



Staff Report

City Council

Item No. {{section.number}}.B

Meeting Date: March 12, 2025

From: George Crum, Police Chief

Title: 2024 Crime Stats Update

RECOMMENDATION:

For information and discussion only

BACKGROUND:

The Police Department is committed to using data-driven strategies to enhance community safety and ensure effective law enforcement operations. A key part of this commitment involves regularly reviewing crime statistics to adapt our policing models based on current and historical crime trends. This ongoing review helps identify patterns, allocate resources efficiently, and implement proactive measures that address both current and emerging crime issues.

For this presentation, crime data for the year 2024 will be analyzed using the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), a comprehensive system that provides detailed information about reported crimes, including the nature of the offenses, locations, offenders, victims, and circumstances. The use of NIBRS data allows for a deeper understanding of crime trends and helps the department tailor policing efforts to the specific needs of our community.

Additionally, a two-year comparison of crime data, covering both 2023 and 2024, will be presented to identify key trends, evaluate the effectiveness of current policing strategies, and highlight areas where adjustments may be necessary. This comparative analysis will allow the City Council to review the crime trends over time, offering a more complete picture of crime dynamics in the community and how the Police Department's response has evolved.

By utilizing both current and historical data, the Police Department aims to continue its mission of reducing crime and improving public safety while maintaining transparency with the City Council and the public.

DISCUSSION:

In 2024, national crime statistics reflected a significant decline in both violent and property

crimes compared to previous years. According to the FBI's Quarterly Uniform Crime Report for the first half of the year, violent crime decreased by 10.3 percent, with murder dropping by 22.7 percent, rape by 17.7 percent, robbery by 13.6 percent, and aggravated assault by 8.1 percent. Property crime also declined by 13.1 percent during the same period. Similarly, the Council on Criminal Justice reported that violent crime in major U.S. cities dropped by six percent in the first half of 2024, with homicides seeing a notable 17 percent reduction compared to 2023. However, while overall property crime declined, shoplifting incidents rose by 24 percent nationwide during this period.

Cathedral City experienced similar positive trends in crime reduction. Between 2023 and 2024, the city saw an overall 10 percent decrease in violent crime. Notably, there were no reported homicides or negligent manslaughters in 2024, marking a 100 percent decrease from the previous year. Other crimes against persons also saw declines, including a 43 percent reduction in kidnapping, a 27 percent decrease in fondling, a 25 percent drop in intimidation, and an 11 percent reduction in aggravated assault. It should be noted that felony domestic violence assaults were not included in the overall aggravated assault category. While most violent crime categories trended downward, the city did experience a 10 percent increase in reported rapes. Additionally, purse snatching and statutory rape both saw increases, with two purse snatching incidents in 2024 compared to none the previous year, and four statutory rape cases compared to two in 2023.

Property crime in Cathedral City also declined by 11 percent from 2023 to 2024. However, certain categories saw increases, most notably arson and shoplifting. Reported arson cases more than doubled, rising from seven incidents in 2023 to fifteen in 2024. This increase may be attributed to the establishment of an arson investigation unit in 2024, which likely led to more cases being identified and classified as arson. Shoplifting also saw a considerable uptick, with 88 reports in 2024 compared to 45 the previous year.

The decline in violent crime throughout Cathedral City can be attributed to several key factors, including a responsive and proactive police department, strong community engagement, and collaborative efforts with other city departments and allied law enforcement agencies throughout the Coachella Valley. While certain crime categories experienced increases, the overall reduction in both violent and property crimes highlight the effectiveness of law enforcement strategies and community partnerships in promoting public safety.

FISCAL IMPACT:

N/A

FIVE-YEAR STRATEGIC PLAN:

Goal E- Safety

Continue to explore and utilize technology to promote public safety.

ATTACHMENTS:

None