



**June 1, 2020**

**A Message from the Chief for the Wheat Ridge Community,**

*I want to share my feelings with you in response to events that occurred last week in Minneapolis, resulting in the death of George Floyd at the hands of a police officer. I am both angered and frustrated by that officer's actions, and I know that society and law enforcement agencies across the country expect better. I demand better, and so does everyone who works for the Wheat Ridge Police Department.*

*I speak for all the women and men in the Wheat Ridge Police Department when I say that we are all shocked and embarrassed by the behavior of the officers involved in Mr. Floyd's death; we are sickened by the senseless loss of his life.*

*Our job is not only to protect and serve, our job goes well beyond that. Our job is to stop violent acts, not act violently. Unfortunately, our job sometimes requires physical interaction. We take our authority to keep peace, and the responsibility that goes with it, very seriously. Our job is to do our best to never ever cause harm to anyone in the course of protecting our community.*

*The Wheat Ridge Police Department trains for situations like the one we have all witnessed on the news in Denver and many other large cities over the last several nights. We train to de-escalate situations and to effectively resolve and intervene in a crisis in order to best serve our community. We follow the use-of-force continuum which reflects the best practices of law enforcement in the nation. We are a nationally accredited agency and we have the best women and men you will ever find in law enforcement working for our City. You should know that Wheat Ridge police officers are faced with difficult situations multiple times every week, just like the arrest seen in Minneapolis, and they find solutions that lead to positive outcomes while minimizing the use of force. You should be proud of this department. We are not perfect, but we strive to attain perfection every day.*

*We will protect lives. We will intercede in violent confrontations. We will protect residents exercising their First Amendment rights. We will not allow lawlessness. We will be compassionate. We will be thoughtful. We will treat every member of our community with respect. We value the diversity of every individual who lives, works, shops, or plays in our community. We are human. Our officers represent the best of our society.*

*As Chief, I want everyone in Wheat Ridge to know that I will work hard to identify and overcome any shortcomings we have as an agency. I will work hard to make you proud. Everyone on the Wheat Ridge Police Department strives to be better every day, and we are here to serve our community with honor and integrity.*

*Respectfully,*

**WRPD Chief Chris Murtha**