



**TOWN OF LOS GATOS
COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**

MEETING DATE: 01/21/2025

ITEM NO: 17

DATE: January 8, 2025
TO: Mayor and Town Council
FROM: Chris Constantin, Town Manager
SUBJECT: Receive the Information Provided in the Police Services Report: July – December 2024

RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommends that the Town Council review and acknowledge this bi-annual report, highlighting the significant accomplishments and ongoing efforts of the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Department (LGMSPD) during the reporting period. This report further outlines future priorities and fiscal needs to ensure continued excellence in public safety services.

BACKGROUND:

The LGMSPD serves the Town of Los Gatos and the City of Monte Sereno, providing tailored law enforcement services to meet the unique needs of each community. With a focus on community-oriented policing, the department continues to adapt to evolving needs while maintaining high standards of service. This report outlines the department's achievements, enhanced services, fiscal savings, and future priorities for 2025. The reporting period for this bi-annual report is July to December 2024 and presents the following:

- Department Staffing Update
- Fiscal Savings Initiatives in 2024
- Enhanced Policing Services
- Calls for Service and Officer Activity
- Emergency Preparedness Efforts
- 2025 Future Priorities and Themes
- Flock Cameras and Private Ownership, Privacy, and Access Review

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Chief of Police

Reviewed by: Town Manager, Assistant Town Manager, and Town Attorney

DISCUSSION:

DEPARTMENT STAFFING UPDATE

The LGMSPD continues to focus on recruitment as a priority for both sworn and professional staff. In this reportable period of July – December 2024 we have seen the following movement in our staffing model:

- Two sergeants retired.
- Hired one lateral officer (currently in Field Training)
- Hired two Police Academy Cadets – one in the Academy and one in Field Training
- Promoted an internal Sergeant and a Corporal
- Hired a Dispatcher – Dispatch is currently fully staffed for the first time in over five years, with the eighth dispatcher currently in training.

Throughout the upcoming year we expect quite a few additional retirements in both ranking sworn positions and key positions within professional staff. Due to the importance of transferring institutional knowledge, status of current projects and outlook on future priorities, significant succession and transition planning is expected. This will entail the importance of hiring ahead to allow for adequate overlap with some of the soon to be retirees that have been with LGMSPD for 20 years or more.

Additionally, promotional opportunities are upcoming with a testing process expected in March for Corporal and Sergeant positions. The rank of sergeant will be opened for eligible outside lateral candidates to apply if they have ascended to the rank of Corporal or higher. Recruitment for a Captain will then follow to backfill a vacancy at the end of 2025 due to retirement.

The LGMSPD has open positions for Community Service Officer Interns, and currently has one intermittently due to their college schedule. LGMSPD has utilized Reserves heavily in recent years, especially for special events, dignitary visits and staffing shortages. Two Reserves recently submitted their interest in retiring their role after having committed 25 years of service to the LGMSPD. In the last six months, Reserves have worked 716 hours, CSO's 735 hours, and Per Diem Dispatchers 597 hours.

In 2024, the LGMSPD hired more sworn officers in one year than in any other calendar year for the history of the Department. The rate of sworn hiring in 2024 was the equivalent of more than 25% of the budgeted allowed.

Budgeted Sworn	Current Sworn	Off due to injury	Light / Modified Duty	Field Training	Total Active and available
39	32	2	1	2	27

The chart below compares overtime hours for two years between July – December. There was less overtime in Dispatch during this reportable period in comparison to 2023. Dispatch overtime was due to required training and protected leave backfill. Sworn overtime was significantly more as the time needed to train an officer before they are a single resource is significant and other factors. Overtime is primarily due to coverage needed for special events (Ex. Halloween, Taste of Los Gatos, Los Gatos in Lights, and Children’s Holiday Parade), Training (mostly mandated requirements), and staffing shortages.

Title	7/01/23 – 12/31/23	7/01/24 – 12/31/24	Difference in FY
Communications	1,364 hours	1,179 hours	-185 hours
Sworn Staff	3,432 hours	4,335 hours	905 hours

FISCAL SAVINGS INITIATIVES IN 2024

New Dispatch and Patrol Shifts: A comprehensive analysis of shift patterns led to the implementation of revised scheduling in August, reducing overtime costs while ensuring adequate coverage during peak hours. This initiative resulted in an anticipated reduction in overtime expenditures when staffing improves.

Efficiencies through Technology:

Electronic Citations (eCite): Streamlined citation issuance processes, reducing officer time spent on paperwork, increased accuracy and legibility, reduction in administrative support and entry needs.

E-Filing with the District Attorney’s Office: Automated submission of reports cut down on administrative delays, increasing case processing efficiency, and reduction of LGMSPD administrative staff having to commute to the DA’s Office.

Increased Fiscal Support: The Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation contributed significant fiscal and volunteer support to fund community programs (National Night Out), officer training (EOD and Tracking), and new policing tools or equipment upgrades (K-9 and drone).

ENHANCED POLICING SERVICES

By allocating resources strategically, LGMSPD can address critical priorities while maintaining its high standards of community-focused policing. Maintaining a localized police department may involve higher initial costs compared to larger regionalized options. However, the long-term benefits of tailored services, community trust and identity, and economic impact justify the investment. Localized departments often prevent higher indirect costs associated with slower response times and reduced community engagement.

Localized police departments, like LGMSPD, provide dedicated and consistent services that a larger regional model may differ on. Benefits include:

- Direct accountability to local leadership and residents, ensuring alignment with community priorities.
- Faster and more tailored responses to emergencies, enhancing public safety.
- Sustained community partnerships that foster trust and collaboration (Ex. National Night Out, Police Foundation, Community Police Academy).
- The ability to adapt policies, training, and initiatives specifically to the unique needs of Los Gatos and Monte Sereno (Ex. CCW Policy and Ordinances)

The LGMSPD exemplifies the value of localized and accessible policing through a high-touch approach, ensuring community trust and maintaining the unique identity of both the Town of Los Gatos and City of Monte Sereno through the following efforts:

Personalized Dispatch Center:

Localized communications ensure faster response times, familiarity with community norms and culture and a strong connection with the community (Ex. Operation Care).

Community Policing Model:

Focused engagement through programs like the Explorer Program, Community Police Academy, Volunteer in Policing (VIP), strong partnerships with stakeholders like the Jewish Community Center (JCC), and proactive neighborhood outreach. The new model of National Night Out (NNO) at the Town Plaza was extremely well attended along with the LGMSPD Police Recognition Luncheon at the JCC that had over 130 people in attendance. Both engagements were made possible through the support of the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation and other community partnerships.

Officers build lasting relationships with residents, fostering mutual understanding and respect.

The LGMSPD specifically demonstrates localized and accessible policing through:

Faith-Based Organizations: Partnerships foster trust and address social issues through programs like faith-led outreach and support for vulnerable populations.

Local Schools: The new School Resource Officer (SRO) has continued to enhance campus safety by conducting safety drills, bike rodeos, conflict resolution workshops, and mentorship

initiatives. The School Resource Officer and SWAT Sergeant attended FEMA and POST certified Active Shooter Train-the-Trainer courses. They subsequently provided this critical training to all sworn staff, with scenario training conducted after hours at the Jewish Community Center.

Additionally, the School Resource Officer and patrol officers participated in multiple Bike Rodeos in collaboration with Safe Routes to School. The School Resource Officer also addressed a significant number of concerns and threats on school campuses, reflecting a statewide increase in such trends during this school year.

Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation: Support from the Foundation has enabled the department to fund critical training programs and acquire advanced equipment. Financial and logistical support from the Police Foundation enables the department to fund special programs, training, and community outreach initiatives.

Special Event Support: Comprehensive logistical and tactical support for community events to assure adequate safety and security measures for events throughout the year to include; Halloween road closures and increased patrol staffing, Childrens Holiday Parade, Los Gatos in Lights, Free Speech events and marches, Taste of Los Gatos full North Santa Cruz Road closure and more.

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and DART (Disaster Aid Response Team): These teams provided support during multiple special events this year, provide awareness and are ambassadors to being a resilient community through their engagement in the Community Police Academy, bi-monthly emergency preparedness meetings, and other opportunities. Additionally, two DART (Disaster Aid Response Team) members were sworn in during this reporting period.

Welcome Packets: Volunteers in Policing (VIPs) stuff and deliver bags containing materials such as Chamber of Commerce information, local resources, emergency preparedness guides, details on LGMSPD services, and a welcome letter from the Chief.

Vacation Checks and Operations Care: proactive policing community services offered to help ensure the safety of residents' homes while they are away on vacation or daily checks on aging community members.

CALLS FOR SERVICE AND OFFICER ACTIVITY

The LGMSPD strives to meet response times and provide an uncompromising high level of service to the community. The following table depicts a comparison of the Communications Division call volume, both inbound and outbound, immediacy to which they are answered, and number of 911 calls over the last two years between the months of July to December.

The industry standard for a Public Safety Answering Point (PSAP) agency is a target for 911 calls to be answered within less than ten seconds 95% of the time. Outbound calls can be a result of transferring callers to other points of contact within Town Departments, contacting or following up with community members, or conducting other inter-agency duties.

July - December	Inbound 911 calls	% of 911 calls answered < 10 seconds	Incoming Non-emergency calls	Non-emergency Outbound calls
2023	4,709	96.6%	15,967	7,726
2024	5,168	95.9%	14,443	6,398

Officers’ response to priority calls for service continue to be comparable to prior years, and close to priority goals. These metrics can be found in the Fiscal Year Adopted Operating Budget in the performance measures section of the Police Department chapter and will have prior years for comparison too.

Priority 1 refers to immediate emergency with threat to life or a public safety hazard, Priority 2 is an urgent emergency that requires an immediate response, and a Priority 3 incident is a non-emergency. The LGMSPD has set response time goals of 5:00 minutes for Priority 1 calls and had an average of 5:02 over the past six months. Priority 2 call response goal is 10:00 minutes and was 6:52 during this reportable period. Priority 3 calls are 15:00 minutes and were 7:01 minute average between July – December 2024. Additionally, there is a comparison bar chart in Attachment 1 with the above data comparisons and contains the slide deck materials for this item.

EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS EFFORTS

CERT (Community Emergency Response Team) and DART (Disaster Aid Response Team) Programs: Welcomed new trained volunteers in disaster response, which increases the community’s readiness for emergencies. Two additional Neighborhood Incident Command Posts (NICP’s) were opened and the first of future bi-monthly emergency preparedness meetings occurred in November in the EOC in collaboration between CERT volunteers and the Police Department.

Advanced Officer Training: All officers completed FEMA and POST certified active shooter training provided by our own internal trainers which aligned with the updated 2024 Santa Clara County protocol. Officer also re-certified on CPR / First Aid, Firearms, and review of policy and laws applicable to de-escalation and use of force.

Community Outreach and Drills: Public education campaigns reached the public through service club meetings, multiple Neighborhood Watch meetings, interfaith collaboration, social media,

and other mechanisms. LGMSPD is currently promoting and accepting application for the Spring 2025 LGMSPD Community Police Academy and focusing efforts on recruitment for Police Explorers ages 14-20.

These partnerships and preparedness efforts amplify LGMSPD's ability to deliver community-oriented services, fostering trust and collaboration while addressing the unique needs of Los Gatos and Monte Sereno.

2025 FUTURE PRIORITIES AND THEMES

Staff Transitions and Succession Planning: Implement hire ahead efforts throughout 2025 as part of a successful transition and succession plan to address upcoming retirements, ensuring adequate knowledge transfer. Additional focus on training new personnel, including new supervisors and professional staff.

The organizational assessment suggested staffing enhancements to better support workload and bandwidth. A full understanding to the timeframe for requests of added FTE's will be forthcoming following the space assessment information on the feasibility of infrastructure and staffing consolidation. The assessment recommended adding a total of four FTE's to include a Police Lieutenant, a Support Services Manager, a Records Specialist, an Administrative Technician, and a dispatcher to address service demands and oversight.

Meliora Recommendations: Meliora Public Safety Consulting (PSC) is a professional consulting firm specializing in comprehensive organizational assessments, strategic planning, and operational evaluations for law enforcement agencies. Their approach focuses on identifying efficiencies, aligning operations with industry best practices, and fostering innovation to meet evolving community needs. Meliora was commissioned in January 2024 in a contemporary effort to outline operational priorities, fiscal needs, and continue the progressive development of the LGMSPD. The LGMSPD staff continue to work on the prioritized recommendations to enhance efficiency, infrastructure, and training.

Training and Professional Development: Training and professional development are critical for police department staff as they directly impact the effectiveness, safety, and professionalism of law enforcement agencies to include encouraging career growth, improved decision-making, promotes officer-safety and enhances operational effectiveness throughout the organization. Areas of focus in 2025 includes:

- Advanced Officer Training (AOT) Taser 10 training for all officers, providing enhanced capabilities such as extended range, improved precision, and increased battery life, which ensure safer outcomes in critical incidents.
- "Building a Culture of Accountability" session at end of January 2025 for Sergeants, Leads, and Command Staff to promote leadership and operational excellence. This is partially

sponsored by the Los Gatos-Monte Sereno Police Foundation with the other half from the LGMSPD budget.

- Advanced certification programs for sworn and professional staff to enhance tactical, investigative, and administrative support skills.
- Continuous education on updated law enforcement policies and state-mandated requirements, such as, CCW requirements, PRA's, accountability measures, and new legislative updates.
- Ongoing emergency response training aligned with POST and FEMA guidelines to enhance preparedness for critical incidents in addition to continued emphasis on redeveloping the Police Departments SWAT team.
- Over half of the Police Department consists of staff either new to the profession or to the department within the last three years, emphasizing the importance of robust core policing training for sworn and professional staff (Ex. Radar/Lidar Certification, Interview and Interrogation, and DUI training).
- Training for newly promoted supervisors focuses on critical areas such as risk management, leadership, supervision, and management, equipping them to effectively handle complex operational and personnel issues.
- As training requirements, travel needs, and unfunded mandates continue to grow, the training budget must be adjusted to reflect these increases. Sustaining a high standard of training is essential to reduced liability and increased risk management, maintaining operational effectiveness, and ensuring compliance with evolving state and federal mandates.

Technology Enhancements: Implementation of software for tracking personnel certifications and equipment inventory, replace and update patrol car computers, implement an automated subpoena delivery and tracking process and identify and automated software to manage false alarm billing and processing.

The Meliora Organizational Assessment recommended throughout the report a software specific to policing services that will provide a robust platform for managing law enforcement training, equipment, and certifications, ensuring compliance with state and federal requirements. Capabilities would include automated scheduling of training sessions, tracking officer performance, and maintaining detailed records of certifications and renewals. This would enhance operational efficiency by reducing administrative burdens, improve transparency in personnel management, and have an auditing function.

Additionally, the assessment recommended an improved false alarm billing and tracking system to enhance efficiency and compliance as the Community Outreach Coordinator currently manages this task in conjunction with Dispatch and after handling billing and receipt of payment, then delivers the checks to the Finance Department.

Another item that was highly recommended was enhanced fiscal software to better manage agreements, timecards, and other fiscal analyst matters, promoting operational efficiencies. This will be a Town wide system update and dependent on the implementation timeline already underway through Tyler Munis.

Infrastructure Improvements: Conduct a comprehensive assessment of existing facilities to plan for security upgrades and improved evidence storage.

- Recommendations are aligned with best practices as defined by the California Association of Property and Evidence (CAPE) and the International Association for Property and Evidence (IAPE).
- Space assessment and upgrades to security and evidence storage facilities.

Space Assessment Priority: Meliora proposed 130 recommendations in their report. The space assessment is identified as a significant priority for the Town to fiscally plan for any actions recommended by the report. Parks and Public Works estimates the delayed space assessment to be underway by the end of March 2025, with completion estimated to take nine to twelve months.

Staff recommends selecting a vendor with extensive experience, references, and expertise in Police Department development, retrofitting, and sustainable energy-efficient police buildings that meet CAPE and IACP best practices and recommendations. The requested outcome of the space assessment study includes the development of a functional report, conceptual drawings, and cost estimates compiled into a comprehensive report for delivery to Council. Currently there is \$75,000 designated in a CIP to go towards a space assessment.

FLOCK CAMERAS AND PRIVATE OWNERSHIP

The Flock camera program provides significant safety benefits to Los Gatos by leveraging technology to combat crime while maintaining a strong commitment to privacy and data protection. Its collaborative funding model ensures widespread implementation, while stringent data handling policies balance safety with the community's privacy expectations.

Benefits

- *Enhanced Public Safety:* Flock cameras were instrumental in solving and preventing multiple crimes this year, follow up on missing persons, and other policing matters.

- *Community Collaboration:* 12 privately owned Flock cameras now supplement the Town's program, expanding coverage to high-traffic areas. More privately owned cameras are expected in 2025 with the appropriate permitting if determined to be on Town property. Seven privately owned cameras are in the Town right of way and a standardized process is under evaluation by Parks and Public Works, the Town Attorney, and LGMSPD for encroachment permit and assuring captured data is shared with LGMSPD.
- *Efficient Resource Allocation:* swift alerting of a noted license plate number for awareness to police department staff and a response if appropriate. This includes stolen vehicles or license plates, Amber Alerts, Wanted Persons or persons under investigation.
- *Accountability:* Auditing ability of camera usage ensures compliance with strict access policies. Only authorized law enforcement personnel can access Flock data, and such access is logged and monitored to ensure compliance with policies.
- *Data Retention:* The 30-day cloud retention policy balances investigatory needs with privacy protections. A download of all captured images within designated timeframes is not feasible, nor is within policy to conduct.
- *No Personally Identifiable Information (PII):* Flock cameras capture vehicle and license plate information, not personal details about individuals.

FLOCK PRIVACY AND ACCESS REVIEW

- *PRA Exemption for Town-Owned Cameras:* Data captured by the 17 Town-owned Flock cameras is exempt from the Public Records Act (PRA). This ensures that sensitive information, such as license plate data, remains protected and is not disclosed publicly. Access is restricted to authorized law enforcement personnel who use the data strictly for investigative purposes. Flock information does not fall under the Town's retention schedule as it is not owned by the Town.
- *Privately Owned Flock Cameras:* Data captured by the 12 privately owned Flock cameras operates under the same strict guidelines as the Town-owned cameras. This includes PRA exemption, restricted access to authorized personnel, and compliance with strict data retention policies. Privately owned cameras contribute to public safety without compromising the privacy of individuals, as data is used solely for legitimate law enforcement investigations.
- *Cloud-Based Storage and Retention:* All Flock camera data, whether from Town-owned or privately owned systems, is stored in a secure cloud environment for a maximum of 30 days. After this period, data is automatically deleted unless flagged for an active investigation.
- *Oversight:* Logs of all access to Flock data are maintained to promote accountability and transparency.
- *Policy and Transparency:* The Police Department's internal Lexipol Policy outlines the governance and civil codes related to Automated License Plate Readers (ALPRs), including data retention, search parameters, and auditing protocols. By law, this policy must be posted separately on the Police Department's website. To enhance transparency further,

the Police Department has embedded the Flock Transparency Portal directly into the LGMSPD website, allowing residents to access information about the program.

FISCAL IMPACT:

To address the department's strategic priorities and recommendations from the Meliora assessment, the following areas of budgetary support are anticipated with exact projections either still being determined or the Department will absorb:

- Staffing and Succession Planning (TBD)
- Training and Professional Development (FY 24/25 absorbed with adjustment request anticipated for FY 25/26)
- Infrastructure Improvements (TBD based on space assessment and security upgrade needs)
- Technology Enhancements (SLESF funds expected to cover)
- Community Engagement and Specialized Programs (Meliora report recommended adding specific budget line items for Drone Program and Community Engagement and Volunteer Programs as they are primarily currently supported by the Police Foundation)

CONCLUSION:

The LGMSPD demonstrates a strong commitment to public safety, operational efficiency, and community engagement. By focusing on localized and community-oriented services, the department addresses unique challenges while fostering trust and collaboration. Continued investment in staffing, technology, and infrastructure is vital to sustaining these efforts and preparing for future challenges effectively.

ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT:

This is not a project defined under CEQA, and no further action is required.

Attachment:

1. PowerPoint Presentation