



Safe. Sustainable. Strong.

A Comprehensive Public Safety Plan for Downingtown

Downingtown's strength begins with its safety. True public safety means protecting every resident, every neighborhood, and every officer who serves this town. It's not just about law enforcement; it's about leadership, accountability, and community partnership. As Mayor, I will continue working with Chief Brazunas, Borough Council, and the Borough Manager to make sure our police department has what it needs to protect every resident while operating efficiently, transparently, and with compassion.

Internal Police Matters

Officer Mental Health

Our officers face immense stress on the job, often without the tools or time to decompress. We can't expect the best from them if we don't give them the best support. I'll work to end the stigma that still surrounds mental health in law enforcement. Every officer should have confidential access to counseling through Chester County's responder wellness network, with annual wellness checks and post-incident debriefs as part of standard practice. Leadership training will include trauma recognition and peer-support development, ensuring that help is available early, not after a crisis.

Partnerships with Chester County's Crisis Intervention Team and local nonprofits will reinforce this culture of care. When our police are healthy, our community is safer.

Budget and Efficiency

The Borough's public safety budget deserves careful, practical management. That starts with a full audit to identify savings in underused line items, overtime inefficiencies, and outdated equipment contracts. Those recovered funds should be redeployed toward officer wellness, community engagement, and visibility initiatives rather than one-time expenditures.

We'll pursue matching funds from the Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency and the U.S. Department of Justice COPS program to expand capacity without burdening local taxpayers. Transparency will guide every dollar, with quarterly public reports summarizing spending, performance indicators, and ongoing needs.

Visibility and Mobility

Community policing works best when officers are visible and accessible. I'll support expanding bicycle patrols and launching a pilot e-bike patrol program to improve presence downtown, along the greenway, and in our parks. These units are low-cost, sustainable, and increase approachability between officers and residents. We can offset



startup costs through grants and local sponsorships from Downingtown businesses committed to a safer community.

e-Bike program

- E-bikes improve police visibility and response in downtown areas and parks
- Lower maintenance costs than patrol vehicles
- Faster access through crowds, trails, and areas where patrol cars cannot go
- All officers using e-Bikes will be professionally training in use during both routine and emergency conditions
- Units cost about \$2,500 to \$4,000 dollars each, outfitted as emergency vehicles
- Grants and partnerships with local businesses can offset startup costs

Policy Changes needed

Pennsylvania law currently limits e-bike power and top speed under Title 75 of the PA Code. Civilian rules make sense for public riders. Police need stronger equipment for quick response in emergencies.

As Mayor, I will work with our State Representatives and State Senators on a clear exception for law enforcement. This change allows officers to use higher powered e-bikes with greater range and speed than the public can operate. Officers would reach calls faster. Visibility improves. Downtown feels safer.

Expected impact

- More patrol hours in high foot traffic locations
- Lower fuel and maintenance spending
- Reduced response times in parks and trail areas
- Stronger community presence where residents are

The message is simple. We protect what works in the budget. We fix what wastes money. We reinvest in what keeps you and your family safe.

External Police Matters

Traffic and Safety Enforcement

Residents deserve safer streets. That means consistent enforcement of speeding, reckless driving, and stop-sign violations in the places where families walk, and children play. We will identify high-risk intersections and corridors using data from police reports, resident complaints, and PennDOT crash statistics. Patrol hours will shift to match the times when violations are most common, including school drop-off, evening rush, and late-night weekend windows. Mobile speed-display signs will go where they have an immediate effect, reducing speed before citations become necessary. Officers will spend



more time outside their vehicles along these routes, so drivers feel the enforcement presence.

We will apply for PennDOT Highway Safety Improvement Program funds to upgrade radar units, add high-visibility signage, and improve crosswalk markings. Better lighting at key crossings increases driver awareness and protects pedestrians after dark. Officers trained in modern traffic enforcement tools will track whether their efforts reduce reported near-misses, crashes, and speeding warnings. The goal is to prevent problems rather than respond after someone is hurt.

Small changes like these make a big difference in how safe residents feel on their own streets.

Youth and Park Safety

Our parks should be gathering places, not problem spots. Police presence in public spaces will increase, especially after hours, through regular walk-throughs and bike patrols. We'll pair that presence with outreach, not punishment, officers engaging with young people, listening, and building trust.

Downingtown Police will partner with Parks & Recreation and local schools to host safe-riding workshops for e-bike and bicycle users. Enforcement of both bicycle and e-bike laws will focus on education first, citation second, ensuring youth understand traffic rules and safety expectations.

Domestic Violence Response

Downingtown ranks near the top of Chester County for domestic violence hotline calls. That reality demands action. I will integrate "Downingtown Safe" directly with police dispatch to ensure immediate crisis linkage and emergency shelter options for victims. The Borough will strengthen its partnerships with the Domestic Violence Center of Chester County, including on-scene advocate response for domestic calls.

We'll also expand the "Handle with Care" program that currently allows residents to alert our first responders about people who may need more care during a police call, such as people with conditions like Autism, Alzheimer's, Down syndrome, PTSD, or other cognitive or physical needs that may require specific attention. disease. Expansion Public safety isn't limited to arrests; it's about ensuring people are safe during police calls.

A natural expansion of the Handle with Care registry would widen access and improve coordination without changing its core purpose. The program could include a caregiver alert system that notifies dispatch if a registered child or adult was involved in a police call the night before, which helps responders arrive already aware of the situation. Enrollment could grow through partnerships with schools, senior centers, and medical



providers, and eligibility could extend to people with dementia, traumatic brain injuries, epilepsy, severe anxiety disorders, or other conditions that benefit from informed response. The registry would also help first responders understand any physical disabilities, such as an amputation or severe immobility, so that if detention or restraint becomes necessary, they can protect the individual's safety and dignity.

Officers would receive training on how to look for and use the registry during calls, and families could request a follow up after an incident to update records or connect with community resources. The registry could support safe return protocols for those who wander, with immediate alerts and caregiver contact to speed recovery. Schools can notify police when a student experiences trauma at home, and police can notify schools when a child witnesses' crisis in the community. Enrollment stays voluntary, records remain confidential, and no information about immigration status is collected. This expansion strengthens care while protecting privacy.

Fair and Lawful Policing

Downingtown's officers are here to serve and protect our residents, not to act as federal immigration agents. Our department will not participate in any voluntary immigration enforcement actions and will focus solely on community safety.

If federal immigration officials operate within the Borough, they will be held to the same legal standards as anyone else. Any use of force, detainment, or other action **MUST** comply with local, state, and federal laws. Our police will be empowered to detain and investigate any agent acting outside those laws. Accountability must be universal.

Implementation and Oversight

The Borough's system of governance ensures shared accountability:

- The Mayor sets priorities, represents the public's interest, and drives interagency collaboration.
- The Chief of Police oversees daily operations, staffing, and training.
- The Borough Manager coordinates budgeting, procurement, and HR policies.
- The Borough Council reviews, approves, and funds key initiatives.

Every decision on public safety must pass through this framework to guarantee transparency and efficiency.

Funding and Grants

Downingtown will leverage county, state, and federal support to make these reforms practical:

- Officer Wellness: Chester County responder wellness grants.
- Community Policing: DOJ COPS Office and PCCD local law enforcement programs.



- Traffic Safety: PennDOT Highway Safety Improvement funds.
- Emergency Response: FEMA training and resilience grants.

These opportunities can cover as much as 50–75% of total program costs when coordinated properly.

Efficiency and Savings

We can make smart changes inside the current police budget so we fund what residents value. The goal is not to spend more. The goal is to spend better.

Opportunities for Savings

- Cut overtime costs with better shift planning and fewer mandatory call backs
- Review low-use equipment contracts and subscriptions
- Pause new vehicle purchases unless required for safety or reliability
- Shift paperwork where possible to civilian staff to reduce sworn overtime
- Combine procurement to secure lower bids from vendors

Where those dollars go:

- Mental health care for every officer
- Annual wellness checks and crisis debrief
- Two to four e-bikes and upgraded mobile speed signs
- Additional Park and downtown patrol hours
- Targeted speed enforcement in residential neighborhoods
- Youth outreach and safe-riding education in schools

Measuring Progress

We'll track:

- Reduction in traffic incidents and park vandalism.
- Participation in officer wellness programs.
- Increase in community patrol hours.
- Decrease in repeat domestic violence calls.
- Annual grant dollars secured for public safety.

Commitment Statement

This plan represents my vision for how Downingtown can continue to be Safe, Sustainable, and Strong. It will evolve with input from Chief Brazunas, Borough Council, and our residents. Each element will require formal review and ratification before implementation, ensuring collaboration at every step. Public safety only works when everyone, residents, officers, and leaders, pulls in the same direction.