

December 3, 2024
Police

TITLE: RECEIVE BIENNIAL UPDATE REGARDING POLICE DEPARTMENT OPERATIONS, SERVICES AND ACTIVITIES

SUMMARY

The Police Department updates the City Council on community policing and department operations twice per year. This second report for 2024 provides an update on recent crime trends, crime statistics, personnel complaints, hiring initiatives, and department staffing.

RECOMMENDATION

Receive biannual update regarding Police Department operations, services and activities.

BACKGROUND

While the end-of-year biannual report is generally a programmatic review, the City Council and the community have expressed interest in receiving more information about current trends, as crime and public safety are key concerns identified citywide. In addition to crime trends, this report will highlight the implementation of the California Incident-Based Reporting System, personnel investigations, hiring, and an update on the operational impacts of police staffing levels.

DISCUSSION

Crime Trends

This report analyzes Part I crimes for January through September 2024 compared to the previous three years and the average for the same period. Part I persons crimes include homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery; Part 1 property crimes include burglary, larceny, auto theft, and arson. The data analytics indicate fluctuations in crime rates during the evaluation periods: Overall, in 2024, Part 1 person crimes are down 16% compared to the previous three-year average. While robberies are on pace to be higher than last year, they will still be within the city's typical range, based on the previous three years. Additionally, more than 50% of Pleasanton robberies escalated from what were originally incidents of theft and organized retail theft. To help address this, staff has been partnering with retailers on crime prevention efforts, including sharing recommendations for crime prevention through environmental design and advanced holiday suppression planning using plain-clothed and directed enforcement officers.

Although Part 1 property crimes have shown an overall decrease of 3% over the previous three-year average, auto theft has significantly increased, consistent with regional trends. Police staff is currently evaluating the Automated License Plate Reader (ALPR) program for deployment improvements and will evaluate a recommendation to use allocated funds to improve technology and reduce incidents of auto vehicle theft.

Following the vacancy of the former Crime Analyst position, which was primarily dedicated to

collecting crime statistics, in 2023 the department recruited a Crime and Intelligence Analyst, enabling staff to use more intelligence-led strategies to address crime spikes and respond proactively. Some of those strategies include deploying officers in high-crime and collision areas, strategically assigning plain-clothed officers to areas where thefts frequently occur, and sharing real-time information with regional law enforcement partners. In addition to these strategies, the crime analyst can provide real-time data to patrol officers to assist in apprehending criminals. For example, patrol officers were recently dispatched on a report of an in-progress vehicle burglary; the Crime Analyst logged into the traffic cameras in the area, was able to locate the suspect's vehicle, and provided the information to the officers, contributing to the efficient use of police resources.

Table 1 below illustrates crime trends in Pleasanton for the past four years, from January through September.

Table 1 : Part 1 Crimes Comparison January-September 2021-2024

	2021	2022	2023	3 Year Average (2021-2023)	2024	2024 % Change from 3 year average
PART I CRIMES						
Homicide	0	1	3	1	1	-25%
Rape	10	11	17	13	4	-68%
Aggravated Assault	43	49	26	39	30	-24%
Robbery	35	13	23	24	28	18%
Total Persons Crimes	88	74	69	77	63	-18%
Burglary	95	98	159	117	120	2%
Larceny	670	837	863	790	732	-7%
Auto Theft	89	82	140	104	129	24%
Arson	8	2	5	5	2	-60%
Total Property Crimes	862	1019	1167	1016	983	-3%
PART I TOTAL	950	1093	1236	1093	1046	-4%

*Crimes Reported Jan-Sep

Clearance Rate

Overall, the Part 1 crime clearance rate decreased to 23%, down from the previous 3-year average of 26%; the property crime clearance rate declined 3% from 22% to 19%, while the persons crime clearance rate remained relatively stable at 80%.

Although staffing levels, as detailed below, have challenged the police department in recent years, the department members have committed to the mission of serving and protecting the Pleasanton community with notable success. In one recent example, a male subject contacted Pleasanton Police Dispatch asking for assistance; he demanded an officer respond to him, stating he had run out of gas. His evasive behavior in providing only limited information caused the dispatcher to be concerned. With the limited information, the dispatchers determined the person was the suspect in a homicide that occurred earlier in the day in a neighboring community. The firearm had not been recovered, and the suspect stated he wanted to be killed by police. Within 10 minutes of receiving the call, the suspect arrived in the Pleasanton Police Department lobby, demanding to see an officer. Through the teamwork of all involved staff, the suspect was safely taken into custody by the officers without any injuries

to the suspect or the officers.

As committed as Police Department staff are to preventing crime and apprehending those responsible, they are equally committed to addressing quality of life issues. Recently, staff from the Police Department and the Traffic Engineering division received multiple complaints from residents about a significant increase in gravel truck traffic on First Street. Unfortunately, state mapping identified First Street as a designated truck route, superseding an agreement between the City and the gravel company to use alternate routes. Balancing the need for commerce with safety and quality of life concerns, current regulations regarding vehicle weight limits were evaluated, and the City installed signs restricting vehicles over eight tons. This change allowed officers to stop and cite vehicles violating the posted weight limit. In addition, police management met with the management of the gravel truck company to provide training and alternate approved truck routes.

Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) v. California Incident-Based Reporting System (CIBRS)

Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) was a collective effort by cities, counties, states, tribal, and federal law enforcement to present a nationwide view on crime. It was also used generally by law enforcement agencies to indicate an increase or decrease in crime in their community and is the reporting method used by the Pleasanton Police Department. UCR reporting has been the crime reporting standard for California law enforcement since the 1930s.

In the early 1980s, the Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) introduced the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). As of May 2024, all 50 states and the District of Columbia were certified to use NIBRS, and the FBI will now no longer accept UCR summary-based reporting. In recent years, the California Department of Justice expanded the data elements of NIBRS to create the California Incident-Based Reporting System (CIBRS) to collect and report more specific information than NIBRS. With this, in December 2024, the City will transition to a new Computer Aided Dispatch and Records Management System and, with it, CIBRS data collection and reporting. The key difference between CIBRS and UCR is eliminating the hierarchy rule and single incident reporting. Under the UCR hierarchy rule, only the single most serious offense is reported, regardless of whether other offenses occurred during the same incident. In contrast, CIBRS will collect up to 10 of the reportable offenses when they occur in the same incident, effectively reporting crime more accurately. In addition, using UCR single incident reporting, only one crime is reported for each incident, regardless of the number of victims. In contrast, using CIBRS, a separate crime is reported for each victim. Effectively, CIBRS incident reporting is more detailed than the traditional UCR standards, which can lead to post-CIBRS misinterpretation of crime data as an increase in crime rather than a by-product of changes in data reporting rules.

The Police Department's first biannual report of 2025 will contain the final comparison of year-to-year crime data in the UCR format. All crime data collected and information provided after January 1, 2025, will be reported using the CIBRS method.

Alternate Response Unit

In 2023, the Alternate Response Unit (ARU) reached full staffing. However, due to a police department staffing shortage, the unit was partially disbanded in early 2024 during which the unit operated with one officer and a clinician team for approximately six months. As

department staffing has improved significantly, the ARU team is now fully staffed. The City contracts with Bonita House, a nonprofit organization in Alameda County that provides crisis mental health services, to provide the two licensed clinicians for the ARU.

Between January and October 2024, the ARU responded to 1,079 calls for service; during the same time period in 2023, the ARU responded to 744 calls for service, representing a 45 percent increase in calls for service year-over-year. In 2024, the ARU diverted 379 calls from patrol officers, co-responded with patrol to 263 calls, and made 437 proactive contacts. During the same timeframe in 2023, the ARU diverted 318 calls from patrol, co-responded to 215 calls, and made 211 proactive contacts. As testament to the ARU's overall success, mental health commitments (5150/5585 Welfare and Institutions Code) continue to decline. During the first 10 months of 2024, members of the Department made 87 holds, compared to 99 mental health commitments during the same time frame last year. Mental health commitments have declined year after year since the department started collecting the numbers in 2020, at which time the total number of department mental health commitments was 410.

The ARU continues to serve the City's unhoused population and found long-term permanent housing for seven individuals, up from two individuals last year. In January 2024, the ARU joined City colleagues to conduct the "Point in Time" count to determine how many unhoused individuals live in Pleasanton; the primary purpose of the Point in Time count is to assist in allocating resources to Pleasanton through the state and county. The count revealed 69 unhoused individuals in Pleasanton, down from 72 identified from the previous count. To date in 2024, four encampments have been cleaned up at Stoneridge Drive/Springhouse Apartments, the underpass at First Street/Stanley Boulevard, Tessa Place, and the Stanford Sports Complex. The City's cost to clean up these encampments was \$26,800.

Personnel Investigations

The Police Department recognizes that while its authority comes from California law, legitimacy comes from the trust of those served, and earned from integrity, including acting appropriately within established laws and policies, acknowledging mistakes, and taking appropriate corrective action when necessary. The Police Department has consistently maintained high expectations of conduct for its sworn and professional staff. The department prominently displays FAQs on its webpage, which explain how community members may express misconduct concerns regarding department employees. Complaints may be submitted to any supervisor or manager directly to the Chief of Police or through the City's Human Resources Department, which is then forwarded to the City Manager for coordination.

Personnel investigations occur when a member of the public or a member of the department expresses concern about an employee's conduct. Generally, a supervisor reviews and investigates each complaint, which is then reviewed by the unit manager, a command officer, and the Chief of Police for impartiality, thoroughness, and accuracy. Depending on the scope and severity of the allegations, the Chief of Police and the City's Human Resources Department may opt to contract with an outside investigator. At the conclusion of the investigation, each allegation of a policy violation will be assigned one of four possible findings: unfounded, not sustained, sustained, or exonerated. An "unfounded" finding means

the alleged conduct did not occur; a “not sustained” finding is assigned when there is insufficient evidence to determine if a policy violation did or did not occur; a finding of “sustained” means the conduct did occur and resulted in a policy violation; and an employee is “exonerated” when the conduct did occur, and that conduct was proper and within policy. Of note, a review of the department’s personnel investigations over the last five years found that all complaints with findings of “sustained” were the result of internally generated investigations. The use of body-worn cameras by field personnel has proven valuable in supporting officers’ interactions with community members as appropriate and within policy. In addition, members of the department expect that they will behave professionally and have a high degree of trust that reported misconduct will be investigated and addressed appropriately.

Table 2 below illustrates the total number of internally and externally generated complaints from 2020 to 2023 and January – September 2024.

Table 2: Personnel Complaints from 2020-2024

Personnel Complaints					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024*
Internal	3	8	5	2	4
Citizen	5	3	4	6	6
Total	8	11	9	8	10
Sustained	1	6	4	2	2**
*January - September **Not all investigations have been completed					

During the identified timeframe, the most frequently sustained policy violation was unsafe driving, which resulted in on-duty vehicle collisions. All field personnel attended driver training during September and October 2024 department training days to address this issue and maintain California Peace Officers' Standards and Training compliance.

Hiring and Staffing

The police department continues to provide a service model that supports a “no call too small” philosophy in its work. The department is authorized for 83 sworn positions and 35 professional staff. Under the leadership of the Chief of Police, the department is composed of three Divisions: Operations, Investigations, and Support Services; a Captain or Commander leads each division. The Operations Division includes uniform patrol, traffic, special events, crime prevention, and animal services; the Investigations Division includes Personnel and Training, Criminal Investigations, Special Enforcement, and Youth and Community Services; and the Support Services include police Dispatch, Records, and Cadets.

At this time last year (in 2023), the department had 9 officer vacancies and 9 sworn members on medical leave, there were two police officer trainees at the Academy, and there were two dispatcher vacancies. At that time, the department had to address its vacancy rate by temporarily reassigning officers in specialized units back to patrol.

Table 3 below illustrates the number of staff separated from the department annually from

2020-2023 and 2024 to date.

Table 3: Annual Separations from Pleasanton Police Department 2020-2024

Annual Separations from Police Department	
2020	14
2021	8
2022	10
2023	11
2024* (YTD)	5

As of November 12, 2024, the department had 2 police officer vacancies and 5 sworn members on medical leave. There are 2 police officer trainees in the academy: one officer trainee started the academy in November and one officer trainee starts the academy in March 2025. Fifteen police officers and 5 professional staff, including 2 dispatchers, 2 Community Service Officers, and 1 maintenance assistant, have been hired in 2024. There are 5 officers in the Field Training Program anticipated to be included in the deployable ranks in early 2025; deployable officers can perform the duties of a solo beat officer and do not include those in the police academy, field training, or on leave. Dispatch Center, Records Unit, and Community Service Officer positions are all fully staffed; the only professional staff vacancy is Property/Evidence Technician.

Over the past year the City has had much success using multiple strategies to fill police department vacancies. The department now hosts the regional written exam and provides Pleasanton police officer applicants with a voucher to pay for the physical agility test. To draw candidates to the Pleasanton Police Department, staff participates in community events such as Dias los Muertos and the Diwali Festival to expose our profession to, and encourage applicants from, our diverse community. In addition, Personnel and Training Unit members host mock oral boards to assist prospective applicants and highlight Pleasanton. Concurrently, the Human Resources Department helped to streamline the hiring process by fast-tracking academy graduate applicants for interviews; now, entry-level police officer trainees are considered hired when they complete the hiring process and participate in in-house training prior to attending the academy. This early hiring improves both success in the academy and reduces the time necessary to complete the Field Training Program upon academy completion.

Youth Engagement Programming as a Recruitment Mechanism

Recognizing the youth of Pleasanton as future leaders and with the goal of developing a workforce reflective of the community, there has been a strong focus on the Department's youth programs. Traditionally, this occurs through the Police Explorer program and the Teen Academy. The Police Explorer program is designed to educate and involve youth in police operations, to educate youth about potential careers in law enforcement, to help strengthen relations with youth, and to increase the opportunity to align department demographics with those of the community we serve; the program is based on the "Learning for Life" school and community-based program affiliated with Scouting of America, emphasizing education, character building, and leadership development. Explorers are 14 to 20-year-old young adults

trained in various law enforcement tasks who assist at community events, as the minimum age to qualify as a police officer is 21. Experience as a Police Explorer allows young people to prepare for future community leadership roles.

Recognizing a potential opportunity to remain connected to our former Explorers, the City launched the Police Cadet Program and hired the police department's first three cadets. The Cadet Program is designed to serve as a pipeline, keeping college students connected to the Pleasanton Police Department. It bridges the time gap between those who age out of the Explorer Program and the age eligibility requirement to become a police officer. The part-time work program allows the Cadets to begin their working career and earn the income needed to continue their formal education. Police Cadets assist department staff with various assignments such as data collection, traffic control, responding to parking complaints and animal-related calls, assisting at the front counter, and redacting confidential information related to Public Records Act requests. The Department has experienced early success with this program. Notably, one of the cadets was recently hired as a police recruit, starting the academy in March 2025.

With improved staffing, the department has been able to deploy officers to critical programs that had been collapsed due to staffing shortages. The Alternate Response Unit is fully staffed with one Sergeant and two officers, each paired with a clinician. The School Resource Office Program is again fully staffed with two officers and the addition of a part-time grant-funded officer dedicated to the elementary schools. One officer has been reassigned back to the traffic unit. If staffing continues positively, the Criminal Investigations Unit, Traffic Unit, and Crime Prevention will be fully staffed in early 2025.

Retirements

Although the City has significantly succeeded in its hiring efforts over the past 12 months, it is necessary to stay focused on this objective. The Pleasanton Police Department may experience a significant turnover in leadership and a need to fill vacant police officer positions resulting from retirements. In 2025, 12 sworn staff members are either eligible for retirement or will become eligible for retirement; it is likely that some, but not all, will elect retirement.

Table 4 below depicts the number of eligible retirees and the rank each currently holds.

Table 4: 2025 Retirement Eligibility by Rank

Retirement Eligibility by Rank	
Captain	1
Lieutenant	2
Sergeant	5
Officer	4

The police department continues to serve the community with honor and pride, recognizing that strong community support is a byproduct of providing professional, quality service. This report provides a snapshot of the policing strategies and operational practices that police employees use in partnership with the community.

EQUITY AND SUSTAINABILITY

Not applicable, as the item is a matter of routine City business.

OUTREACH

No outreach was conducted, as the item is a matter of routine City business.

STRATEGIC PLAN ALIGNMENT

The work of the Police Department is aligned with the completion of the department's strategic plan which is incorporated into the ONE Pleasanton goal of *Safeguarding Our City*.

FISCAL IMPACT

Receiving this report does not create an immediate impact on the City's operating budget.

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Submitted by:



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Attachments:

- 1. Biannual Police Update Presentation