



March 17, 2025

Sean P. Connolly, Chief of Police
Flagstaff Police Department
911 East Sawmill Road
Flagstaff, Arizona 86001

Dear Chief Connolly:

pfm

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We are pleased to submit this engagement letter to assist the City of Flagstaff, Arizona (the “City” or “Flagstaff”) with a comprehensive review and workload-based analysis of the staffing needs of its Police Department (“the Department”).

This engagement letter provides background on the project and proposes a scope of work, project team, schedule, and compensation arrangement for your consideration.

Background

Across the nation, changes to historical patterns of service demand require governments to reorient and reexamine whether their current operations, organization, and policies best meet the evolving needs of their communities – particularly in this uncertain economic environment as local governments reexamine funding for public safety to consider the most efficient and effective structures to provide safety in their communities. This is an operational, fiscal, and policy imperative for local governments like Flagstaff.

Against this backdrop, Flagstaff seeks to conduct a study to identify how it can most efficiently and effectively utilize its resources to staff the Police Department and continue its efforts to reduce crime, respond to calls for service, and engage the community.

To help local governments tackle these priorities, PFM developed a prevention- first approach centered on asking what services law enforcement should provide, and why. By asking this formative question, local governments can reframe their analyses from debates about the antiquated measure of success of how much of the budget is spent on law enforcement to focus on necessary inputs to generate the desired outcomes. A prevention-first approach cuts across every dimension of a police department – from how it is staffed, how it recruits and retains employees, how it operates and is organized, how it impacts equity internally and externally, and how it spends its allocated funding.

The following pages provide an overview of PFM’s approach to meeting the Department’s needs. PFM’s proposed approach provides Flagstaff with a team of experts in police staffing, organization, and operations, collectively informing how communities can effectively and efficiently provide law enforcement services.

Of note, PFM Senior Advisor, Dr. Ronal Serpas – who led three large policing agencies through staffing and organizational/operational plans in each of Washington State Patrol, Nashville, and New Orleans – will serve as a subject matter expert for this engagement.



Our team has conducted police staffing analyses in dozens of departments across the multiple domains sought by the Department, including among others: Albuquerque, Alexandria (Virginia), Baltimore, Chester (Pennsylvania), the District of Columbia, Fairfax City (Virginia), Harris County Sheriff's Office (Texas), Houston, Lancaster (Pennsylvania), Montgomery County (Maryland), New Orleans, Oakland (California), Phoenix, Providence (Rhode Island), Puerto Rico Police Bureau, Rockford (Illinois), the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

Scope of Work

Based on our discussions, we understand that the Department seeks assistance in performing a *data-driven staffing analysis and prospective staffing plan*.

We are excited about the opportunity to work on this task. A primary goal of the staffing analysis is to identify the appropriate headcount by type for the Department's forward-looking needs. This analysis may set a baseline need, but that need can – and should – be affected by the Department's review and pursuit of high-level findings and recommendations from our analysis. The results of these tasks will present the Department with a series of potential options that can impact the baseline staffing analysis.

In short, we believe that an efficient and effective Flagstaff Police Department will be positioned to both better meet its mission and do so in a sustainable operational and fiscal footprint.

The following paragraphs provide a synopsis of PFM's approach:

- 1) **Data-Driven Staffing Analysis and Prospective Staffing Plan.** In our government and consulting experience, we find that city officials often ask police departments, "How many police officers are required to ensure public safety?" This question is understandable but also different from "How many police officers does a community want?" and "How many police officers can a community afford?" The PFM team believes that staffing models are one part of a much larger analytical framework necessary to reach an informed decision on the number of officers a community "needs." The "needs-based" analysis is a complex, but critical, undertaking.

The PFM team uses a process that is a U.S. DOJ-cited best practice. This practice, a workload-based, performance-oriented staffing assessment, was developed by frequent PFM collaborators Drs. Jeremy Wilson and (the late) Alexander Weiss. PFM has worked with these professionals to continue expanding their work. The approach is unique because it accounts for multiple inputs to project staffing needs.





The PFM team uses this approach to inform staffing projections that consider the challenges we have seen as law enforcement leaders and consultants. Too frequently, consultants or jurisdictions forge ahead with staffing analyses in search of the “right” number of police employees without understanding some of the nuances that meaningfully affect the analyses – let alone the desired policy priorities and outcomes that should drive the process in the first place.

In our experience, it is most productive to focus on identifying policy priorities and desired outcomes and resourcing those areas that drive the results rather than simply a single top-line headcount number. The PFM team’s approach will analyze the Department’s staffing allocation and needs, considering its current and future policy priorities, desired outcomes, and available resources to inform recommendations for staffing allocation.

The PFM team takes four different inputs into account when designing the staffing analysis and model:

- *Operational and personnel data.* This analysis is data-intensive. To perform our analyses, we will require detailed data for the Department as a whole and for each precinct (as applicable), including community-generated calls for service and benefit time data for officers and professional staff.
- *Quantitative analysis.* Using the department’s data, we believe it is critical to examine information about every service unit. We will examine data about community-generated calls for service, bureau-initiated activities, investigative caseloads and time on task, and administrative activities. We will also examine geographic and temporal allocation and work schedules to evaluate how they affect staffing.
- *Qualitative analysis.* Our professional experience informs our quantitative approach. As law enforcement leaders, senior budget and executive personnel, and consultants, we know that while we can learn much from looking at data, it is critical to understand, through interviews and roundtable discussions, the experiences and input of the Department’s rank-and-file and supervisory staff and how they view their jobs.
- *Performance objectives.* Our approach emphasizes using performance objectives in staffing analyses and decision-making processes. It is relatively straightforward to build a staffing model based on calls for service or investigative caseloads, but most communities want public safety personnel to do more than react to inputs. Our staffing model will reflect community expectations about the use of discretionary time.

2) **Patrol Services:** The PFM team’s methodology for workload-based patrol staffing is based on a six-step process.

- 1) *Examine the distribution of community-generated calls for service by hour, day, and month.* Calls for service can differ by hour of the day, day of the week, and month of the year. Peak call times can also vary by geographic command. Knowing when peak call times occur can help agencies determine when they must have their highest levels of staff on duty (and the right mix of experience and supervision among assigned staff). Temporal allocation is often affected by shift change. That is, to avoid assigning officers to calls that will cause them to work overtime, some agencies hold calls in queue. As a result, oncoming officers may start their shifts with several assignments waiting.



- 2) *Examine the nature of calls.* Reviewing the nature of calls helps to understand officers' work better. In our police leadership and consulting experience, this analysis frequently reveals categories of calls that could be better handled by alternative means. For instance, we have worked with communities that significantly reduced response to false alarms by requiring that the alarm provider verify the alarm before officers are dispatched.
- 3) *Estimate the time consumed on calls for service.* Determining how long a call takes, from receipt to final paperwork, is key to determining the number of officers needed for a shift. An important aspect of this time-based analysis is the time that calls for service wait in queue before being dispatched. This can be an important indicator of officer availability and inform the efficiency and effectiveness of a department's approach to managing and resolving individual and collective calls for service.
- 4) *Calculate the shift-relief factor.* The shift-relief factor shows the relationship between the maximum number of days that an officer (or civilian) can work versus how many days the individual *actually works*. Knowing the relief factor is necessary to estimate the number of officers and civilians that should be assigned to a shift to ensure the appropriate number and type of employees are available every day, every shift, in every division, and in every unit.
- 5) *Establish performance objectives.* This encompasses determining what fraction of an officer's shift *should* be devoted to responses to calls for service versus what portion should be dedicated to other activities like proactive and community policing. For example, an agency might build a desired staffing model in which officers spend 40 percent of their shift on resident calls for service, 40 percent on discretionary activities, and 10 percent on administrative tasks. Because the performance objective is essentially the amount of community-driven activity, our approach will provide the Department with staffing estimates at various levels of discretionary time.
- 6) *Provide staffing estimates (by shift, precinct, and beat).* The result of the six-step process will provide the Department with staffing needs estimates based on collaboratively developed assumptions and methodical data analyses. The nuanced staffing estimates account for variation in need by the time of day, day of the week, and month of the year, among other variables. These figures also encompass operational decisions that the Department may make. For instance, if the Department decides to assign two officers to each unit in its evening shift, it will affect the number of officers needed for units to respond to calls. If the Department elects to use alternative response methods (e.g., sending a unit during some shifts, but requesting residents file a report in person or online during other shifts), that will impact the staffing level.
- 7) *Assess the number of Sergeants and Lieutenants needed for the supervisory span of control.* As part of this work, PFM will use its new approach to calculate and quantify the workload associated with the Department's desired performance of patrol sergeants and lieutenants. Responding to the evolving needs of our clients (sergeants and lieutenants are consumed by administrative tasks that limit their field supervision, accountability, and mentoring responsibilities), our first-of-its-kind approach moves beyond estimating the number of supervisors based on the span of control ratios. It provides data and metrics to inform staffing allocation for these key supervisory ranks.



Based on the preceding analyses and discussions with the Department and City, PFM will develop a range of patrol bureau staffing levels (minimal to optimal) incorporating Department objectives and policy goals.

A note on the Potential Realignment of Patrol Boundaries. In our professional experience leading redistricting as police executives and in our consulting experience supporting redistricting, it is a complicated and challenging undertaking that demands significant data analyses, intentional process design, and community engagement. A full precinct and beat redistricting process entails time and effort that may be beyond the Department's anticipated scope of services; however, the data-based facts for precinct and beat redesign are feasible within the requested scope of services – that is, the data that informs workload differentiation among and between precincts and beats as well as any potential rebalancing or allocation of staff between and among precincts and beats – and are included in all of our police staffing allocation engagements.

Relatedly, the many variables of interest we consider for future patrol service demands can also be used to inform re-districting patrol division boundaries. For instance, 2020 U.S. Census Bureau data now reports racial demographics at the “block” level. This is a new feature and data set. Another new, valuable piece of Census Bureau data is “block groups,” which reports a full range of demographic statistics for approximately 700 residents per block. The value of these new tools, when combined with existing tools, is that this richer data can be “layered” onto *existing information like defined neighborhood street segments to inform and model impacts of future growth and improve the granularity and information available to make informed choices around redistricting of precincts and beats.*

The final staffing estimates will provide sufficient nuance so that the Department can assess “what-if” scenarios to determine the ultimate impact on staffing resulting from various policy considerations, whether in isolation or in tandem.

- 3) **Investigative Services:** To evaluate investigative staffing needs, the PFM team's approach will be informed by a combination of emerging best practices and experienced analyses of time on task at each stage of the investigative process. We understand that most agencies do not have enough capacity to conduct full investigations for all reported crimes and instead use solvability factor analyses, which have been common to law enforcement for decades.

As a result, our work is informed by a detailed analysis of case log data, clearance rates, closure times, personnel data (assigned working hours, shift structures, callouts for scene investigation on regular time versus overtime, etc.), collection of time on task by case type and investigative stage, use of best practices for case review by solvability factors, approaches to close and effective supervision, and nuanced discussions with detectives and each level of an assigned unit's supervisory chain of command.

PFM's approach will also include the development of customized survey instruments that will solicit information from investigators on the level of effort for each case type, the types of work items, and general responsibilities and challenges faced by investigative functions within the Department. The confidential and anonymous survey will be distributed to all detectives and supervisors serving in investigative roles within the Department including: A squad, B squad, Computer Forensics/Sex Offender, Family Crimes Team, Metro Unit, Property Crimes, and any other appropriate investigative function identified through discussions with the Department.

PFM has successfully customized this approach and methodology for other jurisdictions



to obtain local context into the average or median work hours applied to each case. PFM will develop recommended staffing levels incorporating Department objectives and policy goals (e.g., setting a maximum caseload per detective to manage work volume, establishing a maximum day to completion for misconduct investigations, etc.).

- 4) **All Other Divisions and Functions:** To evaluate the staffing needs of the remaining Divisions within the Department (including, but not limited to): Community Relations/Crime Prevention, Support Services, and Communications, our approach will be informed by a combination of:
- Reviewing any available systems of record (e.g., databases that track the volume of public data requests)
 - Roundtable discussions with front-line personnel
 - Meetings with command members
 - Leveraging the PFM team's subject matter expertise

Among other workload drivers, PFM will consider the following quantitative factors that may impact staffing requirements for each Division, including, but not limited to:

- Annual recertification training requirements (e.g., hours/year)
- Anticipated future trainings on updated policies
- Changing requirements and expectations for IT and records infrastructure
- Anticipated volume of public data requests (based on historical trends)
- Departmental goals on the expected number of new recruits and the subsequent impact on the volume of background investigations (as well as any departmental goals on the expected time to complete such investigations)

- 5) **Assessing Current and Future Staffing Needs Using a Customized, Dynamic, and User-Friendly Staffing Model**

PFM regularly works with law enforcement agencies to assess the impact of various changes (population, calls for service workload, personnel availability, etc.) on staffing and resource allocations. These analyses are dynamic and require an approach that allows for "what-if" scenarios to assess potential changes in staffing demand. PFM's approach does just that. We will use Department data and our analyses to model workload drivers and create a dynamic model that allows us (and Department users) to test different scenarios and changes in isolation or combination. The model can be developed to be adjustable at the division and/or unit levels.

PFM will provide the Department with a Microsoft Excel-based staffing model based on the data and any assumptions developed during our work. ***The flexible model can be updated by Department staff on a go-forward basis after our engagement concludes, as future assumptions need to be changed or added.*** We will provide user training on the model and, subject to Department direction, hold time on an hourly basis for a co-determined amount of "on-call" assistance for a period beyond the initial project completion.



6) **Development of a PowerPoint Report that Documents PFM Findings and Details Data-driven Recommended Staffing Levels**

The preceding steps' analyses, evaluations, findings, and recommendations will culminate in a detailed written report (in Microsoft PowerPoint format). The report will be organized into at least five sections, providing plain-language findings and recommendations – potentially organized in the following manner:

- Project Overview and Introduction (including methodologies used for all analyses)
- Departmental Overview
- Department-wide Historical Staffing Overview
- Workload-based Staffing Analyses
- Workload-based Analysis of the Patrol Divisions
- Workload-based Analysis of Investigative Services
- Workload-based Analysis of Administration and Other Services
- Recommended Department Staffing Summary
- Appendices

The report and the flexible Excel-based staffing model that will accompany it will help Department leaders make more informed staffing, personnel, operational, organizational, and fiscal decisions. If requested by the Department or the City, PFM will provide a limited number of in-person presentation(s) to Department executive staff, City leaders, and the public.

Project Team

Seth Williams, who leads PFM's Law Enforcement practice, will service as the project manager and primary day-to-day contact. Seth will be assisted by PFM Senior Advisor, (Ret.) Chief Ronal Serpas, Ph.D., Kevin Watters, Samantha Brandt, and other experienced professionals from PFM. PFM will utilize additional subject matter expert, EJM Advisory Firm LLC (Eric Melancon), who brings more than a decade of senior law enforcement administrative experience in two large departments.

Schedule

Subject to discussions between PFM and the City, work under this proposal will commence shortly after City approval. PFM anticipates delivery of the full scope of services over approximately six-to-eight months.



Proposed Compensation

PFM proposes a fixed fee of \$134,535 for the requested scope of professional services.

In addition to the compensation for our professional services described above, PFM proposes to be reimbursed at the cost of travel (transportation, lodging, meals, etc.). Appropriate documentation and third-party receipts will be provided with each invoice. Preliminary cost estimates for travel are anticipated to be \$7,500.

The PFM team's technical and financial proposal is based on our experience with similar efforts in comparable jurisdictions. However, we recognize there are multiple ways to approach this work. We would be happy to discuss alternative methodologies to deliver the desired outcomes and budget for this scope of services at the discretion of the City and the Department.

We are accustomed to working with public sector clients under a broad range of contract structures, and we welcome an opportunity to discuss further and refine the level of service and fair compensation commensurate with such levels of service.

If this arrangement is acceptable, please sign the attached page and return it to us.

Please contact Seth Williams with any questions or comments. We look forward to working with you, the Department, and the City on this critical project.

Sincerely,

PFM GROUP CONSULTING LLC

Sarah Schirmer
Managing Director

Seth Williams
Director



On behalf of the City of Flagstaff, Arizona, I agree to the terms described in the above letter.

Accepted by:

CITY OF FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

Authorized Signature

Name

Title

Date