

## City Council – Information

**Date:** September 8, 2025

**To:** Mayor, Mayor Pro Tempore, and Members of the City Council

**From:** Christopher Diamont, Assistant Police Chief  
William Penn Jr., Chief of Police  
Dr. Angel Wright-Lanier, Assistant City Manager

**Information:**

The Winston-Salem Police Department will soon be adopting black-and-white patrol cars

**Strategic Focus Area:** Livable Community

**Strategic Plan Objective:** LC1: Enhancing residents' sense of safety and reducing crime

**Summary of Information:**

The Winston-Salem Police Department will soon be adopting black-and-white patrol cars. The proposed scheme is designed to be simple, professional, and easily identifiable by the community as a police vehicle—aligning with Chief Penn’s vision of making our department a model agency.

One of the biggest advantages of black-and-white police cars is the perception they create. We often call this the **‘omnipresence factor.’** When people see a black-and-white police car, the visibility alone can help deter crime and, just as importantly, give our community a greater sense of safety.

Other departments across the country, including ourselves, have found practical ways to achieve this look. Instead of buying two-tone vehicles outright, we will purchase cars in a single color—black or white—and then apply decals and paint later. This approach saves money, puts cars into service faster, and cuts down on the time and cost of maintaining older vehicles.

And while there are plenty of different police car designs across the world, the black-and-white vehicle has become a powerful and enduring symbol of law enforcement here in the United States. More and more agencies are returning to this traditional look—not just because it’s cost-effective, but because it works. It’s highly visible, it’s authoritative, and it sends a clear message: the police are here, and we’re here to protect, serve, and support you.