



City of Alameda

Staff Report

File Number:2018-5156 (60 minutes)

City Council

Agenda Date: 2/6/2018

File Type: Regular Agenda Item

Agenda Number: 6-B

Recommendation to Accept Report on Alameda Crime Data, Statistics, and Trends from 1988 through 2017. (Police)

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Jill Keimach, City Manager

Re: Recommendation to Accept Report on Alameda Crime Data, Statistics, and Trends from 1988 through 2017

BACKGROUND

In October, 2017 the Alameda Police Department (APD) and members of the City Council began to receive complaints and concerns about an increase in crime within the city. The concerns appeared to be generated by a series of highly publicized laptop thefts from several Starbucks locations, as well as various anecdotal accounts of thefts on social media platforms.

While it is true that there was a spike in crime from 2016 to 2017, Alameda is still in the midst of an overall thirty year low in crimes reported. Despite that fact, the social media reports have caused some to doubt the safety of the community and the effectiveness of the Police Department.

On November 21, 2017, the City Council approved a referral to provide a public update on crime within the City of Alameda.

DISCUSSION

APD sends a monthly report to the FBI containing all crimes reported in Alameda. These reports are based on the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) requirements. Within UCR, there are two types of crimes to be reported; Part I crimes are the more serious offenses, which include murder, rape, robbery, felony assaults, theft, burglary, auto theft, and arson. Part II crimes are essentially all other crimes such as simple assault, identity theft, vandalism, narcotics offenses, etc.

The most common Part I crimes committed in Alameda are petty and grand theft, burglary, and auto theft. The most common Part II crimes in Alameda are simple assault, vandalism, forgery/counterfeit,

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drunk in public, and narcotics offenses.

In calendar year 2017, APD received a total of 5,075 crime reports versus 4,514 during calendar year 2016. The difference amounts to an increase of 561 reports, or an overall increase of 12.4 %. This means APD received approximately 1.5 additional reports per day in 2017 compared to 2016. Two-thirds (66%) of that increase, or 374 of 561 additional reports, is found in the category of grand theft (over \$400) and petty theft (under \$400). For clarification, the threshold that differentiates a grand theft versus petty theft in California is \$950, but for UCR reporting purposes the threshold is \$400. The bulk of the remainder of the increase was in the categories of robbery, assault, forgery/counterfeit, and vandalism.

In an effort to address the increase, Chief of Police Rolleri recently authorized the transfer of three detectives back to patrol to bolster staffing and increase police visibility. We have increased parole and probation checks on repeat offenders, and at tonight's meeting, the Department is asking the City Council to authorize the purchase of fixed Automated License Plate Readers (ALPR) for all points of ingress and egress to the Island. This will hopefully augment the success the Department has had with the four mobile ALPR's currently mounted on patrol cars. Another initiative which is soon to be launched is the S.E.E. Program (Sharing Electronic Evidence). With this program, residents and business owners will have the ability to **voluntarily** register with APD to let the Department know that they have surveillance cameras. If a crime occurs in their area, APD will have a list of locations with surveillance cameras, and can contact the citizen to view the relevant video. The citizen has the choice whether or not to share the information.

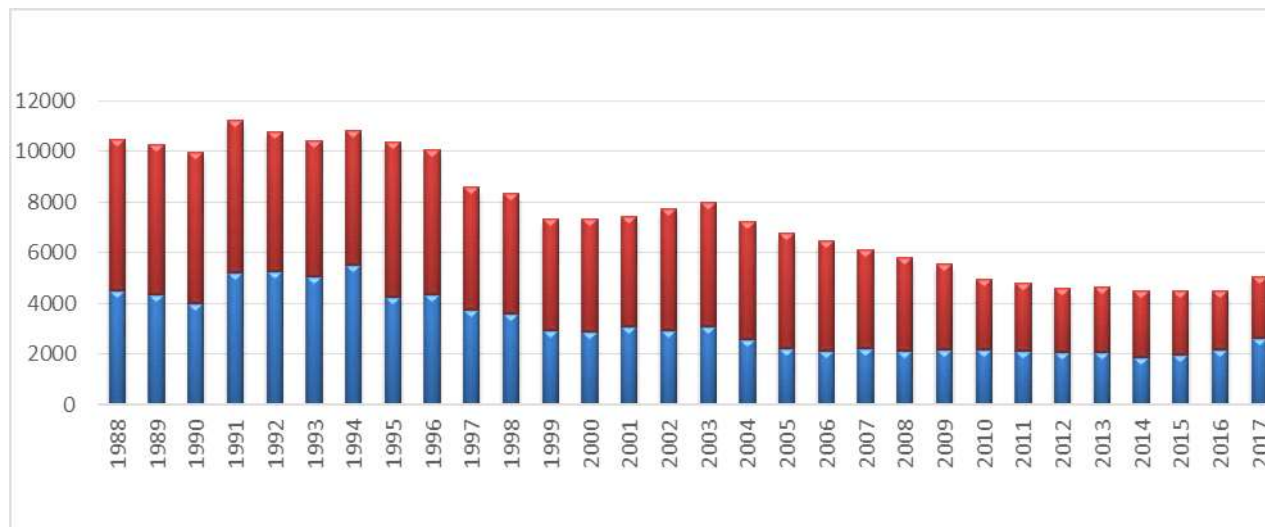
To put the 2017 increase into some perspective and context, APD recently pulled data from all crimes reported for a thirty year period from 1998 through 2017. In that time span, overall crime has declined by 52% and Part I crime declined by 41.5%. The highest crime year in that thirty year span was 1991. The overall crime decrease from 1991 through 2017 is 55% and the Part I decrease for that same period is 50%. See chart below.

Summary of All Alameda Crimes from 1988-2017

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Perhaps the most significant change in Alameda during the thirty year data period was the closure of Alameda Naval Station in 1995. When the base closed, APD assumed patrol responsibility for the area now known as Alameda Point. 1996 was the first full year in which APD patrolled Alameda Point. In that first year, from 1996-1997, there was a 15% overall drop in crime and a 14% drop in Part I offenses. Over the following twenty years, from 1997-2017, there has been a 41% decrease in overall crime and a 30% decrease in Part I crime. This decrease occurred while the fluctuating population in Alameda increased from 76,459 in 1990 to an estimated 78,906 as of July, 2016.

Access to social media allows for a greater level of dialogue about community issues, and APD has significantly raised its social media profile in the past year. Because of the community's involvement on Facebook, the Police Department has been able to solve cases including robberies, package thefts, serial traffic violations, and even a "Peeping Tom" case. Social media also leads to the community hearing more about crimes than ever before, which sometimes leads to a conclusion that things are worse than they really are. There is still much work to be done, but the Department hopes that having access to this data quantitatively informs the community that Alameda is a safe place to live, work, and go to school.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

There is no financial impact.

MUNICIPAL CODE/POLICY DOCUMENT CROSS REFERENCE

This presentation does not affect the municipal code.

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ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

Acceptance of the report does not require environmental review because it is not a project as defined by California Environmental Quality Act ("CEQA"). CEQA Guidelines, section 15378.

RECOMMENDATION

Accept Report on Alameda Crime Data, Statistics, and Trends from 1988 through 2017.

Respectfully submitted,
Paul Roller, Chief of Police