

Rockingham Police Department

2024 Annual Report



Presented by:

Chief George C. Gillenwater

Message from the Chief

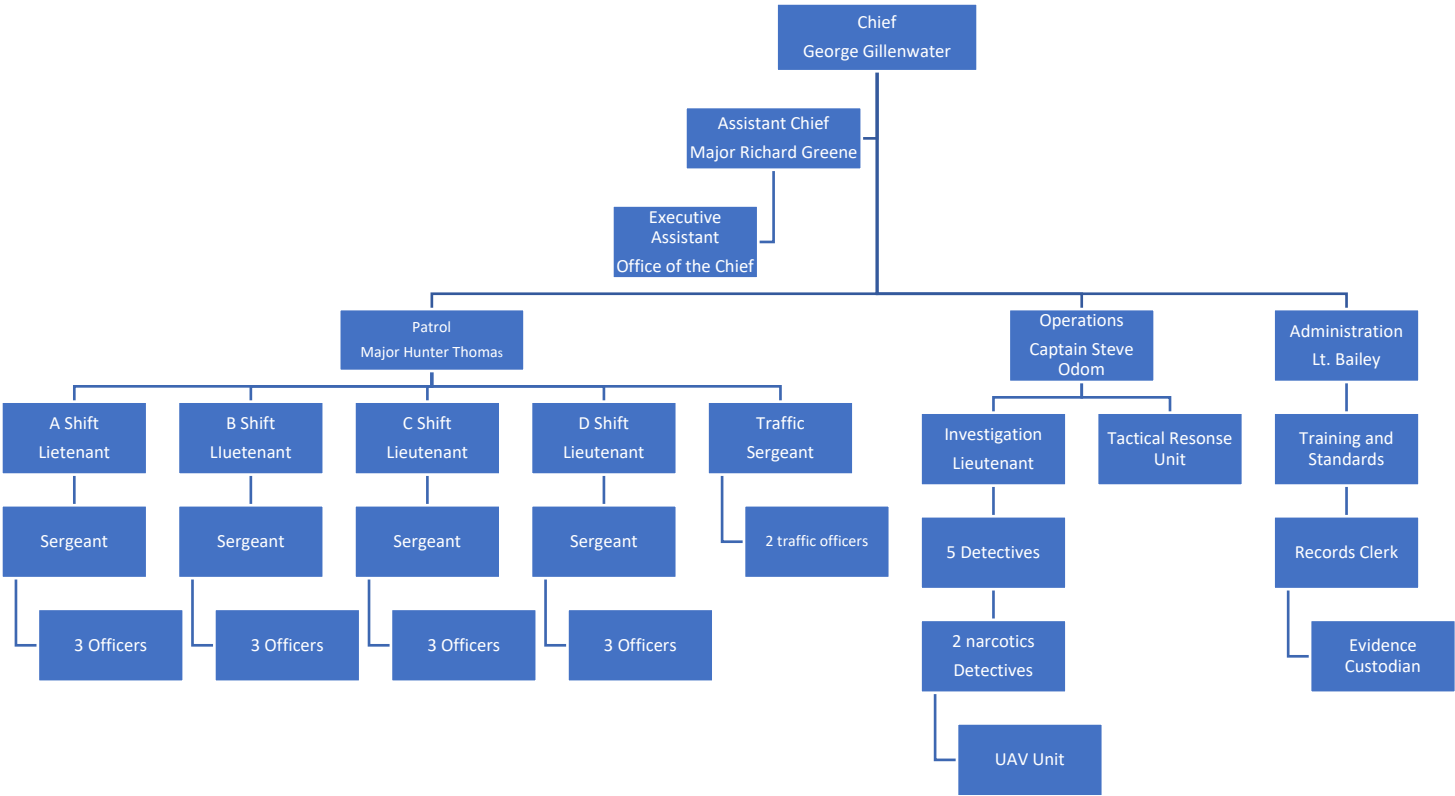
On behalf of the staff of the Rockingham Police Department, it is a pleasure to publish our 2024 Annual Report. This report serves as a summary of the activities of the Rockingham Police Department for the 2024 calendar year, highlighting our commitment to professionalism, transparent policing initiatives, achievements, and public data. I am proud to say that our department remains fully staffed as we have continued to focus on hiring and developing the most qualified individuals. We have remained committed to a retention plan that embraces developing young officers through an extensive training program and encouraging them to take part in vast education opportunities. We have also focused a great deal of attention on our veteran officers, providing them with opportunities for advanced training and education, which will prepare them for promotion in the coming years.

Starting 2024 fully staffed and remaining near full, to full capacity, the entire year has been great for morale and has also allowed us to implement more effective saturation patrol techniques, focusing our attention on interdiction techniques, as well as allowing us to bolster our narcotics division leading to record numbers of narcotics arrests. We remain determined to be at the forefront of policing techniques, provide our officers with state-of-the-art equipment, and more importantly provide our citizens with uncompromising service.

George C. Gillenwater



Rockingham Police Department
 Organization Structure
 Effective January 1, 2025



The Rockingham Police Department is a Risk Management Accredited Agency through the North Carolina League of Municipalities.

Organizational Breakdown

Patrol

Major Thomas leads the Patrol Division. The patrol division is comprised of twenty-one uniformed officers assigned to 4 squads each consisting of 5 officers. Each squad has a Lieutenant who supervises with the assistance of a Sergeant. Patrol answers all 911 calls, conducts proactive patrols to combat crime, and actively participates in community policing events. In addition to the uniformed patrol squads, there is a specialized traffic unit supervised by Sergeant McCaskill consisting of three uniformed officers. This specialized unit handles most accident reports in the city as well as enforcing NC traffic laws. Major Thomas also manages fleet management, parade permits, taxi permits, wrecker rotation, initial officer compliments and complaints and special events for the department.

Operations

Captain Odom provides administrative oversight, leadership, and overall management to the operations division. The Criminal Investigations Division is subdivided into specialized units. General Crime Unit detectives investigate a variety of crime to include crimes against persons, property crimes, fraud, sexual assaults, and homicide. The Vice/Narcotics Unit is a covert technical group of detectives who conduct narcotics and vice investigations. In addition to these specialized units, Captain Odom oversees the management of both the department's UAV (Unmanned Aerial Vehicle) team and the department's Tactical Response Unit.

Administration

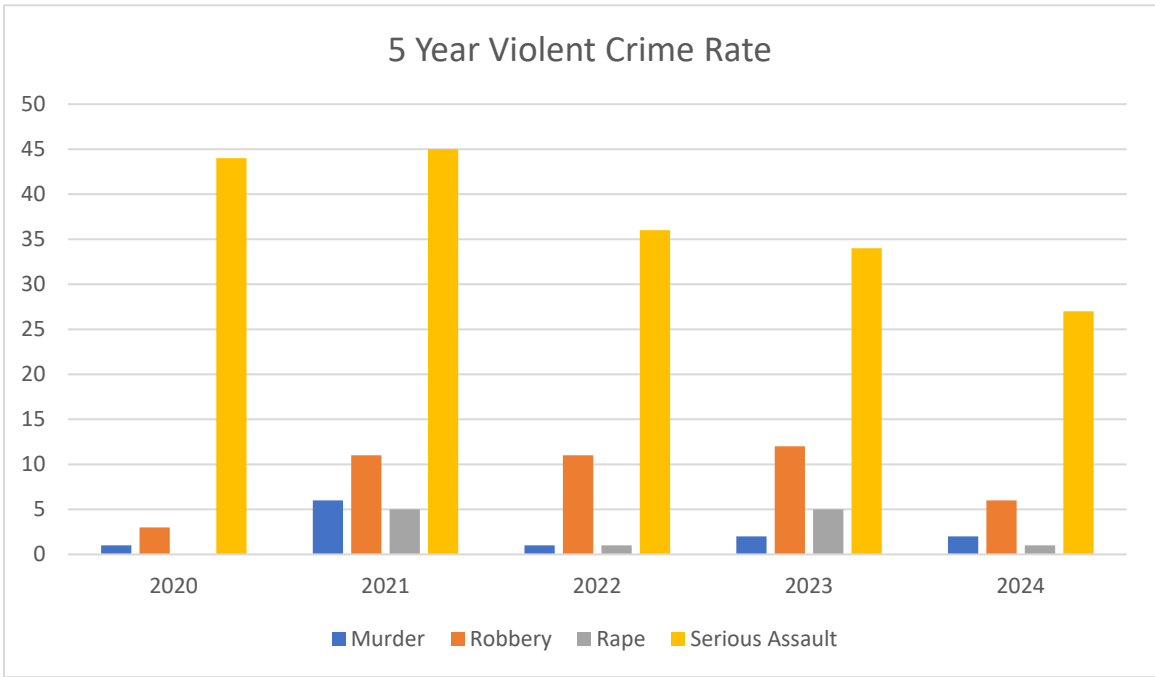
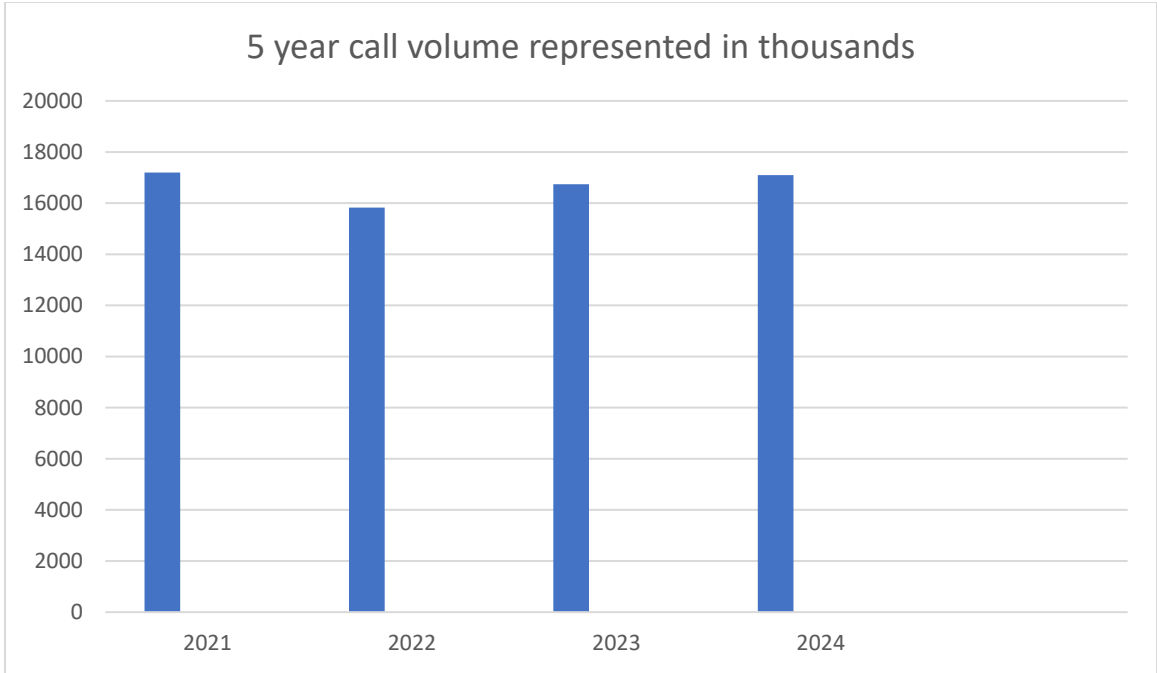
Lieutenant Bailey leads the sworn functions of the administrative division. Police Management Assistant Pavia leads the non-sworn records management functions.

The Administrative Division encompasses numerous organizational functions. Services include records management, evidence/property management, training, grant management, personnel liability, policy review, auditing, fiscal management, non-sworn civil operations, and accreditation.

Crime Data and Transparency Reporting

A benchmark for any community is to have a low crime rate. Many citizens, businesses, and local governments strive to have a low crime rate to help improve the quality of life for the community. The Rockingham Police Department understands the importance of this benchmark and recognizes that crime control is a valuable initiative that supports our department's mission. There are many dynamics to reporting crime data, such as the difference between a reported crime and the subsets of those crimes. Law enforcement's primary role is to accurately collect data to provide reliable crime statistics for the administration of justice, police operations and criminal justice partners.

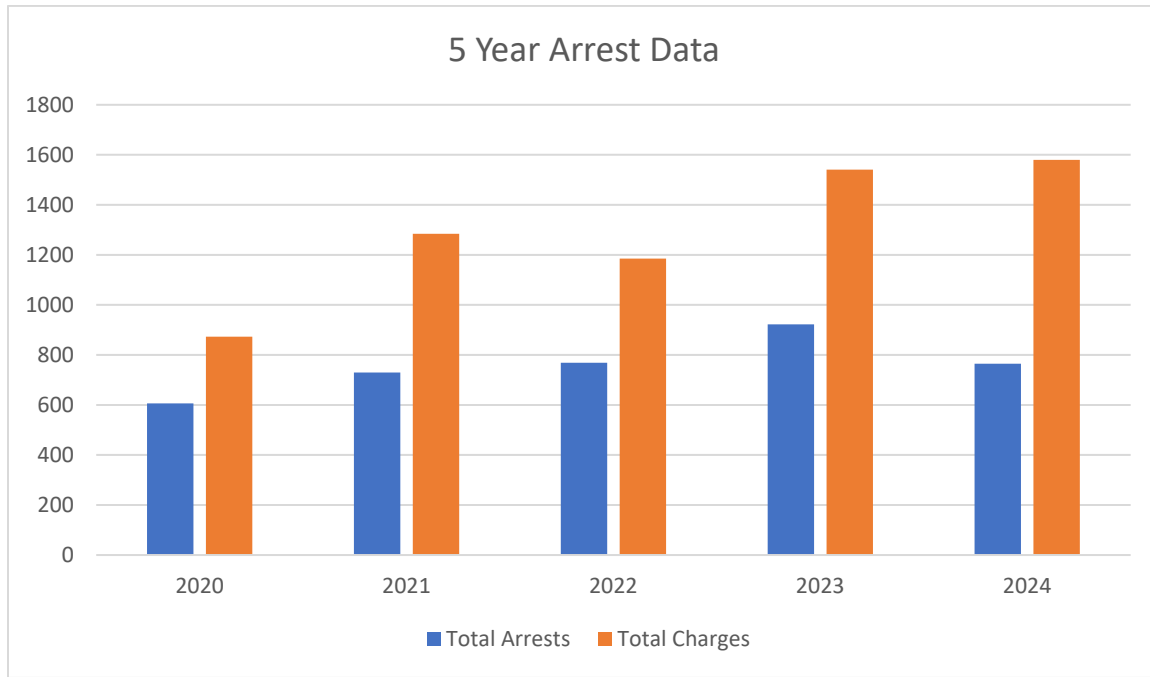
The Rockingham Police Department reports to both state and federal crime reporting systems. The FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program collects offenses that come to the attention of law enforcement for violent crime and property crime, as well as data regarding clearances of these offenses. In addition, the FBI collects auxiliary data about these offenses (e.g., time of day of burglaries). This expanded offense data also includes trends in both crime volume and crime rate per 100,000 inhabitants. All crime related statistical data can be found at the NC State Bureau of Investigations website at <http://crimereporting.ncsbi.gov/Reports.aspx>. This site contains all current and historical data for the Rockingham Police Department. For the calendar year 2024, the Rockingham Police Department received 17,096 calls for service which translates into approximately 800 calls per officer for the year.



Arrests

Arrests are typically represented by two categories, either felony or misdemeanor. Most misdemeanor arrests are the result of warrants that are either obtained by a patrol officer because the crime occurred in their presence, or there is evidence to support a crime occurred shortly before their arrival (i.e., shop lifting.) Most felony arrests are initiated by the Criminal Investigation Division as the result of an investigation into felonious criminal activity (i.e., murder).

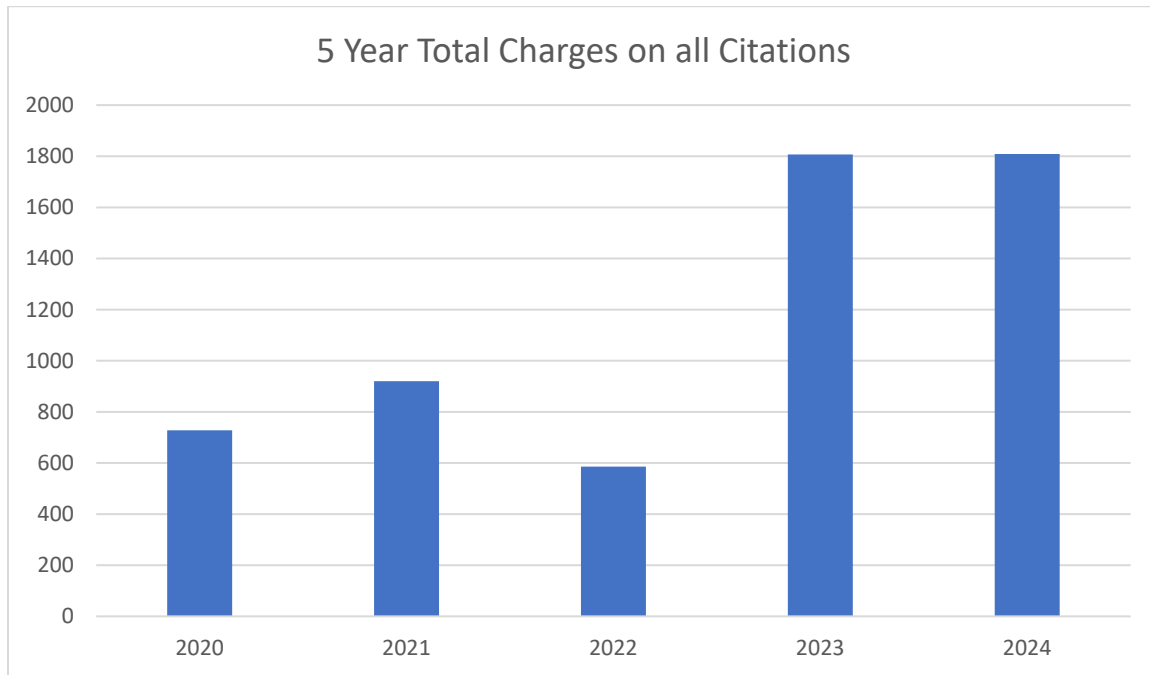
The table provided below shows the total number of arrests and charges for all arrests for the past 5 years. Each arrest, either misdemeanor or felony, represents hours, if not days and sometimes months of effort by the officers who initiated these processes. 2024 arrest numbers remain indicative of a proactive approach to police work. Total charges on all arrests are the highest we have had in the past 5 years, and we expect these numbers to remain consistent into 2025. Once again, these numbers do not necessarily reflect an increase in the crime rate, but a proactive approach, coupled with a high case closure rate.



Citations

Citations are typically self-initiated by an officer; they are the result of an officer witnessing or suspecting criminal activity and then initiating contact with an individual suspected of that criminal activity. Citations can be represented by traffic stops, street encounters, or calls for service to local businesses.

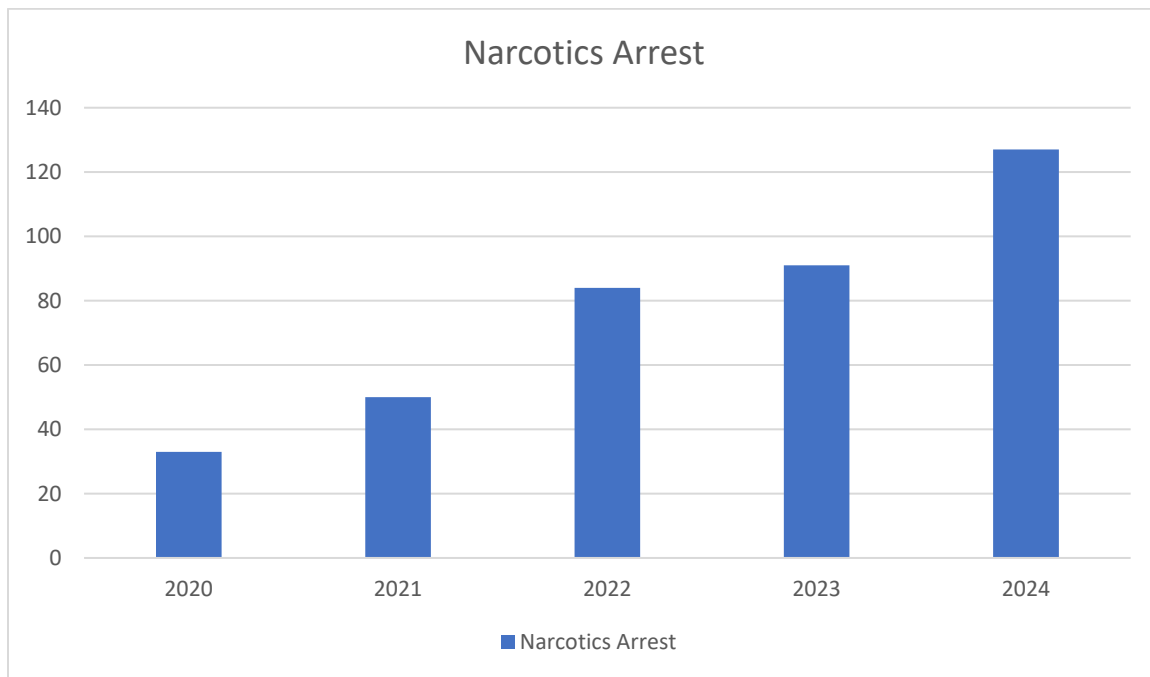
2024 saw an all-time high in traffic stops, citizen engagement, and citations. Our expectation was set in 2023 with approximately 1800 citations and our officers have remained steadfast in their commitment to our departmental goals by exceeding the prior year's numbers.



Narcotics Investigations

Like most agencies across the nation, we receive more complaints about narcotic use than we do about any other criminal activity. 2024 continued a trend where Richmond County continues to be devastated by fentanyl use, as well as overdoses from its use. In 2024 the Rockingham Police Department bolstered its Narcotics Unit and tasked them with formulating new strategies and a more substantial approach to combating narcotics violations in the city. This group executed more than 50 narcotics related search warrants, resulting in over 120 arrests with more than 300 charges. These numbers represent a dramatic increase statistically from prior years.

Our department continues to work with local, state, and federal agencies to build strong cases against narcotics offenders and prosecute these individuals at a successful rate. Many of our narcotics investigations are done jointly with other agencies to include: Richmond County Sheriff Office, NCSBI, NCALE, FBI, ALE, DEA, and ATF. The result of this year's investigations has taken approximately 100 firearms off the street, as well as approximately 8600 grams or roughly 19 pounds of illegal narcotics removed from the streets.



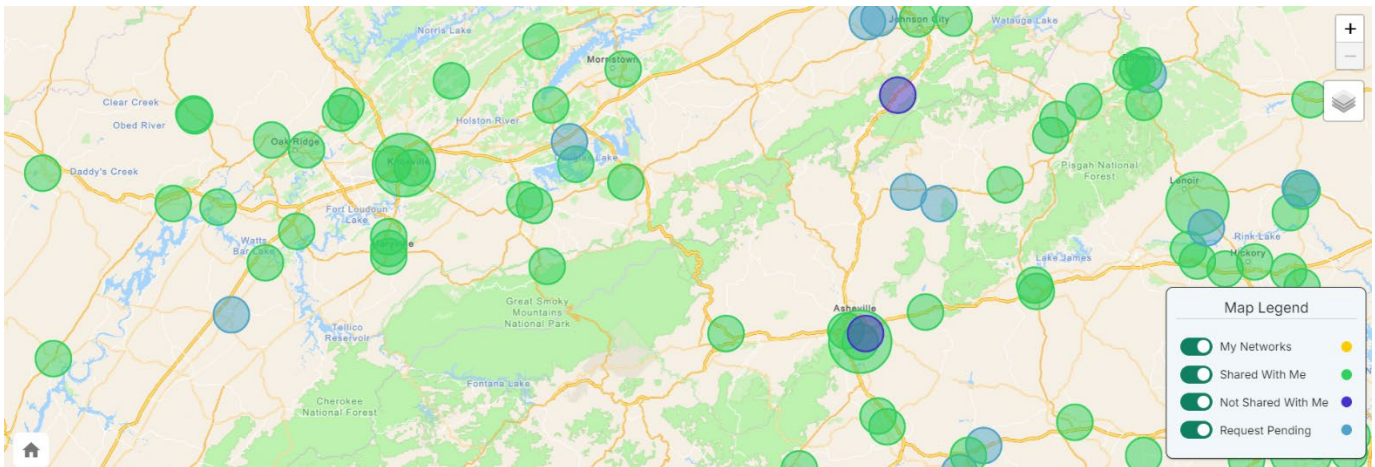
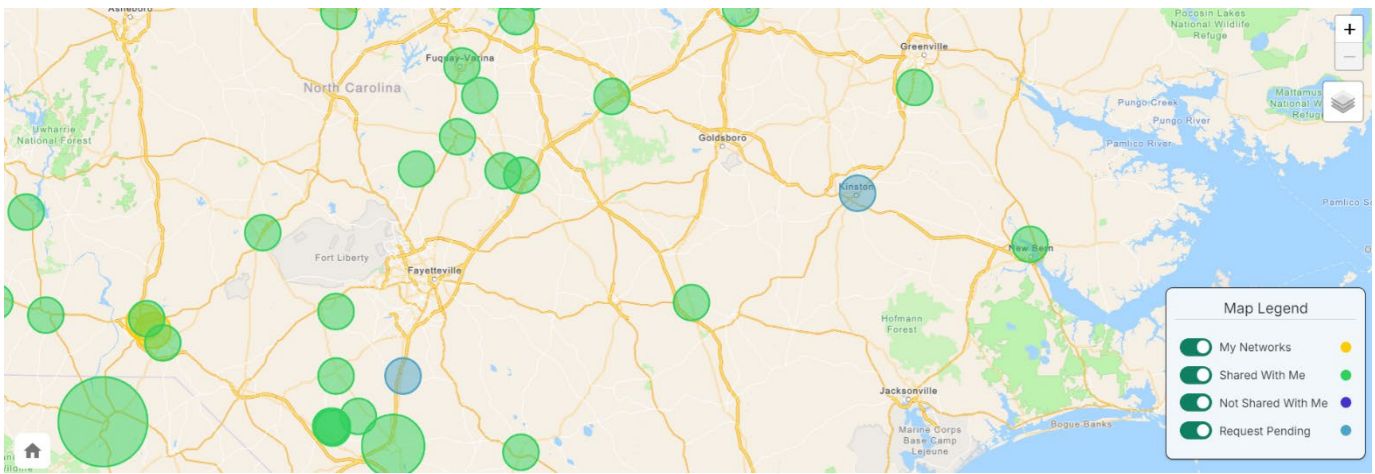
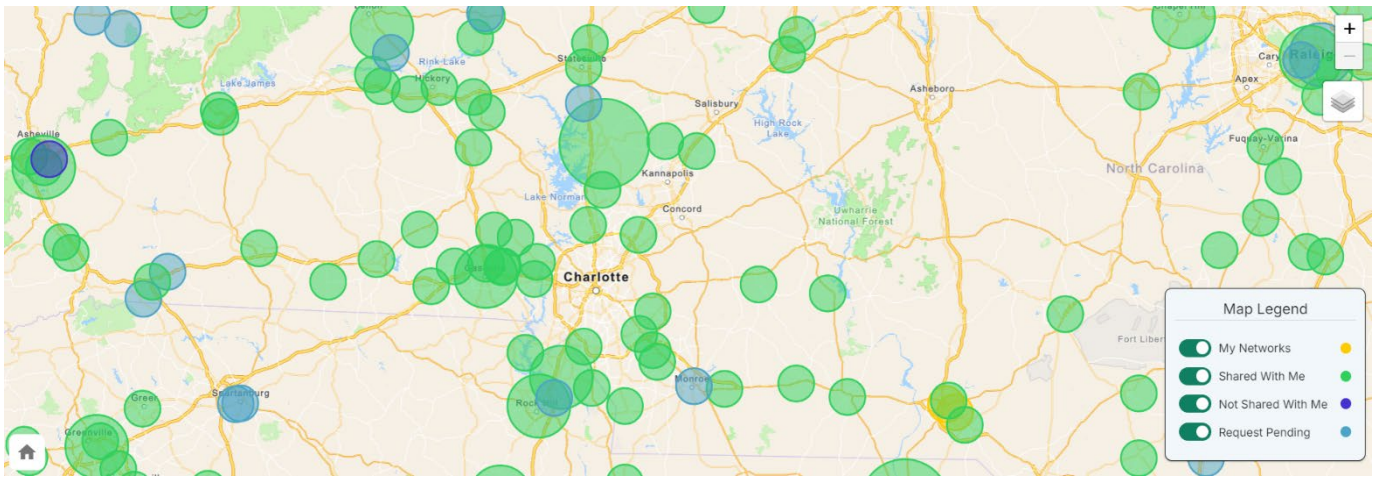


In 2024 the Rockingham Police Department partnered with Flock Safety to strategically place License Plate Reader (LPR) cameras and fixed Pan Tilt Zoom (PTZ) cameras across the city. The LPR cameras give the department the ability to enter pertinent information about a person or vehicle and then receive notification if that person or vehicle crosses the camera's path. For example: If we have information that a 2012 blue Honda Accord was used in a recent Armed Robbery, we can then enter that information into the Flock Safety Portal and see what, if any vehicles matching that description crossed our cameras path, surrounding cities cameras path, and then expand out to surrounding states if needed.

To put it succinctly, we now have the ability to track a vehicle or person from the point of criminal activity, dependent on location, to its final destination. We partnered with Flock in September of 2024 and 3 of our LPR cameras went live shortly after (several more are live now). For 2024, from September to the end of December, this represents what just our cameras were able to accomplish:

- 111 Stolen License Plates
- 43 Stolen Vehicles
- 37 Protection Orders
- 28 outside agency alerts (alerts other agencies setup for specific vehicles)
- 4 missing people
- 3 sex offenders
- 1 outstanding warrant
- Approximately 300,000 vehicles scanned a month (this removes the same vehicle being read over and over)

To give our citizens an idea of coverage in North Carolina I have included a map of our coverage east and west of Rockingham. This is just our coverage of most of North Carolina and does not represent our national network of coverage, which is approximately 15,000 cameras and growing daily.



Community Engagement

A huge part of the success of any police department is how they relate, interact, and engage the community in which they work. A lot of community engagements happen behind the scenes, but we have made strides this year in enhancing our engagement through our social media platforms. I would encourage you to please follow us on Facebook and Instagram where we try to keep the community up to date with all that is going on at the Rockingham Police Department, as well as information that may impact the community. The department expanded its community engagement initiatives in 2024, and the sheer number of events would not be fairly represented in a few photos, so once again, I encourage you to look at our social media to experience all that occurred in 2024.

Training and Education

Training and education are a focal point of our department, and I am proud to report that nearly 80 percent of our department has either an Intermediate or Advanced Law Enforcement Certification through the North Carolina Criminal Justice Education Training and Standards Commission. In 2024, approximately 2600 hours of training was logged, breaking down to approximately 200 hours per month. Much of the training received breaks down into one of 5 Categories:

Criminal Investigations training – 650 hours

Traffic Investigations training – 310 hours

Officer Conduct and Ethics training – 350 hours

Use of Force Training – 700 hours

Leadership Training – 580

In addition to training, we have partnerships with both community and university programs, which attributes a percentage of the Officers Basic Law Enforcement Certification towards an associate or bachelor's degree. The City of Rockingham has always been a strong proponent of and encouraged education by offering strong incentives to seek higher education.

We continue to build a culture that makes education a priority and foster an environment that prioritizes our Officers, contributing to a successful retention rate. We are expanding our investigative capabilities and working to build relationships with outside agencies that will lead to reduced crime rates and strengthen our ability to effectively prosecute offenders. We are proud of what our staff was able to accomplish in 2024 and even more proud of the community engagement and relationships that have been developed leading to feedback that will help guide us into 2025. In conclusion the Chief and his staff would like to thank the City Council, Mayor, City Manager, and City staff for their continued support of the Rockingham Police Department.