



La Center Policing Services Assessment

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Introduction

Between 2016 and 2019, City of La Center gambling tax revenues – a formerly substantial portion of the City’s general fund revenues – declined nearly 60%. The 2016 opening of a tribal gaming facility adjacent to the City combined with the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 have seen this municipal revenue source decline precipitously and introduce new uncertainties about general fund stability.

For several consecutive budget cycles, the City has relied upon one-time revenues such as construction and development-related taxes and fees, enterprise fund transfers, and financial reserves to balance the general fund structural deficit.



The City has undertaken departmental initiatives to better align ongoing revenues with ongoing expenses to create improved balance and fiscal sustainability. Throughout 2019 and 2020, internal and consultant-sourced analyses resulted in changes to the City’s Public Works Department in operations, wastewater treatment plant operations, community development, and finance with respect to alignment of functions, personnel, and insourcing/outsourcing decisions.

The La Center Police Department had yet to undergo evaluation. City policymakers engaged EXIGY Consulting and retired local Chief of Police Robert Richardson in 2020 to analyze departmental workload, municipal crime rates, calls for service/workload, response times, and other relevant operational aspects providing of law enforcement services. This project considers trends in law enforcement, risk management and mitigation, and assessment of the balance of mutual aid with adjacent law enforcement agencies and jurisdictions.

Principal Findings

- 38% of La Center’s total general fund budget is spent on policing; of that, 84% goes to compensation
- Average 2021 patrol officer compensation is \$127,749
- 2021 police chief compensation is budgeted at \$182,094
- La Center police officers spend 19% of their time on committed calls for service and 81% of their time on discretionary activities
- LCPD provided 53% more mutual aid hours to adjacent jurisdictions than it received
- Between 2015-2019 La Center’s crime rate was 6th lowest of 21 comparably-sized Washington cities
- Police-initiated calls for service increased 485% between 2015-2019 owing largely to increases in premise checks, traffic enforcement, and patrol emphasis events
- Response times for priority 1 and 2 calls between 2015-2019 were respectively 4:35 and 5:57 (Min/Sec)

The focus of the assessment is the level of service and corresponding appropriations, rather than labor relations and personnel. In other words: reviewing the City’s financial investment in policing services and what it receives for what it pays. The assessment also identifies deficiencies in the police staffing levels, equipment, and training.



One of a City’s primary responsibilities is providing community members with a safe environment to live, work, and recreate. Safe environments depend upon adequate public safety services, which have high operating costs and accompanying liability risk. This requires professional law enforcement officers who are highly trained, well-equipped, and capable of responding to calls for service in a professional and impartial manner.

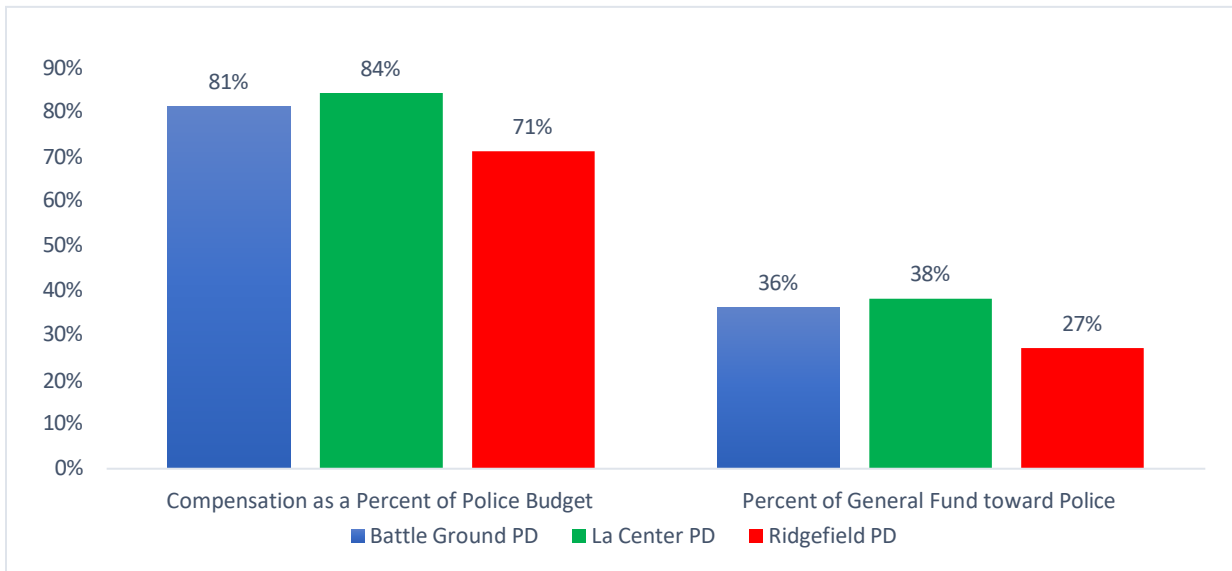
In the current policing environment, agencies are having to quickly adapt to new legislation, additional training requirements, and demands for transparency. These pressures increase costs, making it difficult for small agencies with limited funding, staffing, and equipment resources to respond and adapt. This assessment identifies such known impacts and forecasts their effects on City operations and finances.

Police Budget



Comparing 2021 adopted police budgets for the Cities of Battle Ground, La Center and Ridgefield demonstrates the City of La Center expends a larger proportion of its general fund budget on policing services AND a larger

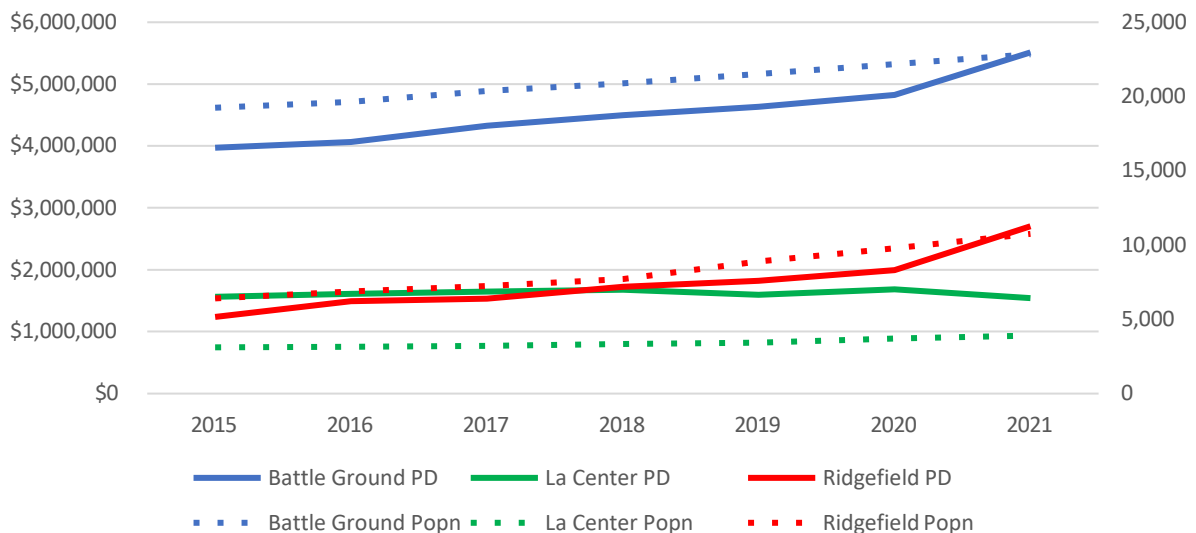
proportion of its police budget on employee compensation than the other jurisdictions.



A comparison of the La Center police budget with the City of Battle Ground and the City of Ridgefield reveals the La Center police budget decreased approximately 1.48% between 2015 and 2021. This decrease compares to increases at the City of Battle Ground of 38.77% and the City of Ridgefield of 118.41% over the same period.

Expected 2021 average salary for the seven commissioned officer positions in the City of La Center is \$100,806, with average wage- and medical-related benefits at \$26,943, for a total value of average compensation per position of \$127,749. The 2021 police chief’s salary was budgeted at \$144,465 for wages and \$37,629 for benefits for a total compensation of \$182,094.

Police Budget and Population Comparison, 2015-2021





Comparing police department base wages from a 14-city sample (including both cities within Clark County and other Washington cities considered to be comparable for

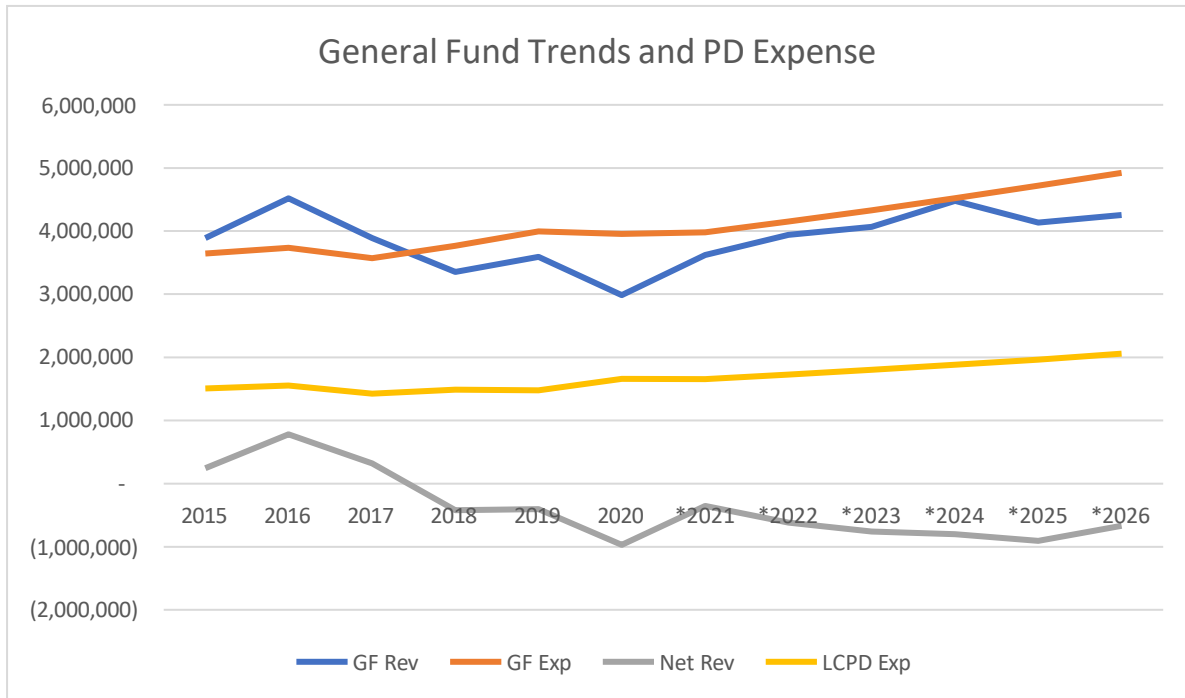
compensation indexing), La Center was third highest in 2019 base monthly wages (range \$7204 to \$5121). The comparable cities indexed are: Algona, Battle Ground, Camas, Eatonville, Elma, Goldendale, Kalama, Montesano, Ridgefield, Washougal, Westport, White Salmon, and Woodland. These cities are used for comparability because they are either similar in size/population and assessed value, or they operate within the same labor market as La Center.

The base wage rate is only a portion of the cost of police compensation. Collective bargaining agreement language also includes incentive and specialty pay compensation. This contract language has combinatorial and multiplicate impacts on compensation costs. La Center offers incentive pay for higher educational attainment.

Comparing the trends in population growth and police department budgets between Battle Ground, La Center, and Ridgefield, La Center’s police budget has declined slightly since 2018 as moderate population growth occurred. Battle Ground and Ridgefield police budgets have grown at a rate exceeding their respective population growth rates recently. The cost per capita of policing in La Center is significantly higher than in Battle Ground and Ridgefield.

City	2021 Population	2021 Police Budget	Cost per Resident
Battle Ground	22,845	\$5,511,123	\$241
La Center	3,890	\$1,542,128	\$396
Ridgefield	10,747	\$2,702,949	\$252

Using a baseline budgeting approach and conservative financial assumptions, below is a forecast through 2025 of general fund revenues and expenses, budget deficit/surplus, and LCPD expense.



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Calls for Service/Patrol Workload

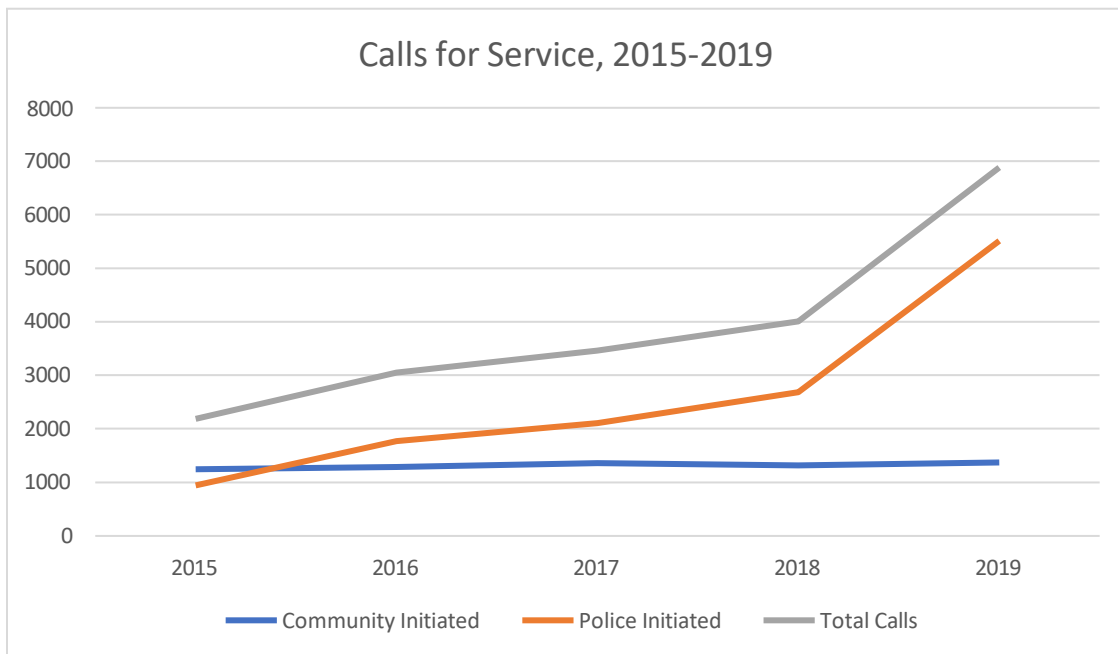
Calls for Service – Events are divided into two categories: community-initiated calls (911 calls, walk ins) and police-initiated calls. A five-year review of historical trends (2015 – 2019) from



community and police-initiated events totaled 19,583. Community-initiated events increased 10% over this period, while officer-initiated events increased 484%.

The greatest increase in officer-initiated counts occurred between the years 2018 and 2019 where the percent of increase was 105%. The calls that impacted officer-initiated events included traffic-related events, premise checks, and patrol emphasis.

¹ Included in the LCPD expense line is an additional \$80,000 from the Vehicle Fund to recognize the cost of one fully equipped patrol vehicle replacement annually.



The highest number of officer-initiated calls were related to: premise checks, traffic events (including enforcement stops and road hazards), patrol emphasis (traffic safety), suspicious activity (suspicious person, circumstances, or automobile), and following up. In 2019 officer-initiated calls totaled 5511. Premise checks are officer-initiated activities, and largely derive from La Center residents notifying the police department of vacation plans and asking officers to check up on their homes while away.

Of the 5511 officer-initiated calls in 2019, only 947 were not related to premise checks, traffic enforcement, or patrol emphasis activities. On average this is less than three calls per day

Removing premise checks (2151 calls), patrol emphasis (968 calls), and traffic enforcement (1445 calls) activities from this total shows 947 calls were related to other general police activity including traffic accidents, property crimes, and crimes against persons. On average this is less than three calls per day.

The highest number of community-initiated calls were related to contacts (welfare checks providing assistance to the public), suspicious activity (suspicious person, circumstances, automobile, or noises), traffic (reckless driving, intoxicated driver, road hazard), disturbances (disturbances involving minors, physical altercations, weapons), and alarms (audible, silent, and panic). In 2019, community-initiated calls for service totaled 1371, on average just under four calls per day.

Impacts on Call for Service Counts – Between 2018 to 2019 traffic-related events increased from 1174 to 1445. Average time spent on a traffic event was 13:12 minutes. Premise check events increased from 548 to 2151. Average time spent on a premise check event was 3:31 minutes. Patrol emphasis events increased from 98 to 968. Average time spent on a patrol emphasis event was 27 minutes.

Call for Service Dispositions – 13% of all calls for service events were cleared with a report disposition. 2% of all calls for service events resulted in a Group A offense, which includes crimes against persons, crimes against property, and crimes against society.

Seasonal impacts – No significant seasonal impacts affected calls for service in the City of La Center.

Characteristics of Calls for Service – Community-initiated calls for service tended to increase beginning Thursdays through Saturday and decrease during the rest of the week. Community-initiated calls for service decrease significantly after midnight until approximately 8:00 AM.

Discretionary Time – The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) recommends that no more than 60% of patrol time should be committed to calls for service. The remaining 40% of time is discretionary time for officers to be available for addressing community problems and respond to serious emergencies.

An analysis of 2019 CAD workload data shows that patrol units averaged approximately 81% discretionary time, and 19% committed time (community and officer-initiated calls for service). This represents a decrease from 84% discretionary time in 2018.

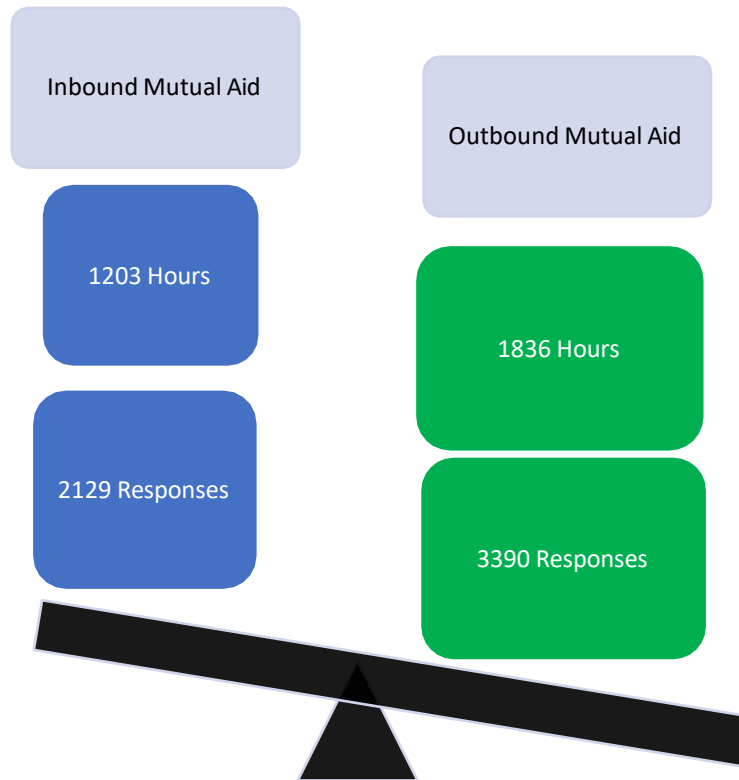
Mutual Aid – Another impact on La Center Police Department resources is the imbalance of mutual aid response both into and outside the City of La Center. Mutual aid is a voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources and services for the mutual benefit of local jurisdictions. This is an important resource for smaller jurisdictions that lack the staffing, resources, and/or expertise to manage any potential call or situation they may face.

In general, a frequent mutual aid response into your city from outside law enforcement agencies to assist on calls indicates your police department is understaffed, the work schedule is not optimized, or a combination of both. In contrast, a frequent mutual aid response outside your city from your law enforcement agency to assist on calls indicates adjacent jurisdictions are understaffed, their work schedule is not optimized, or a combination of both.

Law enforcement agencies in Clark County have a long history of providing mutual aid to one another due to the limited resources and rural character of north Clark County. As

the north portion of Clark County develops, the La Center Police Department should monitor the mutual aid response balance to ensure that there is equity and fairness among all jurisdictions. Long term imbalances can lead to jurisdictions feeling they are providing too many resources or not receiving enough resources in return.

Additionally, understaffing and a lack of field supervision may allow officers to drift over to other jurisdictions when their calls for service are minimal and they are looking to stay active.



Over the five-year period from 2015-2019, La Center provided on average nearly two mutual aid responses per day and received on average just over one mutual aid response per day. This equates to LCPD providing 53% more mutual aid hours to adjacent jurisdictions than it received.

Calls for Service Summary – With relatively stable demand for service activity in both community- and police-initiated calls for service between 2015-2019, it is evident LCPD officers look for opportunities to stay active by responding to calls through mutual aid to adjacent jurisdictions, performing premise

It is evident LCPD officers look for opportunities to stay active by responding to calls through mutual aid to adjacent jurisdictions, performing premise checks and traffic enforcement, and conducting patrol emphasis activities.

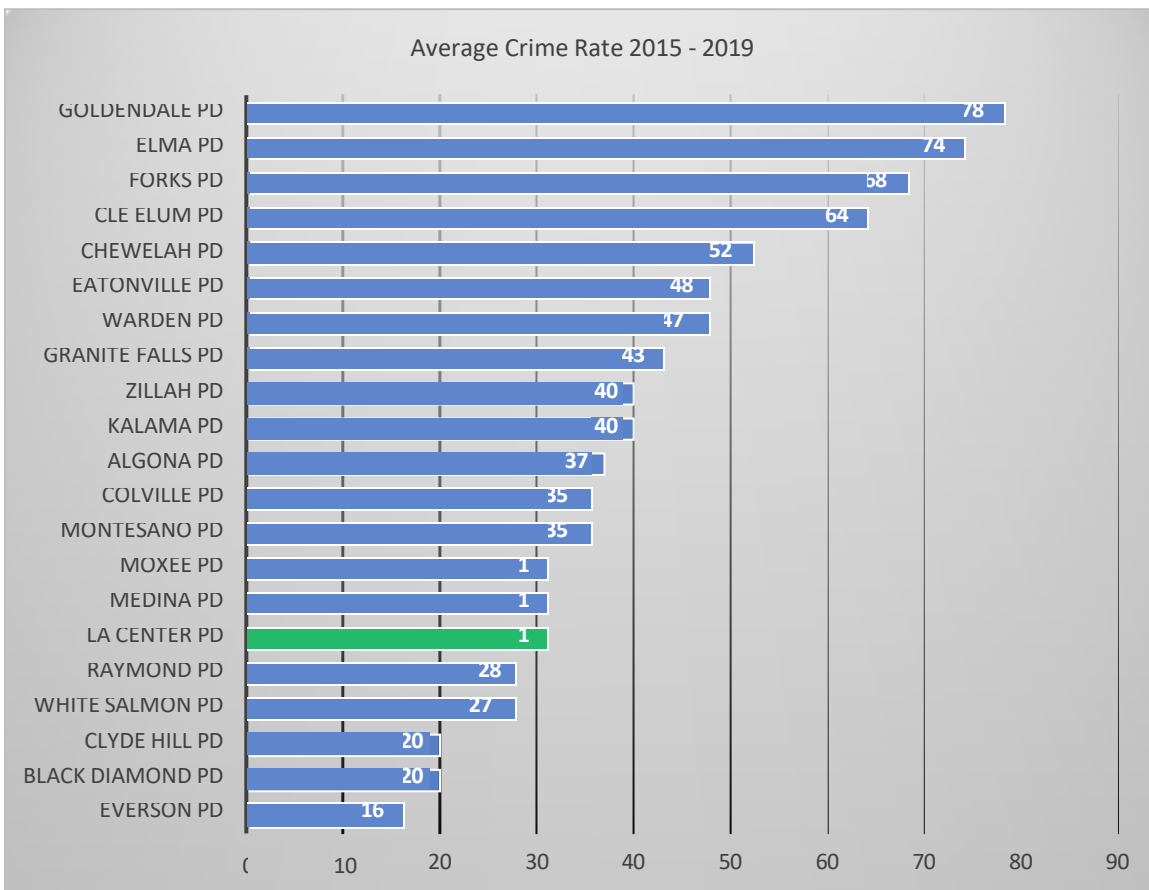


checks and traffic enforcement and conducting patrol emphasis activities. Because of staffing levels, LCPD officers require mutual aid when responding to certain types of calls for general policing services (as opposed to premise check and traffic patrol emphasis activities).

Crime Rate

A comparison of the City of La Center’s crime rate from 2015 to 2019 reveals that, in general, citizens experience much less crime victimization when compared to other Washington state communities with a population between 2,500 to 5,000. La Center’s average crime rate for Group A offenses (crimes against persons, crimes against property, crimes against society) from 2015 to 2019 was 31 per 1,000 persons. The highest crime rate within this comparison was 78 per 1,000 persons and the lowest was 16 per 1,000 persons. La Center’s crime rate is well under the state average of 66 per 1,000 persons.

62% of all reported crimes are crimes against property (predominantly thefts, motor vehicle thefts, and vandalism).



24% of all reported crime are crimes against persons (predominantly domestic violence assaults).

14% of all reported crimes are crimes against society (predominantly drugs and narcotic violations).

Stranger on stranger crime is very rare in La Center.

Response Times

While studies have shown that faster response times have little impact on arrest rates, additional studies have shown that general citizen perceptions of response times strongly correlated to the overall satisfaction they had for their police department. As an outcome of improved citizen satisfaction, individuals are more likely to quickly report a crime to police. If the time delay is reduced between citizen discovery of a crime and the citizen contacting police, this may improve the odds of a subsequent arrest and create positive citizen satisfaction with police services. In turn, high citizen satisfaction with their police department can influence the likelihood that a community member will call the police to report future crime.

With the advent of Automated External Defibrillators (AEDs) and Narcan, the role of the police since the 1970's has greatly expanded to include emergency medical response. This is the single area where the measurement of emergency response times impacts the quality of care for community members.

The City of La Center Police Department contracts with Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) for 911 and dispatch services. CRESA utilizes a computerized assisted dispatch system (CAD) to assist with call processing and dispatching of incidents to the La Center Police Department. All calls for service (CFS) are assigned a priority from one to five. The priority of calls is as follows:

- Priority 1 – Emergency: Life or property threatening event in progress
- Priority 2 – Urgent: Life or property threatening event just occurred
- Priority 3 – Event is cold, non-life threatening that occurred less than ten minutes ago
- Priority 4 – Event is cold, non-life threatening that occurred more than ten minutes ago
- Priority 5 – Information, messages, vehicle impounds, civil issues

Priority 1 Response – Average Priority 1 Call Response Time from 2015 to 2019 was 4:35 minutes from time of dispatch to first unit on scene.

Priority 2 Response - Average Priority 2 Call Response Time from 2015 to 2019 was 5:57 minutes from time of dispatch to first unit on scene.

Priority 3 Response – Average Priority 3 Call Response Time from 2015 to 2019 was 8:21 minutes from time of dispatch to first unit on scene.

Priority 4 Response – Average Priority 4 Call Response Time from 2015 to 2019 was 10:11 minutes from time of dispatch to first unit on scene.

Priority 5 Response – Average Priority 5 Call Response Time from 2015 to 2019 was 7:17 minutes from time of dispatch to first unit on scene.

Police Staffing Deficiencies

Current Staffing Status: Authorized eight commissioned officers (one police chief, two sergeants, five police officers) and one full-time police clerk. Vacant positions: one police chief, one police sergeant, one police officer, one police officer on one-year military deployment (returning to duty early 2022), one officer in recruitment process for other agencies. These vacancies leave potentially only three police officers available for staffing after April 1, 2021.

While a commissioned officer comparison for Washington Cities with a population from 2,500 to 5,000 shows an average of seven authorized commissioned officer positions, current staffing levels make it difficult to staff vacant shifts due to vacations, military leave, sick leave, and mandatory training without impacting the department's overtime budget, or burdening adjacent agencies who feel obligated to provide mutual aid. In addition, large amounts of overtime, and an uncertain future is impacting the morale of the workforce and increases turnover.

Recommended Staffing: Increase authorized commissioned officers to nine (one police chief, two sergeants, six police officers) to allow for two teams each consisting of one sergeant and three patrol officers. The additional patrol position would provide greater depth to cover additional training mandates, military deployments, and leave request without always having to incur overtime or rely on other agencies for staffing.

Increase authorized professional staff by one part-time administrative position to back up the police clerk position to ensure succession planning and coverage for absences. This position would also be available to take on the additional responsibilities of maintaining a body camera program.

Long Term Future Staffing: Increase the authorized commissioned officers to ten (one police chief, two sergeants, six police officers, and one detective position). This new detective rotational position would handle follow up investigations, assist the regional major crimes unit, and process crime scenes allowing patrol officers the opportunity to gain additional experience. This would allow for more opportunities and increase the retention of officers seeking experiences outside of the traditional patrol response.

Equipment Deficiencies

Less Lethal Defensive Weapons: A noted deficiency concerns the lack of less lethal defensive weapons other than a taser. While a taser is necessary, it is insufficient at distances greater than 25 feet. The best practice is to equip officers' patrol vehicles with less lethal 40mm launchers which deploy sponge rounds. This allows an officer to utilize a weapons system from a greater distance (5 to 131 feet) to defend against subjects that are threatening assault using a knife or other weapon that is not a firearm.

At a minimum, one 40mm launcher should always be deployed in the field. Ideally each patrol vehicle should be equipped with a 40mm launcher. Full deployment of four less lethal 40mm launchers would cost approximately \$10,000 which includes the weapon, mounting equipment, and installation (one-time expense). Additional ongoing costs related to training time and materials of approximately \$400 every other year would also be necessary.

Body Worn Cameras: Body worn cameras are utilized to document interactions between police officers and the public. In addition, they are used to record statements of witnesses, suspects, and victims of crime. Currently pending legislation requiring the use of body worn cameras is under consideration. If adopted, this legislation will impact budgets, require additional staffing, and affect collective bargaining with labor groups.

Body worn camera plans from vendors vary depending on the features, software options, and warranty. These vendor services can include automatic updates of equipment, replacement for loss or damage, and data storage capacity. A body worn camera program with eight body cameras would cost between \$34,000 to \$49,000 over a five-year period. This figure excludes additional fees for data storage over contract maximums and city labor costs to manage the program.

It is estimated that a body worn camera program for the City of La Center would require one half-time civilian police position. This position would be responsible for public records requests, providing copies of incidents to the City and County Prosecutor's offices for criminal filings and traffic infractions, and redaction of video to exclude juveniles and uninvolved third parties.

Training Deficiencies

The La Center Police Department's training budget is currently \$15,000 per year. With additional training mandates, potential for needed basic academy training (to offset vacant positions), and instructor training for topics such as Taser, 40mm Launcher, Emergency Vehicle Operations, Crisis Intervention Training, Patrol Rifle Training (among other requirements), it is recommended to increase this to \$45,000 per year.

The La Center Police Department needs to train all patrol officers in patrol rifle response as part of full deployment of patrol rifles. The Department also needs to meet the 25% benchmark requirement for officers attending the 40-hour Crisis Intervention Training as required by the "Trueblood" settlement.

Police Facility Deficiencies

The current police building is approximately 50 years old and consists of approximately 1890 square feet. It does not meet current building codes, and lacks adequate office space, female locker room facilities, secured parking, an exercise area, a legal temporary detention area, a secure interview room, a meeting/training room, and public restrooms. A community the size of La Center would need a police facility of approximately 4,000 sq. ft. to accommodate future growth, the cost of which is estimated at approximately \$5.5 million, including land.

Future Impacts on Policing the City of La Center

Police Reform: Pending legislation will increase mandated police advisory oversight, require new equipment, impose additional training mandates, introduce additional reporting requirements, require body worn cameras and increase the associated public records issues, and increase liability to local government. Most of this new legislation will increase law enforcement costs to local governments without providing a funding source.

Staff Turnover: The La Center Police Department competes with other local police departments to recruit and retain police employees. This results in police officers leaving the City of La Center for agencies with better career opportunities.

Costs to Address Deficiencies

Using the previously established baseline budget forecast, a model of departmental expenses addressing the deficiencies is generated assuming 2021 dollars for one-time and ongoing expenses with conservative forecast assumptions for inflation as follows:

	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Salary/Benefits					
Part time clerk/admin	55,000	58,000	61,000	64,000	67,000
Patrol Officer	141,000	122,000	128,000	135,000	142,000
Detective	141,000	122,000	128,000	135,000	142,000
Supplies					
Less Lethal 40 mm weapon	10,200	200	200	200	200
Body worn cameras/data	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000	15,000
Services					
Increase to training budget	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000	30,000
Capital					
Facility	420,000	420,000	420,000	420,000	420,000
Principal: \$5.5 million 20-year note, 4.5%					
Vehicles					
Additional Patrol	80,000				
Additional Detective	80,000				

Conclusions

The City of La Center’s policing services can only be described as “half-in”, lacking the approach and resources to provide full-service community policing. The LCPD call for service data demonstrates the Department primarily provides premise checks and traffic enforcement. LCPD relies heavily on outside agencies for backup on riskier calls for service, as well as handling property and evidence storage for the City. Policing requires a total commitment because of the inherent risk and liability. Policing is, in fact, the City’s greatest area of risk and liability among its several lines of municipal business activities.

La Center’s policing services can only be described as “half-in”, lacking the approach and resources to provide full-service community policing.

The City of La Center allocates 38% of its general fund towards the Police Department – more than the City of Ridgefield and the City of Battle Ground – yet it still suffers from staffing, equipment, and training deficiencies as well as an outdated police facility. LCPD

is the City's greatest area of general fund cost. Most of this general fund expense goes towards personnel costs including compensation and benefits.

LCPD personnel are compensated comparably well. The City has a low crime rate, low rates of police activity, and is mutual aid dependent for intensive emergency calls. Property, evidence, and major crimes investigations activities are provided for La Center by other agencies in the area.

While the City of La Center allocates over one-third of its General Fund to the Police Department, its overall police budget decreased between 2015 and 2021 by 1.48%. This compares to Ridgefield's budget increase of 118% and the Battle Ground's budget increase of 39%.

The La Center Police Department faces challenges in competing to recruit and retain officers who are recruited by other police departments which offer additional training opportunities, specialty assignments, and career development. This has resulted in La Center becoming the "farm team" for other police agencies who recruit LCPD officers after La Center incurs expenses related to recruitment, academy training, and field training.

Lack of 24-hour supervised coverage increases risk: best practices call for a supervisor on duty to respond to high-risk situations, citizen complaints, conduct preliminary reviews of use of force, and other supervisory functions. In most police departments the graveyard shift generally has the least experienced officers working early morning hours with the least number of resources, and a lack of sufficient supervision. A high degree of correlation exists between police malpractice, police misconduct, and adequate supervision.

Staffing shortages pose difficulties covering shifts and maintaining expected service levels to the public. This also increases officer fatigue and impacts adjacent police agencies responding to the City of La Center to handle calls under mutual aid when a La Center Police Officer is not on duty.

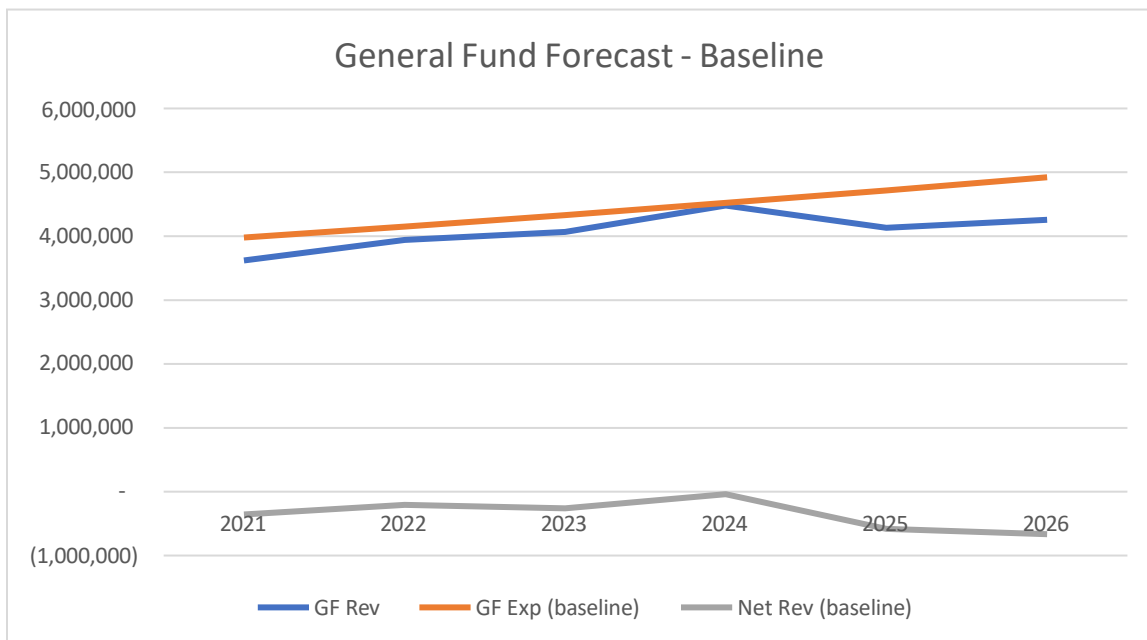
The La Center Police Department relies on mutual aid assistance from other local agencies, primarily the Ridgefield Police Department and the Clark County Sheriff's Office. In situations where patrol shifts were not able to be filled because of shift vacancies, these agencies have provided shift coverage. This is an inappropriate use of mutual aid and the practice should be discontinued except in emergencies.

The La Center Police Department utilizes the Clark County Sheriff's Department for services such as after-hours records, property/evidence storage, issuing of concealed pistol permits, major crimes investigation, and CRESA for 911 and dispatch services.

Recommendation

Do La Center’s calls for service justify a fully-staffed department?

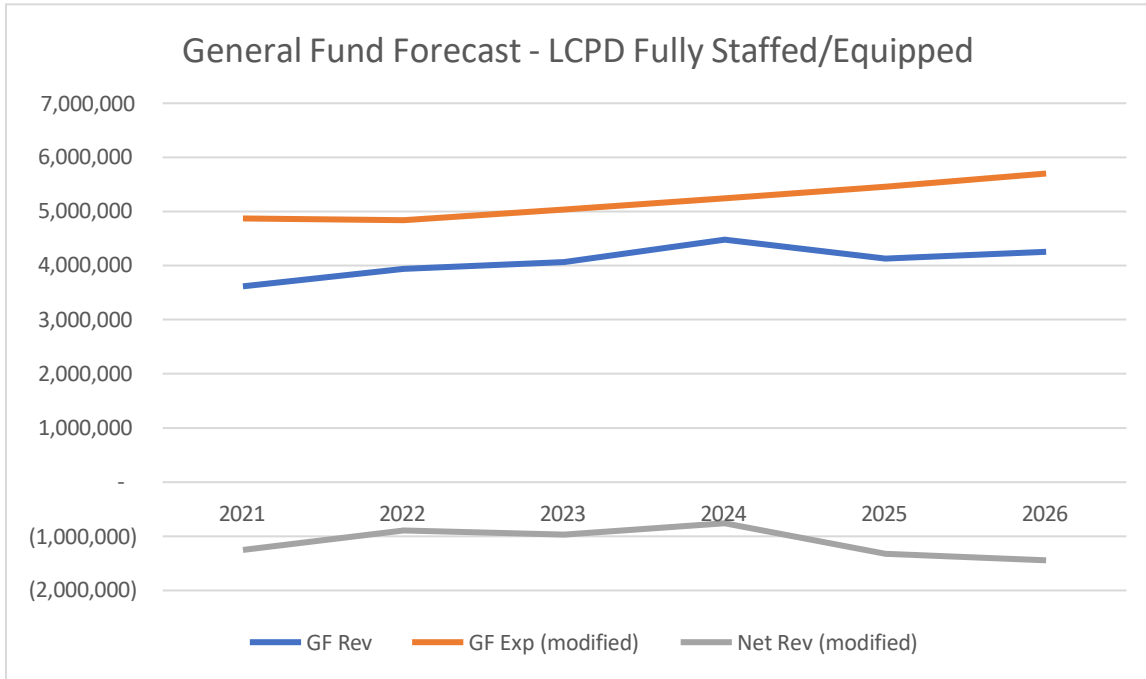
The City of La Center needs to either go “all in” on a full-service law enforcement department or consider alternatives to provide law enforcement services the City can afford. Evidence of the City’s policing services needs is found in its calls for service. A policy question that must be addressed is: “Do La Center’s calls for service justify a fully-staffed department?” Going “all in” means determining a long-term funding stream to staff the department at recommended levels, increase training, provide the necessary equipment to strengthen transparency to the public, and construct a new police facility.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
GF Rev	3,618,400	3,942,000	4,066,000	4,479,500	4,131,000	4,254,000
GF Exp (baseline)	3,980,000	4,151,000	4,332,000	4,521,000	4,718,000	4,923,000
Net Rev (baseline)	(361,600)	(209,000)	(266,000)	(41,500)	(587,000)	(669,000)

The City is faced with a projected general fund deficit in 2021 of approximately \$350,000 to operate at its current baseline without further depleting its reserves. All other City departments have undertaken cost-savings initiatives, resulting in personnel and other operational changes to address this deficit.

To implement fully staffing and equipping the police department the City would need to secure an additional \$815,000 per year (in 2021 dollars) the first year of implementation, including one-time expenses.



	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025	2026
GF Rev	3,618,400	3,942,000	4,066,000	4,479,500	4,131,000	4,254,000
GF Exp (modified)	4,872,200	4,838,200	5,034,200	5,240,200	5,454,200	5,700,010
Net Rev (modified)	(1,253,800)	(896,200)	(968,200)	(760,700)	(1,323,200)	(1,446,010)

To do this the City would need to use both voted and non-voted sources of revenue including a levy lid lift, increasing utility excise taxes, and bonding for the new police facility. Because of statutory limitations (the City’s maximum levy rate is \$1.60 per \$1,000 of property value) these revenue options may be insufficient to cover both the ongoing general fund deficit and the additional expenses of adequately staffing and equipping the police department.

If the City is unable to secure the necessary long-term funding, it should pursue contracting out law enforcement services to another agency with the ability to provide

the services the City requires. This practice – common in other Washington cities – allows cities to meet their law enforcement level of service needs while aligning costs with revenues and reducing risks and liabilities.

Contracting out law enforcement services can be done at a cost savings over the current baseline expense, yielding the same (or better) levels of service. This is because the City would not bear the burdens of administrative overhead, capital costs, ongoing training expenses, risk and liability, and one-time expenses related to recruiting employees, and training and equipping them. The City can benefit from the economies of scale offered by another, larger agency.

Should the City of La Center contract another law enforcement agency for police services, the City must ensure that the contract has measurable, enforceable benchmarks that are reviewed on an annual basis.

Additionally, the City of La Center must promote public/police engagement through community groups such as the La Center Police Advisory Coalition and other civic organizations to ensure transparency and trust between the law enforcement agency and the people they serve.

Acknowledgements

The authors express their appreciation to staff at the City of La Center, City of Battle Ground, City of Ridgefield, Clark County Sheriff's Office, Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency, and First Watch, all of whom assisted in obtaining and providing the data needed for this report.

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SECTION 1 – SUMMARY

As is the case in the City of La Center, nearly half of all local law enforcement agencies in the United States (48 percent) have fewer than 10 police officers serving their communities. Unlike large urban police departments, small agencies generally have fewer resources while still performing the same core functions such as law enforcement, crime prevention, traffic control, protection of civil rights and liberties, and solving crimes.

In addition, police departments are faced with challenges such as maintaining training standards, purchasing technology, employee retention, employee recruitment while maintaining competitive salaries and benefits.

The community of La Center has been fortunate to have a police department that, in contrast to larger urban centers, permits their police officers more time to focus on community policing, thoroughly investigate crimes that occur, and take on duties and responsibilities that are not available to patrol officers in larger departments. In other words, the officers are generalists that must know how to deal with the many facets of policing such as traffic enforcement, investigation techniques, and crime scene processing that officers in larger police departments may not have the opportunity to perform.

Like other law enforcement agencies in the United States, the La Center Police Department has been impacted by legislation limiting taxing authority of their municipalities, a recession, a pandemic, increasing unfunded mandates focused on training and equipment, and most recently nationwide demands for police reform. At the same time the City of La Center has increasing demands to maintain infrastructure and provide other services while experiencing residential growth and a changing economic environment.

In September 2020, Jeff Swanson of Exigy Consulting and retired local Police Chief Bob Richardson were chosen to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the La Center Police Department.² The scope of this study was defined as follows:

- Compile and analyze data related to law enforcement calls for service within the City of La Center and in support of adjacent agencies through mutual aid
- Analyze the volume and type of emergency and non-emergency calls for service the La Center Police Department provides to residents and businesses
- Review the La Center Police Department's reliance on other police agencies for expertise in the areas of criminal investigations, records, and evidence management

² Professional Services Contract – Assessment of Police Services executed September 2020

- Project future Federal, State, and Local mandates that may impact the cost to deliver law enforcement services to the City of La Center
- Consider trends in law enforcement service delivery to mitigate risk management and liability
- Present alternative methods of providing law enforcement services to policymakers for consideration

This report utilizes several sources of information including:

- Comprehensive review of department data from the CAD (Computer Assisted Dispatch) System, RMS (Records Management System), and other available data sources
- Review City of La Center budget documents
- Discussions with Law Enforcement representatives from the La Center Police Department as well as other law enforcement agencies
- Discussions with third party vendors regarding equipment costs
- Review of informational resources such as professional publications and news articles and reports

About the City of La Center

Located east of Interstate 5 at Exit 16, the City of La Center is located in North Clark County, Washington, and borders the north side of the scenic East Fork Lewis River. The City encompasses approximately 2.59 square miles (1657.6 acres) and has five beautiful parks, two of which border wetland areas. The City provides services such as street improvements, public safety, sanitary sewer utility, growth planning, building code enforcement, and parks and recreation management.

The current population is approximately 3,705³ and includes approximately 1,290 housing units. The City of La Center is a non-charter code city with a “Mayor-Council” form of government; policy and administration are separated. The Mayor serves as the chief executive and administrative officer and the five-member City Council serve as the legislative body, setting policy by ordinances and resolutions. All legislative and policy

³ 2020 Population estimates from the State of Washington Office of Financial Management

making powers are vested in the City Council. The administrative authority, including a veto power is vested in the mayor. The Mayor and City Council members are elected at large by the voters living within the corporate limits of the City of La Center.

About the La Center Police Department

The City (Town) of La Center was established in 1874 and on September 2, 1909 W.P. Wampler was appointed the first town Marshal.

Since the first town marshal was appointed, the La Center Police Department has grown to an authorized budgeted strength of 9 police employees. The most recent Chief of Police was Marc Denney who was hired in 2013 and resigned in January 2021. The Chief of Police Position is currently being held by an interim Administrative Police Chief.

The La Center Police Department primarily provides uniformed patrol services 24 hours a day, 365 days a year and relies on the Clark County Sheriff's Office for additional services including detectives for major criminal investigations, SWAT tactical response, property and evidence storage, after hours police records management, the issuance of concealed pistol licenses, and after hours WACI/NCIC processing.

The City of La Center contracts with the Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) to provide 911 dispatch, technology services, and emergency management services.

The La Center Police Department's organizational structure includes an authorized budgeted strength of (1) chief of police, (2) police sergeants, (5)⁴ full-time police officers, (1) part-time police officer⁵, and (1) executive assistant. A review of all Washington police agencies serving populations of 2,500 to 5,000 shows that the La Center Police Department's current full-time authorized staffing of 8 commissioned officers is 1 officer above the state average of 7.

As previously mentioned, the chief of police position is currently vacant and being held by an Interim Administrative Police Chief to provide leadership and management oversight to the organization. In addition, one police officer is pending long term deployment (February 2021 – Spring of 2022) to fulfill his military service obligation which will allow only 2 Police Sergeants and 3 full-time police officers for shift deployment. Additionally, two officers are in the recruitment process with other agencies, potentially leaving only three commissioned officers available to fill patrol shifts effective April 2021.

⁴ One Police Officer position is vacant due to budget limitations.

⁵ The Part-time officer has not worked since March 2020 because of COVID-19 restrictions from his primary employer.

The La Center Police Department works a 4-day/12-hour schedule split between two squads. While one squad is working their 4-day work week the other squad is on their 4 days off.

Since 2009 the La Center Police Department’s budgeted commission officers⁶ has varied:



⁶Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Full Time Law Enforcement Count.

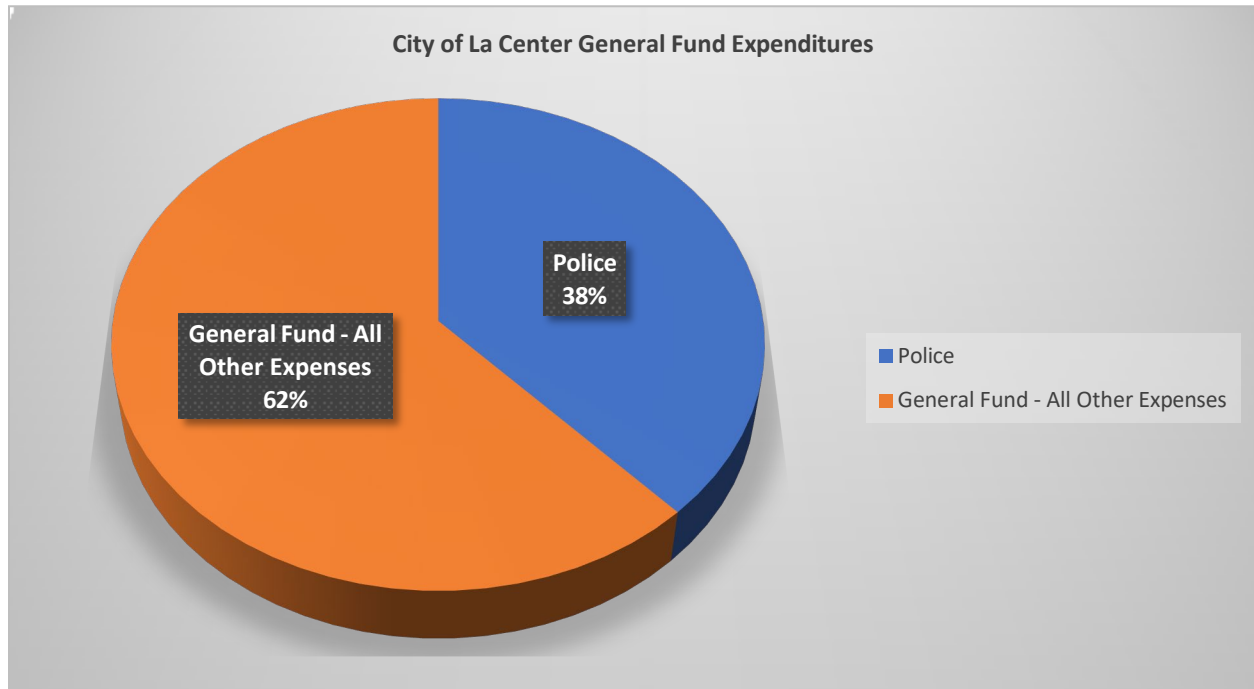
Table 1 - Commissioned Officer Comparison⁷

	Agency	Population	Officers Total	Officer Rate	Total Officers and Civilian	Total Full-Time Employees Rate
2,500 - 5,000	FORKS PD	3,635	4	1.10	10	2.75
	LA CENTER PD	3,406	8	2.35	9	2.64
	KALAMA PD	2,900	6	2.07	7	2.41
	MATTAWA PD	4,920	5	1.02	6	1.22
	WARDEN PD	2,765	3	1.08	5	1.81
	ELMA PD	3,375	7	2.07	10	2.96
	MONTESANO PD	4,178	8	1.91	9	2.15
	ALGONA PD	3,190	8	2.51	10	3.13
	BLACK DIAMOND PD	4,525	9	1.99	11	2.43
	MEDINA PD	3,665	9	2.46	11	3.00
	CLYDE HILL PD	3,055	9	2.95	10	3.27
	CLE ELUM PD	3,350	6	1.79	6	1.79
	GOLDENDALE PD	3,545	9	2.54	11	3.10
	WHITE SALMON PD	2,638	6	2.27	7	2.65
	OMAK PD	4,940	11	2.23	12	2.43
	RAYMOND PD	2,885	5	1.73	6	2.08
	EATONVILLE PD	2,970	5	1.68	6	2.02
	GRANITE FALLS PD	3,900	0	0.00	0	0.00
	CHEWELAH PD	2,765	5	1.81	6	2.17
	COLVILLE PD	4,760	10	2.10	12	2.52
	EVERSON PD	4,405	6	1.36	7	1.59
	COLFAX PD	2,825	4	1.42	4	1.42
	ZILLAH PD	3,185	8	2.51	9	2.83
	GRANGER PD	4,075	8	1.96	8	1.96
	MOXEE CITY PD	4,135	6	1.45	7	1.69
	Average	3,600	7	1.85	8	2.24

⁷ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Full-Time Law Enforcement Count - 2019

According to the adopted 2021 Annual Budget the total General Fund Expenditures were estimated at \$4,098,178. The Police Department expenses are estimated at 1,542,128 which is 38% of all General Fund expenditures. (See Chart 1 – General Fund Expenditures)

Chart 1- General Fund Expenditures⁸



A review of adopted police department budgets of adjacent municipalities reveals that the cost per resident for policing services in La Center is nearly twice that of residents in Battle Ground and Ridgefield.

Table 2 - Law Enforcement Costs Per Resident

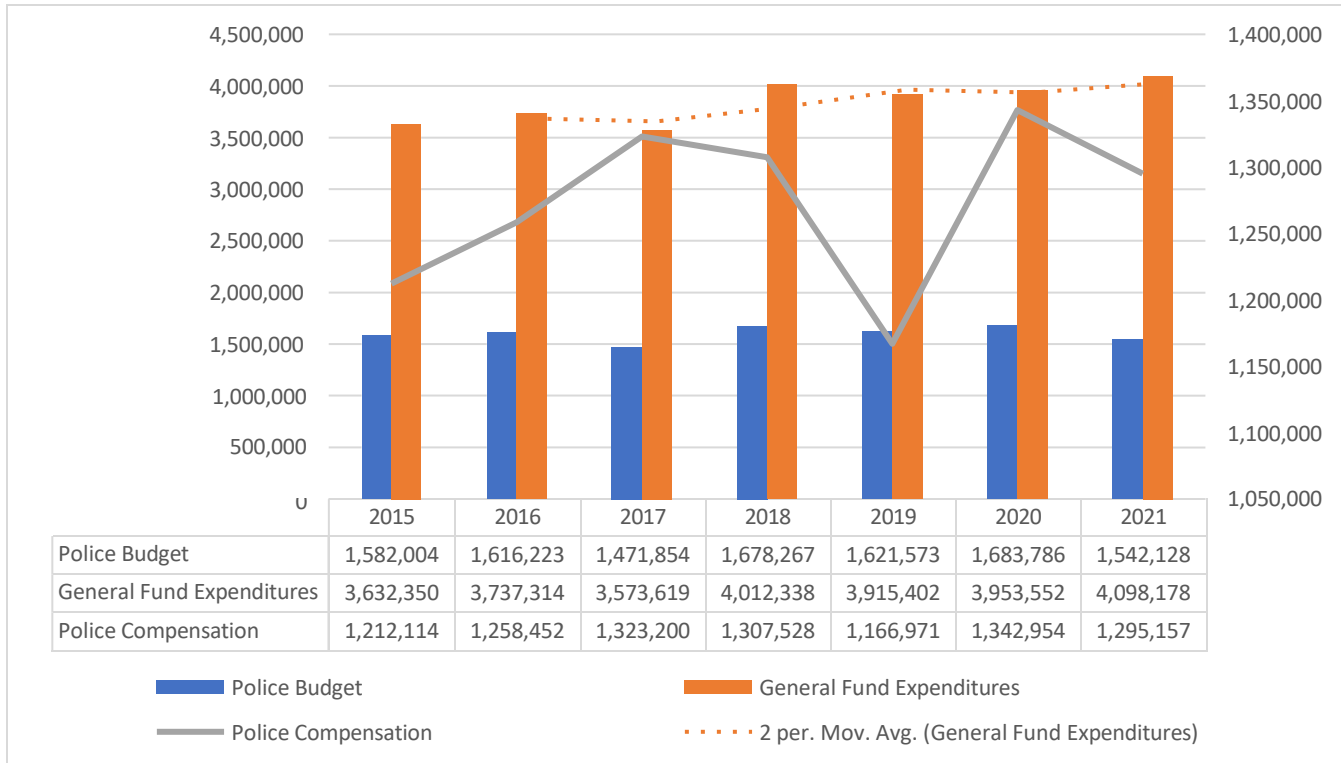
City	2021 Population	2021 Police Budget	Cost per Resident
Battle Ground	22,845	\$5,511,123	\$241
La Center	3,890	\$1,542,128	\$396
Ridgefield	10,747	\$2,702,949	\$252

A review of the General Fund and Police Budget from 2015 – 2021 indicate that general fund expenditures are trending upward, the police department budget has remained relatively flat, while police compensation expenses are trending downward. This downward trend is consistent with the City of La Center leaving vacant police employee

⁸ Review of City of La Center 2021 Adopted Budget

positions unfilled in order to balance the budget. (See Chart 2 – Police General Fund Comparison 2015 – 2021)

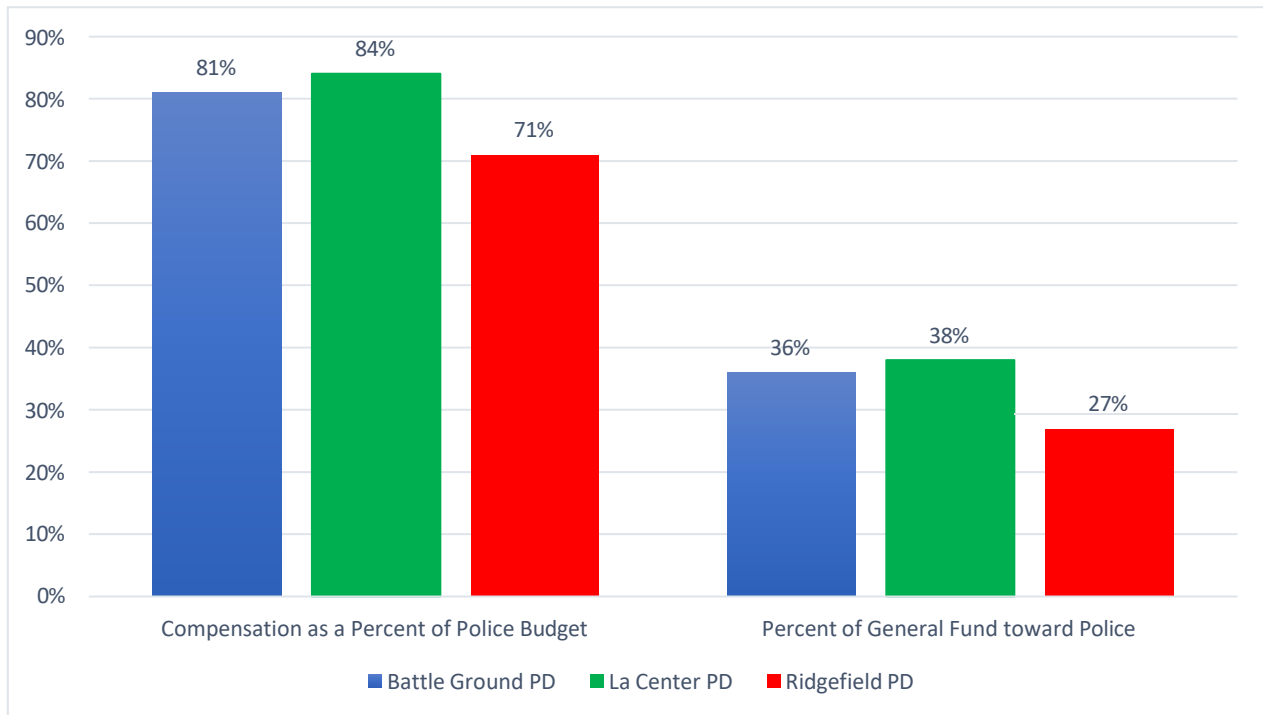
Chart 2 - Police General Fund Comparison 2015-2021⁹



A comparison of the 2021 adopted police budgets for the Cities of Battle Ground, La Center, and Ridgefield reveals that the City of La Center spends a higher percentage of the police budget on both police employee compensation and the portion of the general fund toward policing services. (See Chart 3 – Police Expenses Comparison)

⁹ As reported in the adopted 2015 - 2021 City of La Center Budgets comparing actuals to 2021 budget; Compensation consists of salary, overtime and benefits.

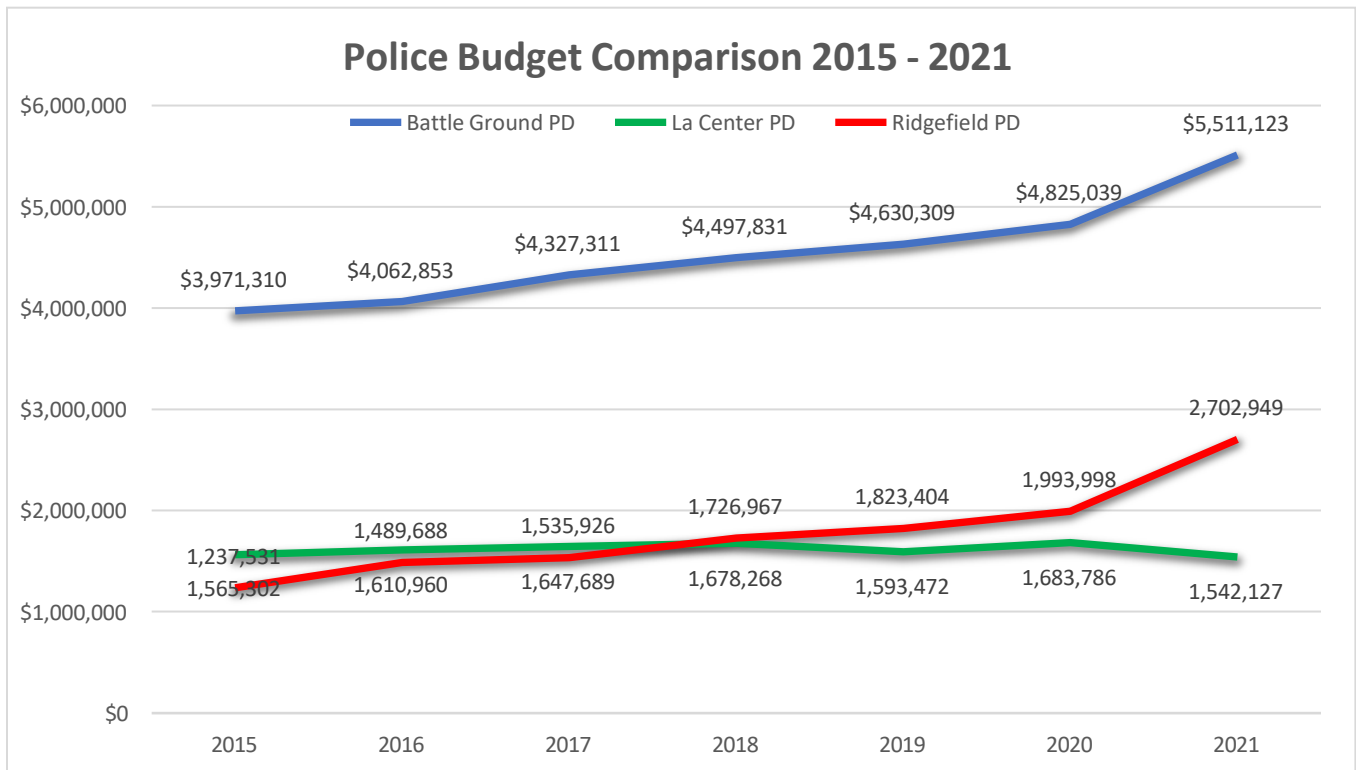
Chart 3 - Police Expenses Comparison¹⁰



A comparison of the City of La Center Police Budget with the City of Battle Ground and the City of Ridgefield revealed that the La Center police budget decreased approximately 1.48% from 2015 – 2021. This decrease compares to the City of Battle Ground’s increase of 38.77% and the City of Ridgefield at 118.41%. (See Chart 4 – Police Budget Comparison 2015 – 2021)

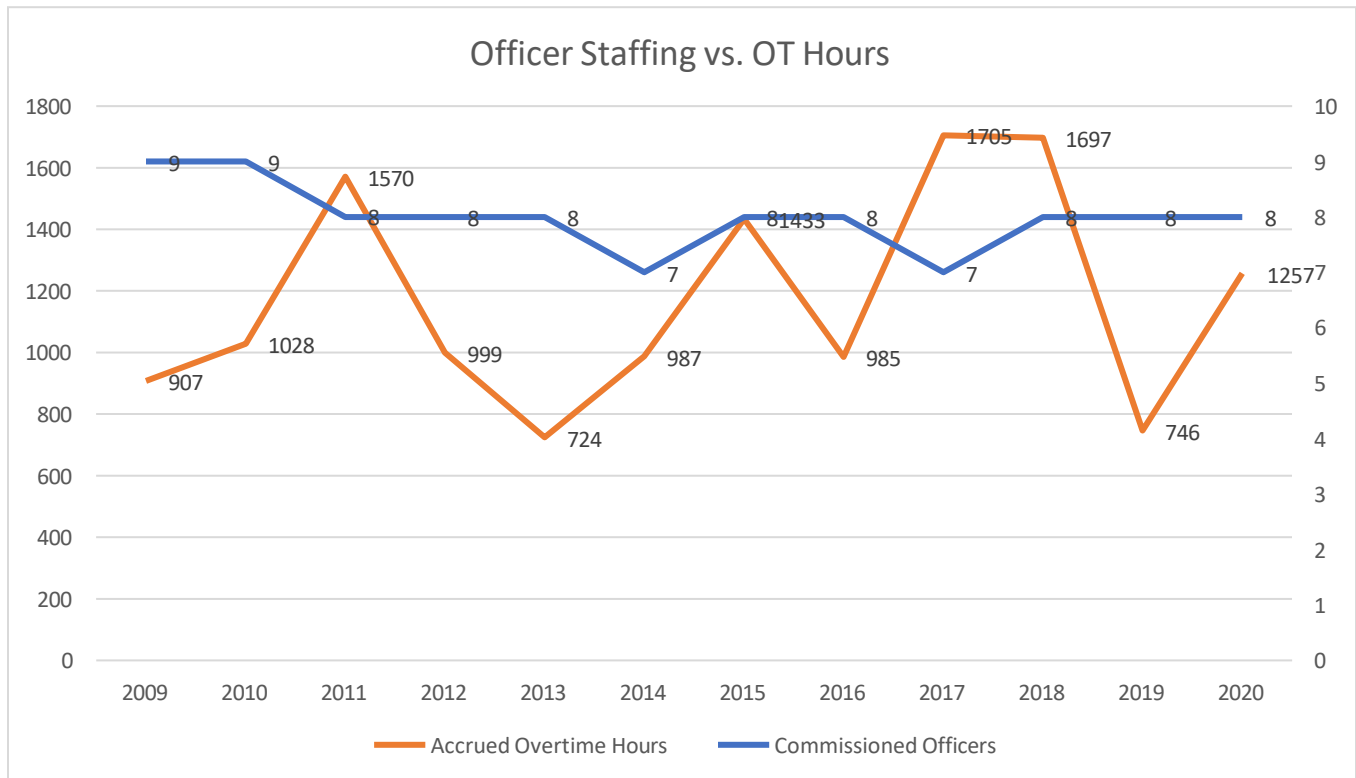
¹⁰ As reported in the Adopted 2021 Budget – Cities of Battle Ground, La Center and Ridgefield

Chart 4 - Police Budget Comparison 2015 – 2021¹¹



¹¹ As reported in 2021 adopted budgets and actual results for the years 2015 – 2020 for the Cities of Battle Ground, La Center and Ridgefield. It is important to note that each city has minor variances as to what fund they track court and jail costs.

Chart 5 - Officer Staffing¹² vs. OT Hours¹³



This chart demonstrates the lack of correlative effect over time of staffing levels to overtime hours. Other drivers of overtime include training and leave periods.

To provide effective policing services in a fair and professional manner a police department requires well-trained employees. In turn, well-trained employees improve public engagement, increase retention, and productivity and decrease the need for supervision. An additional benefit is a reduction in mistakes, reducing risk management exposure and potential costly civil claims.

The Washington State Criminal Justice Training Commission (WSCJTC) recognizes that continuing education and training is the cornerstone for a successful career as a peace officer in providing competent public safety services to the communities of Washington State.

¹² Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Full-Time Law Enforcement Count – 2009 - 2020

¹³ Provided by Executive Assistance Danielle Bowerman – La Center Police Department rounded to nearest dollar.

As such, every Washington State certified peace officer is required to complete a minimum of 24 hours of In-Service training annually.¹⁴ The 24 hours must include the successful completion of the Training Commission’s 2-hour annual online Crisis Intervention Training.¹⁵

The La Center Police Department utilized internally- or externally-provided in-service training. Providers of this training included other police agencies, private vendors, and the training academy located in Burien, Washington.

Table 3 – Adopted Training Budget as a Percent of Police Budget¹⁶

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Battle Ground PD Training Budget	35,000	\$35,000	\$40,000	\$40,000	\$53,920	51,239,525	84,347
% of Police Budget	.88	.86	.92	.88	1.16	1.23	1.53
La Center PD Training Budget	\$10,000	\$10,500	\$15,500	\$15,500	\$15,500	\$15,500	\$15,000
% of Police Budget	.63	.65	.90	.92	.97	.92	.97
Ridgefield PD Training Budget	\$7,158	\$11,988	\$7,295	\$5,688	\$18,820	\$11,000	\$13,000
% of Police Budget	.57	.80	.47	.32	1.03	.55	.48

¹⁴ Washington Administrative Code (WAC) 139-05-300

¹⁵ Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43-101-427

¹⁶ As reported in 2021 adopted budgets and actual results for the years 2015 – 2020 for the Cities of Battle Ground, La Center and Ridgefield.

The La Center Police Department's training expenses seem to be in line with that of neighboring cities. La Center does spend slightly more of their total budget (as a percent) than the City of Ridgefield (See Table 3 – Adopted Training Budget as a Percent of Police Budget). Given expected legislative mandates around police reform it is reasonable to expect training costs to rise substantially in future years, consuming additional budgetary resources to comply with unfunded mandates.

SECTION 2 – CRIME IN THE CITY OF LA CENTER

The La Center Police Department submits crime statistics data to the State of Washington using the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). As indicated in Table 4, NIBRS divides offenses into two categories (See Table 4 – Categories of NIBRS offenses):

Table 4 - Categories of NIBRS offenses

Group A Incidents	Group B – Arrest Only
Animal Cruelty	Bad Checks
Arson	Curfew/Loitering/Vagrancy Violations
Assault	Disorderly Conduct
Bribery	Driving Under the Influence
Burglary	Drunkenness
Counterfeiting/Forgery	Non-Violent Family Offenses
Destruction/Damage/Vandalism of Property	Liquor law Violations
Drug/Narcotic Offenses	Peeping Tom
Embezzlement	Trespass of Real Property
Extortion/Blackmail	All Other Non-Traffic Offenses
Fraud Offenses	
Gambling Offenses	
Homicide Offenses	
Human Trafficking Offenses	
Kidnapping/Abduction	
Larceny/Theft Offenses	
Motor Vehicle Theft	
Pornography/Obscene Material Offenses	
Prostitution Offenses	
Robbery	
Sex Offenses Force and Non-Force	
Stolen Property Offenses	
Weapons Laws	
Violation of No Contact/Protection/Anti-Harassment Orders.	

A review of crime and arrest data reported to the State of Washington from 2015 through 2020 indicates that the City of La Center averages approximately 114 Group A offenses per year or on average 9.5 Group A offenses per month (See Table 5 – Crime and Arrest Data Reported to the State of Washington 2015 -2020). Group A arrests average

approximately 41.6 per year or on average approximately 3.46 per month. Group B arrests average approximately 37 per year with an average of approximately 3 per month.

Table 5 - Crime and Arrest Data Reported to State of Washington 2015 - 2019

	Group A Offenses	Crime Rate ¹⁷	Crime Rate State Average ¹⁸	Group A Arrest	Group B Arrest
2015	105	33.8 Per 1,000	65.0 Per 1,000	N/A ¹⁹	N/A ²⁰
2016	91	28.9 Per 1,000	67.5 Per 1,000	34	25
2017	94	29.4 Per 1,000	69.1 Per 1,000	25	46
2018	94	28.3 Per 1,000	69.5 Per 1,000	41	35
2019	121	35.5 Per 1,000	60.6 Per 1,000	49 ²¹	52
2020	179	48.3 Per 1,000	Not Available ²²	59	29
Total	684			208	187

The data indicates that 2019 and 2020 increases are mostly attributed to an increase in reported assaults and drug/narcotic violations. The assaults are mainly domestic violence related, and the drug/narcotic violations are a result of increased traffic enforcement where drugs are located during the traffic stops.

Another indication of crime in the City of La Center is a review of bookings into the Clark County Jail (See Chart 6 – Comparison of Bookings into Clark County Jail), criminal filing at the Battle Ground Municipal Court (See Chart 7 - Battle Ground Municipal Court Criminal Filings- 2015 - 2020), and Battle Ground Municipal Infraction Filings – 2015 – 2020).

A review of bookings confirms a peak in 2019 as reflected with the increase in Group A arrests and a downward trend in 2020, most likely the result of Covid 19 jail protocols. A

¹⁷ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Crime in Washington State 2015 - 2019

¹⁸ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Crime in Washington State 2015 - 2019

¹⁹ Group A Arrest Data for 2015 was not reported to the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

²⁰ Group B Arrest Data for 2015 was not reported to the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs

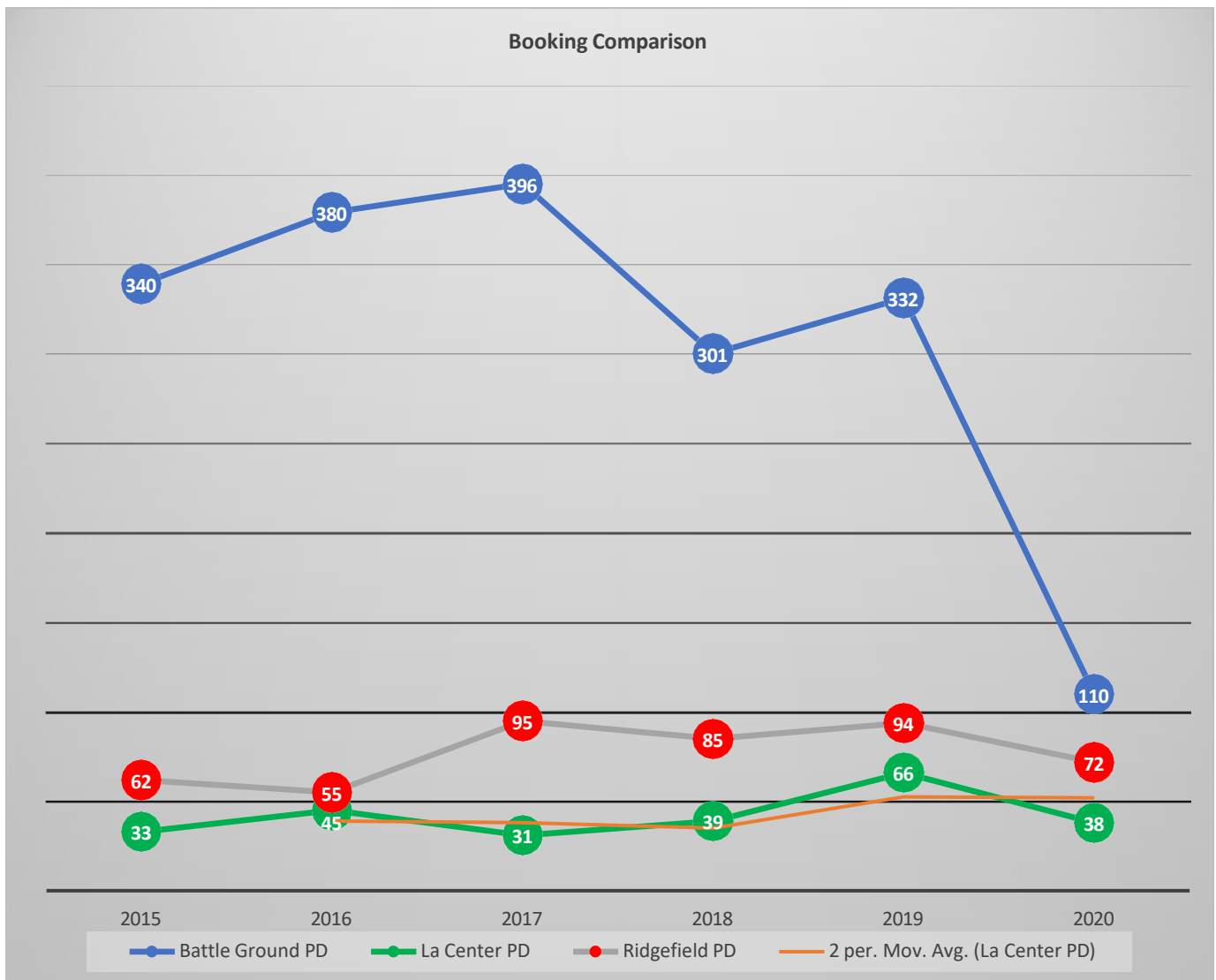
²¹ 28 of the 49 arrests reported are for Domestic Violence offenses

²² Crime Rate State Average Data for 2020 has not been published at the time of this report

review of Municipal Court criminal filings shows a spike in 2019 that is consistent with 2019 bookings and 2019 Group A arrests. In addition, infraction filings have increased in 2019 corresponding with an increase in traffic stops and traffic citations (See Chart 8- Battle Ground Municipal Court Infraction Filings - 2015 -2020).

There is a decrease in criminal and infraction filings in 2020 that is most likely due to the societal impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Chart 6 - Comparison of Bookings into Clark County Jail²³



²³ Data provided by Undersheriff John Chapman, Clark County Sheriff’s Office; 2020 booking data as of October 22, 2020. 2020 Bookings impacted by COVID-19 protocols.

Chart 7 - Battle Ground Municipal Court Criminal Filings- 2015 - 2020²⁴

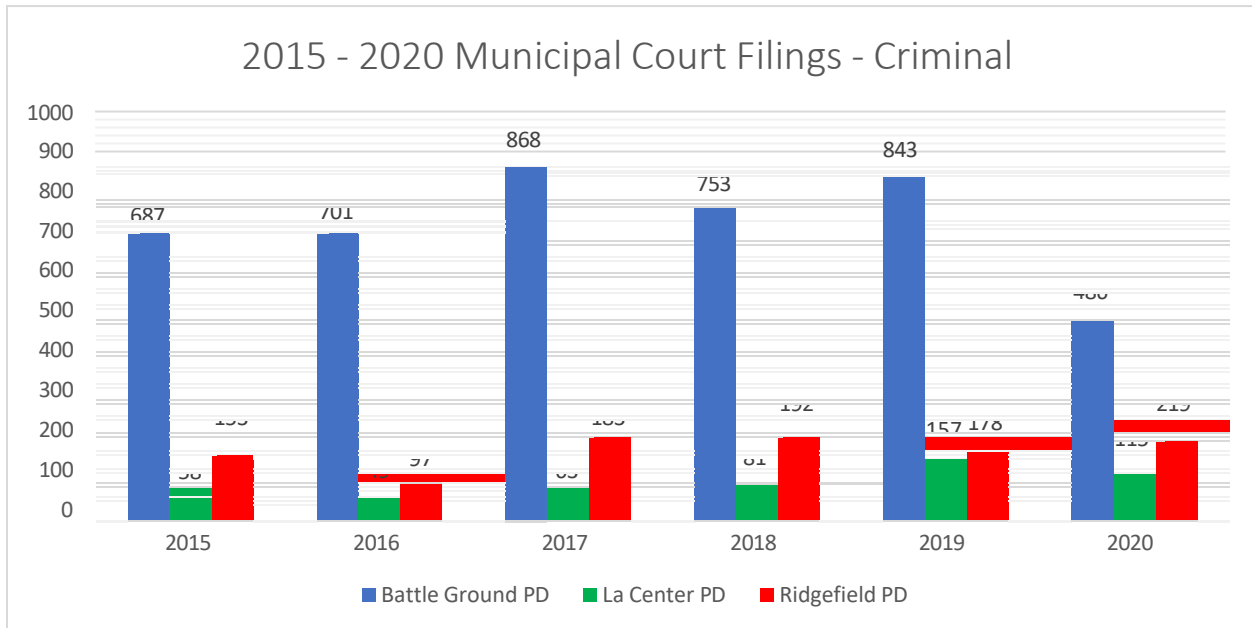
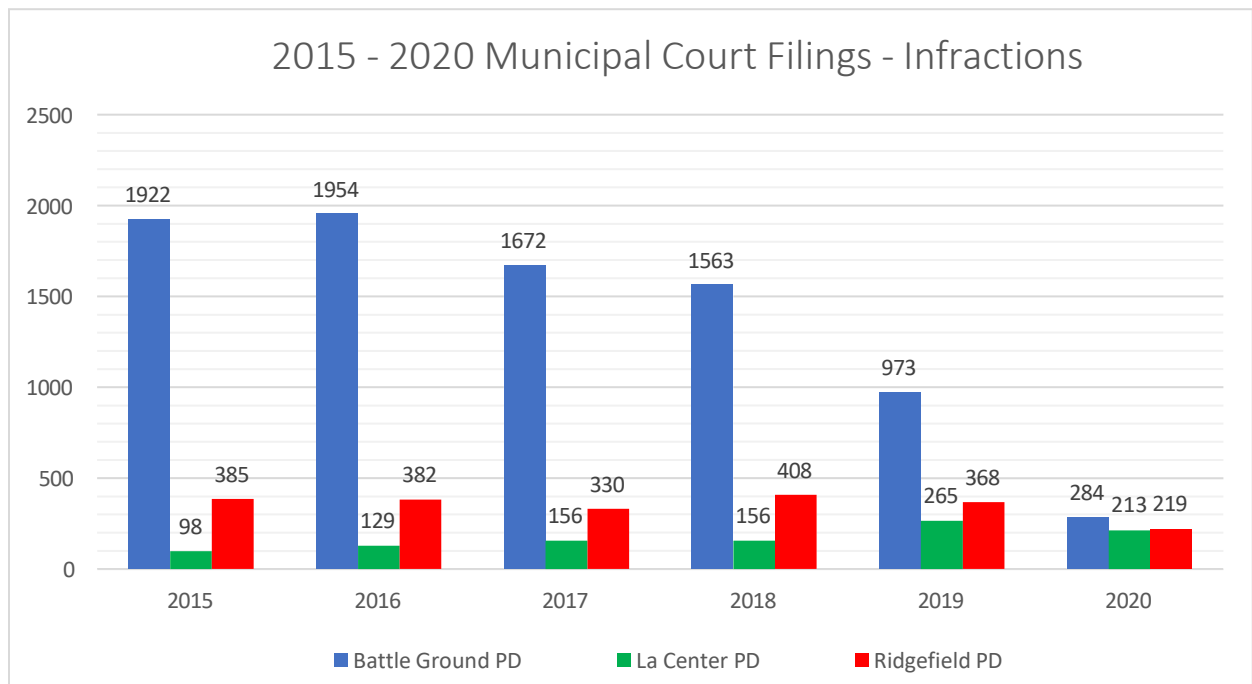


Chart 8 - Battle Ground Municipal Court Infraction Filings - 2015 -2020²⁵



²⁴ Filing Data provided by the Battle Ground Municipal Court

²⁵ Filing Data provided by the Battle Ground Municipal Court

Clark County Crime Rate Comparison²⁶

A crime rate is based on a specific crime category, such as crimes against persons, crimes against property, or crimes against society, or specific crime groupings, such as violent crimes. The category or grouping is adjusted for variances in population by indicating the number of offenses for each 1,000 persons (other base population increments may be used such as the number of offenses per 100,000).

NOTE: In October 1979 Washington State activated UCR (Uniform Crime Report) with data collection starting in January 1980. Washington State moved from UCR reporting to NIBRS (National Incident Based Reporting) with 100% statewide participation by non-tribal law enforcement agencies in September 2018.

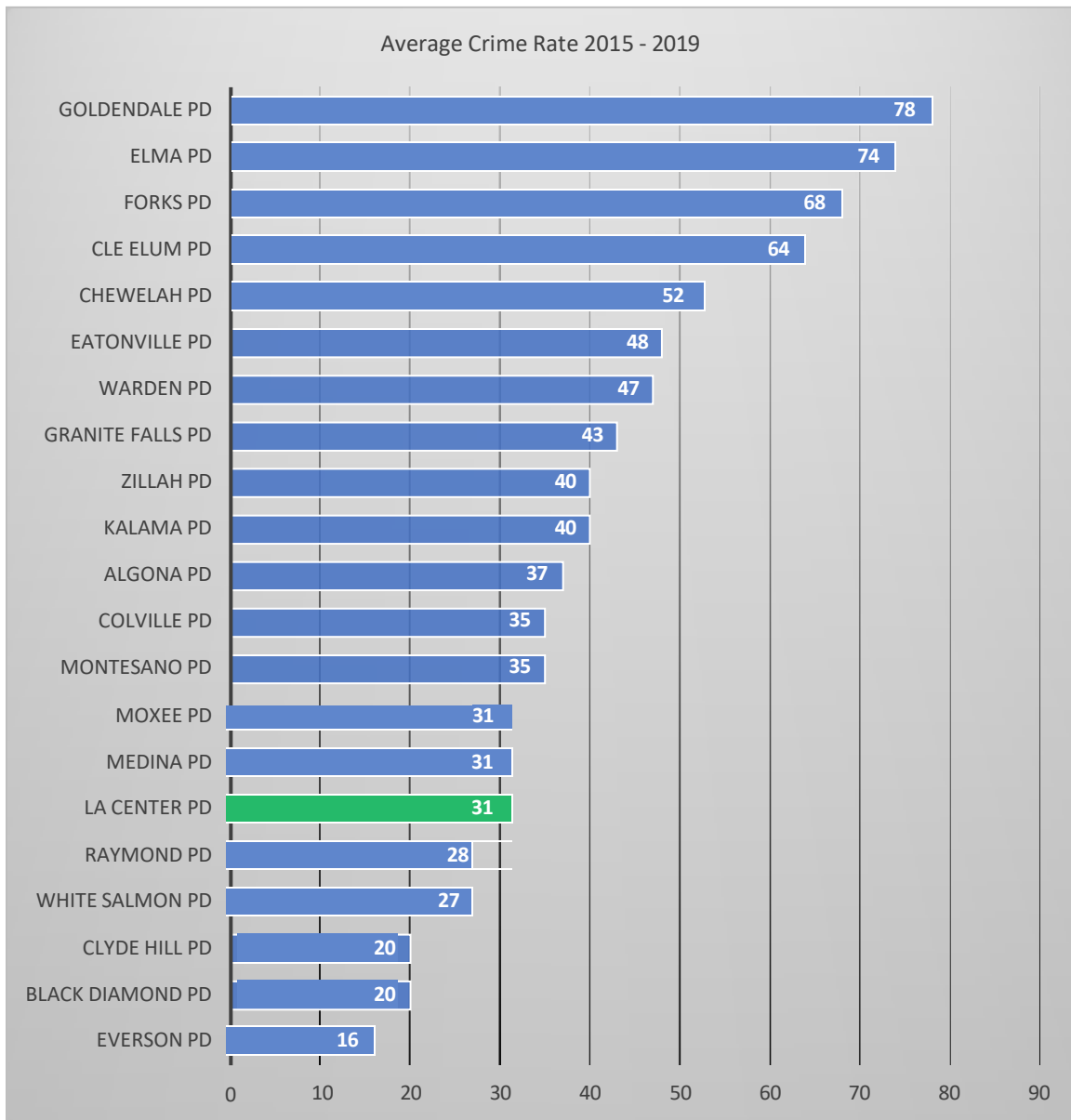
A comparison of the City of La Center Crime rate from 2015 to 2019 reveals that, in general, La Center citizens experience much less crime victimization than other Clark County jurisdictions. (See Table 6 – Clark County Crime Rate Comparison). When compared to 21 other Washington cities with populations of 2,500 to 5,000, La Center has the 6th lowest crime rate (See Chart 9 - Crime Rate per 1,000 for Cities of 2,500 to 5,000, 2015-2019).

Table 6 - Clark County Crime Rate Comparison

City	Crime Rate per 1,000 2019	Crime Rate per 1,000 2018	Crime Rate per 1,000 2017	Crime Rate per 1,000 2016	Crime Rate per 1,000 2015
Battle Ground	37.4	43	36.3	44.0	50.6
Camas	19.4	22.8	32.6	32.4	30.9
La Center	35.5	28.3	29.4	28.9	33.8
Ridgefield	24.3	34.5	35.0	28.8	30.0
Vancouver	79.3	73.6	65.2	68.5	68.2
Washougal	36.9	44.5	39.7	38.9	48.6
State of Washington Average	60.6	69.5	69.1	67.5	65

²⁶ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Crime in Washington State 2015 - 2019

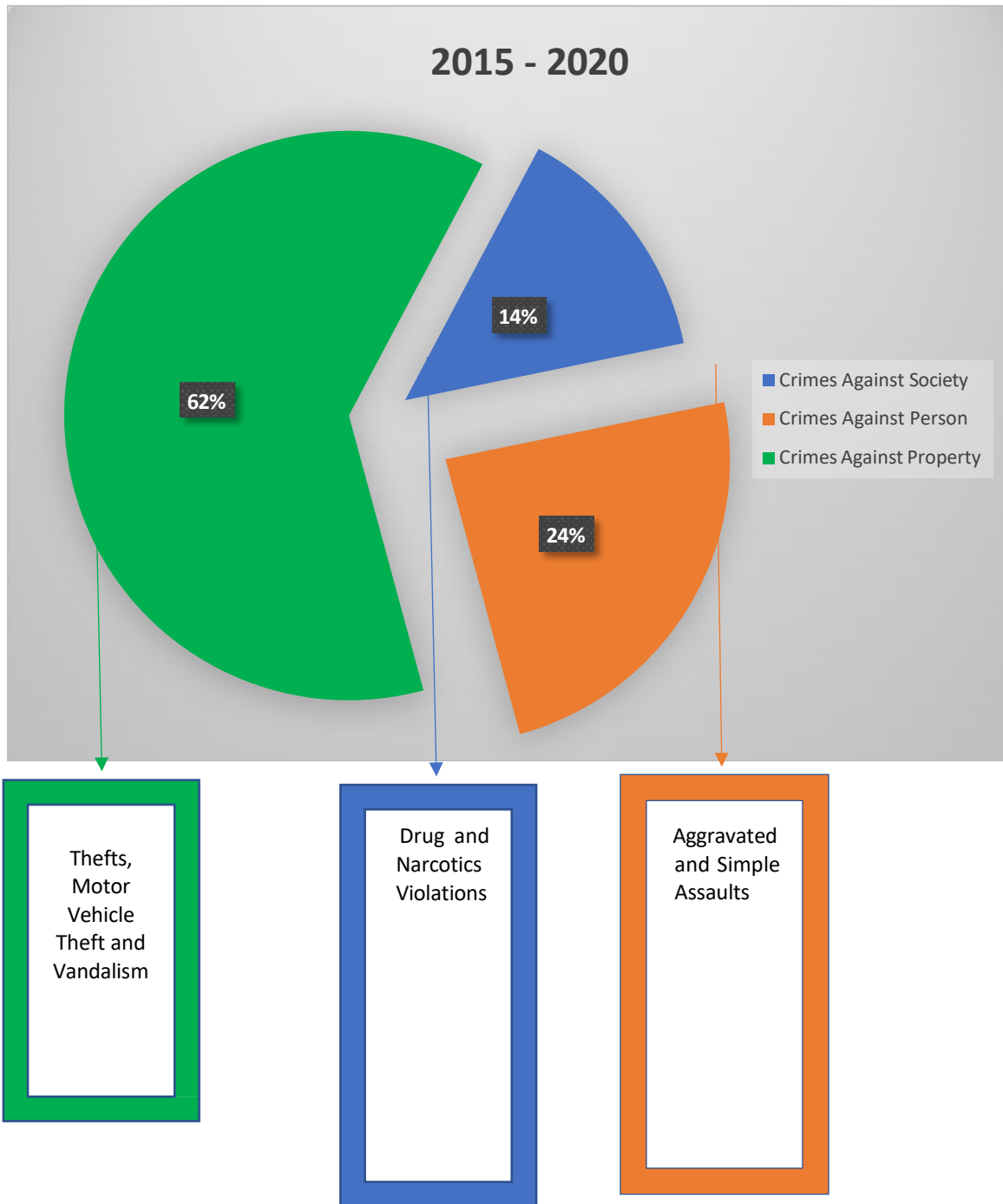
Chart 9 - Crime Rate per 1,000 for Cities of 2,500 to 5,000 2015-2019²⁷



²⁷ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Crime in Washington State 2015 – 2019 – Four Cities were removed because of missing data submissions for the 2015 -2019 comparison period. 2020 was not utilized as the State Crime Rate information was not published prior to this report.

A review of Group A Offenses from 2015 through 2020 reveals that 62% of reported crime are crimes against property followed by Crimes against Persons at 24% and Crimes against society at 14% (See Chart 10 – Profile of Group A Offenses 2015 to 2020).

Chart 10 - Profile of Group A Offenses 2015 to 2020



SECTION 3 – PATROL WORKLOAD

Our project team calculated the community-initiated workload and officer-initiated workload by analyzing incident records from the CRESA computer aided dispatch (CAD) database covering the calendar years 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2019.²⁸ (See Table 7 – 2015 – 2019 La Center Police Department Workload Data).

A five-year review of historical trends for community and police-initiated counts reveals that while community-initiated counts are experiencing a 10% increase over the time period, officer-initiated counts are up 485%. The greatest increase in officer-initiated counts is between the year 2018 to 2019 where the percent of increase was 105% (See Chart 11 – 2015 -2019 Trend Line of Workload Data).

Year	Community Initiated Counts ²⁹	Police Initiated Counts ³⁰	Total Counts ³¹	Reports Total ³²	Reports Police Initiated	Reports Community Initiated	Population ³³	Budgeted Police Officer Positions ³⁴
2015	1243	942	2185	422	128	294	3100	8
2016	1284	1767	3051	365	104	261	3140	8
2017	1358	2103	3461	473	151	322	3195	7
2018	1317	2687	4004	544	219	325	3320	8
2019	1371	5511	6882	645	296	349	3405	8

Table 7 - 2015 - 2019 La Center Police Workload Data

From 2015-2019 the La Center Police Department generated approximately 19,583 calls for service of which 2449 were cleared with a report disposition. This disposition makes up approximately 13% of all calls for service.

²⁸ 2020 was excluded due to the impacts the pandemic has had on the community. Community Initiated 1596, Officer Initiated 2485, total count 4,081

²⁹ First Watch Custom Report - CAD data

³⁰ First Watch Custom Report – CAD data

³¹ First Watch Custom Report – CAD data

³² First Watch Report Custom Report – CAD data

³³ WA State Office of Financial Management - April 1 Official Population Estimates

³⁴ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs Full Time Law Enforcement Count

Chart 11 - 2015 -2019 Trend Line of Workload Data

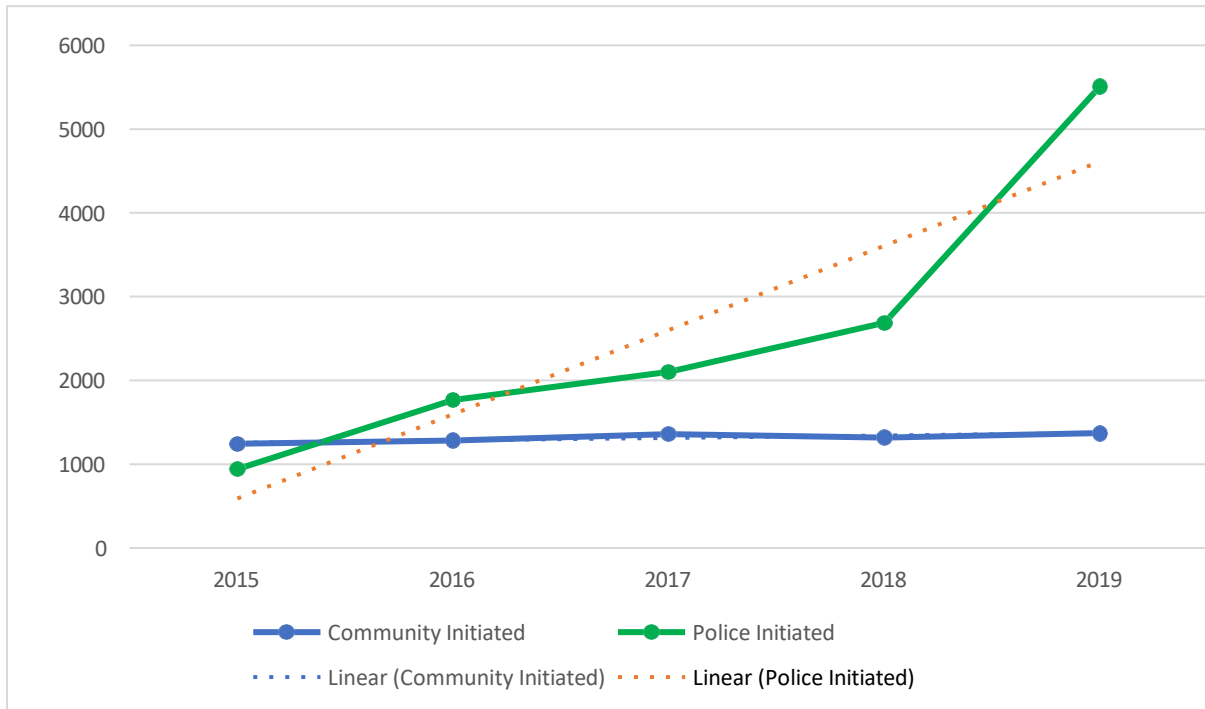
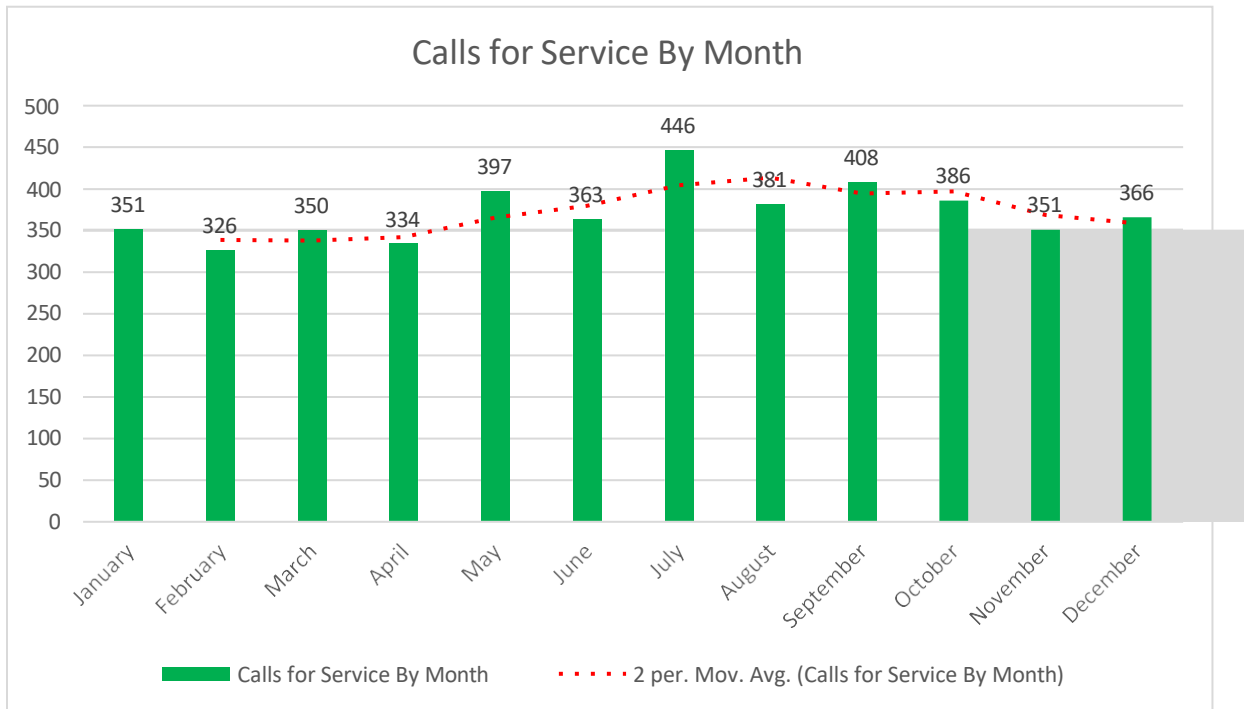


Chart 12- Calls for Service by Month - 2015-2019



A review of responses was conducted to identify locations that had at least one call for service a month for the years 2015 through 2019.

Table 3 -Frequent Call for Service Locations 2015-2019

Location	Type of Location	Number of Calls for Service
2814 NW 319 th Street	Gas Station	254
105 W. 4 th Street	Casino	151
318 NW Pacific Hwy	Casino	93
700 E. 4 th Street	Middle School	91
725 Highland Road	High School	91
225 W. 4 th Street	Casino	76
419 Cedar Lane	Gas Station	65

Most Common Types of Calls for Service³⁵

The following table provides the ten most common event categories of calls for service between 2015 – 2019, as well as the average consumed time for each, which is defined as the time from the primary unit being assigned to the call to the last unit clearing from the call. The average time consumed for the ten call-types of 28.52 minutes is slightly greater than the average time consumed of 23.2 minutes identified in the International City Managers Association (ICMA) Police Staffing Data Analysis white paper.³⁶

Table 4 - Most Common Types of Calls for Service³⁷

Event Type	# of Calls for Service	Average Consumed Time
Traffic Safety	5962	15:46
Premise Check	3273	5:51
Suspicious	1445	27:34
Contact	1226	29:27
Patrol Emphasis	1092	27:18
Follow Up	678	32:26
Field Contact	620	16:17
Police Other	562	43:48
Animal	480	32:36
Traffic Accident	463	56:22

³⁵ This is the total Calls for Service by Event Type including both Officer-initiated and Community-initiated 2015 – 2019.

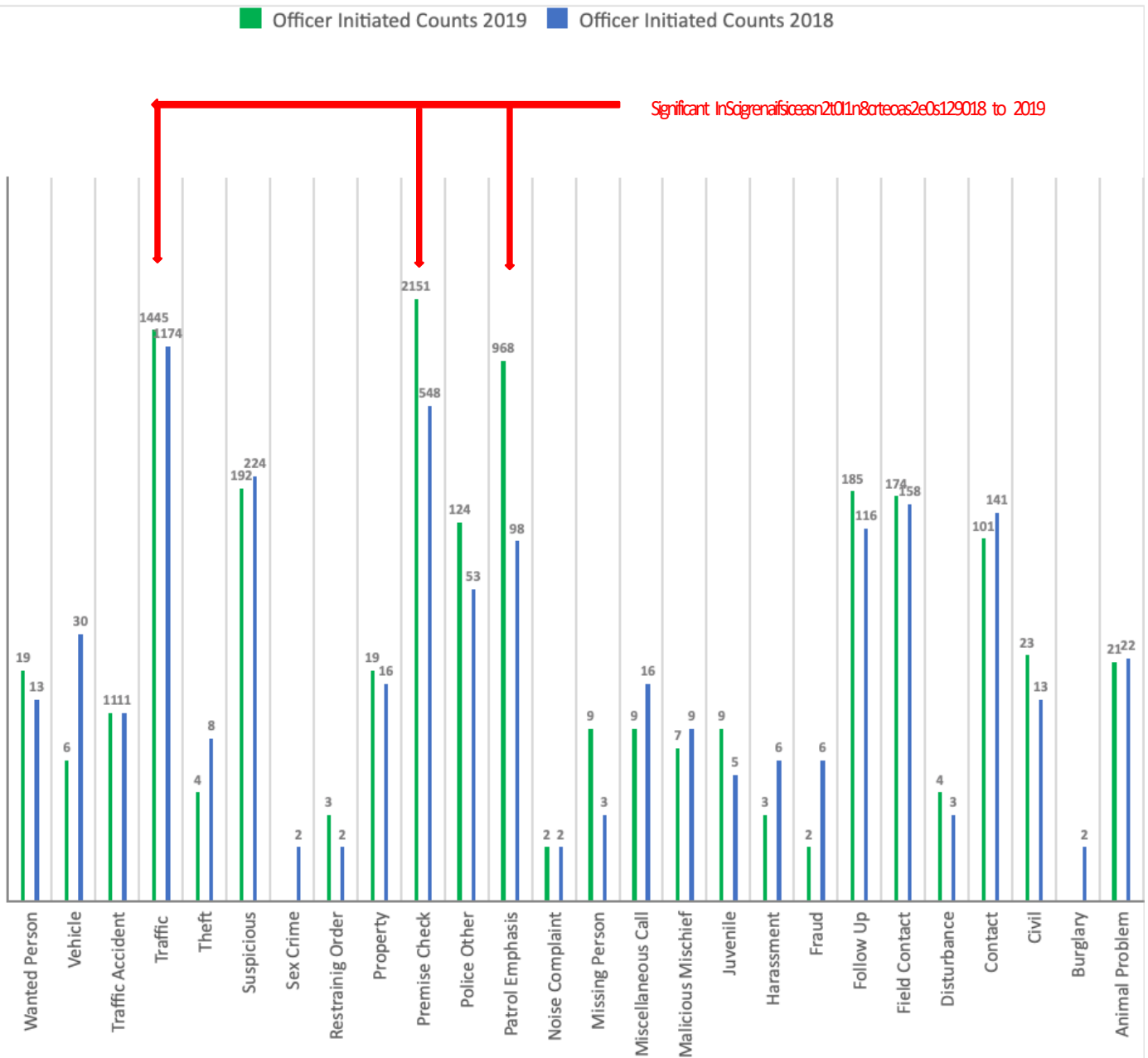
³⁶ ICMA Center for Public Safety Management White Paper –“An analysis of police department staffing: How many officers do you really need?”

³⁷ First Watch Report – LCPD Event Types with Average Time – 2015 - 2019

Police - Initiated Workload

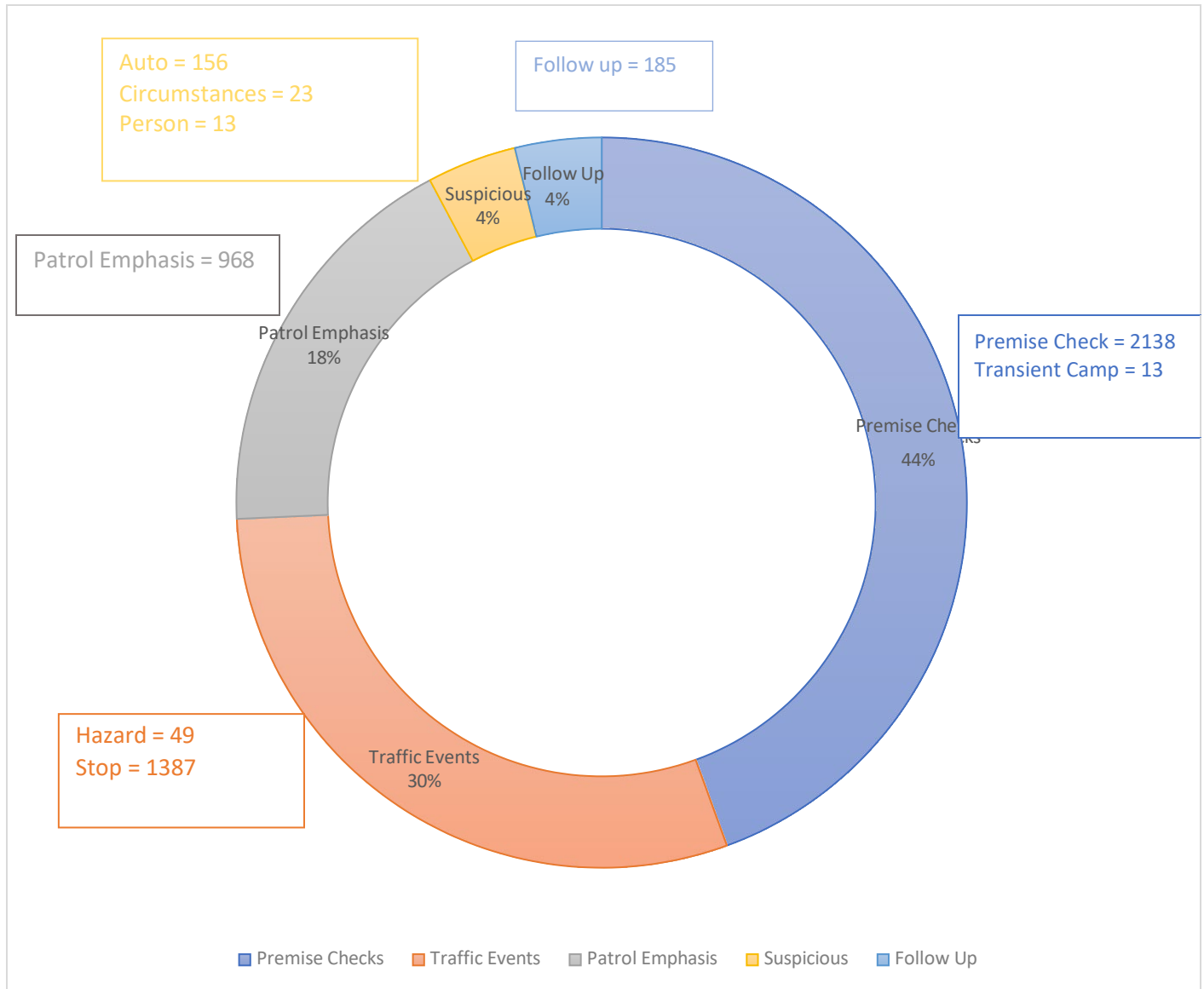
A deeper review of Police- Initiated workload between the years 2018 to 2019 shows that the sharp increase was influenced by Traffic related events, Premise Checks, Patrol Emphasis (See Chart 13 – 2018 -2019 Police Initiated Event Comparison).

Chart 13 - 2018 -2019 Police Initiated Count Comparison



The top five police-initiated categories and sub-categories indicated that 44% were premise checks, 30% traffic events, and 18% patrol emphasis. This was followed by suspicious and follow up at 4% each.

Chart 14 - Top Five Police- Initiated Categories and sub-categories - 2019



The following table displays the total number of calls for service that are police-initiated by each hour and day of the week from 2015 – 2019. Darker-shaded red reflects heightened call activity. A review of police-initiated calls for service indicates that activity is greater Tuesday to Friday and decreases on Saturday, Sunday, and Monday.

The morning hours from 7:00AM to Noon have an increase in police-initiated calls for service followed by a decrease until approximately 8:00PM. The hours of 8:00PM to Midnight appear to have the greatest hours of activity. The fewest number of calls for service occur between Midnight to 7:00AM (See Table 10 – Officer-initiated Calls for Service by Day/Hour of Week 2015 – 2019).

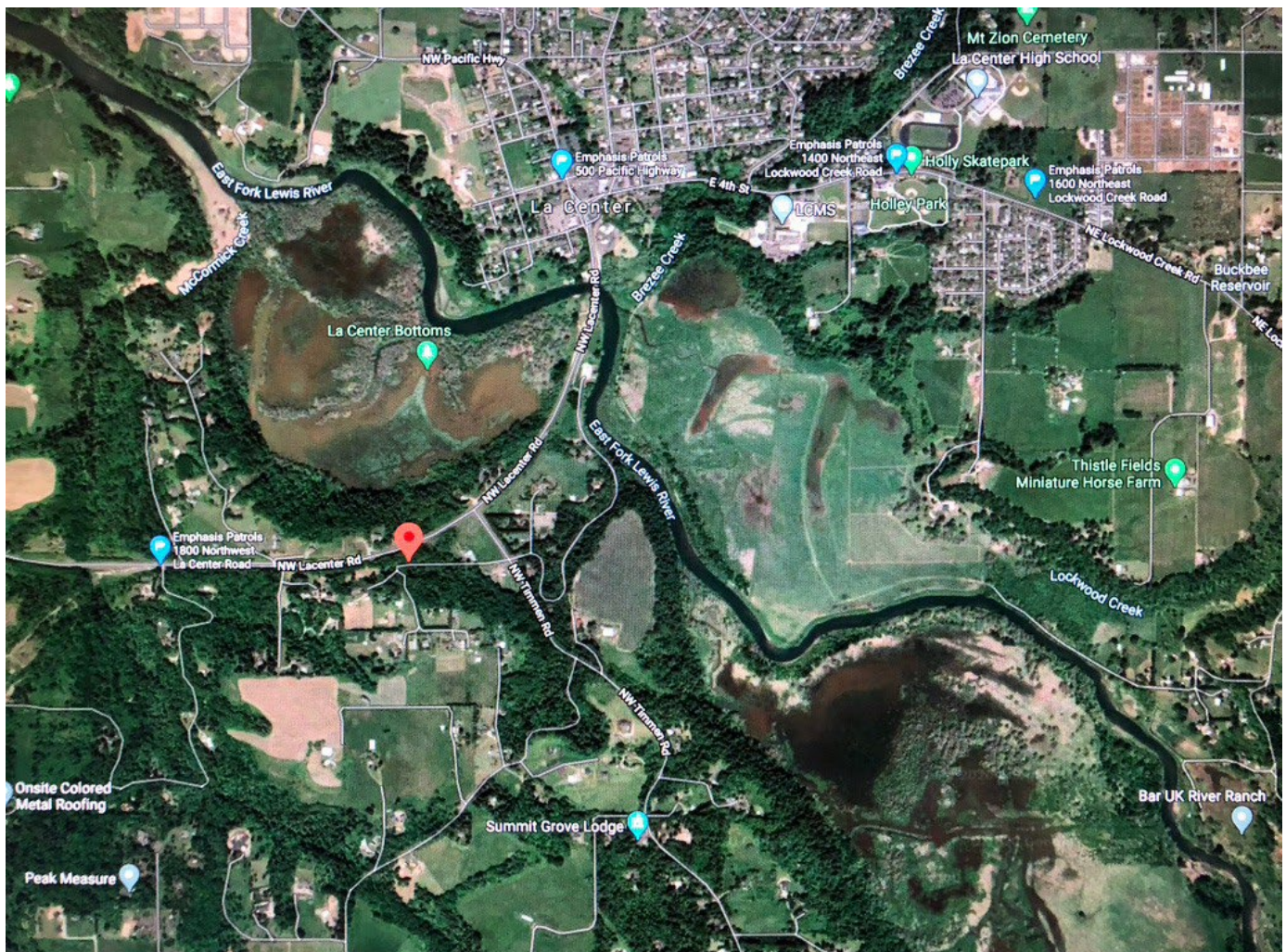
Table 10 - Officer-Initiated Calls for Service by Day/Hour of Week- 2015 -2019

Hour	Police Initiated							Total
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
00:00 - 00:59	77	44	56	66	65	81	66	455
01:00 - 01:59	63	71	55	67	66	58	80	460
02:00 - 02:59	83	65	68	69	63	53	50	451
03:00 - 03:59	56	60	60	87	84	60	55	462
04:00 - 04:59	32	41	35	49	46	67	41	311
05:00 - 05:59	21	33	29	29	31	39	25	207
06:00 - 06:59	2	25	25	16	14	14	8	104
07:00 - 07:59	22	123	98	82	99	64	22	510
08:00 - 08:59	72	121	145	132	114	99	64	747
09:00 - 09:59	112	99	105	104	109	89	72	690
10:00 - 10:59	77	98	134	101	69	86	82	647
11:00 - 11:59	57	86	100	93	108	101	73	618
12:00 - 12:59	47	60	71	65	68	51	48	410
13:00 - 13:59	58	59	71	87	55	52	65	447
14:00 - 14:59	67	78	97	98	95	72	54	561
15:00 - 15:59	65	91	87	106	84	88	55	576
16:00 - 16:59	78	59	52	58	58	46	56	407
17:00 - 17:59	51	41	46	44	45	36	38	301
18:00 - 18:59	50	55	61	51	53	70	57	397
19:00 - 19:59	61	70	88	70	67	78	79	513
20:00 - 20:59	104	73	86	79	101	125	122	690
21:00 - 21:59	120	134	134	161	131	198	142	1,020
22:00 - 22:59	118	154	167	144	170	187	198	1,138
23:00 - 23:59	104	131	106	125	114	158	150	888
Total	1,597	1,871	1,976	1,983	1,909	1,972	1,702	13,010

Three call for service categories contributed most to the police-initiated call for service increase from 2018 to 2019. These were patrol emphasis, premise checks, and traffic enforcement/safety.

The La Center Police Department conducted 968³⁸ emphasis patrols primarily to focus on traffic enforcement in 2019. These patrols were documented by the officers utilizing their mobile computer. Many of these entries indicated the approximate speed of vehicles in the area, types of violations observed (if any), and the enforcement action taken. The La Center Police Department’s documentation concerning patrol emphasis on traffic violations should be commended. The average time spent on a Patrol Emphasis was 27 minutes (See Figure 1 – Patrol Emphasis 2019).

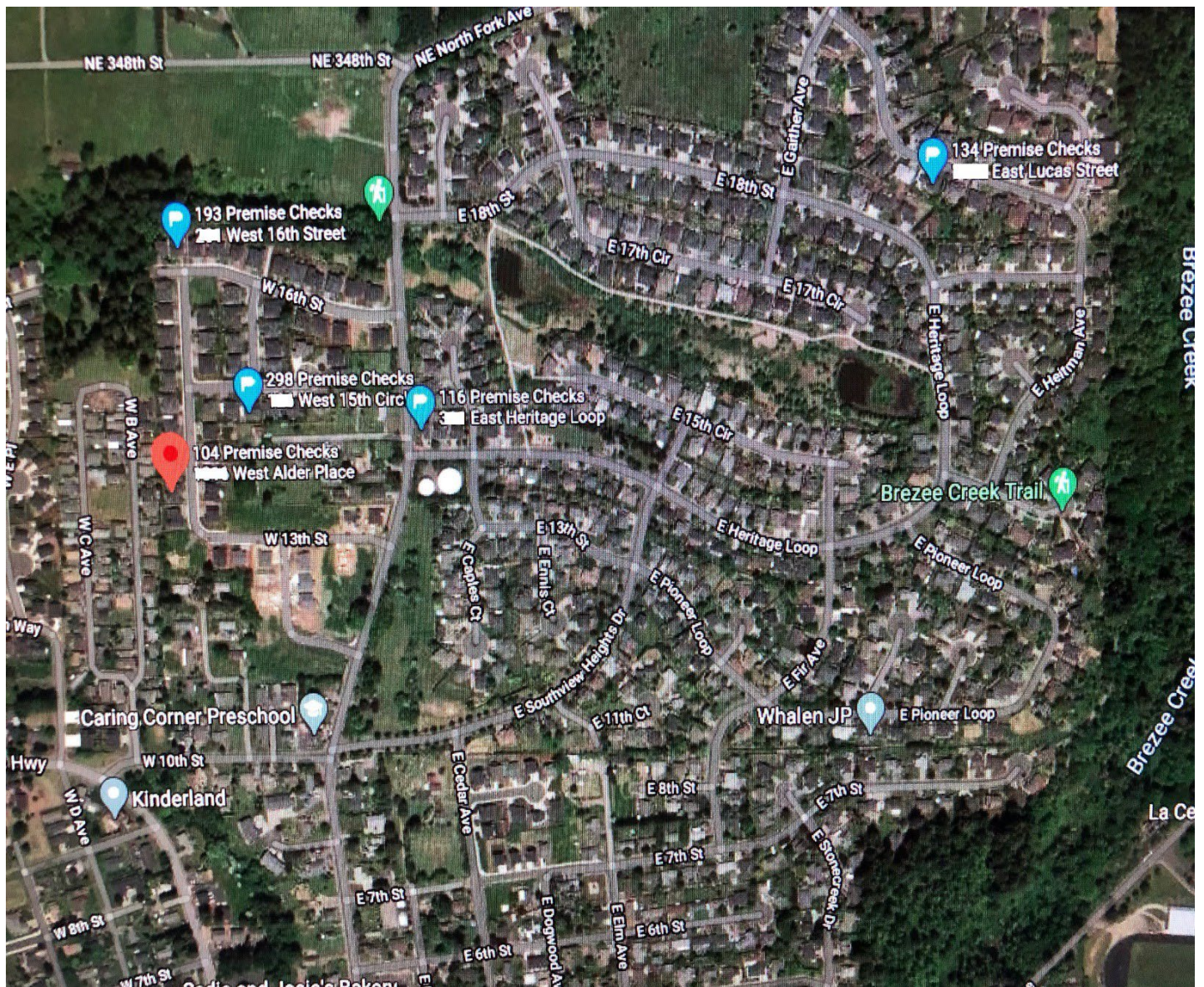
Figure 1 - Patrol Emphasis Top 5 Locations - 2019



³⁸ First Watch Report of Emphasis Patrol Events – January 1 to December 31, 2019

For premise checks, five locations accounted for 845 Premise Checks³⁹ - 39% of the 2151 checks in 2019. The average time spent on a premise check was 3:32 minutes (See Figure 2 – Premise Check Top 5 Locations).

Figure 2 - Premise Check Top 5 Locations



³⁹ First Watch Report of Premise Check Events – January 1 to December 31, 2019

A review of traffic stops and Battle Ground Municipal Court Infraction filings (citations) indicated that the La Center Police Department placed renewed emphasis on traffic enforcement and education in 2019 as traffic stops, citations issued, and written warnings all increased from the prior year. The average time spent on a traffic related event was 13:12 minutes.

This effort saw a reduction of traffic accident responses and reported traffic accident reports from 2018 to 2019. (See Table 11)

Table 11- Traffic Enforcement and Safety Comparison 2018 -2019

	2018	2019
Traffic Citations ⁴⁰	156	265
Traffic Warnings ⁴¹	816	996
Traffic Stops ⁴²	1174	1445
Traffic Accident Response ⁴³	87	69
Traffic Accident Report ⁴⁴	30	20

⁴⁰ Traffic Infraction data provided by the Battle Ground Municipal Court

⁴¹ Traffic Warning data provided by a review of disposition codes from CAD First Watch Reports

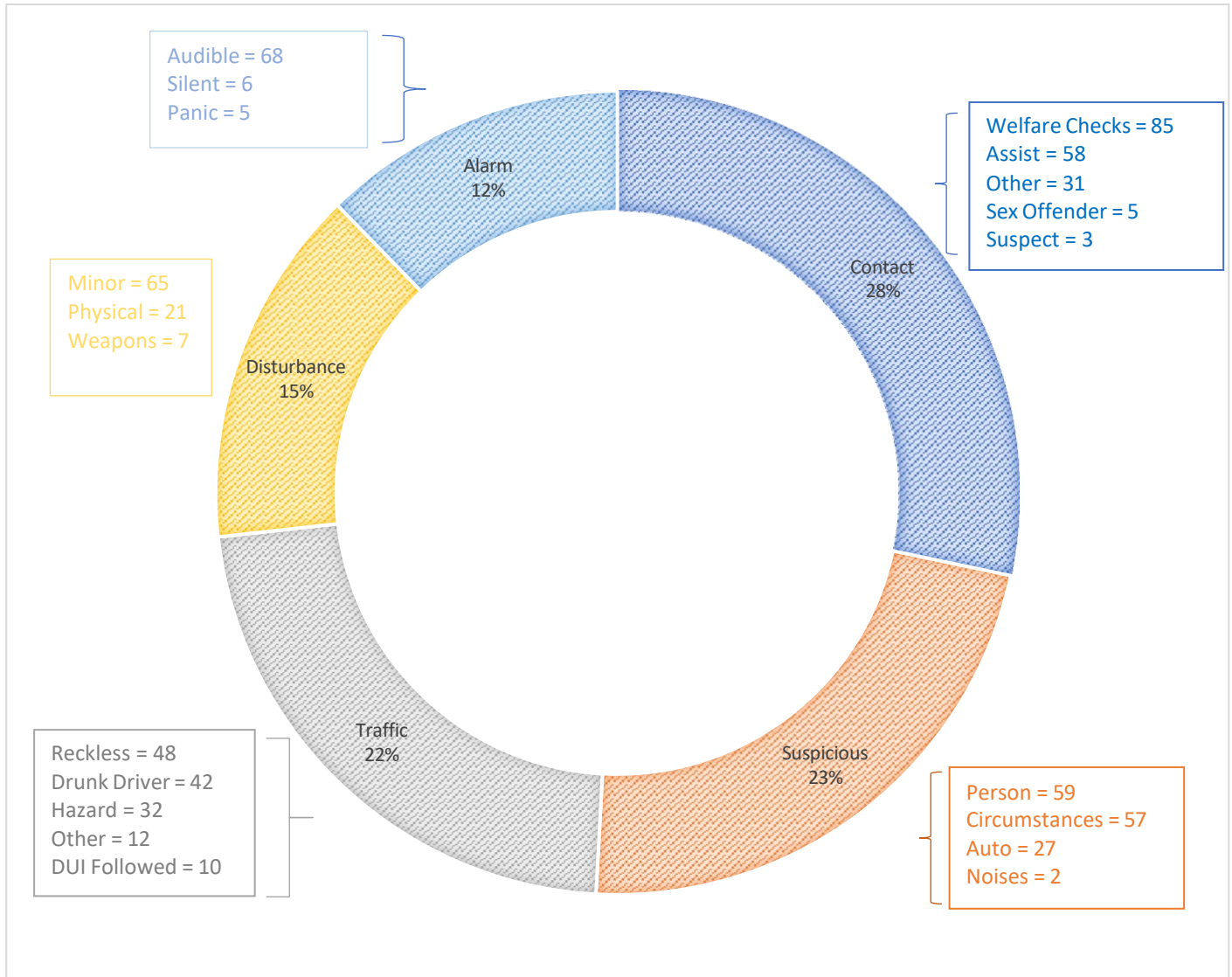
⁴² Traffic Stop data provided by a review of CAD First Watch Reports

⁴³ Traffic Accident Response data provide be a review of CAD First Watch Reports

⁴⁴ Traffic Accident Report data is from a review of Washington Department of Transportation database

Community - Initiated Workload

Chart 14 - Top 5 Community-Initiated Categories and sub-categories - 2019



The following table displays the total number of calls for service that are community-initiated by each hour and day of the week from 2015 – 2019. Darker-shaded red reflects heightened call activity. It appears community-initiated calls for service increase starting Thursdays through Saturday, and then decrease starting Sunday. Community-initiated calls for service decrease significantly after midnight until approximately 8:00AM.

Table 12 - Community-Initiated Calls for Service by Day/Hour of Week- 2015 -2019

Hour	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Total
00:00 - 00:59	56	22	24	23	26	20	51	222
01:00 - 01:59	45	31	17	26	38	23	28	208
02:00 - 02:59	39	17	15	22	22	19	38	172
03:00 - 03:59	27	16	18	15	20	18	21	135
04:00 - 04:59	23	10	17	15	9	12	21	107
05:00 - 05:59	14	17	11	9	16	17	18	102
06:00 - 06:59	9	16	10	25	17	22	15	114
07:00 - 07:59	26	28	25	27	29	24	30	189
08:00 - 08:59	19	41	43	36	49	32	21	241
09:00 - 09:59	36	38	34	37	39	36	50	270
10:00 - 10:59	39	40	40	42	55	37	57	310
11:00 - 11:59	46	37	35	41	43	57	55	314
12:00 - 12:59	37	43	47	43	49	48	37	304
13:00 - 13:59	47	39	44	46	37	52	51	316
14:00 - 14:59	48	52	32	62	52	50	51	347
15:00 - 15:59	47	59	66	49	59	60	53	393
16:00 - 16:59	45	52	51	44	53	52	63	360
17:00 - 17:59	42	43	49	48	53	48	54	337
18:00 - 18:59	56	50	59	48	60	58	51	382
19:00 - 19:59	56	50	58	66	60	56	48	394
20:00 - 20:59	52	51	67	52	53	61	50	386
21:00 - 21:59	49	47	45	45	43	67	70	366
22:00 - 22:59	54	47	41	46	42	50	56	336
23:00 - 23:59	33	33	26	40	38	49	49	268
Total	945	879	874	907	962	968	1,038	6,573

Mutual Aid Response

Another impact on La Center Police Department resources is the imbalance of mutual aid response both into and outside the City of La Center. Mutual aid is a voluntary reciprocal exchange of resources and services for the mutual benefit of other local jurisdictions. This is an important resource for smaller jurisdictions that lack the staffing, resources or expertise to manage any potential call or situation they may face.

In general, a frequent mutual aid response into your city from outside law enforcement agencies to assist on calls indicates your police department is understaffed or the work schedule is not optimized or a combination of both. In contrast, a frequent mutual aid

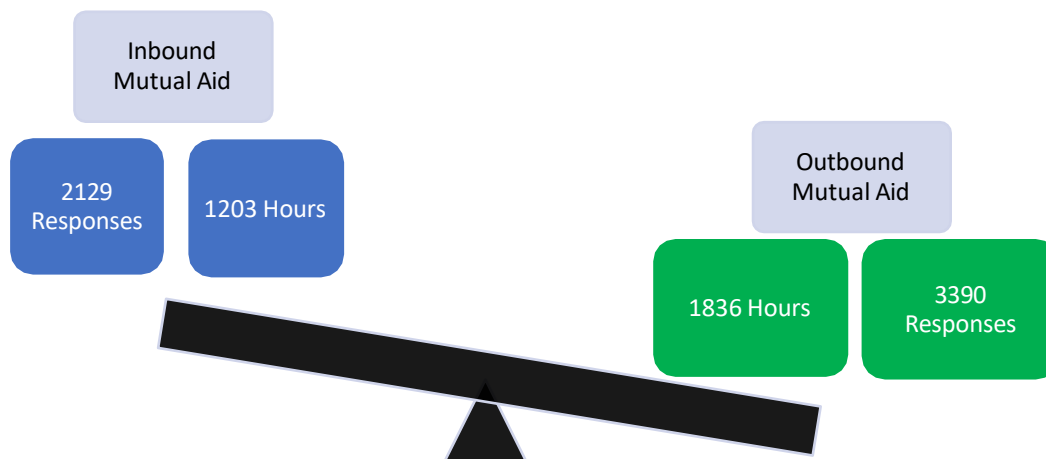
response outside your city from your law enforcement agency to assist on calls indicates your adjacent jurisdictions are understaffed or their work schedule is not optimized or a combination of both.

A review of mutual aid hours expended on unit responses shows that the City of La Center Police Department provided outside jurisdictions with 3390 responses with over 1836 workhours from 2015 – 2019. During the same period adjacent jurisdictions provided the La Center Police Department with 2129 responses with over 1203 workhours.⁴⁵ The largest consumers of La Center Police Department workhours are the Ridgefield Police Department and the Clark County Sheriff’s Office. This is to be expected based on the fact both jurisdictions are immediately adjacent to the City of La Center. (See Table 13)

Law enforcement agencies in Clark County have a long history of providing mutual aid to one another due to the limited resources and rural character of North Clark County. As the north portion of Clark County is developed the La Center Police Department should monitor the mutual aid response balance to ensure that there is equity and fairness among all jurisdictions. Long term imbalances can lead to jurisdictions feeling they are providing too many resources or not receiving enough resources in return.

In addition to understaffing and scheduling, a lack of field supervision may allow officers to drift over to other jurisdictions when their calls for service are minimal and they are looking to stay active.

Chart 15 - Mutual Aid Response for City of La Center 2015 - 2019⁴⁶



⁴⁵ A mutual aid response can be a response from one location to another or assisting another agency remotely such as checking on the welfare of someone in the City of La Center at the request of another jurisdiction.

⁴⁶ Mutual Aid response is the total number of units responding and not the total number of incidents

Table 13- Mutual Aid Response 2015 -2019

	Inbound Mutual Aid	Consumed Time (Dispatched to Clear) ⁴⁷	Outbound Mutual Aid	Consumed Time (Dispatched to Clear)
Battle Ground Police	52	34:37:28	55	08:45:53
Camas Police	11	14:25:43	5	00:34:54
Clark County Sheriff	548	329:24:51	975	529:06:43
Cowlitz Tribal Police	45	18:35:20	24	08:00:58
Ridgefield Police	1,419	735:09:49	2,224	1263:18:54
Vancouver Police	35	57:44:19	55	14:20:41
Washougal Police	17	12:59:56	25	04:39:58
WSU	1	00:00:06	1	00:00:04
Xlaw ⁴⁸	1	00:10:10	26	07:34:44
Total Responses/Time	2129	1203:07:42	3390	1836:22:49

⁴⁷ Formula is in Hours: Minutes: Seconds

⁴⁸ Xlaw are units other than CRESA contract agencies

SECTION 4 – RESPONSE TIME DATA

Historically, communities and police administrators have operated under the assumption that getting to the call quicker can increase arrest rates. However, research conducted in the 1970s showed that response times actually have little impact on arrest rates.⁴⁹

However, additional studies have shown that general citizen perceptions of response times were strongly related to the overall satisfaction they had for their police department. As an outcome of improved citizen satisfaction, individuals are more likely to quickly report a crime to police. If the time delay is reduced between citizen discovery of a crime and citizens contacting police, this may improve the odds of a subsequent arrest and create positive citizen satisfaction with police services. In turn, high citizen satisfaction with their police department can influence the likelihood that a community member will call the police to report future crime⁵⁰

Finally, with the advent of Automated External Defibrillators (AED) and Narcan the role of the police since the 1970s has greatly expanded to include emergency medical response. This is the one area that the measurement of emergency response times does have an impact on the quality of care for community members.

The City of La Center Police Department contracts with Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency (CRESA) for 911 and dispatch services. CRESA utilizes a Computerized Assisted Dispatch system (CAD) to assist with call processing and dispatching of incidents to the La Center Police Department. All calls for service (CFS) are assigned a priority from 1 to 5. The priority of calls is as follows:

- Priority 1 – Emergency – Life or property threatening event in progress
- Priority 2 – Urgent – Life or property threatening event just occurred
- Priority 3 - Event is cold, non-life threatening that occurred less than 10 minutes ago
- Priority 4 – Event is cold, non-life threatening that occurred more than 10 minutes ago
- Priority 5 – Information, messages, vehicle impounds, civil issue

While there is no national standard for police responses to “Priority 1 – emergency calls” or “Priority 2 – urgent calls” there are best practices for Emergency Medical Services. As an example, the Vancouver Fire Department (VFD) “goal” is to have a fire unit on the scene in 8-minutes or less 90 percent of the time. The VFD has a contract requirement

⁴⁹ Kansas City Police Department, (1977). *Response time analysis: Executive summary*. Kansas City, MO: Kansas City Police Department

⁵⁰ International City/County Management Association, 1997; Spelman & Brown, 1984

that AMR will have an ambulance on the scene of an emergency call in 10-minutes or less 90 percent of the time in the Urban area.⁵¹

A response time review of Priority 1 – 5 community-initiated calls for service from January 1, 2015 to December 31, 2019 was conducted.⁵² Response times in the City of La Center are excellent with police call response averaging from 4:35 minutes to 10:11 depending on the priority assigned to the call. The number of Priority1 and Priority 2 calls where the highest risk to loss of life or injury averaged approximately 70 calls per year or approximately 6 calls per month.

Table 14 - Response Times for Priority 1 Calls - Emergency

2015 -2019	# of Incidents	Average Response Time from Dispatch to Arrival ⁵³	Average Time from Arrival to Call Cleared ⁵⁴	Average Consumed Time ⁵⁵
January	0	-	-	-
February	1	00:03:17	04:32:49	04:36:06
March	0	-	-	-
April	0	-	-	-
May	0	-	-	-
June	1	00:01:42	00:24:04	00:25:46
July	2	00:03:13	01:00:38	01:03:51
August	2	00:05:30	01:30:14	01:35:44
September	1	00:09:42	04:09:46	04:19:28
October	0	-	-	-
November	0	-	-	-
December	0	-	-	-
Total/Average	7	00:04:35	02:01:12	02:05:47

Average Response Time for Priority 1 Calls: 4:35
 Average Handling Time for Priority 1 Calls: 2:01:12
 Average Consumed Time for Priority 1 Calls: 2:05:47

⁵¹ Information provided by Dave Fuller, Director of Clark Regional Emergency Services Agency

⁵² Community-initiated calls for service outside the City of La Center on a mutual aid basis were excluded

⁵³ Calculated as first unit dispatched to first unit arrives at incident

⁵⁴ Calculated as first unit arrives until last unit clears incident

⁵⁵ Calculated as first unit dispatched until the last unit clears the incident

Table 15 - Response Times for Priority 2 Calls - Urgent

2015 -2019	# of Calls	Average Response Time from Dispatch to Arrival	Average Time from Arrival to Call Cleared	Average Consumed Time
January	32	00:03:54	00:54:17	00:56:24
February	21	00:04:38	00:39:08	00:42:06
March	21	00:04:21	00:51:23	00:34:08
April	26	00:08:30	00:37:29	00:39:20
May	30	00:03:56	01:08:08	01:05:20
June	28	00:06:52	00:55:22	00:53:24
July	24	00:05:43	01:09:34	01:01:34
August	26	00:05:37	00:39:01	00:42:04
September	37	00:06:15	00:55:51	00:58:03
October	42	00:06:07	00:45:43	00:47:23
November	26	00:07:51	01:04:56	01:05:34
December	29	00:07:33	01:06:56	01:03:17
Total/Average	342	00:05:57	00:54:03	00:53:01

Average Response Time for Priority 2 Calls: 5:57

Average Handling Time for Priority 2 Calls: 0:54

Average Consumed Time for Priority 2 Calls: 53:01

Table 16 - Response Times for Priority 3 Calls – Less than 10 minutes old – cold/non- life-threatening

2015 -2019	# of Calls	Average Response Time from Dispatch to Arrival	Average Time from Arrival to Call Cleared	Average Consumed Time
January	187	00:09:11	00:35:53	00:35:41
February	179	00:10:33	01:33:02	01:21:16
March	198	00:07:39	00:36:09	00:41:00
April	194	00:07:23	00:28:52	00:32:38
May	236	00:09:54	00:33:24	00:37:16
June	209	00:07:12	00:39:20	00:39:36
July	252	00:08:11	00:38:34	00:39:21
August	216	00:07:59	00:34:11	00:36:11
September	199	00:06:52	00:34:27	00:33:18
October	194	00:07:48	00:31:20	00:33:45
November	189	00:10:21	00:32:51	00:36:13
December	202	00:07:28	00:32:43	00:35:40
Total/Average	2,455	00:08:21	00:38:44	00:39:48

Average Response Time for Priority 3 Calls: 8:21

Average Handling Time for Priority 3 Calls: 38:44

Average Consumed Time for Priority 3 Calls: 39:48

Table 17 - Response Times for Priority 4 Calls – More than 10 minutes old – cold/non-life-threatening

2015 -2019	# of Calls	Average Response Time from Dispatch to Arrival	Average Time from Arrival to Call Cleared	Average Consumed Time
January	92	00:10:43	01:39:56	01:24:17
February	84	00:08:20	00:37:38	00:39:22
March	91	00:09:18	01:24:33	01:12:46
April	94	00:16:19	00:48:46	00:56:16
May	104	00:10:06	00:36:09	00:37:23
June	88	00:09:39	00:41:16	00:40:23
July	117	00:11:10	00:51:08	00:47:45
August	101	00:08:31	00:31:23	00:34:34
September	129	00:09:58	00:36:29	00:49:39
October	110	00:08:53	00:41:27	00:43:11
November	106	00:09:38	00:29:53	00:40:40
December	94	00:09:40	00:36:50	00:40:13
Total/Average	1,210	00:10:11	00:47:30	00:48:33

Average Response Time for Priority 4 Calls: 10:11

Average Handling Time for Priority 4 Calls: 47:20

Average Consumed Time for Priority 4 Calls: 48:33

Table 18 - Response Times for Priority 5 Calls – Information/ Civil Issues/ Messages/ Impounds

2015 -2019	# of Calls	Average Response Time from Dispatch to Arrival	Average Time from Arrival to Call Cleared	Average Consumed Time
January	40	00:05:45	00:20:46	00:17:13
February	41	00:10:43	00:34:46	00:31:54
March	40	00:06:29	00:17:50	00:19:27
April	20	00:03:42	00:42:11	00:32:06
May	27	00:11:51	00:17:10	00:45:03
June	37	00:12:30	00:27:55	00:25:34
July	51	00:05:41	00:25:09	00:34:30
August	36	00:05:28	00:17:24	00:20:33
September	42	00:05:39	00:29:06	00:22:17
October	40	00:08:55	00:23:50	00:25:31
November	30	00:05:34	00:14:36	00:22:02
December	41	00:04:35	00:22:11	00:18:51
Total/Average	445	00:07:17	00:24:14	00:25:46

Average Response Time for Priority 5 Calls: 7:17
 Average Handling Time for Priority 5 Calls: 24:14
 Average Consumed Time for Priority 5 Calls: 25:46

The following table displays the total number of Priority 1 - Emergency and Priority 2 - Urgent calls for service that are community-initiated by each hour and day of the week from 2015 – 2019. Darker-shaded red reflects heightened call activity. It appears the highest frequency of Emergency/Urgent Calls for Service occurs between the hours of 3:00PM and midnight. The highest frequency of Emergency/Urgent Calls for Service occurs on Saturday and Sundays (See Table 19 – Priority 1 and Priority 2 Calls by Day/Hour of the Week).

Table 19 - Priority 1 and Priority 2 Calls by Day/Hour of the Week

Hour	Community Initiated							Total
	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	
00:00 - 00:59	7	5	4	3	6	4	10	39
01:00 - 01:59	5	7	5	3	7	2	1	30
02:00 - 02:59	4	2	4	3	5	5	6	29
03:00 - 03:59	5	5	2	3	4	3	0	22
04:00 - 04:59	5	4	6	4	2	2	7	30
05:00 - 05:59	0	3	1	0	1	1	5	11
06:00 - 06:59	1	2	2	5	0	6	1	17
07:00 - 07:59	10	5	6	3	4	4	7	39
08:00 - 08:59	3	2	4	2	6	3	1	21
09:00 - 09:59	3	4	3	5	4	2	5	26
10:00 - 10:59	11	7	1	5	7	4	6	41
11:00 - 11:59	13	5	5	3	5	1	11	43
12:00 - 12:59	6	6	6	5	9	8	5	45
13:00 - 13:59	6	2	4	2	2	5	4	25
14:00 - 14:59	7	4	2	11	9	4	10	47
15:00 - 15:59	6	8	13	6	8	9	8	58
16:00 - 16:59	8	9	6	3	9	6	9	50
17:00 - 17:59	6	2	6	7	8	9	9	47
18:00 - 18:59	9	5	9	9	6	6	7	51
19:00 - 19:59	8	6	7	17	9	7	6	60
20:00 - 20:59	6	9	10	9	6	10	4	54
21:00 - 21:59	5	2	7	9	5	10	8	46
22:00 - 22:59	3	8	3	4	3	10	7	38
23:00 - 23:59	5	10	0	7	7	6	12	47
Total	142	122	116	128	132	127	149	916

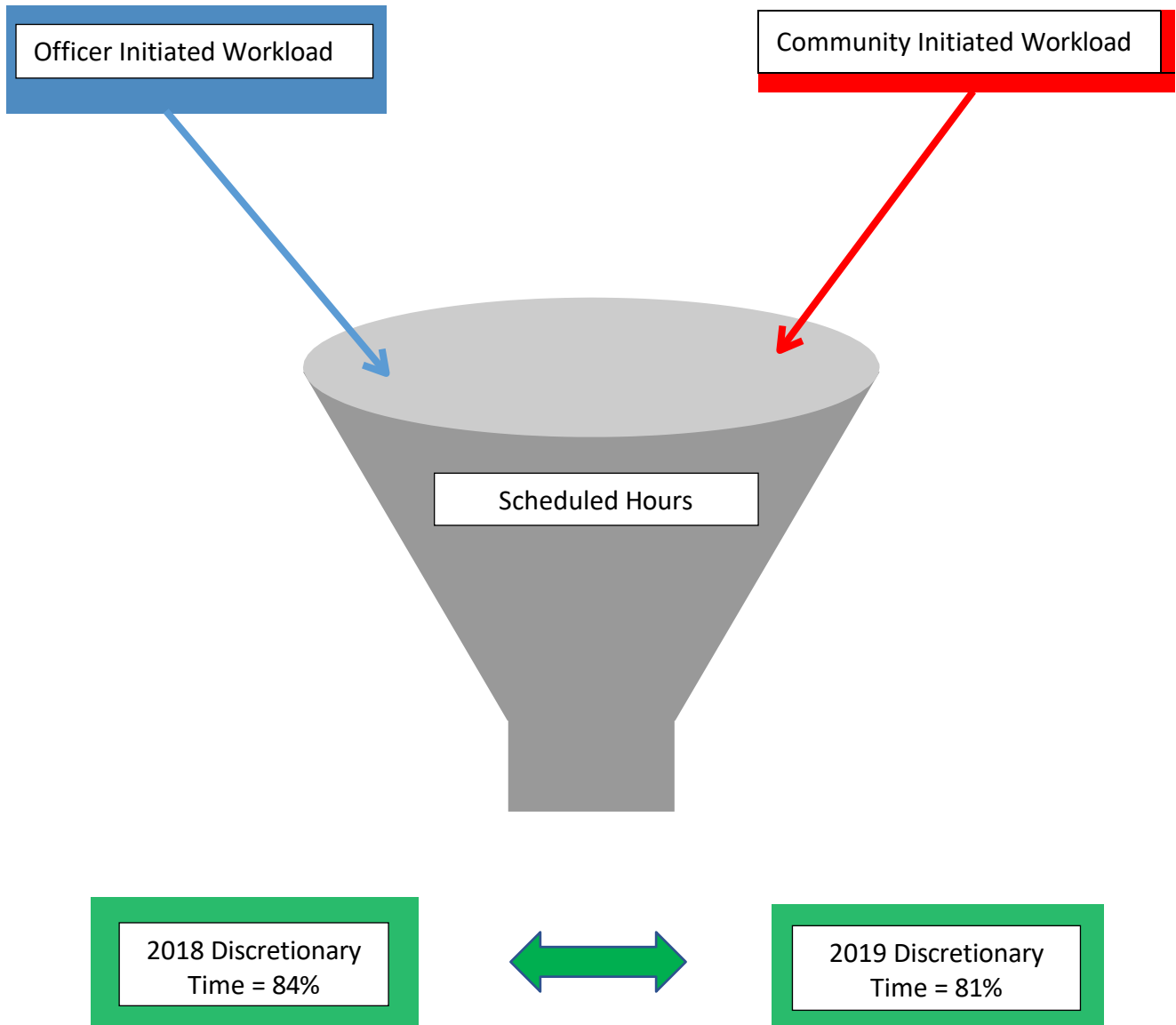
SECTION 5 – WORKLOAD VS. DISCRETIONARY TIME

The International City/County Management Association (ICMA) suggests that no more than 60 percent of patrol time should be committed to calls for service. In other words, ICMA suggests that no more than 60 percent of available patrol officer time be spent responding to the service demands of the community. The remaining 40 percent of the time is discretionary time for officers to be available to address community problems and be available for serious emergencies. This Rule of 60 for patrol deployment does not mean the remaining 40 percent of time is downtime or break time. It is simply a reflection of the point at which a patrol officer time is saturated by Calls for Service. In those incidents officers are using their discretionary time to prepare for the next call for service and this takes them away from addressing community problems.⁵⁶

An analysis of La Center Police Department CAD workload data shows that patrol units averaged approximately 81% discretionary time in 2019 which was a decrease from 84% in 2018.⁵⁷

⁵⁶ An ICMA Center for Public Safety Management White Paper – An analysis of police department staffing: How many officers do you really need?

⁵⁷ First Watch Report LCPD CAD Workload – January 1 to December 31, 2018 and January 1 to December 31, 2019.



SECTION 6 – INVESTIGATIONS WORKLOAD

The La Center Police Department does not staff a detective unit which is typical of an agency with similar staffing and volume of reported crimes. Follow up investigations are conducted by La Center Police Department uniformed patrol officers with major crimes being referred to the Clark County Sheriff's Office Major Crimes Unit.

The Clark County Sheriff's Office does not track case referrals from individual agencies but estimates that from 2015 to 2019 they have investigated approximately 10 cases.⁵⁸

Currently, the case workload and type of reported offenses does not justify the staffing of a detective's position within the La Center Police Department. However, an internal detective's position would have positive impacts on the community such as:

- Improve the quality and consistency of follow up investigations conducted by the La Center Police Department.
- Provide career development for patrol officers and enhance their investigative skills as they rotate through the detective's position.
- Allow the detective to participate in investigations involving the Clark County Sheriff's Office Major Crimes Unit when a multi-agency response is necessary.
- Provide a point of contact during normal business hours for residents to obtain information concerning their case investigation.

⁵⁸ Data provided by Undersheriff John Chapman Clark County Sheriff's Office

SECTION 7 – POTENTIAL FUTURE IMPACTS ON PROVIDING LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

There are approximately 279 law enforcement agencies in Washington State that range from one police officer to approximately 1460.⁵⁹ A majority of these law enforcement agencies are established by local governments and are funded by local tax dollars. While City Councils have the responsibility to establish overall policy direction and budget parameters there are numerous external influences that can impact local police practice, policy, and training, or mandate equipment purchases. These external influences are generally the result of new legislation, court rulings, or best practices in the policing profession. It is important to note that in many cases these influences are mandated and negatively impact the local administration of justice or increase liability if not adhered to. Below are some examples of legislation, court rulings, and police best practices that a City should be aware of when establishing fiscal and police oversight policy.

Legislation

Over the last several years there have been high profile incidents nationwide involving allegations of police officers using excessive force or failing to deescalate situations that have resulted in the use of deadly force. While the La Center Police Department has historically policed the community in a professional manner there are calls for dramatic changes in policing across the United States. These calls for change have already resulted in the Governor of Washington State and many legislators⁶⁰ considering ways to reform policing with the establishment of committees or task forces.⁶¹

While police reform to improve the delivery of law enforcement services within our communities is a positive endeavor, it usually results in fiscal impacts in the areas of mandated training, changes in police practices, or the purchase of additional equipment. It is not uncommon for state mandates to impact communities without regard as to how those mandates will be funded. This creates additional burdens on local government budgets as failure to comply with police reform mandates could place the police department, and the city at risk of civil litigation.

While its uncertain which bill proposals will become laws in the 2021 legislative session, a review was conducted of common topics of police reform. A review of some examples

⁵⁹ Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Washington State Full-Time Law Enforcement Employees -2019

⁶⁰ Washington State Senate, Law and Justice Committee Work Session, Police Accountability – October 14, 2020

⁶¹ Governor Inslee announces task force members to address issues of policing and racial justice – Press Release June 22, 2020 Office of the Governor, State of Washington

has been included in this section⁶² with potential cost where such could be estimated. If costs could not be clearly identified a “cost impact scale” of none, minimal, moderate, high, or unknown was provided based on the professional experience of the authors.

1. Standardize the use of force policies and training centered on the cornerstone principle of the sanctity of human life. De-escalation, proportionality, and the use of time, cover, and distance will be emphasized, and the required training from I-940 should be accelerated. This required curriculum also includes training on implicit bias and the history of race and law enforcement. (Minimal Costs to Local Government)
2. SB 5066 – Duty to intervene. Require all law enforcement officers to intervene and report to their agency whenever another law enforcement officer uses excessive force or knowingly violates the rights of any person. Violation of this duty should be cause for discipline, up to and including termination.
3. Establish and expand wellness, resiliency, and mental health support for law enforcement and correction officers. (No Costs to Local Government – Pilot Program funding)
4. Establish clear and meaningful support for law enforcement and corrections agencies to become accredited (undergo a Best Proactive Audit) by a recognized state or national law enforcement or corrections accreditation entity. (Moderate Costs to Local Government – State would reimburse the local agency that achieved accreditation. Accreditation could have moderate costs if it required additional personnel or equipment to achieve and maintain accreditation.)
5. Reform the civil service system to provide greater access for more diverse candidates into the law enforcement profession and enable Sheriffs and Police Chiefs greater flexibility to hire and promote law enforcement officers who are best suited to carry out the agency’s mission. (No Costs to Local Government – Workgroup to propose civil service changes)
6. Assist law enforcement and corrections agencies to establish intervention programs to identify troubling patterns and behaviors among law enforcement and corrections officers so intervention and support can be offered in a non-disciplinary manner. (Unknown Costs to Local Government)

⁶² Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs – Proposed Law Enforcement Reforms – Bill Drafts, June 25, 2020

7. HB 1267 – Independent Investigations. Establish a monitoring and review mechanism to ensure existing requirements for independent investigations regarding the use of deadly force are followed. Additionally, explore models for creating a completely independent statewide deadly force investigative team governed by a board that includes community members where there is a death, substantial bodily harm, or great bodily harm. (Minor Cost to Local Agency – Potential for overtime waiting for a Statewide Investigative Unit to respond and take over the scene)

8. Facilitate the implementation and use of body cameras. This bill requests grant funding for body cameras and adds some privacy protections for video recording and release. Prohibits Collective Bargaining Agreements from prohibiting the review of body camera recordings. (High Costs to Local Government - While this bill does not address the mandatory use of body camera by police agencies, we have included a discussion of potential costs of a mandated body camera program in the Equipment section of this section)

9. Reform binding interest arbitration to provide greater authority for Chiefs and Sheriffs to dismiss officers who are not helpful to the agency’s mission or who betray the public’s trust. (No Cost to Local Government – This establishes a collective bargaining and binding interest arbitration task force to reform binding interest arbitration. While there is no cost to Local Government there could be future litigation costs incurred as employee grievances are filed in response to impacts on employment)

10. SB 5051/HB 1082 – Decertification. Change licensure rules to provide that a law enforcement officer can lose their Peace Officer Certification for excessive use of force, showing a pattern of failing to follow public policy, and other serious breaches of the public’s trust. (No Cost to Local Government – This legislation broadens the types of misconduct that could result in the revocation of the certification of a peace officer or corrections officer and remove the requirement that a proceeding to revoke certification can only commence once the discharge of the officer is final. While there is a minor reporting cost to Local Government there could be future litigation costs by employees and labor groups)

11. HB 1092 – Data Collection. Require all Washington law enforcement agencies to submit data regarding the use of deadly force, serious bodily injury, when a firearm is discharged, when a firearm is pointed at a person, and creation of a statewide database. (Minor cost to Local Government – to establish policy changes, training, staff time for data input, etc.)

12. Study and establish clear expectations for state investments and expansions of programs that support social services to address mental illness, substance use, and other adverse events that are shown to increase the likelihood of future criminal justice involvement. (Minor Cost to Local Government – Training and policy development regarding mental health field response teams.)
13. HB 1203 – Community Oversight Boards. Establish community oversight boards for law enforcement agencies with 10 officers or more to report on officers’ activities, receive and investigate complaints on officers, hold hearings and subpoenas witnesses, review and make policy recommendations, make budgetary recommendations, provide access to crime scenes, provide a list of candidates for police chief, and retain legal counsel. Community Oversight Boards would be funded by 5% of the police budget. (High cost to local government)
14. HB 1202 – Qualified Immunity. Prevents the use of the doctrine of qualified immunity as it has developed in federal litigation. Makes the employer independently liable for failure to use reasonable care in the hiring, training, retaining, supervision, or disciplining of the peace officer. (High cost to local government)

Washington State Supreme Court

The Washington State Supreme Court establishes rules of the court to provide necessary governance of court procedures and practice, and to promote justice by ensuring a fair and expeditious process.⁶³ The Supreme Court forwards each suggested rule, except those deemed “without merit”, to the Washington State Bar Association, the Superior Court Judges Association, the District and Municipal Court Judges Association, and the Chief Presiding Judge of the Court of Appeals for their consideration. The Supreme Court can also forward the proposed rule changes to any group the court believes may be interested.

While not part of the legislative process, these court rules can have a tremendous impact on police policy and procedures which can impact local government budgets.

In February of 2018 the Washington Association of Criminal Defense Lawyers proposed the following court rule changes to the Washington Supreme Court and published for comment in July 2018.⁶⁴ While the proposed court rules were rejected after public

⁶³ Supreme Court General Rules – General Rule 9 – Supreme Court Rulemaking – Adopted effective March 19, 1982.

⁶⁴ Washington Courts Website – Proposed Rule Archives

comment⁶⁵ it's important to understand that the climate regarding criminal justice reform and more specifically police reform has changed dramatically since that time. Listed below are some examples of court rule changes that could have impacted the police department budgets of local governments if the Washington Supreme Court had approved the rule changes. We have identified a "cost impact scale" of none, minimal, moderate, high, or unknown based on the professional experience of the authors.

1. Proposed new criminal rule CrR 3.7 – Custodial and non-custodial interrogations of persons under investigations for any crime are to be recorded by an audiovisual recording made by use of electronic or digital audiovisual device. Failure to record in compliance with this section, would result in the statements being presumed to be inadmissible in any criminal proceeding against the person, except for purposes of impeachment. Based on the type of crime some of these recordings would have to be retained for 99 years. (High Cost to Local Government – requires the purchase of equipment, redaction software, long term storage costs.)

2. Proposed new criminal rule CrR 3.8 – An out of court identification procedure resulting from a photo array, live lineup, or show-up identification procedure conducted by a law enforcement officer shall not be admissible unless a record of the identification procedure is made. Based on the type of crime some of these recordings would have to be retained for 99 years. (High Cost to Local Government – requires the purchase of recording equipment, redaction software, and long-term storage costs.)

⁶⁵ Washington Council of Police and Sheriffs Letter to the Washington Supreme Court regarding proposed rule changes dated March 21,2019

SECTION 8 – CONCLUSIONS

Budgetary

- The City of La Center is facing decreasing revenue with a long-term structural deficit.
- The La Center Police Department’s budget from 2015 through 2021 has not kept pace with increasing costs and adjacent jurisdictions have seen substantially greater budget increases.
- The City of La Center budgets a slightly greater percentage of their general fund toward the Police Department when compared to adjacent police agencies.
- The La Center Police Department Salaries and Benefits expenditures are a higher percentage of the police department budget when compared to adjacent police agencies.
- The La Center Police Department training expenditures need to increase to be sufficient to cover mandated training and anticipated new training requirements.
- Providing local law enforcement services costs residents of La Center significantly more per resident than adjacent police agencies with less services.

Organization

- The La Center Police Department has left positions vacant to stay within the adopted budget.
- The La Center Police Department has outsourced services such as issuance of concealed pistol permits, major criminal investigations, property and evidence storage, as well as after-hours records processing.
- The La Center Police Department lacks the ability to provide supervisory coverage 24 hours a day. While this is common for a small law enforcement agency it does increase risk management issues, as well as consistency of service.
- The La Center Police Department is losing its capacity to provide police patrol coverage 24 hours a day, seven days a week as a result of staffing and budgetary constraints.

- The City of La Center and the community are faced with difficult decisions regarding the appropriate level of police staffing for deterrence, a rapid response to life threatening emergencies, and officer safety. In addition, the community must take into consideration the services the community expects the police department to provide, the availability of assistance from neighboring agencies, expectations as to response times to non-emergency calls for service, and budgetary considerations.

Crime

- When compared to 21 other Washington cities with populations of 2,500 to 5,000, La Center has the 6th lowest crime rate.
- Property crimes make up the greatest portion of reported crimes (62%) followed by crimes against persons (24%) and then crimes against society (14%). Domestic Violence Crimes make up most of the crimes against persons.
- From January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2019, the La Center Police Department generated 19,583 Calls for Service. Of the 19,583 Calls for Service approximately 2% (411) resulted in a Group A Offense.

Call Response

- Response times in the City of La Center are excellent with police call response averaging from 4:35 minutes to 10:11 depending on the priority of the event.
- It appears the highest frequency of Emergency/Urgent Calls for Service occurs between the hours of 3:00PM and midnight. The highest frequency of Emergency/Urgent Calls for Service occurs on Saturday and Sundays.
- From January 1, 2015, through December 31, 2019, the La Center Police Department generated 19,583 Calls for Service. Of the 19,583 Calls for Service approximately 13% (2449) were cleared with a disposition indicating a report was taken. This amounts to approximately 1.3 report dispositions per day.
- Mutual Aid responses by individual La Center police units indicates an imbalance between resources leaving the city versus other law enforcement agencies' units entering the city to assist on calls. This usually indicates a lack of workload within

the jurisdiction causing units to go look for more activity, a lack of supervisory control, and a lack of clearly established expectations.

Equipment

The La Center Police Department appears to be well equipped with vehicles, AED's, Tasers and technology.

Patrol Rifles – The La Center Police Department has sufficient Patrol Rifles to issue to officers; however two officers have not been trained due to budget limitations. In response to active shooters and suspects with long rifles, a patrol rifle is a necessary piece of equipment for officers to adequately respond to and defend themselves and members of the public. In addition, while officers with issued patrol rifles willingly take them into the field there is no department policy that requires them to do so. At a minimum each officer should be trained and issued a patrol rifle and mandated by policy to have it available in the patrol car.

Less Lethal – One deficiency is the lack of less lethal defensive weapons other than a taser. While a taser is necessary, it is insufficient at distances greater than 25 feet. Best practice is to also equip patrol vehicles with less lethal 40mm launchers which shoot a sponge round. This allows an officer to utilize a weapons system from a greater distance (5 to 131 feet) to defend against subjects threatening assault with a knife or other weapon that is not a firearm.

At a minimum one 40mm launcher should always be deployed in the field. Optimally each patrol vehicle would be equipped with a 40mm launcher.

Full deployment of (4) less lethal 40mm launchers would cost approximately \$5600. There would be an additional cost of \$400 every other year for training rounds plus training time.

Body Cameras – If the State of Washington mandated body cameras this mandate would add the following costs to the La Center Police Department Budget for 8 body cameras, docking station and related software licenses:



Option One – Basic Plan⁶⁶

Year 1 Costs:	\$ 13,208
Year 2 Costs:	\$ 5,121
Year 3 Costs:	\$ 5,121
Year 4 Costs:	\$ 5,121
Year 5 Costs:	<u>\$ 5,121</u>

Total Over 5 Years \$33,692.00 + Taxes and Storage Costs for exceeding 1.5TB of data.

Includes:

- Camera Hardware
- Axon Signal Hardware
- Pro & Basic Licenses
- Storage Added A La Cart⁶⁷
- Mobile Apps: Axon Capture
- Mobile Apps: Axon View
- Docking Station w/o Ext. Warranty
- Camera Warranty: 1-year standard

Police Facility – Most police facilities continue to operate well past their planned lifespans and in many cases are utilized from 20 to 50 years. Increases in population and police staffing as well as changes in technology, building codes, security concerns, improvements in HVAC and electrical systems result in buildings becoming obsolete. For many communities, funding for new police facilities is not available or competes with other important capital improvements.

⁶⁶ This is a non-binding estimate, tax not included from Axon Direct provided on November 2, 2020

⁶⁷ Storage is dependent on the type of event recording requirements and the retention schedule established by the State of Washington

The La Center Police Department operates out of a fire station retrofitted to serve as the police station in 2002 with 1890 square feet. While the building is clean and well maintained, it is clearly at the end of its useful life. There is insufficient storage and office space, no conference/training/briefing room, no locker room for female employees, no public restroom, no public meeting room, no secure interview room, no temporary detention area for suspects, no secure parking for police vehicles, and it lacks other amenities of police facilities in other jurisdictions.

It is estimated that a new police facility would require at least 4,000 square feet to accommodate future growth and provide a modern workspace for employees and the public.⁶⁸ It is estimated that a new police facility would cost approximately \$5.5 million include land acquisition.

Uncertain External influences

- Federal, State, and Local legislative mandates related to training, disciplinary policy, or equipment such as body cameras will have future impacts on the budget of the La Center Police Department.
- Nationwide demands from the public regarding police reform and transparency will have future impacts on the budget of the La Center Police Department.
- Potential changes to court rules that require additional documentation or recording of interviews will have an impact on the budget of the La Center Police Department.
- Economic downturns, pandemics, civil unrest will have an impact on the budget of the La Center Police Department.
- Replacement of expensive technology projects such as records management, computer aided dispatch, and digital radio systems will have an impact on the budget of the La Center Police Department.

⁶⁸ This estimate is based on recent or under construction police facilities in the City of Kalama and City of Ridgefield.

SECTION 9 – OPTIONS FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

The City Council has the responsibility to develop fiscal policies that balance the needs of the community, such as maintaining existing infrastructure, and providing cost effective policing services while balancing the budget. The challenge for the City of La Center – like many other municipalities in Washington State – is providing those services while facing an increasing structural deficit.

While the La Center Police Department has had adequate funding in the past, it is apparent that without an increase in fiscal resources the department will be unable to add additional personnel, provide additional services to the community, and its ability to respond to future internal or external influences will be constrained. This will increase work demands on police employees, expose the city to increased risk management issues, and require the diversion of funding from other city departments to maintain basic services.

The City of La Center should evaluate the merits of a contract model of policing to reduce costs, liability, and related administrative burdens associated with maintaining their own police department.

Considerations for Maintaining Police Department

Pros:

- Generally, a local police department is more responsive to a community's expectations for handling lower-level criminal activity and quality of life issues such as barking dogs, loud parties, and other nuisance calls.
- The Mayor and City Council maintain more control over service expectations and policing policy.
- The Mayor and City Council have direct input regarding the hiring of the Chief of Police who is appointed versus the Sheriff who is an elected official.
- Community identity that a local police department provides with uniformed officers driving police vehicles associated with the City of La Center.

Cons:

- Challenges of maintaining a police department that is sufficiently funded to maintain desired staffing levels, comply with training mandates, and respond to external pressures related to potential state and federal mandates regarding training and equipment.
- Increased liability and risk management issues related to claims of excessive force, biased policing, failure to train, personnel complaints, and/or not maintaining police best practices.
- Purchasing and maintaining capital equipment such as vehicles, firearms, less lethal equipment, communications, information technology, etc.
- Maintaining a police facility with the ability to fund future expansion or remodeling as necessary.
- Increased support required from other city departments such as finance, human resources, public works operations/fleet maintenance, the City Attorney, and the Mayor's office.

Considerations for Contracting Policing Services

Pros:

- Cost savings of reduced administrative burden related to maintaining payroll, labor relations, recruitment, public records, civil claims, personnel complaints, labor and industry claims, etc.
- There may be favorable long-term implications related to liability when contracting for police services.
- The City of La Center pays for the desired level of service with flexibility to negotiate increases or decreases in service levels.
- Reduction in capital expenditures for vehicle purchases, vehicle maintenance, facility maintenance, equipment maintenance, etc.
- There are numerous cities in King and Snohomish counties that have a long history of successfully contracting out for police services that could be replicated in the City of La Center.

- The City of La Center would no longer be responsible for continuous police training, policy development, property and evidence processing, police records processing, etc.
- Access to much larger law enforcement agency that has greater resources and capacity to respond to emergencies in the City of La Center.

Cons:

- Loss of local control over the day-to-day operations of the police department. However, some of these issues could be mitigated by provisions within the contract for services.
- Generally, a local police department is more responsive to a community's expectations for handling lower-level criminal activity and quality of life issues such as barking dogs, loud parties, and other nuisance calls. This could be mitigated by provisions and expectations within the contract for services.
- The Mayor and City will lose direct input regarding the hiring of the Chief of Police who is appointed versus the Sheriff who is an elected official.
- The community identity that a local police department provides with La Center Uniformed Officers driving La Center police vehicles may be impacted. This could be mitigated by provisions and expectations within the contract for services. Some contract cities in Washington state provide county deputies with local police department uniforms and police vehicles.
- The City Council may have to change the City of La Center Municipal Code to allow for the contract agency to enforce local ordinances.

Options for providing Law Enforcement Services

1. Maintain the City of La Center Police Department and identify needed additional funding sources

This option would allow the police department to maintain existing services but would require additional funding sources in the future to fund legal mandates, additional training, additional equipment, and build a new police facility.

To maintain minimum 24 hour per day staffing levels the La Center Police Department would need to fill vacant positions to reach the authorized staffing level of 8 commissioned police officers which includes: (1) Police Chief, (2) Police Sergeants, (5) Police Officers and (1) Police Clerk. This staffing level will require significant overtime to provide employees with mandated leaves, and any additional training requirements.

2. Expand the City of La Center Police Department and identify needed additional funding sources

This option would allow for additional staffing within the police department to provide one additional police officer to patrol, a detective position for follow up of investigations, and a part-time records clerk. This would make the police department less reliant on the Clark County Sheriff’s Office and other Clark County police agencies for assistance. It would also provide a career development opportunity for patrol officers as they rotate through the detective position to gain additional experience and take the experience back into patrol.

The part-time records clerk would allow the Police Department to provide more services from the police station⁶⁹, provide back up to the Police Clerk, and manage a body camera program.

The added patrol officer position would require an additional \$116,000 per year in salary and benefits, and one-time costs of \$25,000 associated with recruiting, training, and equipping the officer.

The detective position would require an additional \$116,000 per year in salary and benefits, one additional fully equipped \$80,000 patrol vehicle, and one-time costs of \$25,000 associated with recruiting, training, and equipping the officer.

The part-time records clerk position would require an additional \$55,000 per year to the police department budget.

3. Basic Law Enforcement Services with Clark County

There is an existing Attorney General’s Opinion⁷⁰ that would potentially allow a city to eliminate its police department and require the County Sheriff to provide basic law enforcement services. The County Sheriff would only be obligated to provide the

⁶⁹ Processing of concealed pistol permits, prescription drug take back, and other community services

⁷⁰ The Municipal Research and Services Center (MRSC) website

same services that are provided to the unincorporated areas of Clark County. Any police protection beyond that would require the City to contract for enhanced services.

AGO 1990 No.4 – May 24, 1990⁷¹

“Sheriff’s statutory duties apply to both the incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county.

Should a city find it desirable or necessary to obtain the services of a specific number of county police officers, or a specific level of police services, it may contract with the sheriff’s office for such services. Such contracts, in our view, are the only means by which a city may assure itself of quantified police protection beyond that contained in the sheriff’s general charge to enforce state laws. The authority to contract in this manner is contained in the Interlocal Cooperation Act, chapter 39.34 RCW, and is implicitly recognized in several other statutes.

To summarize, we conclude that the sheriff has a duty to enforce state law in both incorporated and unincorporated areas of the county. To the extent that a particular city’s police department is unable to provide adequate police protection, the sheriff’s office has a duty to allocate its resources accordingly. However, the sheriff is not obligated by statute to provide cities with a specific number of officers, or a specific level of services. Should a city wish to obtain such specific protection, it may do so by contract.”

In addition, the Revised Code of Washington outlines the following duties of the County Sheriff:

“RCW 36.28.010 – The sheriff is the chief executive officer and conservator of the peace of the county. In the execution of his office, he and his deputies:

- 1. Shall arrest and commit to prison all persons who break the peace, or attempt to break it, and all persons guilty of public offenses.*
- 2. Shall defend the county against those who, by riot or otherwise, endanger the public peace or safety;*
- 3. Shall execute the process and orders of the courts of justice or judicial officers, when delivered for that purpose, according to law;*

⁷¹ Washington Attorney General’s Opinion No. 4 – May 24, 1990

4. *Shall execute all warrants delivered for that purpose by other public officers, according to the provision of particular statutes;*

5. *Shall attend the sessions of the courts of record held within the county, and obey their lawful order or directions;*

6. ***Shall keep and preserve the peace in their respective counties, and quiet and suppress all affrays, riots, unlawful assemblies and insurrections, for which purpose, and for the service of process in civil or criminal cases, and in apprehending and securing any person for a felony or breach of the peace, they may call to their aid such person, or power of their county as they may deem necessary.”***

“RCW 36.28.011 – It shall be the duty of all sheriffs to make complaint of all violations of the criminal law, which shall come to their knowledge, within their respective jurisdictions. Sheriff authority is county wide. He is not restricted by municipal limits.

4. Enhanced Law Enforcement Services Contract with Clark County

The City of La Center could enter into an interlocal agreement with Clark County for law enforcement services and specify the staffing and services they wish to contract for. This agreement could include proposed costs for up to five years as is done with the City of Stanwood and the County of Snohomish.⁷² (For example, the City of La Center could contract to have a deputy assigned within the city limits for any period of time up to 24 hours a day, seven days a week.)

5. Enhanced Law Enforcement Services Contract with another City

The City of La Center could enter into an interlocal agreement with another municipality for law enforcement services and specify the staffing and service they wish to contract for. This agreement would be similar to the Interlocal Agreement between the cities of Bingen and White Salmon.⁷³

⁷² Interlocal Agreement Between Snohomish County and the City of Stanwood Relating to Law Enforcement Services as approved by the Stanwood City Council – March 26, 2014.

⁷³ Interlocal Agreement Between the City of Bingen and the City of White Salmon Relating to Law Enforcement Services as approved by the White Salmon City Council – December 15, 2010.