

MEMORANDUM

Milpitas Police Department



DATE: March 3, 2021

TO: Mayor and Councilmembers

THROUGH: Steve McHarris, City Manager *Steve McHarris*

FROM: Jared Hernandez, Acting Chief of Police *Jared Hernandez*

SUBJECT: Calendar Year 2020 Crime Data, Community Engagement, and other Updates

This document is to provide the Council with key crime data for calendar year 2020 and an update on community engagement, staffing and recruitment, and the implementation of new technologies in 2021.

Crime Data – Calendar Year 2020

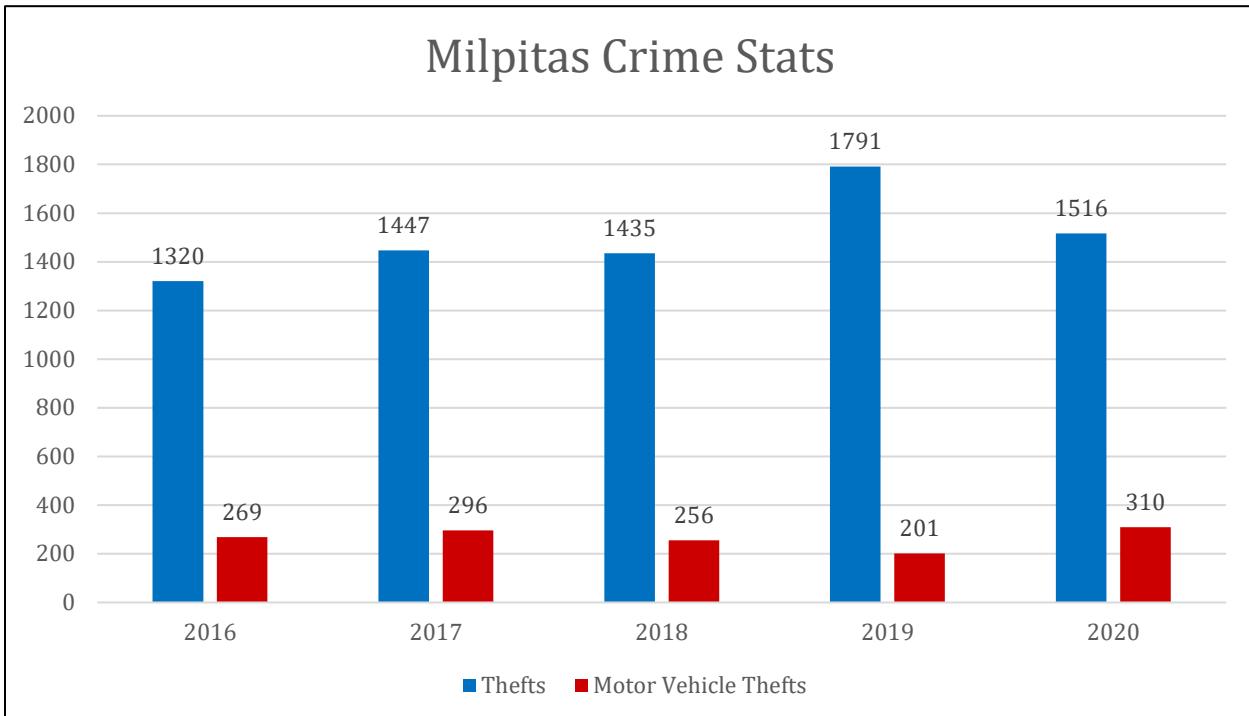
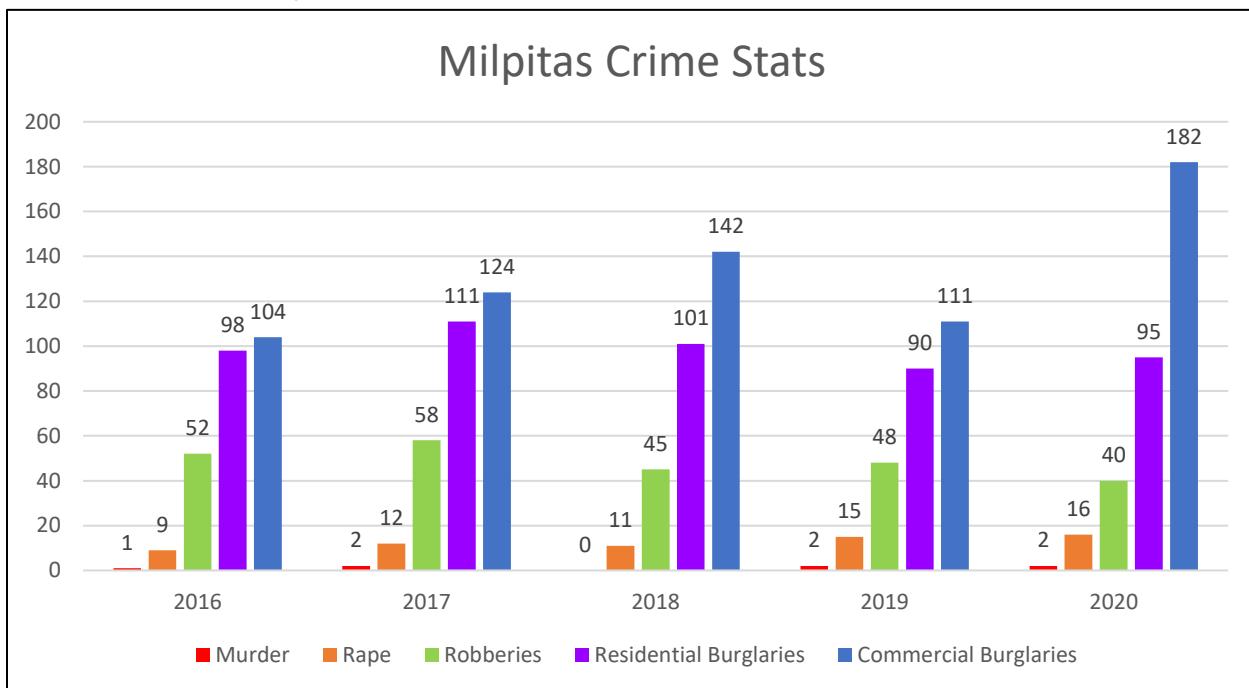
The Milpitas Police Department (MPD) compiles crime data using the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. The UCR is a Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) effort to compile national crime data from over 18,000 law enforcement agencies. UCR data is reported as Part 1 crime categories which include murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assaults, burglary, theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. Part 2 crime categories which are less serious crimes and include crimes such as simple assault, narcotic offenses, prostitution, fraud and others. Part 2 crimes are not reported under the UCR. MPD analyzes crime trends for Part 1 and Part 2 crimes on a weekly and monthly basis and uses the data to develop crime reduction strategies. MPD also uses the data to identify year-over-year and multi-year crime rate changes and patterns.

In comparing calendar year 2019 and 2020, overall, the number of Part 1 crime cases decreased by 80 cases, or 3.5%, from 2,300 cases to 2,220 cases primarily due to a reduction in auto burglary and robberies and offset with increases in commercial burglary, auto theft, and aggravated assaults. In 2019, there were 111 commercial burglaries reported versus 182 in 2020, an increase of 64%. In 2019, there were 201 auto thefts reported versus 310 in 2020, an increase of 54%. In 2019, there were 37 aggravated assaults reported versus 53 in 2020, an increase of 43%.

It is important to point out that the shift in crime that occurred in Milpitas is consistent with other cities in our region and throughout the state except for homicide. There was a sharp national and state increase in homicides however, the number of homicides in our City remained the same. Like 2019, there were two homicides in 2020. In both incidents, the suspect knew the victim.

The following charts provide a 5-year overview of Milpitas Part 1 crime statistics. The first chart includes data on all other Part 1 crimes, except statistics on aggravated assaults and arson. The second chart include thefts and motor vehicle thefts. Auto burglaries, shoplifting, and other larcenies are incorporated into the theft category. Primarily due to the Pandemic and the resulting stay-in-place orders, the number of thefts decreased by 275, or 15%, from 1,791 to 1,516 cases. In contrast, as discussed above, the number of auto thefts increased by 54%.

City of Milpitas UCR Part 1 Crimes 2016 - 2020



Zero-Dollar Emergency Bail Schedule

On March 30, 2020, the State of California adopted a zero-dollar emergency bail schedule and Santa Clara County almost immediately implemented the bail schedule. This effort was to reduce the jail population and minimize the COVID-19 spread within the jails. The zero-dollar emergency bail schedule required the release of many persons incarcerated for non-violent felonies and misdemeanor offenses and required that those arrested for many non-violent felonies and all misdemeanor offenses be cited and released in-lieu of booking. Any person booked into jail that did not meet the criteria of a violent felony was immediately released back into the community. Unfortunately, the zero-dollar emergency bail schedule has led to a re-offending population being released into the community.

Despite these challenges, the Police Department staff worked diligently to minimize the impacts of the zero-dollar emergency bail schedule. While other agencies in the county halted proactive patrols and enforcement, our officers continued to proactively drive down crime. Our officers continued directed enforcement efforts, burglary suppression operations, evidence collection to identify offenders, collaborating with other law enforcement agencies, and community education.

Community Engagement

Developing new relationships, strengthening existing relationships, and building trust in the community remained a high priority throughout 2020 and MPD continues to prioritize our relationship with the community and stakeholders. The Police Department was involved in 67 community engagement events, including 50 virtual events, and had contact with approximately 2,000 people. These events included Neighborhood Watch and HOA meetings, crime presentations, Milpitas High school career day, public and private school book readings, police department tours, Special Olympics Torch Run, and a community organized social justice demonstration.

As we continue into 2021, community engagement will remain a priority. The Police Department is exploring ways to enhance engagement with our teen community members and at-risk youth. This quarter we will be building on the success of our virtual book readings and expanding our virtual program to include interactive virtual games of Pictionary and Memory where our teen and pre-teen students will compete against staff members. We are also in the process of exploring the potential implementation of a program that will help redirect youth offenders from the juvenile justice system through programming, supervision, and support.

Staffing / Recruitment

In 2020, nine (9) sworn staff members retired including one (1) Sergeant, one (1) Lieutenant, two (2) Captains, one (1) Assistant Police Chief, and Police Chief Armando Corpuz. These retirements created promotional opportunities at all levels of the organization. In 2020, one (1) Captain was promoted to Assistant Chief, four (4) Lieutenants were promoted to Captain, and four (4) officers were promoted to Sergeant. This left one additional Sergeant vacancy as we moved into 2021. Thus far in 2021, we have had one (1) Sergeant retire with another planning to retire in April. Two officers have been promoted to Sergeant and we will have one additional Sergeant promotion taking effect in April. As the police department continues through 2021, we will continue to focus on developing our new supervisors.

To keep pace with the retirements and existing vacancies, our recruitment team remained active in the COVID environment. While most police agencies in our area halted recruitment efforts, we pivoted our approach to academy visits on testing days and virtual events. In total the recruitment team attended 59 recruitment events and contributed 141 hours towards recruitment. In total, our team contacted over 1,789 prospective applicants for police officer and communications dispatcher.

In early 2020, five (5) officers graduated the police academy and one (1) lateral police officer was hired. Later in the year, seven (7) additional entry level police officers were hired. Four (4) of these officers graduated the police academy in February 2021 and two (2) are expected to graduate in May. One (1) officer resigned while at the police academy. In 2021, MPD hired two (2) lateral police officers and extended a conditional job offer to one (1) police applicant. The recent academy graduates and lateral police officers are in our field-training program. The Police Department expects to fill additional vacancies throughout 2021 in alignment with the training program capacity to effectively train new officers.

Also, in 2020, four (4) Community Service Officers, one (1) Evidence Technician, one (1) Business Management Analyst, and four (4) Communications Dispatchers were hired. MPD continues to recruit for remaining Police Officer, Records Clerk, and Communications Dispatcher vacancies.

Automatic License Plate Readers (ALPR) and Remote Cameras

Council previously approved Capital Improvement Program (CIP) project 3459. The CIP project was approved to fund the implementation of a fixed ALPR system and remote camera system in areas identified through crime data analytics. In late Spring, we began community outreach and engagement to notice the community and receive feedback during online presentations. The meetings were lightly attended, and no significant public concerns were noted.

In September 2020, twenty (20) ALPR cameras were installed in areas identified through crime data analytics. On average, MPD receives 817 notifications every 30-days of stolen license plates, stolen vehicles, or vehicles used in a felony crime. The twenty (20) ALPR cameras have resulted in the apprehension of over 60 criminals including auto theft suspects, burglars, and robbery suspects. Staff identified fifteen (15) additional locations to install ALPR cameras to enhance the Department's crime reduction efforts. Funding for these additional locations is included in the Proposed 2021-2026 Capital Improvement Program.

Parallel to seeking Council approval of the funding, staff is evaluating available camera hardware and analytic software that will provide better situational awareness, enhance our service delivery, and improve our response time to events with the goal to identify a product and define an implementation timeline prior to the start of the next fiscal year.

AEDs

In November 2020, Milpitas City Council authorized the police department to accept a \$30,000 grant from the Racing Hearts organization to fund the purchase of fifteen (15) Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs). AEDs are a vital piece of safety equipment that can save lives during a cardiac emergency. We received the AEDs in February and are in the process of training staff on their use. Once the training is complete, the AEDs will be deployed with the officers in the field allowing officers to provide critical care to patients when officers arrive sooner at scene than firefighters or paramedics. The deployment would not be possible without the partnership with Racing Hearts and the support of council.

BolaWrap

In February 2021, the Milpitas Police Department became one of the first cities in the Bay Area to deploy the BolaWrap remote restraint device from Wrap Technologies. The BolaWrap is a handheld device capable of expelling a Kevlar string that can wrap around a person's arms or legs to immobilize their movement. The purpose of the tool is to restrain a combative or agitated person from a safe distance and take them into custody without having to use force. The BolaWrap will complement our continuing efforts to de-escalate situations, reduce the potential of injuries to people we need to take into custody and officers, and reduce our exposure to civil liability in situations that would otherwise require the use of force.

Conclusion

This past year presented a rapid succession of challenges for the Police Department. In addition to the challenges created by the pandemic, social unrest, and wildland fires, the Department also experienced an officer involved shooting in early 2020. Any single one of these events could easily have had a severe negative impact on operations; however, the women and men of the Police Department instead raised to the challenge and persevered. Our staff met the challenges with resilience and adapted as necessary to meet the needs of the community and provide the highest level of service. 2020 was a true testament to staff's commitment to the community, their resourcefulness, and their ability to proactively identify solutions.

Although the Police Department's success and ability to persevere was the result of the values and culture of the organization, it was equally dependent on the support from City Council, the community and the City Manager's Office. As we begin to recover from the pandemic, the Police Department will continue to make the necessary service delivery adjustments to safeguard the community.