



CITY MANAGER

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December 23, 2025

Contract #17-104.08

Spokane County Sheriff John Nowels
Spokane County Sheriff's Office 1100 West Mallon
Spokane County Public Safety Building, First Floor
Spokane, WA 99260-0300

RE: Notification to Spokane County Sheriff and Spokane County of City Council Approval of Additional Officers

Dear Sheriff Nowels,

As you are aware, the City conducted a comprehensive police staffing and law enforcement services study in 2023. The study recommended increases in officer staffing levels to increase response times and proactive policing, and decrease officer burnout. To that end, in 2024, City Council approved an implementation plan beginning with Phase One, which called for the hiring of 10 additional Dedicated Officers, one shared Lieutenant, and one internal City Public Safety Coordinator. The City thanks you for your efforts in hiring the 10 dedicated officers this year. We are already seeing positive impacts from them on the streets.

However, the City Council has continued to seek funding for additional officers and this year submitted a public safety sales tax to voters for consideration. After overwhelming support and approval, the City Council is pleased to provide notice of the need and its desire to add additional officers to the Spokane Valley Police Department. The resounding message from Spokane Valley citizens was support for the men and women of law enforcement and the City's efforts to enhance public safety across the City. The purpose of this letter is to provide notice of the City's approval of Phase Two implementation – the hiring of new Dedicated City Officers and Shared Officers as more fully described below. Further, this letter serves to memorialize Council's approval to convert a patrol deputy to a K9 deputy.

New Dedicated and Shared Officers

Pursuant to Section 5.1.1 of the Interlocal Agreement for Law Enforcement Services (the "Interlocal Agreement"), the "City may unilaterally adjust the number of Dedicated CITY officers set forth in Exhibit '3' only after meaningful prior consultation between the SHERIFF and the City." At its October 21, 2025 Council meeting, and after collaboration between yourself, Chief Ellis and the Public Safety Committee, the City Council adopted law enforcement's recommended implementation plan of an additional round of hiring. The funding from the public safety sales tax begins on January 1, 2026, and we request that the Sheriff's Office prepare for hiring the positions identified below as expediently as possible beginning January 1, 2026.

This plan includes recruiting and hiring ten additional dedicated officers, one shared detective, and funding one position that was previously grant funded as follows:

- Patrol Deputy – 3 additional patrol deputies, for 57 total patrol deputies (resulting in 12 per day and night platoon, 4 per power shift platoon, and 1 front desk deputy).
- Traffic Detective – 1 additional detective, for 2 total (for traffic investigations).
- Behavioral Health Deputy – Fully funding the position currently in the contract to cover the loss in grant funding that occurred in July 2025; adding 1 new dedicated deputy, with 2 total dedicated Behavioral Health Deputies (these work with behavioral health professionals in co-deploy teams). Of note, we request that with the loss of grant funding, these teams focus work solely within Spokane Valley as dedicated units paid for by the City.
- School Resource Officer – 1 additional school resource officer, for five total with one at each of the four high schools along with one shared officer that is available to fill in at any school; note that schools pay a portion of SRO costs.
- Spokane Valley Investigative Unit – 4 additional detectives, for 16 total detectives.
- Shared Sex Crimes Detective – 1 additional detective (split approximately half time between Spokane Valley and Spokane County); note that under the Law Enforcement Agreement shared positions may be implemented after notice by the Sheriff's Office and this position has already started in 2025.

In addition, the Sheriff's Office recommended, and the City Council agreed, to convert a deputy from the SVIU to the regional RAVEN unit. This position will remain a dedicated SV position. These additions, assignments, and modifications are shown in Exhibit 3A for Dedicated City Officers, and Exhibit 4A for Shared Units, attached hereto.

In addition to the new officers, on December 16, 2025, City Council agreed to Chief Ellis's recommendation to convert a patrol deputy to a K9 deputy and for the four K9 units to be assigned with one to each of the four day and night platoons. That change is also reflected in the updated Exhibit 3A.

Implementation Plan

Section 8.3 of the Interlocal Agreement states, "SHERIFF or his designee and the City Manager shall jointly discuss and work diligently to fill any vacancies in a manner that is reasonable and fair to each party". The Sheriff, Police Chief, and City Manager have agreed, in recognition of current recruitment for both Spokane Valley dedicated officers and County dedicated officers, that positions for both Spokane Valley and County openings will be filled generally in an alternating 1-to-1 basis.

While all the new positions are important, our Council has expressed its desire not to deplete patrol platoons by immediately filling higher-ranked positions through promotion that would subsequently create long-term vacancies in patrol due to the training time required for new recruits. We understand from Chief Ellis that he will not fill higher ranked positions until the officers are available to fill the vacancies that may be created through such promotions. We appreciate and concur with the efforts of Chief Ellis to fill the new positions in a manner that

does not materially lower patrol staffing levels (for fully-trained officers) or materially impact the service provided by other units. Please provide quarterly updates to the City indicating the number of officers hired and the location to which they will be assigned.

We ask that you please sign and return an executed copy of this letter acknowledging your agreement to this implementation plan and replacing Exhibits 3 and 4 to the Interlocal Agreement with Exhibit 3A, and Exhibit 4A, attached hereto. City staff and Council will continue to consider future public safety enhancements and look forward to further discussions with you and Chief Ellis.

Thank you for your collaboration in meeting the public safety needs of Spokane Valley, and please extend our thanks and appreciation to the men and women under your charge. We look forward to our ongoing cooperation and continued success.

Sincerely,

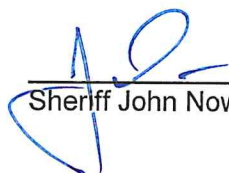


City Manager John Hohman

CC:

Spokane County CEO Scott Simmons
Spokane Valley Police Chief Dave Ellis

Acknowledged and Approved by



Sheriff John Nowels

12/29/2025

Date

EXHIBIT 3A-DEDICATED CITY OFFICERS

Administrative

Police Chief/Undersheriff	1
Assistant Chief/Inspector	1
Sergeant	1

Patrol

Lieutenant	4
Sergeant	8
Deputy	53
K-9 Deputies	4

Traffic

Sergeant	1
Detective/Corporal	2
Deputy	6

Community Services

Deputy	1
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Behavioral Health

Deputy	2
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Homeless Services

Deputy	2
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Domestic Violence

Detective/Corporal	1
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School Resource Officer

Deputy	5
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Property and Drug Crimes

Sergeant	2
Detective	16

Regional Safe Streets (RAVEN)

Deputy	1
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Total Dedicated Officers	111
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EXHIBIT 4-COMBINED NUMBER OF OFFICERS IN SHARED UNITS

<u>Administrative (Technical Support)</u>	
Sergeant	1
<u>Investigations</u>	
Undersheriff	2
Lieutenant	1
DEA Deputy	1
<u>Major Crimes</u>	
Sergeant	1
Detective	8
<u>Sex Crimes</u>	
Sergeant	1
Detective	8
<u>Investigative Task Force Spokane County Investigative Unit (SCITJ)</u>	
Lieutenant	2
<u>Regional Intelligence Group</u>	
Sergeant	1
Detective	1
<u>Joint Terrorism Task Force</u>	
Detective	1
<u>Safe Streets (RAVEN)</u>	
Sergeant	1
Detective	3
Deputy	1
<u>Emergency Operations Team</u>	
Deputy	2
<u>Public Information Officer</u>	
Corporal	1
<u>Professional Standards</u>	
Lieutenant	2
<u>Training</u>	
Sergeant	4
Total Shared Officers	42