



OXNARD POLICE DEPARTMENT

Protecting Our Community with Exceptional Service

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February 14, 2019

To Our Oxnard Residents:

It is that time of year when we finalize our annual crime statistics from the prior year. I'm happy to report positive news. Following an 11% decrease in crime in 2017, Oxnard saw another 6% reduction in overall crime in 2018. This was our third consecutive year of declining crime rates.

Oxnard is a safe city, and we're committed to continuing on with our recent successes. We compare favorably to other cities of similar size. Using nationwide FBI statistics for cities with a population between 100,000 and 250,000, the violent crime rate averaged 4.73 incidents per 1,000 residents in 2017. Oxnard's rate in 2018 was 3.88 per 1,000 residents. For property crimes, the national rate for comparable cities was 30.83 per 1,000 residents in 2017. Oxnard's rate was 24.68 per 1,000 residents in 2018.

Violent crime was down almost 12% in 2018. This was largely driven by a 24% reduction in robberies. Our officers and detectives responded quickly when they saw upticks in violent crime and they made many great arrests. Our primary focus will always be on violent offenders.

There were 14 homicides in our city last year, and our detectives cleared 14 cases. Detectives made arrests for seven homicides committed in 2018 and three homicides committed in 2017. Four homicide cases from prior years were cleared "exceptionally." While I'm very proud of the work from our detectives in clearing these cases, we will continue to seek justice for every single victim.

Our officers also made 129 arrests for firearm offenses. Some of the more common firearm arrests include: 1) convicted felon (or "prohibited person") carrying a firearm, 2) carrying a firearm while on parole or probation, 3) carrying a concealed firearm, 4) carrying a loaded firearm, 5) carrying a large capacity magazine, and 6) carrying a firearm while in possession of drugs. Our officers took possession of a total of 239 firearms in 2018, either as evidence or for safekeeping.

Property crime was down 5%. The biggest property crime category decrease was a 10% reduction in burglaries. We're putting more emphasis on disrupting and deterring crime. We'd much rather prevent a crime from occurring than make an arrest after the fact.

We're also appreciative of the partnerships we have with our community. We rely on our residents to cooperate if they're a victim or a witness to a crime. These partnerships have grown stronger with new programs like *AXON Citizen* and *Eyes on Crime* which allows our community partners to share security camera video with investigators to help solve crimes. It also improves community safety when our residents look after each other and call 911 to report suspicious activity. When there is trust and respect for the police department, we have a safer and stronger city.

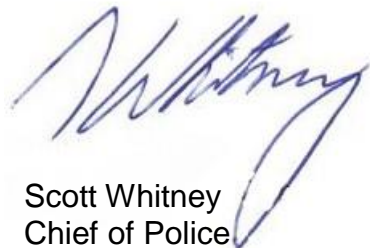
Our biggest crime category increase was in auto thefts, which went up by 13%. Although our number of arrests for auto theft went up significantly, and we had a lot of prevention efforts, we didn't have the impact that we wanted. We know the most commonly stolen cars (older model Honda Accords and Civics) and we know many of the repeat offenders, so it's very frustrating to see the increasing crime numbers.

We've arrested several of the same individuals, multiple times, for auto theft in 2018, without any real consequences. Many of these individuals spend very little time in custody after being arrested. With the reduced criminal sentences in California over the past several years, the risk of getting arrested for lower level property crimes doesn't have much deterrence value for our chronic offenders .

Responding to these lower level, chronic offenders will be one of our bigger challenges in 2019. They drain our limited police resources and lower the quality of life for our residents. Drug use and property crimes are their most common offenses. With Assembly Bill 109 in 2011, Proposition 47 in 2014 and Proposition 57 in 2016, these types of offenders are spending less time in custody and more time on our streets. Funding for treatment programs and alternatives to incarceration have not kept pace with the lighter sentences.

We will work with our public safety partners throughout the county to mitigate the negative consequences of prolific offenders. We also welcome new community partners that are willing to step forward to do good for our city. There are 375 good, smart and dedicated employees of the Oxnard Police Department and we look forward to a safe and prosperous 2019.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "S. Whitney", with a large, stylized flourish extending from the bottom right.

Scott Whitney
Chief of Police