crime statistics can be powerful *and* easily misunderstood. Trends make the most sense when viewed in context—where incidents occur, who is involved, and what conditions are present when harm happens. These data are in comparison to 2024.

- **Overall crime rate:** 10,760 per 100,000 residents (107.6 per 1,000), **down 6.4%** from 2024 (11,490)
- **Crimes involving weapons:** **down 18.8%** from 2024 and 44% from 2023
- **Violent crime overall:** **up 9.8%**, with 213 incidents in 2025, compared to 194 in 2024

The overall crime rate includes many different kinds of crimes. Some are property crimes that often occur in public spaces, and the victims may not know or even see the perpetrators. Others are violent crimes that tend to occur in private spaces like homes, between people who know each other. Weapons can be a factor in both types of crime.

Overall crime declined, even as violent incidents increased, accentuating that not all crime trends move in the same direction.

Property crime decreased significantly in 2025.

- **Overall property crime: down 19.3%**
 - **Larceny: down 21.9%**
 - **Vandalism: down 11.1%**
 - **Graffiti: down 50%**

Other types of property crime include burglary, motor vehicle theft, and arson.

Violent crime includes homicide, rape and other forcible sex offenses, robbery, and aggravated assault. Most violent incidents are not random events between strangers. These types of incidents are impacted by risk factors such as stress, substance use, and instability, which often develop over time. Crimes rooted in personal relationships and private spaces are influenced by housing stability, behavioral health, substance use, and access to support.

In 2025, the most extreme violence remained rare. **Homicides declined over 30%**, from three incidents in 2024 to two in 2025. Domestic battery continued to represent a significant share of violent incidents.

- **Assault: up 7.2%**
- **Robbery: up 8.7%**
- **Domestic battery: up 6.4%**
- **Rape and forcible sex offenses: up 11.1%**

Substance use impacts public safety both indirectly, as a risk factor in other crimes, and directly. Prevention, treatment, and targeted enforcement are important tools in reducing the elevated risk for accidents, injury, and escalation caused by substance use.

- **Arrests for operating while intoxicated: up 33.3%**
- **Arrests for public intoxication: up 2.3%**

Traffic Safety

- **Traffic stops:** 11,228, **down 14%** 1,866 fewer stops than in 2024
- **Crashes involving injury:** 431, **down 16% from 2024**
- **Crashes involving property damage:** 2,241, **down 4% from 2024**
- **Crashes involving leaving the scene:** 523, **down 10.8% from 2024**

The decrease in traffic stops does not necessarily indicate a reduction in violations. In 2025, officers made 303 more arrests than in 2024, requiring additional time for processing, reporting, and court-related duties. This shift in workload likely reduced officer availability for discretionary traffic enforcement.

Traffic stop activity also increased significantly the year prior—rising 24% from 2023 to 2024—making the 2025 decrease a partial rebalancing rather than a clear long-term decline.

Traffic safety work in Bloomington is guided by the [Safe Streets for All \(SS4A\) Action Plan](#), a long-term, data-driven roadmap focused on reducing serious injuries and fatalities for all road users—drivers, pedestrians, bicyclists, and transit riders. The plan prioritizes:

- Improved crosswalk visibility
- Signal timing and intersection safety
- Traffic calming on high-injury corridors
- Equity-focused design and implementation

Many of the changes residents ask for—safer crossings, slower speeds, better lighting—are already part of this coordinated strategy. Community feedback continues to inform how and where improvements are implemented.

Fire Capacity

For many years, the Bloomington Fire Department experienced the same structural staffing pressures seen across Bloomington public safety. Prior to 2025, BFD routinely lost trained firefighters to neighboring departments, including White River Township, Monroe Fire Protection District, Indianapolis Fire, Bargersville Fire, and Franklin Fire, where compensation levels were higher. Recruitment and retention challenges required constant internal reassignments to maintain minimum shift coverage.

In September 2025, BFD reached full staffing across all authorized positions for the first time in the last decade. Since achieving full staffing, vacancy rates have remained low.

The improvement followed targeted compensation adjustments designed to strengthen recruitment and retention in public safety roles, particularly positions that had been difficult to fill. Those changes helped reduce departures to neighboring agencies and significantly improved applicant flow.

Year-over-year fire applicants:

- **2023: 141**
- **2024: 87**
- **2025: 272**

Full staffing carries new meaning in today's fire service environment. Indiana law permits lateral transfers, allowing certified firefighters from other jurisdictions to join without repeating initial academy training. As a result, BFD now competes not only for entry-level recruits, but also experienced firefighters statewide. Achieving full staffing under these conditions signals competitive standing within our regional labor market.

Operationally, the staffing stabilizations sharply reduced overtime. In past years, it was not unusual for an individual to work 40 to 50 overtime shifts in a year due to staffing shortages. These were not all mandatory overtime shifts, but mandatory overtime also declined considerably compared to prior years. In the fire service, an overtime shift is

typically a full additional 24-hour shift, often worked directly before or after a firefighter's regular 24-hour shift. In 2025, most personnel worked fewer than ten. Reduced overtime improves our firefighters' rest cycles, lowers their injury risk, supports family stability, and strengthens overall morale.

Full staffing also allowed the department to restore leadership positions previously held vacant to maintain shift coverage, including Assistant Chief of Operations and Captain of Training.

Facilities, Equipment, and Training

Bloomington firefighters logged **48,600 hours of training**—an average of **441 hours per firefighter**. Facilities also saw meaningful progress. Fire Station 3, which originally opened in 1963 and had not seen major modernization until last year, reopened in October 2025 after a full renovation and expansion, improving response efficiency, living conditions, and separation from potential hazard exposures.

The project included a complete renovation and refresh of the existing building, along with an expanded footprint to accommodate individual bunk rooms and a larger exercise facility. Improvements also delivered a more functional layout that separates living quarters from areas with potential hazard exposure, a refreshed alerting system, updated dispatch and department information displays, horizontally opening bay doors to support faster response times, and upgraded facility equipment.

Construction continues on the Operations and Training Center, **an 18,000-square-foot facility that will consolidate training, logistics, backup vehicles, and equipment storage**. With completion anticipated in September 2026, the facility addresses a long-standing gap in the department's ability to house reserve apparatus and critical equipment in one centralized location. This consolidation will create dedicated space for maintenance and readiness of backup vehicles—ensuring they are deployment-ready when needed.

The center is designed to strengthen year-round training capacity, including support for recruit academy operations and ongoing department benchmarks that must be met regardless of weather conditions. By colocating the operations center near the training

tower, firefighters will no longer need to shuttle between sites—streamlining training time and improving efficiency. This proximity directly enhances preparedness while supporting the department’s continued achievement of its ISO rating goals over the past five years. Insurance Services Office, or ISO, is a national organization that evaluates how well a community’s fire protection system performs.

Design elements incorporate updated health and safety protocols, including additional gear washers and clear separation between areas with potential contamination (“hot zones”) and clean living or working areas (“cold zones”), consistent with evolving cancer prevention standards in the fire service.

Separately, the department implemented a radio system upgrade at the end of 2025. The new system integrates multiple communication pathways—including radio towers, cellular networks, Wi-Fi, and GPS—to improve reliability, reduce coverage gaps, and maintain communication continuity across different operating environments.

Mobile Integrated Health

Mobile Integrated Health (MIH) is a Fire-led service and patient-centered model of care delivered in a patient's home or in a mobile environment. This work includes teams that come to patients as well as facilitate the use of telehealth platforms. Community Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) can visit patients at their home and assist with health screenings, wound care, treatments and follow-ups. MIH can also include social work, substance abuse resources, mental health, chronic disease management and more.

MIH teams include trained fire and medical professionals who respond to urgent but non-emergent situations, follow up with individuals after emergency calls, and help connect residents to healthcare, behavioral health services, and community resources. MIH works to supplement traditional emergency response.

Last year, **MIH provided 220 total services and initiated 187 new referrals**, a 9% increase over the prior year. Clients averaged 11.9 visits each, reflecting the program’s focus on ongoing relationships and preventative care rather than one-time emergency intervention.

Beyond referrals, **MIH logged 2,672 patient and community interactions**, including one-on-one visits, trainings, and community first aid events. The program also became Monroe County's first permanent car seat fitting station and distributed 16 car seats and installed 59.

Police Capacity

The Bloomington Police Department has operated with a persistent staffing gap for many years. The last time BPD was fully staffed was nearly 10 years ago (in April of 2017). From 2021 through 2024, sworn officer staffing levels hovered between 78% and 88% of authorized strength. While the City has made significant strides in closing the staffing gap, officers are still often required to work extended or mandatory overtime to maintain coverage, increasing both operational and human costs. Staffing shortages also limit police capacity to patrol proactively, build relationships with neighborhoods, and intervene early.

In June 2025, BPD took a significant step forward by swearing in **11 new officers—the largest single recruit class in more than three decades**. This milestone reflects progress toward restoring baseline capacity, not expanding the force beyond its authorized size. As of the end of 2025, BPD had:

- **Sworn officers:** 93 of 105 authorized (12 vacancies)
- **Non-sworn staff:** 66 of 82 authorized (16 vacancies, including 12 in Dispatch)

Of those 93 sworn officers, however, not all are available for work in the field due to injuries, family leave, and other reasons. And while take-home car policies introduced in 2024 and pay increases in 2025 have led to a surge in recruitment, it takes many months for those new officers to actually hit the streets. New law enforcement officers must complete 600 hours of training at the Indiana Law Enforcement Academy, as well as months of additional training with BPD Field Training Officers.

And yet, even while understaffed, BPD conducted **75 targeted enforcement operations** in 2025 to disrupt organized and predatory activity. These efforts resulted in the recovery of firearms and stolen vehicles, as well as the seizure of multiple pounds of narcotics—including methamphetamine, fentanyl, cocaine, crack cocaine, and heroin—removing both weapons and dangerous substances from circulation.

These efforts directly contributed to a **43% reduction in crimes involving weapons since 2023**, significantly lowering the risk of serious injury and loss of life.

BPD continues to work with the administration to close the staffing gap and hopes to fill the remaining open sworn officer positions by the end of 2026.

Long-time staffing shortages at Dispatch are also being addressed. In summer of 2025, a new schedule was introduced at staff request. The Pitman schedule is a 12-hour, 4-team, 2-week, 24/7 rotating shift system that provides more consecutive days off than a traditional work week. These rest periods are essential to reducing some of the strain caused by staffing shortages and overtime in these critical, high-stress jobs. In addition, the leadership structure of Dispatch was adjusted and new leaders hired to ensure practices, training, and culture support attracting and retaining skilled dispatch staff.

Facilities, Equipment, and Training

The Bloomington Police Department’s current headquarters on 3rd Street, constructed decades ago, no longer provides the operational reliability required for modern policing. The building has experienced recurring flooding and water intrusion, creating ongoing maintenance challenges and operational disruption. Space constraints also limit evidence storage, training areas, interview rooms, and officer wellness facilities.

In response, the City began evaluating the feasibility of relocating BPD headquarters in January 2025 to 714 S. Rogers Street, a four-story concrete structure on the former Bloomington Hospital campus already owned by the City. The building’s size, structural integrity, central location, and proximity to other public safety and civic investments make it a strong candidate for adaptive reuse.

Both City leadership and representatives of the police union have expressed agreement that the Rogers Street site presents a viable and strategic option. The City has initiated feasibility assessments to evaluate structural conditions, renovation scope, cost estimates, operational layout, security requirements, and long-term sustainability. This evaluation will inform whether the site can meet modern policing standards, improve response readiness, and provide safer working conditions for sworn and non-sworn staff. The proposed location also aligns geographically with broader public safety and redevelopment efforts in the South Rogers–Walnut corridor.

The City is also evaluating the project within a significantly constrained fiscal environment. Senate Enrolled Act 1, or SEA 1, has reduced projected local revenue and limited the City’s bonding capacity, creating a substantial funding gap for major capital investments, including public safety facilities. Because Public Safety Local Income Tax bonds cannot be used to cover the full scope of the proposed headquarters project, the City must identify other funding sources before any relocation or renovation can move forward. These financial constraints do not change the operational need for a modern police facility, but they do affect the timing, scale, and funding strategy for the project.

As the City evaluates a facility capable of supporting modern policing, the Department has continued to strengthen the operational readiness of its officers through expanded training.

Last year, BPD officers completed **10,092 total training hours**. With 93 sworn officers as of January 1, 2026, this equates to an average of 108.5 training hours per officer.

For context, the State of Indiana requires 24 hours of annual training for certified officers. Bloomington officers, on average, completed **more than 4.5 times the state minimum**. Training includes all statutorily required areas, including firearms, defensive tactics, and emergency vehicle operation, but extends significantly beyond compliance.

Moreover, BPD places a primary emphasis on mental health response and de-escalation. All officers receive annual training in Integrating Communications, Assessment, and Tactics (ICAT), developed by the Police Executive Research Forum. ICAT is designed to improve both officer and public safety by equipping officers with

additional tools and strategies to manage critical incidents, particularly those involving individuals experiencing mental health or behavioral crises.

Officers also receive Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) training, a nationally recognized, community-based model that prepares first responders to safely and effectively handle calls involving mental illness and substance use disorders.

Additional training includes:

- Emotional survival training, supporting officer resilience and long-term performance
- Use of WRAP restraint systems, designed to reduce injury during self-harm or high-risk situations
- Proper deployment of less-lethal tools, including electronic control weapons (tasers) and OC spray
- Annual Active Assailant training, often conducted through scenario-based exercises with role players

Specialized units—including the Critical Incident Response Team (CIRT), Crisis Negotiation Team (CNT), Civil Disturbance Unit (CDU), and K9 Unit—train monthly to maintain readiness for high-risk and complex incidents.

Consistent with Bloomington’s community-centered policing approach, the Department prioritizes engagement and public education alongside enforcement. For example, BPD conducted 238 community engagement events. For the purposes of this report, community engagement events are defined as structured, in-person interactions between the police department and the public designed to educate, build relationships, and improve community safety outcomes.

- These include the Resident’s Academy, Teen Academy, and City-led engagement programs, which provide participants with direct exposure to:
- Department responsibilities and structure

- Daily operations and decision-making
- The roles of specialized units and divisions

The Department also provides hands-on safety services, including a multi-session Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) program, focused on personal safety and self-defense training.

In addition, police social workers and members of the Department's Mental Health Professionals Division lead public education efforts concentrated on effective interaction with individuals experiencing mental health conditions or substance use disorders and strategies for de-escalation and communication.

Flock LPRs

Since late 2023, the Bloomington Police Department has used license plate readers (LPRs) and related camera systems as investigative tools to support public safety and criminal investigations. BPD was a relatively late adopter of this technology, which remains in use by other agencies in the community, including Indiana University and Monroe County. As of March 5, 2026, the City's contract for Flock LPR services expired and was not renewed. BPD has since begun phasing out the Flock system.

These tools were most useful when officers have no or limited information to work from, such as a vague vehicle description or a general timeframe. They do not replace investigative work, but they can reduce the time required to identify a possible lead, narrow a search area, or locate a vehicle connected to a case.

This technology has been used in cases involving violence and life-threatening harm. Specific examples include a domestic battery investigation that escalated into a vehicle pursuit and safe recovery of a kidnapping victim, a homicide investigation near the county line, a roadside sexual assault investigation involving an armed suspect, a homicide investigation involving a vague vehicle description, and a multi-jurisdictional homicide investigation that led to evidence recovery in Bloomington. Most recently, investigators used Flock data on April 21, 2026 to help locate a vehicle connected to a

case in which a woman was found severely assaulted and left inside her burning home before being carried out by responding officers.

LPR technology captures a still image of the rear of a vehicle and its license plate as the vehicle travels on a public road. The resulting record is a photograph and timestamp, along with basic vehicle characteristics such as make, model, and color. It does not use facial recognition, nor does it provide or store personal identifying information such as a person's name, address, date of birth, or activities. BPD operated 11 Flock LPR cameras, though the total number of cameras county-wide may run higher throughout due to additional systems owned by other local jurisdictions.

Within BPD, use of the system was governed by policy, training, and audit requirements. Access was limited to trained sworn officers and data analysts. Searches were tied to an active event number and a valid investigative reason. Users accessed the system through individually assigned credentials, and searches are logged by user, date, case number, and reason for inquiry. Bloomington's retention period was 30 days unless an image is preserved as evidence in a criminal case. The Department also maintained restrictions on sharing and has not participated in Flock's national network. Under Bloomington policy, data collected by BPD cameras was only authorized to be shared with other Indiana law enforcement agencies.

The City's contract for Flock LPR services expired on March 5, 2026 and was not renewed. The system remained temporarily active through Little 500-related public safety operations and Bloomington's LPR data stream was then disabled after the April 25, 2026 weekend. The City is working through the legal process to terminate the remaining Flock-related contracts for other camera products and services. No new Flock LPRs will be installed.

BPD is evaluating replacement camera technologies and providers that would allow the Department to retain useful investigative tools without tying Bloomington-owned cameras to the broader Flock network. The goal is to preserve legitimate public safety value, particularly in serious investigations where time, distance, and limited information matter, while maintaining clear safeguards, local control, and public trust.

In addition to LPRs, the City has used fixed video cameras in parts of downtown. Those systems have been used to review evidence after crimes occur and are used during large events—for example, the recent national football championship, which brought thousands of visitors to the Kirkwood corridor. The City also deploys two trailer-mounted cameras in areas with elevated call volumes. One trailer camera is currently deployed at the request of residents in an apartment complex experiencing security concerns. The remaining trailer camera is stored and not currently in use, though may be deployed for specific public safety needs such as large events. These units serve as a visible deterrent, capture video evidence, and include gunshot-detection technology.

The next section explores how alternative response and social support strategies work alongside policing to reduce escalation and ease pressure on emergency services.

Alternative Response

Not every call for service is made in response to criminal behavior or immediate danger. BPD and BFD both have internal resources for addressing some of these non-emergencies, and they already work closely with outreach workers from local nonprofits and service providers to meet a variety of non-emergency needs. Alternative response, when implemented thoughtfully and in partnership with providers, can effectively divert some non-emergency calls from sworn officers and firefighters to other public safety staff and to trained community responders. This focuses public safety dollars and time on true emergencies, while also ensuring that people in crisis receive fast, appropriate care from trusted, expert providers.

911 Study

The City's strong relationships with service providers are currently not integrated into 911 dispatch, however. This year, the City is investigating whether and how 911 could be used to more efficiently connect calls for service with either law enforcement or community outreach workers, depending on the level of need. In 2025, the City signed a letter of intent with Law Enforcement Action Partnership (LEAP) to analyze

Bloomington's 911 calls for service and identify opportunities for safe, effective alternative responses.

LEAP will create recommendations for the City of Bloomington by:

- Analyzing 911 calls-for-service data to identify call types that may be appropriate for response by existing partners
- Learning from Dispatch, City departments, and service providers about current practices, capacities, and constraints
- Researching lessons from similar programs and initiatives in other cities
- Identifying practical strategies to facilitate 911 Dispatch to existing Bloomington resources
- Providing recommendations to help anticipate and address:
 - Practical barriers to integration with 911/Dispatch
 - Public safety and responder concerns related to escalation risk
- Offering guidance that is data-informed, locally grounded, and aligned with national best practices, while remaining fiscally and operationally realistic

Any such integration will need to be carefully structured to ensure the safety of both the public and the responding officer or outreach worker. Situations can escalate quickly, and outreach workers often request police support. It will also be critical to ensure Dispatch has the capacity and training to support any recommended changes.

The study is likely to begin in late spring and will take seven months to complete.

Police Social Support Services

Within the Police Department, social support services help address situations where enforcement alone is unlikely to resolve the underlying issue. These services focus on

outreach, referrals, and short-term case management for individuals experiencing repeated crises related to mental health, substance use, or housing instability.

In 2025, **BPD police Mental Health Professionals served 429 unique clients**, compared to 432 in 2024. Police Mental Health Professionals also received **278 new referrals**. The most common referral reason was mental health concerns, which accounted for 26% of referrals, followed by grief after the death of a loved one at 13%, and homelessness at 11%.

BPD also added a Dispatch Mental Health Professional (MHP) position in 2025 to strengthen the connection between emergency call-taking and behavioral health response. The Dispatch MHP was hired in August 2025, soft-launched at the end of September, and began operating more formally in October 2025. The Dispatch MHP spends 15 hours each week in the Dispatch Center.

This work is supported by a broader group of sworn officers, known as Downtown Resource Officers (DROs) and non-sworn personnel within BPD, including Community Service Specialists (CSSs), who expand the department's capacity to respond to non-violent and service-oriented calls. As of the end of 2025, BPD employed 66 non-sworn staff across functions such as dispatch, records, social services, and field-based support roles, providing critical operational and community-facing capacity alongside sworn officers.

In 2025, **CSSs handled 5,675 calls for service**, accounting for approximately 9.8% of call volume (excluding extra patrols), and completed 22,612 extra patrols. **DROs handled 2,737 calls for service**. These roles are typically deployed to incidents such as minor crashes, traffic direction, welfare checks, ordinance-related concerns, and other non-criminal matters. By assigning these calls to trained non-sworn personnel, the department is able to respond more efficiently while preserving sworn officer availability for higher-risk incidents.

Social support staff, CSSs, and DROs frequently work in coordination with other officers, particularly on calls involving individuals in crisis or with repeated service needs. While not all of this work is captured in primary call ownership data, these roles regularly provide on-scene support, follow-up, and continuity of care.

This layered response model is intended to match the type of call with the most appropriate responder. For the community, this means faster response times for routine or service-based calls, more appropriate handling of behavioral health needs, and more consistent follow-up for individuals who frequently interact with emergency services. For the department, it reduces strain on sworn staffing and supports more focused deployment of police resources to situations involving immediate safety risks.

Stride Mobile Crisis Response

Stride, a nonprofit organization, serves as Bloomington's 24/7 mobile crisis response team, staffed by trained mental health professionals working alongside medical providers. The agency provides a professional, non-police response to distress in real-time, such as mental health, substance use, and behavioral crises. Stride's work reduces unnecessary emergency room visits and sworn officer response arrests and builds trust with residents who may be hesitant to engage traditional systems of authority.

While the City does not operate Stride directly, it maintains a close partnership with the organization. This includes promoting Stride's public crisis line to residents and ensuring first responders understand how and when to make referrals. At this time, Stride receives calls directly through its public phone line and through referrals from community partners and first responders. Stride is currently not dispatched through 911.

Residents can contact Stride at any time at 1-866-STRIDE-TEAM.

Coordination and Prevention

The City's Community and Family Resources Department (CFRD) supports prevention and stabilization efforts by improving access to services, strengthening coordination with community partners, and providing residents with clear, actionable information.

The City's After Hours Ambassadors are trained, non-law-enforcement staff who provide a visible presence downtown during evening and late-night hours, offer assistance,

connect people to services, and help de-escalate situations before emergency response is needed.

- **After Hours Ambassadors: 5,229 hours of non-law-enforcement engagement** in the downtown core
- **Downtown Outreach and Violence Reduction Grants: over \$393,000 invested** in crisis response, street outreach, youth intervention, mobile crisis teams, and recovery services

The City operates After Hours Ambassadors as part of its downtown safety strategy and coordinates their efforts with nonprofit outreach teams, service providers, and public health partners to ensure coverage, de-escalation, and access to support during high-activity hours.

Preventive measures—such as Naloxone (Narcan) availability in downtown establishments—reflect a harm-reduction approach that saves lives and prevents medical emergencies. Coordinated after-hours response reduces gaps in service during peak activity times and supports a safer, more welcoming downtown environment.

Helping Bloomington–Monroe

Helping Bloomington–Monroe is a centralized resource navigation platform, designed to help residents quickly locate support for food, health care, housing, and financial assistance. The platform is publicly accessible online and supported through community access points, including the Monroe County Public Library, and is administered by CFRD. In 2025:

- **7,247 unique users** accessed the platform, a **42% increase** from 2024
- **9,531 total searches** were conducted, a **27% increase** year over year
- Housing remained the top need (**36% of searches**), followed by food, goods, health, and financial assistance

CFRD also integrated years of Helping Bloomington–Monroe data into GIS mapping by zip code, allowing the City to more precisely align funding, outreach, and partnerships with areas of highest need.

Resource Guides

To supplement digital access, CFRD produces and distributes printed resource materials to ensure information is available in multiple formats and reaches residents where they are. CFRD distributed more than **3,100 paper resource guides in 2025 alone**. These included:

- **Downtown Resources Map & Guide**, which provides a listing of housing resources, public bathrooms, and transit and provided to unhoused individuals
- **Food access guides** were distributed during a SNAP benefits gap in November 2025
- **Substance Use Disorder Resource Guides**, developed with the Monroe County Health Department and distributed to medical clinics, recovery centers, and nonprofits

Grantmaking That Prevents Harm

CFRD directs funding strategically to partners already embedded in high-need areas, using data to align dollars with prevention and stabilization outcomes. Last year:

- **\$244,095** awarded through Downtown Outreach Grants
- **\$149,240** awarded through Violence Reduction Grants
- Over **\$393,000** total invested in crisis response, street outreach, youth intervention, mobile crisis teams, emergency shelter, and recovery services

Funded partners included Community Kitchen, New Hope for Families, Stride, and others providing frontline support.

Looking Ahead

In the coming year, the City will continue strengthening its public safety system, emphasizing stability, coordination, and long-term capacity. **Priorities include maintaining adequate staffing levels, expanding alternative response options, and completing planned infrastructure improvements.**

The guiding principle remains consistent: a coordinated and well-resourced system produces safer outcomes for the community. While service demand remains high and incidents increasingly complex, Bloomington will continue refining its approach to ensure earlier intervention, sustained readiness, and measurable accountability across agencies and partners.