CASE STUDY | FORT COLLINS, COLORADO | THE ROCk, SANTA FE

Proactive Street Outreach Works

What Fort Collins demonstrates and how The ROCk puts it to work

the ROCk
By Interfaith Community Services

In August 2026, ICS leaders walked downtown Fort Collins with its street outreach team, met the police unit that works alongside it, and toured the Fort Collins Rescue Mission's new campus under construction. What they found is a **system, not a single program**: trained outreach staff on the street every weekday, a shelter that stays open around the clock, and first responders who share data and divide the work. The result is visible. The business district is calm, and the people our team met on its walk were ordinary pedestrians, not crowds gathered on the sidewalk. The ROCk's Operations Plan builds this same system into how we will operate.

THREE PARTNERS, ONE SYSTEM

Outreach Fort Collins (OFC)
THE STREET TEAM

Independent nonprofit, launched in 2016 after business owners, providers and first responders studied Burlington, Vermont's model. Annual budget is about $900,000. Three two-person teams proactively engage people within a defined area and respond to calls from businesses and neighbors.

Police HOPE Team
THE POLICE PARTNER

Created in 2023: a sergeant, a corporal and three officers. Still sworn officers but trained in trauma-informed engagement and focused on offering stabilization before enforcement. Its referrals to OFC grew from 169 in 2023 to 312 in 2025. Works with OFC daily and meets monthly.

Fort Collins Rescue Mission
THE SHELTER

24/7 services. In 2025: 67,204 nights of shelter provided, 127,146 meals served, and 185 people moved into more stable housing. A new 250-bed, 41,000 sq ft Homeless Resolution Center, with a true day center, opens in early 2027.

THE RESULTS

Outreach Fort Collins measures what matters to businesses, first responders and the people it serves. Its 2025 Year in Review, marking a decade of service, shows:

98%

of 1,986 community calls resolved without more first-responder involvement
Average response time 9 min 17 sec (OFC, 2025)

312

referrals from police HOPE officers to OFC in 2025
Up from 169 in 2023, a sign of growing trust between the teams

1,008

unique people engaged, with 2,906 connections to needed resources
40 clients connected to long-term housing (OFC, 2025)

83%

reduction in ER charges for five frequent users of emergency services
$508,622 to $87,334; police citations or arrests 16 to 1 (2024 to 2025). Five people, large effect.

WHAT OUR TEAM SAW ON THE GROUND

- **Calm streets, built on relationships.** The OFC team knew many people by name and stopped to engage them. A downtown plaza where people once congregated has been reclaimed. A police officer told us it can take ten or more encounters to build trust, which is why daily presence matters.
- **A turnaround at the Rescue Mission's old site.** Directly across from the Old Town business district, the shelter was previously only open overnight and people lingered around the shelter all day. Proactive outreach around the building, coupled with expanding shelter operations to 24/7 so people had a place to be, addressed the community challenges that surrounded the old site.
- **Police and outreach work as one team.** Police dispatch routes non-emergency calls straight to OFC. A short MOU covers data sharing. Police log after-hours engagements so OFC can follow up the next morning. Clear, posted rules also work: a month's notice and "no overnight parking" signs cleared a nuisance without enforcement.

> *"Without Outreach Fort Collins our ability to serve our community is greatly diminished."*
> Jeff Swoboda, Fort Collins Police Chief (outreachfortcollins.org)

WHY IT WORKS, AND HOW THE ROCK BUILDS IT IN

Fort Collins' achievements come from five practices that reinforce one another. Each has a direct counterpart in the ROCk Operations Plan.

What works	In Fort Collins	In The ROCk Operations Plan
1. A constant, recognizable street presence	Two-person teams canvass a defined area every weekday, mixing proactive walks with call response rather than a fixed route. Branded caps, backpacks and photo ID make them recognizable without looking like police. Packs carry water, socks, hygiene kits and Narcan.	Dedicated street outreach teams make **documented daily perimeter walks** and run **neighborhood sweeps on a published schedule**. Peer-support staff with lived experience build trust. Every incident is logged and reviewed daily.
2. Outreach, not police, as first response	Dispatch directs non-emergency calls directly to OFC. In 2025, 98% of its 1,986 calls were resolved without more first-responder involvement, at an average response of 9 minutes 17 seconds. Officers stay available for crime and emergencies.	Street outreach is the **first response to non-emergency issues** on and near the property. Response follows a progressive sequence: engage, offer services, redirect, and call law enforcement only for genuine safety incidents.
3. One number to call and a person who answers	A hotline for businesses and neighbors rings on every team member's phone at once. One person each day runs dispatch and sees teammates' locations, so the closest team responds.	A **24/7 Neighborhood Response Line** staffed by ICS, with a **30-minute response** to disruptive behavior in a defined coverage area around the facility and a named Neighborhood Liaison. We are evaluating Fort Collins' rotating-dispatch design for the line.
4. Clear roles with first responders	A defined area and hours of operation (weekdays 9am to 5pm). Police cover evenings and weekends and log every contact so OFC follows up the next business day. Everyone says the same thing to the people they serve - consistency of messaging matters.	Written collaboration protocols with SFPD, Fire/EMS and the City's CARE Team, developed with our **Neighborhood Health and Safety Task Force before opening**. Who responds at which hour will be agreed in writing before we publish evening or weekend commitments.
5. A place to be other than the streets	Outreach works because the shelter is open day and night, so people have a place to go. The new FCRM Resolution Center adds a full day center, dining hall and on-site partners.	**24/7 shelter** with 125 emergency beds, a day program built as a "place to be," a supervised Welcome Area, and on-site partners including The Life Link, La Familia and Santa Fe Recovery Center. Perimeter walls, lighting and single-point of entry make being inside more attractive than outside.

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- **Our outreach is connected to a 24/7 facility.** OFC is independent of any shelter and can limit its hours. ICS will be clear about what we will do and when, and will rely on first-responders or other outreach partners in the evenings and overnight.
- **Santa Fe's conditions differ.** Fort Collins appears to face a less severe fentanyl crisis, so every ROCk staff member is trained in overdose response, and Narcan is stocked throughout the building and carried by security staff.
- **We will measure our own results.** OFC's results show what is possible; they are not a promise for Santa Fe. We will report what we find, including what is not working.

ACCOUNTABLE IN PUBLIC

The ROCk will publish a **Monthly Trust Report** on its website covering hotline calls received and resolved, perimeter walks and sweeps completed, incidents on or near the property, and performance against every published response-time commitment. Our goal is plain: **fewer people on adjacent streets, sidewalks and on neighboring property six months after opening the ROCk.**

Fort Collins shows that proactive outreach, a shelter that stays open, and partners who share the work can keep a community calm and connect people to help. The ROCk is designed to do the same for Santa Fe.

Learn more and read the full Operations Plan at theROCksantafe.org

Sources: Outreach Fort Collins 2025 Year in Review and outreachfortcollins.org; Fort Collins Rescue Mission (fortcollinsrescuemission.org: Our Impact, Homeless Resolution Center); City of Fort Collins, HOPE Team program overview; ICS site visit to Fort Collins, August 3, 2026; The ROCk Operations Plan, July 2026. Fort Collins figures are as reported by those organizations. OFC statistics are from its 2025 Year in Review; the high-need client results track five individuals from 2024 to 2025.