

*THE STATE OF CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE
IN FORT BEND COUNTY, TEXAS*

*AN INDEPENDENT, COMPREHENSIVE, MIXED METHODS
RESEARCH ANALYSIS*

Third Edition – Updated July 2026

Crime Data Period: 2020–2025

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

Crime statistics influence public policy, law enforcement priorities, media coverage, and residents' perceptions of safety. Yet crime data alone rarely provides a complete understanding of crime and criminal justice within a community. Official statistics describe reported criminal activity, but they cannot fully explain the organizational decisions, investigative practices, demographic changes, or community experiences that shape those numbers. As a result, understanding crime requires more than measuring crime; it requires placing those measurements within their broader operational and community context.

The State of Crime and Criminal Justice in Fort Bend County was developed to provide that broader perspective. Using a mixed-methods research design, this report integrates quantitative crime analyses with qualitative research, agency consultation, demographic analysis, document review, and a review of contemporary criminal justice scholarship to provide an independent assessment of crime and criminal justice throughout Fort Bend County.

Commissioned by Fort Bend County District Attorney Brian Middleton, the third edition of this report provides an updated and comprehensive analysis of crime and criminal justice trends in Fort Bend County, Texas. Building upon the original study completed in January 2024, this edition expands the longitudinal analysis through six consecutive years of National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data, incorporates updated qualitative insights from criminal justice leaders, and offers refined recommendations to support evidence-based decision-making, policy development, and alignment with recognized best practices in the field.

Dr. Elizabeth Gilmore and Dr. Kevin Buckler have led this project since its inception, authoring the original report released in January 2024 and each subsequent edition. They continue to serve as independent researchers throughout the ongoing study. Neither researcher are employed by the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office. Accordingly, the findings, interpretations, and recommendations presented throughout this report reflect the researchers' independent analysis of the available evidence.

From the inception of this project, District Attorney Brian Middleton emphasized the importance of an objective assessment of crime trends, law enforcement operations, and the criminal justice system in Fort Bend County. He consistently maintained that findings should be reported accurately and transparently, regardless of whether they reflected positively, negatively, or neutrally on any agency or office, including his own. The commissioning of the research has remained distinct from the research team's analysis and interpretation of the evidence.

The findings, interpretations, and recommendations presented throughout are intended to provide a balanced, transparent, and evidence-based assessment of the current challenges, strengths, and opportunities within Fort Bend County's criminal justice system.

The project integrates information from multiple criminal justice agencies throughout Fort Bend County. Although all participating law enforcement agencies now report crime data through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), each agency operates with its own records management systems, internal workflows, reporting practices, and data management procedures. NIBRS provides a standardized framework for reporting crime data, but these operational differences

still require collaboration with agency personnel to ensure that statistical findings are interpreted accurately within each agency's operational environment.

The standardized structure provided by NIBRS makes countywide analysis substantially more consistent and reliable than would otherwise be possible. Standardization, however, does not eliminate the need for local context. Policing practices, organizational differences, community characteristics, investigative priorities, and reporting processes can all affect how crime is reported, investigated, and ultimately reflected in the data. Understanding those differences is essential to interpreting standardized statistics accurately and translating them into information that can inform policy, practice, and public understanding.

District Attorney Middleton has continued to support the project by facilitating access to data and appropriate agency contacts. That access has allowed the research to expand each year and incorporate the agency-level context necessary to interpret the findings more fully.

Now in its third edition, this report builds upon the foundation established in previous years while expanding the longitudinal analysis through six consecutive years of standardized NIBRS data. Rather than simply documenting crime changes from one year to the next, it seeks to identify longer-term patterns and explain why changes may look different across offenses, agencies, and communities. The report is intended to serve as a practical resource for policymakers, criminal justice practitioners, researchers, community leaders, and residents seeking to understand not only how crime and public safety are changing in Fort Bend County, but also the context necessary to interpret those changes responsibly.

CHAPTER TWO: UNDERSTANDING CRIME DATA

Beyond the Official Statistics: The Reality of Underreported Crime

In criminal justice research, it is a longstanding and widely accepted practice to examine large-scale crime patterns using incidents reported to law enforcement agencies. These analyses typically rely on nationally standardized reporting systems such as the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program and, more recently, the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), which provide consistent and comparable measures of reported crime across jurisdictions. Because these systems employ standardized definitions and reporting procedures, they serve as the foundation for much of the empirical research used to examine crime trends, evaluate criminal justice policies, and inform public safety decision-making.

Although these reporting systems represent the most comprehensive sources of official crime data available, they measure only crimes that become known to law enforcement. Consequently, they do not capture offenses that are never reported, discovered, or formally recorded. Readers should therefore recognize that the crime statistics presented throughout this report, as with national FBI publications, state crime reports, and local agency annual reports, reflect reported criminal activity rather than the total amount of crime occurring within a community. This distinction is fundamental to the interpretation of all official crime statistics and serves as the basis for the concept known as the "dark figure of crime." Understanding the distinction between reported crime and actual crime is essential for interpreting every quantitative analysis presented throughout this report. Before examining crime trends in Fort Bend County, it is therefore important to understand the concept of the dark figure of crime and the factors that influence whether criminal incidents are reported to law enforcement.

The underreporting of crime creates a discrepancy between the actual amount of criminal activity occurring within a community and the offenses reflected in official crime statistics. Criminologists commonly refer to this discrepancy as the dark figure of crime, a term describing the gap between crimes that occur and those that become known to law enforcement and are subsequently recorded in official reporting systems. The dark figure of crime represents one of the most enduring challenges in criminological research because it limits the ability of official crime statistics to provide a complete measure of criminal activity. Consequently, all analyses based on police-reported data, including those presented throughout this report, should be interpreted as measures of reported crime, not the total amount of crime occurring within a community.

Several factors contribute to the dark figure of crime, including a victim's willingness or reluctance to report an offense. Victims may choose not to report crimes for many reasons, including fear of retaliation, distrust of police, shame, or embarrassment, particularly when the offender is known to the victim or the offense involves intimate partner violence or sexual assault. Research has consistently documented underreporting in offenses such as domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse (Baumer, 2002). These offenses may also be shaped by cultural norms, social stigma, and differing perceptions of severity, all of which can influence how victims interpret their experiences and whether they seek assistance. Victims may fear not being believed or may anticipate stigma from authorities or their communities, leaving some incidents absent from official statistics (Lorenz et al., 2021).

Additionally, some victims may perceive certain offenses, particularly minor or nonviolent crimes, as too insignificant to report or may doubt that law enforcement has the resources or ability to take meaningful action. This perception can be especially relevant in cases such as petty theft, vandalism, or harassment, where victims may assume that the likelihood of recovery or prosecution is minimal. For example, a person whose child's bicycle is stolen from an apartment complex parking lot might choose not to report the incident, believing that the property is unlikely to be recovered and that the case would receive lower priority than more serious offenses.

Victims may also choose not to report crimes because of practical considerations, including the anticipated inconvenience of engaging with law enforcement. For instance, an individual who discovers that a vehicle has been vandalized while en route to work may decide not to report the damage if doing so is expected to require substantial time with little likelihood of recovering the loss. In such circumstances, the decision not to report reflects the victim's assessment of the costs and likely benefits of engaging with the criminal justice system rather than the absence of victimization.

Beyond logistical concerns, trust in law enforcement can substantially influence crime reporting. Negative past experiences, perceived bias, or a general sense of police ineffectiveness may deter victims from seeking assistance. Distrust can be especially pronounced in communities with histories of over-policing or discriminatory practices. Research has found that lower levels of perceived community social capital are associated with greater police distrust (MacDonald & Stokes, 2006).

Conversely, certain types of crimes are more likely to be reported to the police. For example, crimes such as auto theft, substantial burglaries, or major property damage are more likely to be reported because victims often need a police report to file insurance claims or attempt to recover stolen property. Similarly, crimes that have a clear financial impact, such as fraud or identity theft, are more likely to be reported when victims seek compensation or legal remedies.

Reporting rates also vary among violent offenses. Robbery, particularly when the offender is unknown to the victim, may be more likely to prompt police contact because of the immediate threat, trauma, and tangible loss involved. Homicide differs from most other offenses because it is generally among the most consistently detected and recorded forms of serious violence, making homicide data comparatively complete within law enforcement records (Oberwittler, 2019; Smit et al., 2011).

While fluctuations exist, victims of some types of crimes are more likely to report incidents in hopes of receiving immediate assistance, to prevent further victimization, or to create an official record of the incident. This tendency also creates a skew in the data, as crimes with a higher propensity to be reported are often more visible in official statistics compared to those that remain unreported.

The dark figure of crime therefore remains a central limitation of crime-data analysis because it affects the extent to which official statistics reflect the prevalence and distribution of victimization within a community. Researchers and consumers of criminal justice research must recognize that police reports and administrative crime data provide a partial, rather than complete, measure of the underlying crime environment.

To help address this limitation, the research team engaged directly with leaders and data managers from the law enforcement agencies included in the study. These conversations provided operational context for observed crime trends and helped clarify how reported data should be interpreted within individual jurisdictions. Participating agencies also provided incident details, report data, and other relevant information when available. The analysis further incorporates demographic and community characteristics to place agency-level findings within their local context.

These sources do not eliminate the dark figure of crime, but they provide a more informed basis for interpreting what official statistics can and cannot show.

Future iterations of the report can continue to expand this contextual approach by incorporating additional community perspectives, including those of victim-service organizations, mental health professionals, residents, and other stakeholders, through interviews, observation, and related qualitative methods where appropriate.

Understanding Differences Between UCR and NIBRS: Implications for Crime Data Reporting and Interpretation

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The Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) are two distinct crime data collection and reporting systems managed by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). The two programs differ significantly in their data collection methods, scope, and level of detail; each system produces reports with its own structure, strengths, and limitations. Most notably, UCR and NIBRS count crime data differently, which can produce different findings even from the same underlying events. This report discusses these differences because understanding them is essential to accurately interpreting crime statistics and analyzing crime trends over time.

During the 1920s, members of the International Association of Chiefs of Police (IACP) formed the Committee on Uniform Crime Reporting. The committee sought to develop a standardized system of police statistics that could improve consistency in reporting and provide a national picture of crime in the United States. After examining differences in state criminal codes and agency recordkeeping practices, the committee developed a reporting plan based on standardized offense definitions and data requirements. The original framework identified seven Crime Index Offenses—murder, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and larceny—selected as indicators for tracking changes in serious crime. Because reporting and compilation were entirely manual, the early system necessarily emphasized a relatively concise set of measures.

In January 1930, 400 cities representing approximately 20 million residents across 43 states became the inaugural group of agencies participating in the UCR Program. That same year, Congress authorized the Attorney General to collect national crime data, and the Attorney General designated the FBI as the national clearinghouse for crime statistics. The UCR Program was intended to produce reliable state- and national-level criminal statistics for law enforcement administration, operations, and management. The data were also intended to support scholars and other professionals examining crime trends across jurisdictions and to provide the public with a standardized measure of reported crime.

For nearly 60 years, the UCR program remained largely stable in its core structure regarding the type of data collected and disseminated, with notable updates including computers automating data collection in the 1960s and arson being added as the eighth index crime in 1979. In the 1980s, it became evident that the UCR needed broader evaluation and revision. In 1985, the FBI and Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) made significant revisions to the UCR system, including adding new offenses, increasing information about victims and offenders, and expanding availability to interested users. Over time, revisions and modifications continued to be made to reflect new crime categories and changing terminology and definitions. The term Crime Index was discontinued in 2004, after which the eight offenses were referred to as Part I crimes; two additional offenses, Human

Trafficking/Commercial Sex Acts and Human Trafficking/Involuntary Servitude, were added as the ninth and tenth Part I crimes in 2013.

Throughout its history, the UCR employed a summary-based reporting system, in which law enforcement agencies submitted monthly aggregate data on crimes categorized into two groups: Part I offenses, believed to be the most serious crimes, and Part II offenses, which included less severe crimes such as simple assault, drug violations, public drunkenness, and fraud (FBI, n.d.).

One of the primary limitations and frequent criticisms of the UCR program was its use of the 'hierarchy rule.' Under this rule, when multiple offenses occurred during a single incident, only the most serious offense was reported, with later exceptions made for three offenses, Arson, Human Trafficking/Commercial Sex Acts, and Human Trafficking/Involuntary Servitude, which were eventually designated to always be counted. For example, if both a robbery and a murder took place in the same event, only the murder would appear in the official UCR data. As a result, less serious offenses were excluded from reporting, leading to concerns about the underrepresentation of crime in official statistics. Despite this shortcoming, the UCR's summary-based format made it simpler for law enforcement agencies to compile and submit data, a practice that likely contributed to its longevity as a national standard.

In the mid-1980s, as the United States entered a period of technological growth, the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) was developed as a more detailed and comprehensive successor to the UCR, aiming to address some of its key limitations. Although NIBRS was made available to law enforcement agencies beginning in the late 1980s, it did not officially replace the UCR system nationwide until January 2021.

As the name implies, NIBRS collects incident-based data, capturing detailed information about each crime, including the nature and *types of offenses, characteristics of victims and offenders, and the relationship between the parties involved* (Addington, 2009). Unlike the UCR, NIBRS does not apply the hierarchy rule, meaning all offenses that occur within a single incident are recorded, giving a more complete picture of criminal activity, though at the cost of more complex and time-consuming data collection for law enforcement agencies. This richer data can support more nuanced analysis of crime patterns, but the transition from UCR to NIBRS has also posed challenges, particularly when comparing historical UCR data with newer NIBRS data.

An important difference between the systems is the number of crime categories each program identifies, with NIBRS collecting a substantially broader range of offense types. Unlike the summary-based UCR, NIBRS distinguishes between attempted and completed crimes. NIBRS also historically used a broader definition of rape that included male as well as female victims, a definition the summary-based UCR did not adopt until 2013. Because UCR and NIBRS capture and categorize crime information differently, it is difficult to compare older UCR data to more recent NIBRS data and shifts between the two may be more likely to reflect changes in data collection methods rather than actual changes in crime (FBI, n.d.).

The shift from UCR to NIBRS represented a significant advancement in the quality and depth of crime data available in the United States, though it requires adjustments in how crime trends are interpreted, particularly when comparing historical UCR data to newer NIBRS data. Understanding the strengths and limitations of both systems remains essential for policymakers, researchers, and law enforcement officials making informed decisions based on crime data.

The National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) has faced several implementation challenges despite providing substantially more detailed incident-level information than the former

Summary Reporting System. One continuing issue is incomplete nationwide participation. As of the end of 2024, approximately 87% of the U.S. population was covered by NIBRS-reporting law enforcement agencies (Congressional Research Service, 2025). When agencies still reporting through the older Summary Reporting System (SRS) are included, combined coverage rises to approximately 95.6% of the U.S. population (Congressional Research Service, 2025). Certain populous states, including California and New York, have also used state-specific reporting systems intended to interface with national reporting requirements, creating additional complexity in assessing uniform national coverage (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023; Congressional Research Service, 2021). Incomplete NIBRS participation therefore limits the completeness of incident-level national comparisons and can disproportionately affect the visibility of data from smaller or less-resourced agencies.

Additionally, as NIBRS reporting requires more nuanced and detailed incident data, meeting those requirements can create a barrier to participation for smaller or lower-funded agencies. The NIBRS system mandates comprehensive input on various factors like incident time, relationship dynamics between involved parties, and the presence of weapons, requiring more time and resources from reporting agencies. Smaller agencies, especially those with limited resources, may struggle to keep pace, leading to issues with data quality and uniformity (Office of Justice Programs, 2023). To mitigate these challenges, the FBI and the Bureau of Justice Statistics have launched initiatives like the National Crime Statistics Exchange (NCS-X) to encourage participation by offering technical support and resources to under-resourced agencies (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2023; Office of Justice Programs, 2023).

The distinctions between UCR and NIBRS outlined above are not merely academic. They directly shape how the crime data presented in this report should be interpreted, particularly when comparing figures across time or among agencies that transitioned to NIBRS at different points. Several agencies in Fort Bend County did not complete NIBRS-based reporting until 2020, and one agency transitioned at the federal deadline in January 2021. The study therefore begins with the 2020 period while treating transition-era comparisons with appropriate caution. This approach reflects the principle emphasized throughout this chapter: accurate interpretation depends not only on the reported numbers, but also on understanding how, when, and under which reporting system those numbers were generated.

2020: An Unprecedented Year in Recent Crime Trends

The year 2020 marked a significant and abrupt departure from the crime trends observed across much of the previous decade, particularly with respect to violent crime. After a prolonged period during which many violent crime measures remained relatively stable or declined nationally, 2020 witnessed a historic increase in violent offenses, most notably homicide. The Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) reported that homicides increased by nearly 30 percent between 2019 and 2020, representing the largest single-year increase in homicide since the agency began collecting national crime statistics (FBI, 2021). This unprecedented increase disrupted the relatively stable patterns observed between 2010 and 2019 and established 2020 as a statistical outlier in recent national crime trends. When interpreting these changes, however, it is important to consider several factors, including the limitations associated with the national transition from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). It is also important to view the 2020 spike in the context of homicide trends over longer historical periods, rather than relying solely on comparisons with the preceding decade.

Texas, like many other states, experienced a similar rise in violent crime rates in 2020. While the state's overall crime rates had generally followed national trends during the prior decade, 2020 saw a noticeable spike in homicides and aggravated assaults, with the statewide murder rate increasing 35.6 percent and the aggravated assault rate increasing 15 percent per 100,000 population. Texas's homicide rate mirrored the national increase, with urban areas such as Houston and Dallas reporting significant upticks in violent incidents; Houston recorded 400 murders in 2020, a 42 percent increase from 2019, while Dallas ended the year with 251 murders, its highest total in 15 years. However, Texas also differed from some states in its property crime trends, with the statewide property crime rate declining 5.9 percent in 2020, a somewhat steeper decrease than in several other parts of the country (Texas Department of Public Safety, 2021b).

The year 2020 presents particular challenges as a starting point for crime-data analysis because of its unusual social and institutional context. The COVID-19 pandemic produced widespread disruption, including economic instability, changes in routine activity and policing practices, and substantial social stress. The year also included heightened national attention to policing and racial justice. Crime patterns in 2020 therefore diverged from much of the preceding decade, particularly for serious violence. Although this report uses 2020 as the beginning of its longitudinal study period because of the reporting-system considerations discussed above, year-over-year comparisons should be interpreted with the understanding that 2020 was an atypical baseline.

Using 2020 as a baseline can complicate interpretation because subsequent increases or decreases may partly reflect movement away from the exceptional conditions of that year rather than a new long-term trajectory. This report therefore emphasizes multi-year patterns rather than relying on a single comparison with 2020. The methodological caution is reinforced by the UCR-to-NIBRS transition occurring during the same period. Taken together, these conditions make 2020 analytically important but unsuitable as a stand-alone benchmark for judging later public-safety conditions.

Reading Crime Rate Changes in Context

An increase in reported crime does not necessarily indicate a corresponding increase in underlying criminal activity or danger within a community. Reported crime can change because of shifts in law enforcement practices, legislative definitions, investigative technology, public trust, reporting behavior, and other institutional or community factors. The same principle applies in reverse: a decline in reported crime does not independently establish that a community has become safer, because many of the same forces can suppress reporting or alter how offenses are recorded. Interpreting crime trends therefore requires attention to both the direction of change and the processes that may have produced it. The sections that follow examine factors that can increase or decrease reported crime and recent Texas legislative changes that add further complexity to interpreting 2025 data.

Factors That Can Increase Reported Crime Rates

Proactive Policing and Discretionary Stops

One factor that can influence recorded crime is proactive policing, including discretionary traffic enforcement. These practices remain common components of patrol activity, although their

effectiveness, distribution, and community consequences continue to be debated in the research literature (Lum et al., 2020). Visible enforcement may contribute to deterrence by affecting perceived risks of detection (Nagin, 1998), while discretionary stops can also lead officers to identify contraband, firearms, or individuals with outstanding warrants (Gaston, 2019). Because proactive enforcement can generate police contacts and detected offenses that might not otherwise come to official attention, changes in enforcement intensity can affect recorded crime independently of changes in underlying offending.

Research has also examined whether discretionary or pretextual stops contribute to crime reduction, particularly when enforcement is concentrated in high-crime locations. Findings are mixed and should be interpreted within the broader literature on effectiveness, legality, equity, and community trust; however, some studies have identified crime-control benefits associated with focused enforcement strategies (Braga & Weisburd, 2022; Rosenfeld et al., 2014). Proactive initiatives have been used by several agencies examined in this report and are discussed in the corresponding agency sections where relevant.

Community Trust, Outreach, and Willingness to Report

Reported crime can also increase when residents become more willing to contact law enforcement. Greater trust, accessibility, or confidence in local agencies may increase the likelihood that victims and witnesses report incidents that otherwise would remain outside official statistics. Fort Bend County agencies and the District Attorney's Office have invested substantially in community-facing programs and outreach. The present study does not establish that these efforts caused higher reporting, but they provide relevant context when considering how police-community relationships may influence the volume of crime that becomes known to law enforcement.

Municipal Law Enforcement Outreach

FBCSO has maintained a steady cadence of community-facing events, from a series of eight meet-and-greets in the summer of 2023, which allowed attendees to meet their local law enforcement officers while learning about the services provided by the department (Edwards, 2023), to its continued participation in National Night Out, most recently marking the department's 42nd consecutive year in the event on October 7, 2025 (Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, 2025c). "National Night Out is a powerful reminder that safety starts with community," said Fort Bend County Sheriff Eric Fagan. "When neighbors come together and connect with law enforcement, we build trust, strengthen relationships, and create neighborhoods where everyone feels safer and more supported" (Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, 2025c). FBCSO also partners with Kids & Cops, Inc., a nonprofit operating under the Sheriff's Office's Community Services Division, to run an ongoing youth outreach program giving young residents structured opportunities to interact positively with deputies outside of an enforcement context (Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, n.d.). The Stafford Police Department engages in a multitude of outreach initiatives, including a quarterly "coffee with a cop" event where residents and business members can meet one-on-one with officers (City of Stafford, n.d.-a), and a House Watch Program in which officers periodically inspect the homes of residents who are away for up to two weeks (City of Stafford, n.d.-b).

The Rosenberg Police Department has built out a particularly wide range of community-facing programs of its own. In December of 2024, Rosenberg PD's Community Relations Officers helped

Friends of North Rosenberg distribute a holiday lunch to the community as part of a program called "Breaking Bread" (City of Rosenberg, n.d.-a). The department also runs a Seniors and First Responders program, implemented by Chief Jonathan White specifically to strengthen relationships and quality of care for senior residents (City of Rosenberg, n.d.-b), and a Victim Assistance Program funded through the Office of the Governor's Criminal Justice Division "Victims of Crime Act" (City of Rosenberg, n.d.-c). Rosenberg PD additionally participates in National Night Out alongside FBCSO.

The Missouri City Police Department also runs an active slate of community-facing programs, including an annual, free Citizens' Police and Fire Academy offering hands-on exposure to firearms training simulators, vehicle extrication demonstrations, and staged emergency scenarios (City of Missouri City, n.d.-a); a Senior Assistance Program (City of Missouri City, n.d.-b); a house watch program; a community crime watch program; and participation in National Night Out (City of Missouri City, n.d.-c). The department recently welcomed a new police chief, Troy Finner, who formerly served as the chief of the Houston Police Department.

The Richmond Police Department, under Chief J.J. Craig (City of Richmond, n.d.-a), offers similar outreach through its own Citizens Police Academy. Now on Class #27, the ten-week program has graduated more than 650 residents to date and includes ride-alongs, taser training, and hands-on firearms decision-making scenarios; graduates can go on to join the Richmond Citizen's Police Academy Alumni Association, a 501(c)(3) organization that meets monthly (City of Richmond, n.d.-b). Richmond PD also runs a house watch program, periodically checking the homes of residents who will be away for five or more days, mirroring Stafford's program of the same name (City of Richmond, n.d.-c).

The Fulshear Police Department likewise operates a Citizens Police Academy, covering patrol procedures, investigative techniques, community policing, emergency response, and trust-building, including a K-9-unit session, with its most recent enrollment period opening in fall 2025 (City of Fulshear, n.d.). Notably, Fulshear PD partners closely with several other county agencies, including FBCSO, the Sugar Land Police Department, and the Rosenberg Police Department, reflecting the degree to which Fort Bend's smaller municipal departments rely on shared, regional law enforcement infrastructure rather than operating in isolation.

Citizens Police Academies

Citizens Police Academies (CPAs) are another common form of community engagement intended to increase public understanding of police operations and create direct interaction between residents and officers. These programs can provide participants with exposure to patrol, investigations, public-safety strategies, and decision-making processes, potentially reducing misconceptions and increasing familiarity with local agencies. The Sugar Land Police Department's Citizen Police Academy, for example, includes activities such as patrol ride-alongs and crime-scene investigation simulations (City of Sugar Land, n.d.); the program remains active, with its next session beginning in February 2026. The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office runs a comparable academy, with its next class beginning January 15, 2026. Rosenberg Police Department's Citizen Police Academy has graduated more than 450 residents since its inception, with its next ten-week session beginning March 19, 2026. Richmond, Fulshear, and Missouri City also operate Citizens Police Academies, as described above, demonstrating how widely this engagement model is used across Fort Bend County.

District Attorney's Office Initiatives

More recently, the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office has expanded this kind of community-facing work considerably. In January 2025, DA Brian Middleton announced the formation of the Fort Bend Anti-Trafficking Collective (FBATC), a three-year, DOJ-funded task force focused on identifying trafficking victims, investigating cases, and raising community awareness (McCord, 2025). In September 2025, DA Middleton joined Fort Bend County Precinct 4 Commissioner Dexter McCoy and Child Advocates of Fort Bend to launch CAP-C (Child Abuse Prevention Collaborative), a county-wide initiative aimed at making child abuse prevention a shared community responsibility (Fountain, 2025). In October 2025, the office entered a multi-year partnership with the Human Trafficking Institute to strengthen investigations and prosecutions (Staff Report, 2025). Each of these efforts gives residents a more visible, more direct relationship with the prosecutorial side of the system, not just patrol officers, which may extend the trust-and-reporting dynamic described above beyond policing alone.

Richmond Police Department Beat Reports

A particularly rich, if less traditional, source of insight into community trust and outreach comes from the Richmond Police Department's own monthly beat patrol reports, publicly available for each of the department's twelve patrol beats. Unlike a press release or program description, these reports are written by individual patrol officers in their own words, documenting who they spoke with, what concerns residents raised, and what they hope to accomplish in the following month. A review of each month of the 2025 reports across all twelve beats offers a rare, first-hand look at how community trust-building unfolds at the officer level, day to day, rather than only through named programs and press coverage.

Several consistent patterns emerge across the beats. Officers routinely introduce themselves to residents they encounter during patrol, explain their role as the beat's assigned officer, ask directly whether the resident has any concerns, and leave behind contact information so residents can follow up later without needing to call 911 or file a formal report for a minor issue. This practice appears across most beats and officers, suggesting it functions less as an individual officer's personal style and more as a standard departmental approach to community policing. In several instances, residents told officers directly that visible police presence made them feel safer, and in at least one beat, residents had proactively requested additional patrols, which the assigned officer then incorporated into that month's stated goals.

The reports also show officers adapting their outreach to the specific character of their beat. In a beat with a significant commercial footprint, the officer's monthly report included direct comparisons in reported theft and mail fraud trends relative to the prior year, illustrating how beat-level reporting can surface small-scale, comparative crime data alongside relationship-building efforts. In another beat, the assigned officer coordinated with a local mental health community support organization to plan a joint education session, an example of outreach aimed specifically at improving communication and understanding between officers and a population that may otherwise be more hesitant to engage with law enforcement. Other beats reflect outreach tied to neighborhood history and identity, including a community event held in connection with a historically significant neighborhood's founding (City of Richmond, 2025).

Taken together, these reports offer a ground-level complement to the department and county-level initiatives discussed above. Where a press release or program page describes an outreach effort

in the abstract, the beat reports show, in officers' own words, how that kind of engagement plays out in practice, one conversation at a time, and provide a documented basis for the broader argument that sustained, personal community engagement can plausibly increase residents' comfort in reporting concerns to police.

Across the agencies examined, community engagement emerged as a recurring organizational practice, reflected in official program materials, public communications, and local reporting. These efforts vary in form and intensity but collectively demonstrate sustained attention to relationships between criminal justice institutions and the communities they serve. Existing research provides reason to consider such relationships relevant to reporting behavior and public cooperation; however, the presence of outreach programs should not be treated as direct evidence of community trust or as proof that engagement caused changes in reported crime. Later sections of this report examine these distinctions in greater depth.

Legislative Reclassification

Legislative changes represent another important consideration when interpreting crime statistics. Because criminal offenses are defined by statute, changes to criminal law can alter how conduct is classified, prosecuted, and ultimately reflected in official crime data, even when the underlying behavior itself has not changed.

In 2009, for example, Texas law was amended to classify family violence involving strangulation or suffocation as a felony offense rather than a misdemeanor. Prior to this legislative change, many incidents of non-fatal strangulation were recorded as lesser assault offenses or were not separately identified, in part because visible injuries are often minimal despite the substantial medical risks associated with strangulation. As a result of the statutory change, these offenses became more likely to be investigated, documented, and prosecuted as felony assaults, contributing to an increase in the number of offenses classified and reported as serious violent crimes (Texas Legislature, 2009). This legislative change does not necessarily indicate an increase in the actual incidence of strangulation but rather reflects a change in how these offenses are legally classified and reported.

More recently, House Bill 6 (Texas Legislature, 2023) expanded the circumstances under which individuals who knowingly manufacture or deliver fentanyl resulting in death may be prosecuted for murder. Effective September 1, 2023, the legislation also requires qualifying deaths to be identified as fentanyl poisoning or fentanyl toxicity on death certificates. These statutory changes illustrate how legislative action can influence criminal justice statistics by expanding the circumstances under which certain deaths may result in homicide investigations or murder prosecutions, even when the underlying public health event remains the same.

Similarly, Senate Bill 1300 (Texas Legislature, 2025a) substantially revised the classification and punishment structure for organized retail theft by eliminating the lowest offense tier, increasing the severity level assigned to remaining offense categories, and lowering the dollar threshold required for the highest-level felony offense. As a result, conduct that previously qualified for a lower-level theft offense may now be prosecuted under a more serious offense classification. Consequently, future increases in reported felony theft offenses should be interpreted with caution, as they may reflect changes in statutory classification rather than actual increases in organized retail theft activity.

Senate Bill 1646 (Texas Legislature, 2025b) similarly expanded criminal liability for certain offenses involving copper and brass theft by creating new criminal offenses, enhancing penalties under

specified circumstances, and strengthening regulatory requirements governing the sale and recycling of these materials. Like the organized retail theft legislation, statutory changes of this nature may influence offense classifications and prosecution patterns without necessarily reflecting a corresponding change in the underlying frequency of theft.

Taken together, these examples, spanning family violence, drug-related deaths, and property crime, demonstrate that legislative reclassification is not an isolated phenomenon but a recurring feature of how reported crime statistics are generated and interpreted. Consequently, year-over-year changes in reported crime should not automatically be interpreted as evidence that criminal behavior has increased or decreased. Rather, such changes should be evaluated within the broader legal, policy, and operational context in which crime data are collected, classified, and reported.

Forensic Investigative Advances

Advancements in forensic science and investigative techniques, including DNA analysis and investigative genetic genealogy, have significantly influenced criminal investigations and case-clearance capabilities. Over the past two decades, DNA technology has expanded law enforcement's ability to identify offenders and revisit cases that previously remained unsolved. Investigative genetic genealogy has further extended these capabilities by using crime-scene DNA and genealogical relationships to develop investigative leads. The method has been used in numerous high-profile investigations involving homicide, sexual assault, and other serious offenses (Glynn, 2022).

A significant recent development further extends this trend. In January 2025, the Federal Bureau of Investigation approved updated Quality Assurance Standards permitting DNA profiles generated through Rapid DNA analysis—an automated process capable of producing DNA profiles in as little as one to two hours without the need for a traditional forensic laboratory, to be searched directly against the Combined DNA Index System (CODIS). These standards became effective on July 1, 2025 (Federal Bureau of Investigation, 2025a). Previously, Rapid DNA technology was used primarily for identity verification during booking and other limited applications rather than direct database searching. This expansion has the potential to substantially increase both the speed and volume of DNA-assisted investigations and case resolutions in the coming years. Researchers and oversight organizations have cautioned, however, that the rapid advancement of forensic DNA technologies continues to outpace portions of the legal and regulatory framework governing their use, raising important questions regarding accuracy, transparency, oversight, and genetic privacy that policymakers and criminal justice agencies will continue to address.

These forensic advancements do not represent an increase in new criminal activity, but they can affect investigative and clearance statistics by enabling agencies to solve cases that previously remained unresolved. Under NIBRS, agencies can update investigative information as additional evidence becomes available. Consequently, an older case may later be associated with an identified offender or cleared through subsequent investigation, changing outcome measures without changing the number of crimes that originally occurred.

Consumer Technology and Crime Reporting

Technological advancements have also influenced crime reporting more broadly, particularly through the widespread availability of smartphones and residential security systems. Smartphones have enabled more individuals to capture photographic and video evidence of criminal activity,

including assaults, thefts, and other offenses, and provide that evidence directly to law enforcement. Likewise, the increased use of high-definition home security cameras and doorbell surveillance systems has substantially improved the detection and documentation of offenses such as package theft, burglary, trespassing, and vandalism (FBI, 2021).

In Fort Bend County, the increased availability of residential surveillance footage has enhanced investigative efficiency by providing law enforcement agencies with valuable evidentiary material that may not have existed previously. At the same time, these technologies may contribute to increases in reported crime by allowing residents to document and report incidents that might otherwise have gone undetected or unreported. Consequently, increases in reported offenses may sometimes reflect improvements in crime detection and reporting rather than corresponding increases in criminal behavior.

Population Growth

Population growth also represents an important consideration when interpreting crime statistics. As populations increase, particularly in rapidly growing communities such as Fort Bend County, the total number of reported crimes may naturally increase simply because there are more residents, businesses, vehicles, and opportunities for social interaction. An increase in crime counts alone therefore does not necessarily indicate that a community has become less safe.

For this reason, crime rates standardized per 1,000 or 100,000 residents provide a more meaningful measure of public safety than raw crime totals alone. Population growth can increase the total number of reported offenses while crime rates remain stable or even decline. Accordingly, distinguishing between overall crime counts and standardized crime rates is essential for accurately evaluating crime trends and making meaningful comparisons across jurisdictions and over time.

Summary – Factors That May Increase Reported Crime

Taken together, these examples demonstrate that reported crime statistics are influenced by far more than changes in criminal behavior alone. Legislative reforms, advances in forensic science, emerging investigative technologies, improvements in crime reporting, proactive policing strategies, and continued population growth all have the potential to influence the number and types of crimes reflected in official statistics. Consequently, meaningful interpretation of crime trends requires more than simply comparing annual crime totals. It requires consideration of the broader legal, technological, demographic, organizational, and operational context in which crime data are collected, classified, investigated, and reported.

Recognizing these influences helps policymakers, criminal justice professionals, researchers, and community members distinguish changes in reported crime from changes in underlying criminal activity. The mixed-methods design used in this report supports that distinction by pairing quantitative crime data with operational information, qualitative evidence, and contemporary research. The purpose is not to explain away increases or decreases, but to interpret them within the conditions under which the data were generated.

Factors That Can Decrease Reported Crime Rates

A decrease in reported crime likewise does not necessarily indicate a corresponding reduction in criminal activity or an improvement in community safety. Changes in policing priorities, staffing, legal definitions, reporting behavior, and data systems can all reduce the number of offenses appearing in official statistics without changing the underlying prevalence of victimization. These possibilities are equally important when interpreting downward trends and making decisions about public safety or resource allocation.

Policing Priorities and Resource Constraints

One significant factor that can lead to a decrease in crime rates is a change in law enforcement practices, such as a shift in priorities or reporting standards. For instance, some police departments, when faced with resource constraints, may focus more on serious offenses and deprioritize minor infractions. This shift can result in fewer incidents of lesser crimes like petty theft or vandalism being recorded by law enforcement, which may make overall crime rates appear lower. However, this type of change does not necessarily indicate that such crimes are no longer occurring; rather, they may simply be less likely to result in a police report (Lynch & Addington, 2019). In this context, a reduction in crime rates could reflect changes in police focus rather than a true decline in criminal behavior or crime victimization.

A related and increasingly documented driver of this dynamic is police staffing shortages, which affect response times and, in turn, residents' willingness to call police at all. In Austin, for example, average police response times rose steadily over a five-year period, from about 29 minutes in 2019 to nearly 47 minutes in 2024, an increase driven primarily by ongoing patrol staffing shortages (Moreno-Lozano, 2025; Asher, 2025). Crime data analyst Jeff Asher, who conducted the underlying analysis, has found clear evidence that longer response times lead to fewer incidents being successfully reported to law enforcement at all, meaning that as response times lengthen, residents grow less confident that calling police will result in a timely response, which can suppress reported crime rates without reflecting any actual reduction in criminal activity (Asher, 2025). This dynamic is directly relevant to any jurisdiction, including those evaluated in this report, that has experienced staffing challenges within its law enforcement agencies.

Policy-Driven Charging Decisions

Policy decisions by local criminal justice leaders can also affect the volume of offenses entering official systems. A useful historical example comes from Harris County, Texas, where former District Attorney Kim Ogg implemented the Misdemeanor Marijuana Diversion Program (MMDP) in 2017. The program allowed individuals found in possession of up to four ounces of marijuana to avoid arrest and prosecution if they completed a brief education program. The stated purpose was to divert lower-level cases from traditional court processing and allow criminal justice resources to focus on more serious offenses (Harris County District Attorney's Office, 2017).

The policy changed the number of lower-level marijuana cases entering the arrest and court systems. A decline in such cases therefore would not, by itself, demonstrate a corresponding decline in marijuana possession; it would also reflect a change in how those incidents were handled. The

example illustrates how prosecutorial policy can alter administrative crime and case-processing statistics without necessarily changing underlying behavior (Cox & Lansdowne, 2017). The MMDP also generated public debate over prosecutorial discretion (Clemens, 2017). Kim Ogg is no longer Harris County District Attorney; Sean Teare took office in January 2025, so this example should be understood as illustrating a prior policy period rather than current Harris County practice.

The MMDP also reflected a broader national movement toward marijuana decriminalization and diversion in some jurisdictions. Such policy changes can reallocate enforcement and court resources and reduce the number of lower-level drug cases processed through traditional criminal justice channels. Whatever their policy merits, these changes illustrate the interpretive point relevant here: administrative declines in drug offenses can result from changes in enforcement or case-processing policy rather than changes in underlying substance use or possession.

Immigration Enforcement and Reporting Behavior

Changes in reporting behavior among citizens can also contribute to a decrease in crime rates, and one of the most consistently documented drivers of this phenomenon is the relationship between immigration enforcement activity and crime reporting among immigrant communities. When community trust in law enforcement diminishes, victims may be less likely to report crimes, leading to a drop in official crime statistics, regardless of whether actual victimization has declined (Tyler et al., 2014).

This effect has been documented locally. Following Texas's 2017 "sanctuary cities" law, then-Houston Police Chief Art Acevedo reported that Hispanic residents' reporting of sexual assault dropped nearly 43 percent in the first three months of 2017 compared to the prior year, with Hispanic-reported robberies and aggravated assaults each down 12 percent over the same period (Hart, 2017). This pattern is not unique to Houston. Research on the federal Secure Communities program found that Hispanic crime victims were approximately 30 percent less likely to report incidents to police once the program took effect in their county (Gonçalves et al., 2026), while a separate Dallas-based study found that narrowing federal immigration enforcement to focus specifically on individuals convicted of serious crimes, rather than all undocumented immigrants broadly, increased Hispanic crime reporting by approximately 4 percent (Jácome, 2022). Together, these findings indicate that the scope and visibility of immigration enforcement can measurably affect whether crime victims come forward, independent of any change in the underlying rate of victimization.

This factor carries forward-looking relevance for Texas jurisdictions. Senate Bill 8, effective January 1, 2026, requires Texas sheriffs to request 287(g) agreements with U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement for county jail operations (Texas Senate Bill 8, 2025). Given the documented relationship between visible immigration enforcement and reduced crime reporting in immigrant communities, this change is one that Fort Bend County and its constituent agencies should monitor closely in future reporting cycles, as it may plausibly suppress reported crime rates in affected communities without reflecting any actual change in victimization.

Legislative and Data-System Changes

Legislative changes can influence reported crime rates without necessarily indicating a shift in actual criminal behavior. For instance, when legal definitions are revised or certain offenses are decriminalized, actions that were once classified as crimes may no longer appear in official statistics.

A clear example of this is the decriminalization of marijuana possession in several states, which has resulted in notable declines in drug-related arrests and charges, thereby contributing to a reduction in overall crime rates (Maier et al., 2017). While such changes reduce the legal consequences for specific behaviors, they do not necessarily reflect improvements in public safety, nor do they suggest a decrease in the use of marijuana, which continues to be prevalent.

Changes in how crimes are classified or processed through reporting systems can have a similar effect. The nationwide transition from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) system to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) is one such example, as differences between the two systems' data collection methods can result in shifts in recorded crime rates without reflecting actual changes in criminal behavior (Congressional Research Service, 2021). These shifts can make it challenging to interpret whether observed decreases are genuine or a byproduct of evolving data collection methods, a point discussed at greater length earlier in this report.

A distinct but related problem arises when agencies stop or interrupt data submission during a records-management-system transition rather than merely changing how offenses are classified. Nationally, this problem was substantial during the 2021 NIBRS transition: nearly 40% of U.S. law enforcement agencies submitted no crime data to the FBI's revised national database that year, including agencies serving several of the nation's largest jurisdictions (Li, 2022). By 2022, approximately 31% of the nation's roughly 18,000 law enforcement agencies were still absent from the FBI data (Li et al., 2023). Similar gaps can occur at the local level when agencies change records-management vendors or reporting systems. If incomplete submission is mistaken for a genuine decline, public interpretation of crime trends can be distorted. Future system transitions within Fort Bend County should therefore be evaluated for possible reporting gaps before apparent changes in crime are interpreted substantively.

A comparable, more recent illustration comes from a 2021 change to Texas's legal definition of child neglect within the state's Department of Family and Protective Services (DFPS) system. Following this redefinition, a federal Child and Family Services Review found that substantiated maltreatment reports declined by approximately 20 percent, with repeat-maltreatment findings declining by approximately 28 percent, over the following reporting years (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, 2023). As with the other legislative and definitional changes discussed in this section, this decline reflects a change in what qualifies as a substantiated finding under state law rather than a demonstrated reduction in the underlying prevalence of child maltreatment in Texas.

Retail and Business Underreporting

A further, less visible factor that can suppress reported crime statistics is the tendency of businesses, particularly retailers, not to report theft to police at all. A 2024 industry study found that retail theft is substantially underreported, driven in large part by retailers who believe that reporting theft to police is unlikely to result in meaningful law enforcement action or case resolution (Retail Industry Leaders Association, 2024). Because retail theft that is never reported cannot appear in official crime statistics, this dynamic can suppress reported property crime figures independent of the actual rate at which retail theft occurs. This factor is worth monitoring going forward in light of Senate Bill 1300's 2025 changes to organized retail theft classification, discussed earlier in this report, since a felony-level charge may be more likely to prompt retailer follow-through with police than a lower-

level offense was previously, potentially altering retailer reporting behavior in ways that affect future statistics independent of any change in actual theft activity.

Summary – Factors That May Decrease Reported Crime

Taken together, these examples demonstrate that a reduction in reported crime rates does not always equate to a safer community. Such reductions are often influenced by factors including changes in policing priorities and resource constraints, policy decisions by criminal justice leadership, the effect of immigration enforcement activity on community trust and reporting behavior, legislative and definitional changes, evolving data collection systems, and the underreporting behavior of businesses and other institutions. To accurately assess community safety, it is critical to analyze crime data in context and to consider the underlying factors that may contribute to shifts in reported crime levels, rather than treating a numerical decline as evidence, on its own, that a community has become safer.

Regional Comparability of Crime Data

Although standardized reporting systems such as the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) have substantially improved the consistency of crime reporting across jurisdictions, meaningful comparisons remain challenging. Differences in administrative practices, prosecutorial procedures, agency responsibilities, reporting policies, public transparency initiatives, and methods of presenting crime data can all influence how official statistics are generated and interpreted. Consequently, apparent differences in crime or criminal justice outcomes between neighboring jurisdictions do not necessarily reflect differences in underlying criminal activity. Rather, they may also reflect important organizational and procedural differences that shape how crime is documented, processed, and communicated to the public.

Recent developments in neighboring Harris County provide a useful illustration of these broader challenges and reinforce a central premise of this report: crime statistics are most meaningful when interpreted within the institutional and methodological context in which they were produced.

Administrative and Prosecutorial Differences

One procedural difference is worth explaining in some detail, because it directly illustrates how administrative process, not underlying crime, can shape recorded statistics. Harris County operates a distinctive prosecutorial intake model, in place since the late 1970s, in which a prosecutor reviews every case and must approve probable cause before police complete a warrantless arrest (Gershowitz, 2017). Most Texas jurisdictions, including Fort Bend County, do not require this pre-arrest review; a Fort Bend officer who determines probable cause exists can proceed directly to arrest without first clearing that decision with a prosecutor. This is not a minor technicality. Because Harris County's intake division functions as a gatekeeper before an arrest is finalized, the rigor, staffing, and consistency of that division directly affects how many arrests are ultimately made and recorded, independent of how much crime is actually occurring in the county.

The practical stakes of this difference became visible in Harris County in recent years. A Houston Chronicle investigation published February 1, 2024, found that criminal charges filed by the Harris County District Attorney's Office in more than 4,500 cases in 2022 were later determined by judges to have lacked probable cause, more than double the number of such cases in 2016 (Houston Chronicle,

2024). The investigation traced this increase to a staffing change made early in former District Attorney Kim Ogg's tenure, in which the intake division moved away from a rotational model staffed exclusively by experienced trial prosecutors toward a model using a larger number of full-time attorneys with more varied levels of experience (Houston Chronicle, 2024). Sean Teare, who succeeded Ogg as Harris County District Attorney on January 1, 2025, identified reforming the intake division as his top priority upon taking office and, by March 2025, had restored a model built around experienced line prosecutors reviewing charges directly with officers at the scene (Grunau, 2025; Amari, 2024).

This history matters for interpreting crime and arrest statistics for a straightforward reason: the same underlying pattern of criminal activity in Harris County could plausibly have produced meaningfully different official arrest and case-filing numbers depending on which intake staffing model was in place in a given year, since a less rigorous review process was directly linked to a documented rise in legally deficient arrests. For Fort Bend County residents, the relevant takeaway is not that one county's approach is right and the other wrong, but that any informal comparison between Fort Bend's and Harris County's arrest or case-filing statistics, comparisons residents and local media make frequently given the counties' shared border and media market, should account for the fact that Harris County's numbers reflect an administrative filtering process Fort Bend does not have, and that this filtering process was itself unstable and subject to significant change across the 2024–2025 period covered by portions of this report.

The Harris County intake model illustrates a broader methodological principle that extends well beyond any single jurisdiction. Administrative structures, prosecutorial review procedures, staffing models, and organizational practices can all influence official criminal justice statistics independently of changes in underlying criminal activity. Consequently, meaningful comparisons between jurisdictions require consideration of the legal and administrative frameworks through which crime data are generated, not simply the numerical outcomes themselves. Administrative procedures represent only one aspect of this broader challenge. Equally important is how crime data are ultimately presented, defined, and communicated to the public.

Public Data Transparency and Interpretation

Harris County's recent experience with public data transparency more broadly offers a further, cautionary illustration of this report's central methodological concern. In October 2024, the Harris County District Attorney's Office launched a public dashboard covering pending, dismissed, and rejected cases, along with bond and re-offense data for nearly one million criminal cases (KHOU, 2024). In December 2024, advocacy organizations including the Texas Jail Project, The Bail Project, and the ACLU of Texas publicly raised concerns that the dashboard could be "potentially misleading," citing unclear date ranges, undefined terms such as "violent crime," and charts that could be misread without clarification that certain new-charge data reflected only offenses committed after release on a specific bond rather than pre-existing cases filed later (Texas Jail Project, 2024a). A separate review found the dashboard omitted demographic breakdowns necessary to assess racial disparities in case outcomes (Texas Jail Project, 2024b). These concerns mirror the core argument of this report: that undefined terms, unclear timeframes, and granular data presented without broader context can mislead the public even when a dashboard or report is well-intentioned. A separate 2023 dispute, in which the Harris County District Attorney's Office publicly called for the County Administrator's Office to retract a claim that violent crime had declined that year, further illustrates how contested crime-

data methodology can become even at the county level, underscoring that disagreements of this kind are not unique to Fort Bend County (Hansen, 2023).

These examples demonstrate that transparency alone does not guarantee accurate public understanding. Even when agencies make extensive crime data publicly available, meaningful interpretation depends upon clear definitions, transparent methodology, appropriate context, and careful explanation of what the data do, and do not, represent. Increasingly, criminal justice agencies, researchers, and community organizations have recognized the importance of independent analysis to help bridge this gap between data availability and data interpretation.

Independent Crime Data Validation

This regional context also reflects a broader trend toward independent crime-data validation. In 2022, Crime Stoppers of Houston, in partnership with the Glenda Gordy Research Center, launched an independent regional violent-crime index compiling data from Texas DPS, the Houston Police Department, and the Harris County Sheriff's Office (Houston Chronicle, 2022). Like this report, that effort represents a move toward crime reporting produced by parties positioned as independent of the law enforcement and prosecutorial agencies whose data they analyze, a trend that reflects the growing recognition that independent analysis can strengthen public confidence in crime statistics by providing objective interpretation that extends beyond the reporting responsibilities of individual criminal justice agencies.

This report reflects the same commitment to independent interpretation. Although commissioned by the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, responsibility for the research design, analysis, interpretation, and presentation of findings remained with the research team.

The commissioning relationship did not determine the conclusions reported here. Findings are grounded in the available evidence rather than organizational priorities or anticipated outcomes. By integrating standardized NIBRS data with qualitative interviews, nonparticipant observations, demographic analysis, and contemporary criminal justice research, the report seeks to provide a contextually grounded assessment of crime and criminal justice in Fort Bend County. In this framework, transparency requires more than making statistics available; it also requires explaining the legal, organizational, methodological, and community contexts necessary to interpret them responsibly.

A Final Note on Interpreting Crime Statistics

Collectively, the concepts presented throughout this chapter illustrate a central principle underlying this report: crime statistics should not be interpreted in isolation. Reported increases and decreases may reflect genuine changes in criminal activity, but they may also result from legislative reforms, prosecutorial practices, administrative procedures, investigative priorities, reporting behavior, technological advancements, agency resources, population changes, or modifications to data collection systems. Consequently, meaningful interpretation requires consideration of the broader legal, organizational, operational, and community context in which crime data are generated.

The analyses that follow apply this principle by interpreting statistical change alongside the circumstances under which the data were produced. Numerical increases and decreases are important, but they are not treated as self-explanatory. The report instead distinguishes, where the available

evidence permits, between changes in recorded crime and changes that may reflect reporting, classification, enforcement, administrative, demographic, or technological influences.

The chapters that follow build on this framework by examining the demographic, geographic, organizational, and criminal justice characteristics of Fort Bend County before turning to the study's empirical findings. This contextual foundation is intended to make the later statistical analyses more interpretable, not less consequential, by clarifying what the available crime data can support and where caution remains necessary.

CHAPTER THREE: CONTEXTUAL FACTORS **SHAPING CRIME AND CRIMINAL JUSTICE IN** **FORT BEND COUNTY**

Fort Bend County Population Growth

Fort Bend County has experienced significant, sustained population growth over the past two decades. According to the U.S. Census Bureau's Population Estimates Program, the county's population grew from approximately 350,000 in 2000 to approximately 975,000 in 2025, making it the eighth most populous county in Texas and one of the fastest growing counties in the nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026a). This growth has been driven by regional economic development and the county's continued attractiveness to families and businesses relocating from the greater Houston area and elsewhere. Although earlier projections anticipated that the county would surpass 1 million residents by 2026, the most recent estimates place the population just below that threshold, underscoring both the pace of growth and the uncertainty inherent in long range population projections.

This scale and pace of growth matter directly for interpreting the crime data presented later in this report. As a community's population grows, the number of residents, businesses, vehicles, and daily interactions grows alongside it. Raw incident counts may therefore increase even when the underlying rate of crime per capita remains stable or declines. For this reason, crime statistics throughout this report are interpreted with population growth in mind, and population adjusted rates are used where appropriate alongside raw counts.

Fort Bend County Infrastructure

Infrastructure and land use changes also matter for interpreting crime data because they can alter policing demand independent of changes in the underlying crime rate. Roadway expansion changes traffic flow and the volume of traffic related incidents, while commercial and mixed use development increases the number of daily interactions and calls for service within an area. As Fort Bend County has grown, its infrastructure has expanded alongside it, with direct implications for how law enforcement agencies allocate resources and how crime statistics from rapidly developing areas should be interpreted.

Several major roadway projects illustrate this dynamic. The ongoing expansion of the Grand Parkway (State Highway 99) and the Fort Bend Toll Road is designed to ease congestion and improve connectivity between the county's suburban areas and greater Houston, while continued improvements to the I 69 corridor aim to support freight movement and reduce commute times. At a more local level, the City of Sugar Land's expansion of University Boulevard, a corridor increasingly strained by residential growth and traffic tied to nearby venues, reflects the same pattern at a neighborhood scale. As of April 2025, the project's total funding had grown to \$5.31 million through an interlocal agreement between Sugar Land and Fort Bend County (Vogel, 2025). Projects of this kind matter for crime interpretation not because of their cost or scope, but because changing transportation corridors can affect traffic volume, enforcement activity, collision response, and other demands on police resources without necessarily reflecting a change in the surrounding area's underlying safety.

Commercial and mixed-use development follows a similar logic. The Stafford development known as "The Grid," built on the former Texas Instruments campus, combines restaurant, retail, and residential space, with an estimated 328,000 vehicles passing the site daily along adjacent roadways (Weaver, 2024). The relevant point for this report is not the specific businesses located there, but that dense, mixed-use developments of this kind concentrate people, vehicles, and commercial activity in ways that increase both the opportunity for certain offenses, such as retail theft, and the volume of routine police activity in the surrounding area.

Given this pace of growth, public safety staffing and resource needs are best understood not simply as a matter of adding personnel, but also as a matter of evolving service demands. Modern policing in a rapidly growing county such as Fort Bend increasingly requires capacity across a wider range of functions, including traffic management, event staffing, cybercrime investigation, technology infrastructure, traditional patrol, and investigative services. The staffing demands associated with the county's growing calendar of large venues and gatherings are considered separately below.

Event-Driven Policing Demand

Beyond roadway and commercial infrastructure, Fort Bend County's growing calendar of large venues, festivals, and recurring events creates a distinct category of policing demand tied to specific dates and locations rather than to a community's baseline crime rate. Fort Bend agencies do not publicly report event specific data on overtime costs, calls for service, or arrests. Accordingly, the discussion below draws on research concerning policing and large gatherings, documented Texas municipal practices for special event staffing, and publicly available information about major Fort Bend venues. Where an effect is described as likely or probable, it should be understood as an inference based on the scale and structure of the event rather than as a confirmed local statistic.

Research generally finds that police staffing and presence are associated with crime levels, particularly violent crime (Chalfin & McCrary, 2018; Kovandzic & Sloan, 2002). Large events therefore create an important resource allocation question because they may require concentrated police presence at a particular location while agencies continue to meet routine service demands elsewhere. Texas municipalities commonly address special event staffing through paid off duty or extra job details in which event organizers pay for licensed officers assigned to the event (City of Austin, n.d.; City of Pilot Point, n.d.). These examples demonstrate one approach used in Texas, although this report did not confirm the specific staffing or compensation model used by every Fort Bend agency. Multi day events may create additional staffing and scheduling demands because coverage must be sustained across repeated event periods. Events involving alcohol service may also generate calls for service associated with impaired driving, public intoxication, disorderly conduct, and related activity, although event specific Fort Bend data were not available to quantify those effects.

Several Fort Bend venues illustrate these dynamics at different scales. Constellation Field in Sugar Land, home to the Triple A Sugar Land Space Cowboys, represents a season long rather than single day demand, with 75 home dates across the 2025 season at a 7,500 seat venue with alcohol service (MiLB.com, 2025a). The Space Cowboys won the Pacific Coast League championship and the Triple A National Championship in 2024 and entered the 2025 season as defending champions (MiLB.com, 2025a). The same facility hosts the Sugar Land Holiday Lights, a 45 night event that ran from November 21, 2025, through January 4, 2026 (MiLB.com, 2025b). The Smart Financial Centre, a 6,400 seat indoor venue also in Sugar Land, hosted at least 59 individually confirmed concert dates in 2025 (setlist.fm, n.d.; Ticketmaster, n.d.). The 89th Annual Fort Bend County Fair & Rodeo, held

in Rosenberg from September 26 through October 5, 2025, with a separate Championship BBQ Cook Off held on September 19 and 20, combined ten days of livestock shows, midway operations, alcohol service, and a PRCA sanctioned rodeo that serves as an official RODEOHOUSTON qualifier (Fort Bend County Fair Association, 2025). These venues differ substantially in size and structure, but each illustrates how recurring entertainment activity can create concentrated and repeated public safety demands that are not captured by the county's underlying crime rate alone.

A structural funding consideration is also relevant to these staffing demands. Fort Bend County began imposing a Hotel Occupancy Tax on October 1, 2024, with full enforcement beginning May 1, 2025, generating an estimated \$2 million annually (Fort Bend County, n.d.; Community Impact, 2024), as authorized under House Bill 3453 (Tex. H.B. 3453, 2023). Under the Texas Tax Code, hotel occupancy tax revenue is restricted to statutorily authorized tourism related purposes and does not function as a general funding source for law enforcement overtime or event security (Texas Comptroller of Public Accounts, n.d.). This distinction is relevant because events that contribute to tourism activity may also create public safety staffing demands that must be funded through other mechanisms. That relationship should be considered when interpreting future changes in event related enforcement activity or overtime spending.

Viewed collectively, these venues and events represent a distinct and growing category of policing demand associated with the county's expanding entertainment and tourism footprint. They should not, by themselves, be interpreted as evidence of a change in the county's underlying crime rate. Instead, event timing and location provide important context when evaluating localized increases in enforcement activity, DWI arrests, or calls for service associated with specific dates and venues.

Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Fort Bend County

Fort Bend County is consistently recognized as one of the most racially and ethnically diverse counties in the United States, and a December 2025 Greater Houston Partnership analysis of newly released Census Bureau data identified it as the most diverse county in the greater Houston region (Greater Houston Partnership, 2025). Perhaps most notably, no single racial or ethnic group constitutes a majority of the county's population. According to recent estimates, approximately 28.7% of residents identify as White, 24.7% to 25% as Hispanic or Latino, 21.9% to 23% as Asian, and approximately 20.5% as Black or African American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2024; USAFacts, 2025). These categories should be interpreted carefully because Hispanic or Latino origin is an ethnicity and can overlap with racial categories. Even with that distinction, the distribution illustrates the unusual demographic balance within Fort Bend County, where several racial and ethnic communities each represent substantial portions of the population.

This lack of a clear majority is not simply a demographic characteristic; it has practical implications for policing and community engagement because no single set of cultural expectations, language needs, or historical relationships with law enforcement can be assumed to represent "the community" as a whole. Effective outreach may therefore require engagement strategies responsive to multiple communities operating within the same jurisdiction rather than a single uniform approach.

Fort Bend County's diversity index, which measures the probability that two randomly selected residents belong to different racial or ethnic groups, stood at 76.5 percent as of the most recent American Community Survey estimates, essentially unchanged from 76.3 percent in the 2020 Census, and considerably higher than the Texas statewide average (Census Dots, n.d.). This level of sustained diversity, combined with the county's rapid population growth discussed above, means Fort Bend

County's demographic profile differs meaningfully from many of the jurisdictions typically used as comparison points in state and national crime data, a distinction worth bearing in mind throughout the remainder of this report.

Interpreting Crime Within the Context of Fort Bend County

The discussion in this chapter establishes Fort Bend County not simply as the geographic jurisdiction in which the reported crime data were generated, but as the community context within which those data must be interpreted. Crime statistics do not exist independently of the communities they describe. Population growth, development, infrastructure, demographic composition, organizational practices, and the administrative structures through which criminal justice agencies operate all shape the environment in which crime is reported and public safety services are delivered. The quantitative findings that follow are therefore most informative when considered within this local context rather than as isolated numerical measures.

Among the most significant contextual factors is Fort Bend County's rapid and sustained population growth. A county adding tens of thousands of residents while simultaneously expanding its residential developments, commercial corridors, transportation infrastructure, and public amenities can reasonably be expected to experience increases in reported incidents, calls for service, traffic activity, and demands placed upon the criminal justice system. Consequently, increases or decreases in reported crime should not automatically be interpreted as changes in underlying criminal behavior without first considering changes in the size, composition, and distribution of the population at risk.

Fort Bend County's demographic composition adds a second important layer of context. With no single racial or ethnic group comprising a majority of the population, community engagement, victim reporting, public communication, and efforts to build trust occur across multiple cultural, linguistic, and social contexts. These characteristics are relevant both to the demographic patterns examined later in the report and to understanding how residents may experience and interact with criminal justice institutions.

Organizational and administrative practices also influence the interpretation of crime data. As discussed in Chapter Two, criminal justice agencies differ in their reporting procedures, charging practices, staffing models, prosecutorial policies, and operational priorities. Direct comparisons between jurisdictions should therefore account for these organizational differences. Apparent differences in crime rates or criminal justice outcomes may, in some instances, reflect differences in administrative practice rather than differences in underlying criminal activity.

Collectively, these characteristics establish the analytical framework for the quantitative findings that follow. The purpose of the remaining chapters is not merely to present crime statistics, but to examine what those statistics mean within the demographic, organizational, geographic, and community context that defines Fort Bend County. That distinction is central to the report: numerical change identifies what occurred, while context helps determine how that change should be understood.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHOD

Research Design

This report employs a longitudinal mixed methods research design to examine crime and criminal justice trends in Fort Bend County, Texas. The study integrates quantitative analyses of National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data with qualitative evidence from interviews with criminal justice professionals, nonparticipant observations, agency document review, demographic analyses, and review of contemporary criminal justice research. Combining these complementary sources of evidence within a single analytical framework supports a more comprehensive assessment than either quantitative or qualitative evidence could provide alone (Creswell, 2018; Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

The longitudinal component examines six consecutive years of crime data (2020–2025) to evaluate changes in reported crime, victimization, offender characteristics, and clearance rates over time. Examining multiple years helps distinguish sustained patterns from temporary fluctuations associated with isolated events, policy changes, or other short term influences. The 2020 baseline also captures the period in which participating Texas agencies were transitioning to NIBRS reporting. As discussed below, Meadows Place did not begin NIBRS reporting until 2021; that exception is addressed explicitly in the agency level analyses.

Quantitative analyses provide the statistical foundation for examining reported crime trends, while qualitative methods supply context regarding agency operations, investigative practices, reporting procedures, and community characteristics. The methods are therefore complementary: the quantitative evidence identifies patterns requiring explanation, and the qualitative evidence helps establish the circumstances in which those patterns occurred.

Throughout the project, quantitative and qualitative findings informed one another through an iterative process of analysis and contextual verification. Statistical findings frequently guided additional qualitative inquiry, while qualitative information informed subsequent interpretation of the quantitative results. This process allowed findings to be evaluated within their legal, organizational, operational, demographic, and community contexts (Greene, 2007).

The Value of a Mixed-Methods Approach

Crime statistics provide an essential foundation for understanding crime and criminal justice trends, but they rarely explain those trends on their own. Reported crime may be influenced by legislative reforms, prosecutorial procedures, agency policies, reporting practices, technological changes, demographic shifts, and other contextual factors that numerical analyses cannot fully capture (Creswell, 2018).

Mixed methods research is particularly useful for examining complex social phenomena because it draws on the complementary strengths of quantitative and qualitative inquiry (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Greene, 2007). In this study, standardized NIBRS data establish measurable patterns, while interviews, observations, document review, demographic analysis, and relevant scholarship provide evidence needed to interpret those patterns within the conditions in which they occurred.

Unexpected findings, statistical outliers, and emerging patterns frequently prompted additional inquiry, including follow up interviews with agency leadership, review of policies and operational practices, examination of agency documentation, and consideration of relevant legal, demographic, and organizational factors. This process reflects methodological triangulation: findings are examined across complementary sources of evidence to strengthen their credibility and interpretation (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018; Greene, 2007).

The findings presented in this report should therefore be read as more than statistical summaries. The study uses standardized crime data as its quantitative foundation and draws on qualitative and contextual evidence to assess what changed, how those changes should be interpreted, and which questions warrant additional examination.

Iterative Data Verification and Contextual Interpretation

Quantitative and qualitative methods were not treated as separate phases of the research. Statistical analyses identified overall trends, unexpected findings, outliers, and patterns requiring additional examination; those findings then guided targeted qualitative inquiry designed to clarify the circumstances surrounding the observed results.

When unusual patterns emerged, the research team sought additional context through agency consultation, review of policies and operational practices, publicly available documentation, and consideration of relevant legal, demographic, organizational, and community factors. The purpose was not to explain every statistical change, but to assess whether an observed pattern might reflect changes in criminal activity, reporting practices, legislation, operational priorities, resource allocation, technology, or other contextual influences.

Qualitative findings also prompted additional quantitative review when appropriate. This movement between methods reduced the likelihood that conclusions would rest on statistical artifacts or incomplete contextual information and allowed interpretations to be refined as additional evidence became available.

This iterative process reflects the methodological principle guiding the report: crime and criminal justice data are most informative when numerical patterns are evaluated alongside the conditions in which they occur. Conclusions therefore reflect the integration of complementary sources of evidence rather than reliance on a single dataset in isolation.

Quantitative Methods: National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Analysis

The quantitative component of the present study examined crime and criminal justice trends using data reported through the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). NIBRS served as the primary quantitative data source for evaluating reported crime, offense rates, victimization, known offenders, and clearance rates across participating law enforcement agencies within Fort Bend County. These analyses provided the statistical foundation for both the countywide and agency-level findings presented throughout this report. Qualitative methods used to contextualize these findings are described separately within this chapter.

Data Sources

Quantitative crime data were obtained through the Texas Department of Public Safety's National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Report Center. Data included reported incidents, offenses, victims, known offenders, arrests, and clearance information for each participating law enforcement agency.

Throughout this report, crime rates are calculated using offense counts unless otherwise specified. Definitions for incidents, offenses, victims, known offenders, arrests, and clearance categories are provided in the notes accompanying the statistical tables presented in the Findings chapters.

Participating Law Enforcement Agencies

Nine law enforcement agencies participated in this study: the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, Fulshear Police Department, Meadows Place Police Department, Missouri City Police Department, Needville Police Department, Richmond Police Department, Rosenberg Police Department, Stafford Police Department, and Sugar Land Police Department. Collectively, these agencies represent the primary municipal and county law enforcement organizations serving Fort Bend County and provide comprehensive NIBRS reporting for the jurisdictions examined throughout this report.

Prior to data collection, the researchers met with the chief executive of each participating agency to explain the purpose, scope, and objectives of the project. Each agency voluntarily agreed to participate and demonstrated a willingness to facilitate access to relevant information while maintaining appropriate standards of confidentiality and data security.

Agency participation extended beyond the initial collection of quantitative data. Agency leadership remained available to clarify reporting practices, explain operational procedures, discuss unusual statistical patterns, and provide additional contextual information when requested. This cooperation improved the research team's ability to interpret agency level findings while responsibility for all analytical decisions and conclusions remained with the research team.

Study Period

The study examines six consecutive years of crime data spanning 2020 through 2025. The period was selected to align as closely as possible with the transition to NIBRS and to provide a consistent incident based framework for longitudinal analysis. One participating agency, Meadows Place Police Department, did not begin NIBRS reporting until 2021; accordingly, its 2020 data are unavailable for the NIBRS based analyses, as discussed below.

As discussed in Chapter Two, NIBRS differs substantially from the legacy UCR Program by collecting incident-level information, eliminating the hierarchy rule, and capturing substantially more information regarding offenses, victims, offenders, property, and offense circumstances. Restricting the analysis to the NIBRS reporting period therefore enhances the consistency and comparability of the longitudinal analyses presented throughout this report.

Quantitative Review and Contextual Verification

Following the initial quantitative analyses, the research team conducted follow up discussions with participating agency leadership regarding notable findings, including unexpected trends, statistical outliers, and patterns requiring additional examination. These discussions supplied agency specific operational and organizational context that assisted in interpreting the quantitative results.

Observed changes were not interpreted from numerical movement alone. When additional inquiry was warranted, the research team considered whether changes in reporting practices, enforcement priorities, organizational structure, legislation, technology, staffing, demographic conditions, or other contextual factors could reasonably affect interpretation of the pattern.

These discussions were not used to alter the statistical results or to allow agencies to determine the report's conclusions. Their purpose was to identify relevant context that could inform interpretation while leaving analytical judgments with the research team.

Crime Rates Calculations

The primary quantitative objective is to estimate crime rates for Fort Bend County as an aggregate unit and, secondarily, for the participating law enforcement agencies. Unless otherwise specified, rates are calculated from reported offenses rather than incidents using the following formula:

$$\text{Rate Per 100,000} = \frac{\text{Number of Offenses} \times 100,000}{\text{Population}}$$

This standardized approach permits meaningful comparisons across jurisdictions and over time while accounting for differences in population size.

Selection of Crime Rate Denominator

Crime rates presented throughout this report are generally expressed per 100,000 population, consistent with reporting practices used by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), and many state criminal justice agencies. Standardizing crime rates in this manner allows meaningful comparisons across jurisdictions that differ substantially in population size and facilitates comparisons with state and national crime statistics.

In some sections of this report, particularly when discussing overall county trends or communicating findings intended for a broader public audience, supplemental rates per 1,000 residents are also presented. These alternative rates are mathematically equivalent but may be easier for readers to interpret when examining crime within a single community. Unless otherwise specified, however, the detailed statistical analyses presented throughout this report use rates per 100,000 population to maintain consistency with established criminal justice research and national reporting practices.

Percentage Change Calculations

To evaluate changes in crime rates over time, year-to-year percentage increases and decreases were calculated for each offense category and jurisdiction using the following formula:

$$\text{Percent Increase/Decrease: } \frac{\text{Current Crime Rate} - \text{Previous Crime Rate}}{\text{Previous Crime Rate}} \times 100$$

Positive values indicate an increase in the reported crime rate relative to the previous year, whereas negative values indicate a decrease. Percentage change calculations provide a standardized method for assessing the magnitude of change across multiple years while accounting for differences in baseline crime rates.

Small Number Stability

Percentage changes can become unstable and potentially misleading when calculated from very small baseline counts. Small numerical differences may produce disproportionately large percentage increases or decreases that do not represent meaningful changes in underlying criminal activity.

Accordingly, this study applies a conservative analytical threshold and does not calculate percentage increases or decreases when the baseline offense count is fewer than 100 reported offenses. The threshold is intended to reduce the likelihood that small numerical changes in low-frequency offenses are presented as large percentage shifts that may overstate the practical magnitude of change. This rule was applied consistently across agencies, offense categories, and study years.

In tables where percentage changes were not calculated because of the small number rule, "NA" indicates that the calculation was intentionally omitted rather than that data were missing.

Population Estimates

The following population estimates were used to calculate crime rates for aggregate Fort Bend County and for each respective law enforcement jurisdiction included in the analysis.

Table Population Data: Populations Used to Calculate Crime Rates						
	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Aggregate FBC	818,027	854,175	889,146	916,778	958,434	973,702
Fulshear	16,856	25,169	34,264	42,616	54,629	64,630
Mead. Place		4,755	4,671	4,596	4,689	4,546
Missouri City	74,259	74,800	76,500	76,773	76,558	77,327
Needville	3,113	3,059	3,040	3,088	3,094	3,114
Richmond	11,627	11,800	12,520	12,816	12,582	13,389
Rosenberg	38,202	39,468	40,739	41,104	40,646	42,701
Stafford	17,666	17,200	17,427	17,338	17,555	18,043
Sugar Land	111,026	110,000	109,414	108,515	109,853	107,726
FBC Sheriff	545,278	567,924	590,571	609,932	638,828	642,226

NIBRS Data Processing and Analytical Procedures

NIBRS Data Structure

The quantitative analyses presented throughout this report were based on incident-level data reported through the Texas Department of Public Safety (Texas DPS) National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS). Texas DPS organizes reported crime into three broad offense categories: Person Offenses, Property Offenses, and Offenses Against Society. Each category includes multiple offense types, as identified in the footnotes accompanying Table AFBC 1.

In addition to these aggregate offense categories, the Texas DPS data provide offense-specific information for several crimes commonly used to evaluate community safety and criminal justice trends. These include assault, sex offenses, homicide, robbery, burglary, theft, and motor vehicle theft, among others (see Table AFBC 2). For each offense category, the analyses examined incidents, offenses, victims, known offenders, and clearance information where available.

Agency-Level Crime Rate Analysis

Agency-level analyses were conducted for each participating law enforcement agency within Fort Bend County using offense-level data obtained from the Texas DPS NIBRS database. Crime rates were calculated for each agency using the procedures described earlier in this chapter, allowing comparisons across agencies and over time using a standardized methodology.

One exception to this process involved the Meadows Place Police Department. Meadows Place was the only participating agency that had not transitioned from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program to NIBRS reporting in time for the 2020 reporting year. Consequently, official Texas DPS NIBRS data were unavailable for Meadows Place for 2020, preventing calculation of a 2020 agency crime rate. Beginning in 2021, Meadows Place fully transitioned to NIBRS reporting and has continued reporting through the present study period. Although Meadows Place did not contribute NIBRS data for 2020, the department remained in compliance with the Federal Bureau of Investigation's nationwide transition timeline requiring NIBRS reporting beginning January 1, 2021.

Evaluation of Alternative Data Sources

At the outset of the project, the researchers explored obtaining detailed offense data directly from each participating law enforcement agency rather than relying exclusively on the Texas DPS NIBRS database. Following introductory meetings with agency leadership, each participating agency was asked to provide offense-level information that would permit development of both agency-specific analyses and an aggregate countywide assessment.

Although agencies were highly cooperative and provided information whenever possible, substantial differences existed in the structure, format, level of detail, and organization of the data maintained by individual agencies. These variations limited the ability to combine agency-provided datasets into a single standardized analytical database suitable for reliable countywide comparisons.

After evaluating both approaches, the researchers determined that the Texas DPS NIBRS database provided the most complete, standardized, and methodologically consistent source of information for the quantitative analyses presented throughout this report. Accordingly, Texas DPS NIBRS data served as the primary quantitative data source. Agency-provided information was used to supplement contextual understanding where appropriate and, when sufficiently complete and interpretable, is presented separately within the Appendix. Additional discussion regarding these methodological considerations appears in the Limitations chapter.

Countywide Crime Rate Estimation

Unlike municipal police departments, the Texas DPS NIBRS database does not publish crime statistics aggregated at the county level. Consequently, a countywide dataset was developed by aggregating offense-level information reported by each participating law enforcement agency within Fort Bend County. This process enabled estimation of countywide crime rates while maintaining consistency with the agency-level analyses presented throughout the report.

Several methodological considerations were addressed during development of the aggregate county dataset.

First, because Meadows Place Police Department did not report NIBRS data during 2020, its information could not be incorporated into the countywide calculations for that year. While this omission introduces a minor limitation, the researchers concluded that its effect on the aggregate county estimates is likely minimal because Meadows Place has consistently represented only a small proportion of total incidents, offenses, victims, and known offenders reported within Fort Bend County during subsequent reporting years.

Second, estimating crime rates for the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office required development of an adjusted population denominator. Unlike municipal police departments, whose jurisdictions correspond to clearly defined municipal boundaries, the Sheriff's Office primarily provides law enforcement services within the county's unincorporated areas. Using the total county population as the denominator would therefore substantially underestimate Sheriff's Office crime rates because it would include residents served by municipal police departments.

To address this issue, the researchers estimated the Sheriff's Office service population by subtracting the combined populations of Fulshear, Meadows Place, Missouri City, Needville, Richmond, Rosenberg, Stafford, and Sugar Land from the total Fort Bend County population for each study year. This approach produced estimated Sheriff's Office service populations ranging from 545,278 residents in 2020 to 642,226 residents in 2025, providing a denominator more closely aligned with the agency's operational jurisdiction while remaining consistent with annual population growth across the county.

Clearance Rate Analysis

In addition to reported crime rates, this study examines offense clearance rates as an indicator of investigative outcomes across participating law enforcement agencies. Crime rates measure the frequency of reported offenses; clearance rates indicate the proportion of offenses cleared by arrest or exceptional means under NIBRS definitions.

Within the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS), an offense is considered **cleared** when it is resolved either through the arrest of one or more offenders or through **exceptional means**, as defined by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI). An exceptional clearance occurs when investigators have identified the offender, established probable cause to support an arrest, know the offender's location, and encounter circumstances beyond law enforcement's control that prevent an arrest, such as the death of the offender, denial of extradition, or a victim's refusal to cooperate with prosecution (FBI, 2023).

Clearance rate information used in this study was obtained from the Texas Department of Public Safety (Texas DPS) National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Report Center. Unlike offense-level crime data, the Texas DPS Report Center reports clearance information only for the three broad NIBRS offense categories:

- Person Offenses
- Property Offenses
- Offenses Against Society

Accordingly, the clearance analyses presented throughout this report are limited to these three standardized offense categories.

For each participating law enforcement agency, this report presents:

- the overall percentage of offenses cleared;
- the percentage of offenses cleared by arrest;
- the percentage of offenses cleared by exceptional means; and
- year-to-year percentage increases or decreases for each clearance measure.

Year-to-year percentage changes in clearance rates were calculated using the following formula:

$$\text{Percentage change: } \frac{\text{Current Clearance Percentage} - \text{Previous Clearance Percentage}}{\text{Previous Clearance Percentage}} \times 100$$

The same small number rule used for crime rate percentage changes was applied to clearance rate analyses: percentage changes were not calculated when the baseline number of reported offenses was fewer than 100. In these instances, values are reported as Not Applicable (NA) to indicate an intentional omission rather than missing data.

The research team also explored obtaining clearance information directly from participating agencies. Although agencies were highly cooperative, differences in records management systems, reporting practices, data structure, and historical availability prevented development of a standardized countywide clearance dataset suitable for reliable comparison. Texas DPS NIBRS clearance data were therefore used for the analyses in the body of this report, while agency specific clearance information that could be interpreted reliably is presented separately in the Appendix.

Qualitative Methods

Qualitative methods complement the quantitative analyses by providing context that administrative crime data cannot supply on their own. They were used to examine organizational, operational, legal, and community factors relevant to interpretation of reported crime, victimization, offender characteristics, and investigative outcomes.

Qualitative data collection occurred throughout the project rather than during a single phase. Information obtained through interviews, observations, document review, and other contextual inquiry informed interpretation as the statistical analyses developed; qualitative evidence was not treated as an independent measure of crime trends.

The qualitative component consisted of five complementary methods: (1) key informant interviews and operational consultation with criminal justice professionals; (2) structured nonparticipant observations of police and community interactions; (3) a qualitative investigator interview study examining criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision making; (4) a community perspectives study examining resident perceptions of law enforcement encounters and procedural justice; and (5) systematic review of agency documents, demographic information, legislation, governmental reports, and scholarly literature.

Sampling Strategy and Participant Selection

Each qualitative component of this research sought to provide contextual understanding rather than statistical generalization and therefore participant and site selection relied primarily on purposive sampling techniques. Purposive sampling is widely used in qualitative research to identify information-rich participants, settings, and documents capable of providing detailed insight into the phenomena under investigation. Rather than selecting participants randomly, individuals and observational settings were intentionally chosen based upon their knowledge, experience, responsibilities, or relevance to the specific research questions addressed within each component of the study.

Sampling strategies varied according to the objectives of each qualitative method while maintaining the common goal of obtaining diverse and meaningful perspectives. Key informant interviews included executive leaders and subject-matter experts representing participating criminal justice agencies throughout Fort Bend County because of their direct knowledge of agency operations, organizational practices, crime reporting procedures, investigative strategies, staffing, and community engagement efforts. The investigator interview study similarly employed purposive sampling to recruit investigators representing multiple law enforcement agencies, investigative assignments, and levels of professional experience. The community perspectives study utilized purposive sampling to recruit residents with firsthand experience relevant to the study objectives, while structured nonparticipant observations were conducted across multiple agencies, jurisdictions, and community settings to capture a broad range of naturally occurring police-community interactions.

Document selection followed the same purposive logic. Government publications, agency reports, legislative materials, demographic data, publicly available records, and peer reviewed scholarship were selected for their relevance to the research questions and to interpretation of the quantitative and qualitative findings.

Key Informant Interviews and Operational Consultation

Purpose

Key informant interviews and operational consultations were conducted to provide organizational and operational context for the quantitative findings presented throughout this report. As crime statistics alone cannot fully explain the factors influencing reported crime patterns, discussions with criminal justice leaders were used to better understand agency practices, reporting procedures, investigative strategies, organizational priorities, staffing, technological changes, legislative developments, and other operational factors that could reasonably influence the interpretation of statistical findings.

These interviews were intended to provide contextual understanding rather than serve as independent evidence of crime trends.

Participants

Participants included executive leadership and subject-matter experts representing the nine participating law enforcement agencies serving Fort Bend County, including chiefs of police, leadership from the Fort Bend County Sheriff, command staff members, and designated agency representatives with direct knowledge of departmental operations and crime reporting practices. Additional consultations were conducted, when appropriate, with personnel from the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office to better understand prosecutorial procedures, organizational processes, and criminal case-processing practices relevant to specific findings presented throughout the report.

Data Collection Procedures

Initial meetings were conducted with participating agencies to introduce the project, discuss the objectives of the study, identify available data sources, and develop an understanding of each agency's organizational structure, jurisdictional responsibilities, operational priorities, and community characteristics. These meetings also established collaborative working relationships that facilitated communication throughout the duration of the project.

As quantitative analyses progressed, researchers conducted follow-up consultations with agency representatives to discuss preliminary findings, clarify statistical trends, and obtain additional contextual information regarding observed changes in reported crime. These discussions frequently focused on statistical outliers, changes in reporting practices, staffing levels, proactive enforcement initiatives, technological advancements, legislative developments, organizational restructuring, community engagement efforts, and other operational changes that could reasonably influence interpretation of the quantitative findings.

Rather than relying upon a single interview with each agency, contextual consultation occurred as an iterative process throughout the study. Additional meetings, telephone conversations, and electronic communications were conducted as needed to clarify questions that emerged during data analysis and to obtain supplemental information relevant to interpreting the statistical findings.

Data Use and Role in the Present Report

Information obtained through key informant interviews and operational consultations was not used to modify or validate the quantitative findings. Instead, these discussions provided contextual information that assisted researchers in interpreting statistical results within the organizational and operational environments in which they occurred. Throughout the project, responsibility for all analytical decisions, interpretations, and conclusions remained with the research team. Contextual information obtained from participating agencies informed the interpretation of the findings but did not determine the conclusions presented throughout this report.

Nonparticipant Observations: Police and Citizen Community Interactions in Fort Bend County

Purpose

To complement the quantitative analyses and agency consultations, a structured nonparticipant observation study examined police and community interactions throughout Fort Bend County. Administrative crime data provide important measures of reported crime and criminal justice outcomes, but they cannot capture many interpersonal and situational features of public encounters with law enforcement. Structured observation therefore supplied contextual evidence concerning communication, accessibility, participation, and other features of police and community engagement.

Research Design

The observation study employed a structured nonparticipant observational research design. Nonparticipant observation is a qualitative research method in which the researcher systematically observes behaviors and interactions without participating in the activities being observed. This approach allowed the researcher to document naturally occurring police-community interactions while minimizing influence on participant behavior.

Unlike informal field observations, the study utilized a standardized observation protocol to promote consistency across observation sites and events. Observations focused on recurring interaction patterns, communication styles, community participation, officer accessibility, and other factors associated with procedural justice, community-oriented policing, and public trust.

Observation Site Selection

Observation sites were selected using purposive sampling to capture a diverse range of community engagement activities involving participating law enforcement agencies. Events represented multiple jurisdictions, community settings, and opportunities for interaction between officers and residents. The objective was not to evaluate individual officers or agencies but rather to observe naturally occurring police-community interactions across a variety of settings that collectively reflected community policing efforts throughout Fort Bend County.

Data Collection Procedures

The researcher attended each observation as a nonparticipant and did not engage in agency operations or organized activities beyond the role of observer. A structured observation instrument was used to document characteristics of each event, environmental conditions, officer-community interactions, communication styles, levels of community participation, observable indicators of procedural justice, and other contextual factors relevant to police-community relationships.

Field notes were completed during and immediately following each observation to maximize accuracy and preserve contextual detail. As additional observations were conducted, the observation instrument was refined to improve consistency, increase specificity, and ensure that recurring themes identified during earlier observations could be documented systematically throughout the remainder of the study.

Data Analysis

Observation data were reviewed using an iterative qualitative process in which field notes were examined to identify recurring patterns, common themes, and contextual factors observed across agencies and community settings. Analysis emphasized recurring behaviors and interaction patterns rather than isolated events, allowing observations to contribute to a broader understanding of community engagement practices throughout Fort Bend County.

Ethical Considerations

Observations were conducted only in publicly accessible settings where no reasonable expectation of privacy existed. The researcher remained a nonparticipant throughout each observation and did not interfere with law enforcement activities or community interactions. No personally identifiable information regarding individual community members was collected or reported. The purpose of the observation study was to better understand police-community engagement at the organizational level rather than evaluate individual officers or members of the public.

Role in the Present Report

Information obtained through the structured nonparticipant observation study was integrated with quantitative findings, key informant interviews, document review, demographic analyses, and other qualitative evidence to provide additional context for interpreting crime trends and criminal justice practices throughout Fort Bend County. The observation study was not intended to evaluate agency performance or measure community satisfaction independently. Rather, it served as one component of the report's broader mixed-methods approach by providing direct observational evidence of police-community engagement that complemented the statistical analyses and operational information obtained through the study's other research methods.

Investigator Perspectives on Criminal Case Referral and Prosecutorial Decision-Making in Fort Bend County

Purpose

To further understand criminal justice processes operating within Fort Bend County, the researchers conducted a qualitative investigator interview study examining investigators' experiences with criminal case referral, prosecutorial decision-making, interagency collaboration, and investigative practices. Whereas the key informant interviews focused primarily on organizational context and agency operations, this study examined the perspectives of investigators responsible for conducting criminal investigations and preparing cases for prosecution. The study was designed to provide a deeper understanding of operational processes that cannot be fully captured through quantitative crime statistics alone.

Research Design

The investigator interview study employed a qualitative phenomenological research design utilizing semi-structured interviews and thematic analysis. This design was selected because it allowed participants to describe their professional experiences, decision-making processes, and perceptions regarding criminal investigations and prosecutorial interactions in their own words while providing sufficient flexibility to explore emerging topics during each interview.

Participants

Participants were selected using purposive sampling to recruit experienced criminal investigators representing a variety of investigative assignments and participating law enforcement agencies throughout Fort Bend County. Selection emphasized investigators possessing substantial investigative experience and direct involvement in the criminal case referral process. At the time of this report, interviews had been completed with 13 investigators representing seven participating law enforcement agencies. Participants represented a broad range of investigative responsibilities and professional experience, providing diverse perspectives regarding criminal investigations and interagency collaboration.

Data Collection Procedures

Semistructured interviews were conducted individually using an interview guide addressing criminal investigations, case preparation, referral practices, communication with prosecutors, evidentiary challenges, organizational processes, and factors influencing investigative decision making. Interviews averaged approximately 41 minutes and were audio recorded with participant consent. Recordings were professionally transcribed, each transcript was reviewed by the researcher for accuracy, and the recordings were subsequently destroyed.

Data Analysis

Interview data were analyzed using Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase thematic analysis framework. Analysis began with repeated review of interview transcripts to achieve familiarity with

the data, followed by systematic coding of meaningful text segments. Codes were subsequently organized into broader categories and refined into themes that reflected recurring patterns across participant experiences. Throughout the analytical process, themes were continually reviewed against the original transcripts to ensure they accurately reflected participants' perspectives while maintaining consistency across interviews.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Several procedures were employed to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. Interview recordings were professionally transcribed and independently reviewed by the researcher to verify transcription accuracy. Coding and theme development followed an established analytical framework, allowing themes to emerge inductively from participant narratives rather than being imposed a priori. Throughout the analytical process, findings were continually compared across interviews to ensure themes reflected recurring experiences rather than isolated perspectives. These procedures strengthened the credibility, dependability, and confirmability of the qualitative findings.

Role in the Present Report

Although the investigator interview study was conducted as a distinct qualitative component, themes concerning criminal investigations, prosecutorial decision making, interagency collaboration, organizational practices, and investigative processes informed relevant contextual analyses in this report. The interview findings were not used to validate or modify the quantitative results; they provided an additional source of evidence about criminal justice processes that administrative crime data cannot capture.

Resident Perspectives on Police–Citizen Interactions (Fresno, Texas)

Purpose

To complement the agency focused qualitative methods, the research team incorporated preliminary findings from an ongoing qualitative study of police and community relations in Fresno, Texas. The study followed a contextual analysis of Fort Bend County traffic stop data that identified disproportionate representation of Black motorists in stops involving the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office. The qualitative follow up was designed to examine how residents experienced and interpreted police encounters and how those experiences related to procedural justice, police legitimacy, community trust, and willingness to engage with the criminal justice system. The study therefore provides a community based source of contextual evidence that administrative data cannot supply. Only preliminary findings available at the time of this report are incorporated, and they are used to inform interpretation rather than to characterize the experiences of Fort Bend County residents generally.

Research Design

The resident perspectives study employed an exploratory qualitative research design to examine how community members experience, interpret, and assign meaning to interactions with law enforcement. The study was informed by procedural justice theory, police legitimacy theory, racial

threat theory, and legal cynicism, recognizing that residents' experiences with law enforcement are shaped not only by the objective characteristics of police encounters but also by perceptions of fairness, respect, transparency, voice, neutrality, and trust.

The original research protocol proposed a convergent qualitative design incorporating two complementary sources of qualitative evidence consisting of systematic nonparticipant observations of police-community interactions and semi-structured resident interviews. As fieldwork progressed, however, the resident interview component became the primary source of qualitative evidence. Although observational activities informed the researcher's understanding of the community and assisted with site familiarization, considerably fewer naturally occurring police-community interactions were observed than anticipated. Consequently, the preliminary findings incorporated throughout the present report are derived primarily from the resident interview component, with observational field notes serving a supplementary contextual role.

The study remains ongoing. Accordingly, only preliminary findings available when this report was prepared are incorporated where relevant.

Study Site and Participant Recruitment

The study used purposive sampling to identify information rich participants capable of providing meaningful insight into police and community relations. Fresno, Texas, was selected because both public discussion and the research team's contextual analysis of Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office traffic stop data raised questions about the disproportionate representation of Black drivers in stops occurring within the community. The qualitative study was designed to examine how residents experienced and interpreted those patterns rather than relying on statistical analyses or public commentary alone.

Participant recruitment was conducted through purposive intercept sampling at carefully selected locations throughout Fresno, Texas. Considerable preparatory work preceded data collection, including review of demographic information, jurisdictional boundaries, publicly available records, community characteristics, and multiple site visits to identify locations most likely to facilitate meaningful engagement with residents. This planning process also informed the limited observational component of the study and helped identify settings where naturally occurring police-community interactions might be observed while remaining consistent with the study's original design.

Rather than relying on a single recruitment location, interviews were conducted across multiple community settings to capture diverse resident perspectives. Adult residents were primarily recruited through intercept interviews at a local grocery store serving the Fresno community, while additional interviews were conducted at Mustang Community Center and Park and Sundial Park, where the researcher engaged young adults and teenagers in naturally occurring community settings. Additional contextual information was also obtained through conversations with business owners, long-tenured employees, customers, and other community members encountered throughout the fieldwork.

Using multiple recruitment settings broadened the range of resident experiences represented in the qualitative evidence beyond what a single interview location or participant group could provide.

Data Collection Procedures

Qualitative data were collected primarily through semi-structured resident interviews utilizing a standardized interview guide designed to explore participants' experiences with law enforcement, perceptions of procedural fairness, police legitimacy, community trust, communication, and willingness to engage with the criminal justice system. The interview guide promoted consistency across interviews while allowing sufficient flexibility for participants to describe their experiences in their own words and elaborate on issues they considered most meaningful.

The lead researcher conducted most participant interviews and maintained primary responsibility for all aspects of participant recruitment, interviewing, and fieldwork. Former graduate research assistants accompanied the lead researcher during selected data collection sessions as part of their qualitative interviewing training and conducted a limited number of interviews under the direct supervision of the lead researcher. Participants were informed of the graduate assistants' educational role during the recruitment process, and many expressed appreciation for contributing to the students' professional development as future criminal justice researchers. Throughout the study, the lead researcher remained responsible for ensuring consistency in interview procedures, participant safety, adherence to the research protocol, and the overall quality of the data collection process.

Data Analysis

Interview data were analyzed using an inductive thematic analysis informed by the study's theoretical framework. Audio-recorded interviews were professionally transcribed and repeatedly reviewed to identify meaningful patterns, recurring concepts, and emerging themes related to procedural justice, police legitimacy, community trust, communication, and residents' experiences with law enforcement.

Former graduate research assistants participated in discussions regarding emerging concepts and assisted with identifying relevant interview excerpts as part of their qualitative research training. Responsibility for coding decisions, theme development, interpretation, and all final analytical conclusions, however, remained solely with the lead researcher. Because the study remains ongoing, thematic development should be considered preliminary, and findings incorporated into the present report remain subject to refinement as additional interviews are completed and the broader study progresses.

Rigor and Trustworthiness

Several procedures were incorporated to enhance the rigor, credibility, dependability, and trustworthiness of the study. Standardized interview procedures promoted consistency across participant interviews while allowing sufficient flexibility for participants to describe their experiences in their own words. Audio-recorded interviews were professionally transcribed and reviewed for accuracy prior to analysis. Throughout the analytical process, the lead researcher maintained responsibility for coding, theme development, interpretation, and documentation of analytical decisions.

Methodological rigor was further strengthened through purposive recruitment of information-rich participants across multiple community settings, allowing experiences and perceptions to be

examined across diverse participant groups rather than relying on a single source of information. Reflexive review, continual comparison of participant narratives, and ongoing documentation of analytical decisions further enhanced the credibility and dependability of the findings. Although the observational component remained limited, information obtained through field observations and community engagement provided additional contextual understanding that informed interpretation of participant narratives and complemented the broader mixed-methods research design.

Role in the Present Report

The resident perspectives study remains an ongoing qualitative research project, and only preliminary findings relevant to the objectives of the present report are incorporated where appropriate. These findings are not intended to represent the experiences or perceptions of Fort Bend County residents generally, nor are they used to draw conclusions regarding countywide crime trends or evaluate the performance of any individual law enforcement agency.

The preliminary findings provide an additional source of contextual evidence regarding procedural justice, police legitimacy, community trust, and residents' lived experiences with law enforcement. Considered alongside investigator perspectives, agency consultation, document review, demographic analysis, relevant scholarship, and quantitative findings, they add a community perspective to interpretation of the criminal justice data examined in this report.

Document Review

To complement the quantitative analyses and qualitative methods employed throughout this study, the researchers conducted a systematic review of documentary evidence to provide additional context regarding crime, criminal justice operations, public policy, and community characteristics relevant to Fort Bend County. Documentary evidence was reviewed throughout the research process to identify organizational practices, legislative changes, reporting procedures, demographic influences, historical developments, and other contextual factors that could reasonably influence the interpretation of quantitative findings.

Documents reviewed included publicly available law enforcement agency reports, annual reports, strategic plans, organizational publications, demographic reports, planning documents, legislative materials, court opinions where applicable, public records, and official publications produced by criminal justice agencies and governmental organizations. Public communications, including official press releases, agency announcements, and publicly available statements, were also reviewed where appropriate to establish timelines, clarify organizational actions, and document publicly reported initiatives relevant to the objectives of the study.

Media reports were likewise reviewed throughout the research process; however, media accounts were not relied upon as independent evidence supporting substantive findings. Rather, media reporting frequently served as a starting point for identifying issues requiring additional verification through official documents, quantitative analyses, agency consultation, or other independent sources of evidence. This approach ensured that interpretations presented throughout the report were grounded in corroborated information rather than media reporting alone.

Document review occurred continuously throughout the study rather than during a single phase of the research. Information obtained from documentary sources frequently informed subsequent

quantitative analyses, qualitative inquiry, and contextual interpretation, while findings generated through those methods likewise guided additional document review. Accordingly, documentary evidence served as an integral component of the report's broader mixed-methods research design rather than as an independent source of information.

Literature Review

A comprehensive review of contemporary criminal justice literature was conducted throughout the research process to provide theoretical, empirical, and methodological context for the findings presented in this report. The literature review was not undertaken merely to summarize previous research but to assist in interpreting observed crime trends, evaluating competing explanations, identifying contextual factors, and situating local findings within the broader body of criminal justice scholarship.

The review incorporated peer-reviewed journal articles, scholarly books, government reports, technical publications, and research produced by federal, state, and professional organizations. Particular emphasis was placed on scholarship addressing crime trends, policing, procedural justice, police legitimacy, community trust, victimization, prosecution, criminal investigations, forensic science, demographic change, and evidence-based criminal justice policy. Government publications produced by organizations such as the Bureau of Justice Statistics, National Institute of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Texas Department of Public Safety, and other governmental agencies were reviewed, where appropriate, to provide additional empirical context and nationally comparable data.

Rather than relying upon a single theoretical perspective, the present study drew upon multiple complementary areas of scholarship to inform interpretation of the findings. Where appropriate, quantitative results were examined alongside existing empirical research to determine whether observed patterns were consistent with previous findings or whether alternative explanations warranted consideration. This process contributed to a more balanced interpretation of crime and criminal justice trends by ensuring that statistical findings were evaluated within the context of established scientific knowledge.

The literature review remained iterative throughout the research process. As new quantitative findings, qualitative evidence, and contextual information emerged, additional scholarly literature was reviewed to refine interpretation, evaluate competing explanations, and ensure that conclusions remained consistent with the broader body of criminal justice research. Consequently, the literature review functioned as an ongoing component of the study rather than a discrete phase completed prior to data collection.

Data Integration

The methodological value of this study lies in the deliberate integration of complementary sources of evidence. Quantitative crime data establish measurable patterns; interviews, observations, documentary evidence, demographic information, and criminal justice scholarship provide context for interpreting those patterns. These sources informed one another throughout the research process rather than functioning as isolated analytical streams.

Statistical trends, unexpected findings, and apparent anomalies frequently guided additional qualitative or documentary inquiry. Conversely, qualitative evidence identified organizational practices, investigative procedures, reporting methods, legislative changes, technological developments, demographic influences, and community experiences that could not be identified from statistical analyses alone.

Comparing findings across these sources allowed the research team to assess consistency, consider alternative explanations, and reduce reliance on any single dataset or methodological perspective. This triangulated approach strengthened interpretation without treating contextual evidence as a substitute for the quantitative results.

The objective of integration was not simply to identify whether crime changed, but to understand how observed changes should be interpreted within Fort Bend County's legal, organizational, operational, demographic, and community context.

Responsibility for collecting, integrating, interpreting, and presenting the findings remained with the research team. Participating agencies, criminal justice professionals, community members, and other stakeholders contributed valuable information, but they did not determine the analytical decisions or conclusions presented in this report.

CHAPTER FIVE: QUANTITATIVE FINDINGS

Introduction

The quantitative analyses presented in this chapter provide a longitudinal assessment of reported crime and investigative outcomes across participating Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies. The six-year design allows short-term fluctuations to be distinguished from longer-term patterns and provides a stronger basis for interpretation than a single-year assessment alone.

The findings are derived primarily from National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data submitted by participating law enforcement agencies and are interpreted within the demographic, organizational, and community context established earlier in this report. As discussed in Chapters Two and Three, official crime statistics provide valuable insight into reported criminal activity but should not be interpreted in isolation. Population growth, demographic change, agency jurisdiction, operational responsibilities, administrative practices, and community characteristics all influence the volume and distribution of reported crime. Accordingly, the analyses presented throughout this chapter emphasize not only what the data show, but also how those findings should be interpreted within the broader context of Fort Bend County.

The chapter begins with a countywide examination of reported crime, presenting aggregate analyses that identify overall crime patterns and longitudinal trends observed across participating agencies. These findings establish the broader context within which individual agency analyses should be understood. The chapter then examines each participating law enforcement agency independently, recognizing that agencies differ substantially in jurisdictional boundaries, population served, enforcement priorities, staffing, operational responsibilities, and the communities they serve. Consequently, direct comparisons between agencies should be approached cautiously and interpreted within the context of these organizational differences rather than through reported crime statistics alone.

Throughout this chapter, emphasis is placed on identifying meaningful patterns rather than simply describing statistical change. Where appropriate, findings are interpreted in light of demographic trends, agency operations, and relevant criminal justice research. The quantitative findings also establish the empirical foundation for the qualitative analyses in Chapter Six and the integrated discussion in Chapter Seven.

5.1 Countywide Quantitative Findings

The analyses presented in this section provide a countywide overview of reported crime across participating Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies. Examining crime at the county level establishes the broader context within which individual agency findings should be interpreted and allows longer-term patterns to be identified that may not be apparent when agencies are examined independently. The analyses that follow examine aggregate crime counts, standardized crime rates, and selected offense trends across the six-year study period, providing an overall assessment of crime patterns before turning to agency-specific findings.

5.1. Fort Bend County Aggregate Crime Counts

Question addressed: How much reported crime occurred across Fort Bend County over time?

Aggregate crime counts provide an overall assessment of the volume of reported criminal activity across Fort Bend County and establish the foundation for the more detailed analyses presented throughout this chapter.

**Table AFBC 1: Fort Bend County Aggregated: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	6,386	13,602	1,839
Offenses ⁵	7,260	13,703	1,839
Victims ⁶	7,260	14,818	1,839
Known Offenders ⁷	6,818	12,556	2,351
Rate/100,000	887.50	1,675.13	224.81
2021			
Incidents ⁴	6,397	14,109	2,120
Offenses ⁵	7,266	14,400	2,120
Victims ⁶	7,266	15,324	2,120
Known Offenders ⁷	6,799	12,607	2,538
Rate/100,000	850.65	1,685.84	248.19
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-4.15	.70	10.40
2022			
Incidents ⁴	6,729	16,260	2,272
Offenses ⁵	7,510	16,428	2,272
Victims ⁶	7,510	17,583	2,272
Known Offenders ⁷	7,050	9,903	2,648
Rate/100,000	844.63	1,847.62	255.53
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-.71	9.60	2.96
2023			
Incidents ⁴	6,792	14,779	2,441
Offenses ⁵	7,570	14,853	2,441
Victims ⁶	7,576	15,966	2,441
Known Offenders ⁷	7,065	6,676	2,850
Rate/100,000	825.71	1,620.13	266.25
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-2.24	-12.31	4.20
2024			
Incidents ⁴	7,149	14,733	2,121
Offenses ⁵	7,969	15,002	2,121
Victims ⁶	7,969	15,836	2,121
Known Offenders ⁷	7,363	6,462	2,418
Rate/100,000	831.46	1,565.26	221.30
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	.69	-3.38	-16.88
2025			
Incidents ⁴	6,955	13,586	2,247
Offenses ⁵	7,831	13,721	2,247
Victims ⁶	7,831	14,760	2,246
Known Offenders ⁷	7,099	5,942	2,575
Rate/100,000	804.25	1,409.15	230.76
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-3.27	-9.97	4.27

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table 5.2. Fort Bend County Select Offense Counts, Rates, and Annual Percentage Changes, 2020–2025
Question addressed: How did the volume and population-adjusted rates of selected offenses change across Fort Bend County over time?

Table AFBC 2: Fort Bend County Aggregated: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

		Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020								
	Incidents ¹	6,245	289	23	235	1,040	6,484	661
	Offenses ²	7,112	299	28	235	1,108	6,484	694
	Victims ³	7,112	299	28	349	1,298	6,933	684
	Known Offenders. ⁴	6,672	304	27	336	920	5,928	554
	Rate/100,000	869.41	36.55	NA ⁵	28.73	135.45	792.64	84.84
2021								
	Incidents ¹	6,011	313	30	237	921	6,928	761
	Offenses ²	6,859	334	30	237	1,175	6,928	805
	Victims ³	6,859	334	30	363	1,147	7,474	779
	Known Offenders. ⁴	6,390	321	35	298	831	6,073	682
	Rate/100,000	803.00	39.10	NA ⁵	27.75	137.56	811.08	94.24
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-7.64	6.98	NA ⁵	-3.42	1.56	2.33	11.09
2022								
	Incidents ¹	6,441	232	18	242	1,161	8,364	816
	Offenses ²	7,215	237	18	242	1,278	8,364	867
	Victims ³	7,215	237	18	365	1,469	8,848	849
	Known Offenders. ⁴	6,741	235	24	263	754	5,086	485
	Rate/100,000	811.45	26.65	NA ⁵	27.22	143.73	940.68	97.51
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	1.05	-31.83	NA ⁵	-1.91	4.49	15.98	4.49
2023								
	Incidents ¹	6,494	252	24	232	865	7,217	886
	Offenses ²	7,272	255	25	232	900	7,217	922
	Victims ³	7,272	255	25	362	1,049	7,742	925
	Known Offenders. ⁴	6,747	258	31	242	393	3,478	408
	Rate/100,000	792.56	27.81	NA ⁵	25.31	98.17	787.21	100.57
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-2.33	4.35	NA ⁵	-7.02	-31.69	-16.31	3.14
2024								
	Incidents ¹	6,844	264	21	189	898	7,532	680
	Offenses ²	7,914	280	24	189	1,120	7,532	727
	Victims ³	7,644	280	24	291	1,082	7,988	704
	Known Offenders. ⁴	7,055	260	22	214	381	3,532	320
	Rate/100,000	825.72	29.21	NA ⁵	19.72	114.84	785.87	75.85
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	4.18	5.03	NA ⁵	-22.08	16.90	-.17	-24.57
2025								
	Incidents ¹	6,698	221	19	187	965	6,646	690
	Offenses ²	7,561	229	21	187	1,072	6,646	718
	Victims ³	7,561	229	21	270	1,198	7,053	729
	Known Offenders. ⁴	6,840	224	20	207	427	2,988	262
	Rate/100,000	776.52	23.51	NA ⁵	19.20	110.09	682.54	73.73
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-5.95	-19.48	NA ⁵	-2.61	-4.13	-13.14	-2.78

¹ Incident: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table 5.3. Fort Bend County Clearance Rates by Major Offense Category, 2020–2025
Question addressed: How did clearance rates for person, property, and society offenses change over time, and were cases more frequently cleared by arrest or exceptional means?

Table AFBC 3: Fort Bend County Aggregated: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases

	2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025		
	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	72.96	14.14	72.27
% Cleared by Arrest	30.27	8.08	68.52
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	42.69	6.05	3.75
Total Incidents	6,386	13,602	1,839
Total Incidents Cleared	4,659	1,923	1,329
Cleared by Arrest	1,933	1,100	1,260
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,726	823	69
2021			
% Cleared	70.56	13.46	80.66
% Cleared by Arrest	27.93	7.68	76.70
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	42.63	5.78	3.96
Total Incidents	6,397	14,109	2,120
Total Incidents Cleared	4,514	1,899	1,710
Cleared by Arrest	1,787	1,083	1,626
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,727	816	84
% Cleared Increase/Decrease	-3.29	-4.81	11.61
% Cleared Arrest Increase/Decrease	-7.73	-4.95	11.94
% Cleared E/M Increase/Decrease	-.14	-4.46	5.60
2022			
% Cleared	66.95	12.67	80.42
% Cleared by Arrest	27.06	7.50	77.82
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	39.89	5.17	2.60
Total Incidents	6,729	16,261	2,272
Total Incidents Cleared	4,505	2,060	1,827
Cleared by Arrest	1,821	1,219	1,768
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,684	841	59
% Cleared Increase/Decrease	-5.12	-5.87	-.29
% Cleared Arrest Increase/Decrease	-3.11	-2.34	1.46
% Cleared E/M Increase/Decrease	-6.43	-10.55	-34.34
2023			
% Cleared	69.83	13.37	80.84
% Cleared by Arrest	32.04	8.29	77.73
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	37.79	5.08	3.11
Total Incidents	6,792	14,779	2,443
Total Incidents Cleared	4,743	1,976	1,975
Cleared by Arrest	2,176	1,225	1,899
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,567	751	76
% Cleared Increase/Decrease	4.30	5.52	.52
% Cleared Arrest Increase/Decrease	18.40	10.53	-.12
% Cleared E/M Increase/Decrease	-5.26	-1.74	19.62
2024			
% Cleared	63.62	12.16	73.31
% Cleared by Arrest	30.89	8.44	71.00
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	32.73	3.72	2.31
Total Incidents	7,149	14,733	2,121
Total Incidents Cleared	4,548	1,791	1,555
Cleared by Arrest	2,208	1,243	1,506
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,340	548	49
% Cleared Increase/Decrease	-8.90	-9.05	-9.31
% Cleared Arrest Increase/Decrease	-3.60	1.81	-8.65
% Cleared E/M Increase/Decrease	-13.38	-26.78	-25.72
2025			
% Cleared	67.79	10.58	86.64
% Cleared by Arrest	30.26	6.30	71.68
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	37.53	5.28	2.37
Total Incidents	6,685	13,009	2,108
Total Incidents Cleared	4,532	1,506	1,561
Cleared by Arrest	2,023	819	1,511
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,509	687	50
% Cleared Increase/Decrease	-31.27	-12.99	18.18
% Cleared Arrest Increase/Decrease	-2.03	-25.35	1.00

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
% Cleared E/M Increase/Decrease	14.66	41.03	2.59

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

Fort Bend County Aggregate Crime Trends: Longitudinal Summary

The aggregate crime trends presented in Tables 5.1 through 5.3 provide an overall assessment of reported criminal activity and investigative outcomes across Fort Bend County during the six-year study period. Overall, the findings indicate that reported crime remained relatively stable despite continued population growth and residential and commercial development throughout the county. Although annual fluctuations occurred across individual offense categories, the overall findings suggest that observed changes were generally driven by offense-specific patterns rather than broad increases or decreases across all forms of reported crime.

Among the selected offenses examined, assault consistently represented the largest volume of reported violent crime throughout the study period. Although annual fluctuations were observed, assault rates demonstrated an overall decline between 2020 and 2025. Property crimes exhibited greater variation over time. Burglary generally declined following an increase in 2022, while theft offenses increased substantially during the middle of the study period before declining during both 2024 and 2025. Motor vehicle theft increased through 2023 before declining during the final two years of the analysis. Robbery demonstrated a gradual downward trend across the six-year period, while reported sex offenses fluctuated modestly without evidence of a sustained long-term increase. Reported homicides remained comparatively infrequent throughout the study period, reinforcing the importance of interpreting homicide trends cautiously given the relatively small number of annual incidents.

When standardized by population, offense rates generally mirrored the patterns observed in aggregate counts, indicating that many year-to-year fluctuations reflected changes in the volume of reported offenses rather than substantial shifts in the underlying risk of victimization. This distinction is particularly important in a rapidly growing county such as Fort Bend, where increases in population can influence aggregate crime counts independently of changes in crime prevalence. Accordingly, both aggregate counts and standardized rates should be considered together when evaluating longitudinal crime trends.

The clearance data further demonstrate that investigative outcomes varied considerably across the three major offense categories. Offenses against society consistently achieved the highest clearance rates throughout most of the study period, reflecting the officer-initiated nature of many drug, weapons, and public-order offenses. Person offenses likewise maintained comparatively high clearance rates, with approximately two-thirds or more of reported incidents cleared annually. Property offenses remained substantially more difficult to clear, with clearance rates generally ranging between approximately 10% and 14%, a pattern that is consistent with national research regarding the investigative challenges associated with property crime.

The data also demonstrate important differences in the mechanisms by which offenses were cleared. Across person offenses, exceptional clearances accounted for a substantial proportion of all cleared cases, frequently exceeding the number of clearances accomplished through arrest. Property offenses likewise exhibited relatively small proportions of both arrest and exceptional clearances, while offenses against society were overwhelmingly cleared through arrest, reflecting the proactive nature of many drug, weapons, and other public-order investigations. Although annual fluctuations were observed across each category, these differences remained remarkably consistent throughout the six-year study period and illustrate the fundamentally different investigative characteristics associated with offenses against persons, property, and society.

Overall, these findings establish the countywide context for the agency-specific analyses that follow. Although overall reported crime remained relatively stable throughout the study period, important differences emerged across offense categories, and investigative outcomes varied substantially depending upon the nature of the offense being examined. Accordingly, the agency-level analyses presented in the following sections should be interpreted within the broader countywide trends while recognizing the unique demographic, operational, and jurisdictional characteristics that influence crime patterns within each participating law enforcement agency.

Contextualizing Individual Law Enforcement Agencies

The countywide analyses presented in the preceding section provide an important assessment of overall crime trends across Fort Bend County. However, aggregate statistics necessarily mask important variation among individual jurisdictions. Participating law enforcement agencies serve communities that differ substantially in population size, geographic area, demographic composition, patterns of residential and commercial development, transportation infrastructure, and calls for service. Agencies likewise differ in organizational structure, staffing levels, available resources, operational priorities, and policing strategies. Consequently, countywide trends should not be interpreted as reflecting identical conditions or crime patterns across every participating jurisdiction.

Although the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) provides a standardized framework for reporting offenses, the data remain influenced by the operational context in which they are generated. Differences in proactive enforcement initiatives, investigative priorities, reporting practices, community engagement strategies, records management procedures, and available personnel may all contribute to variation in reported crime and criminal justice outcomes. Likewise, localized factors such as commercial activity, school populations, entertainment districts, major transportation corridors, and patterns of residential growth can meaningfully influence the volume and composition of reported crime within an agency's jurisdiction.

For these reasons, the agency-level findings presented throughout this chapter should be interpreted within the broader context of each jurisdiction. The contextual profiles accompanying each agency are intended to assist readers in understanding the demographic, organizational, and environmental characteristics that may help explain observed crime patterns, year-to-year fluctuations, and differences among agencies. These contextual discussions do not alter or qualify the underlying NIBRS data; rather, they provide additional information necessary for the responsible interpretation of those findings.

The contextual information presented for each participating agency draws upon publicly available demographic and community data, agency-specific operational information, and discussions with agency leadership and knowledgeable personnel. Where appropriate, these profiles identify factors such as jurisdictional responsibilities, staffing and resource considerations, community characteristics, ongoing initiatives, and emerging public safety concerns that may have influenced observed crime trends during the study period.

By integrating standardized quantitative data with agency-specific contextual information, the analyses that follow provide a more comprehensive understanding of crime across Fort Bend County than would be possible through statistical comparisons alone. This approach recognizes that meaningful interpretation requires consideration not only of the number of reported offenses, but also of the unique operational environments in which participating law enforcement agencies serve their communities.

Individual Agency Findings

Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office

**Table FBCSO 1: Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	4,426	8,449	672
Offenses ⁵	4,990	8,540	672
Victims ⁶	4,990	9,072	672
Known Offenders ⁷	4,655	9,039	825
Rate/100,000	915.13	1,566.18	123.24
2021			
Incidents ⁴	4,263	8,283	640
Offenses ⁵	4,784	8,401	640
Victims ⁶	4,784	8,918	640
Known Offenders ⁷	4,486	8,667	708
Rate/100,000	842.37	1,479.25	112.69
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-7.95	-5.55	-8.56
2022			
Incidents ⁴	4,655	9,643	884
Offenses ⁵	5,104	9,736	884
Victims ⁶	5,104	10,230	884
Known Offenders ⁷	4,796	5,462	976
Rate/100,000	864.25	1,648.57	149.69
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	2.59	11.44	32.83
2023			
Incidents ⁴	4,645	9,208	858
Offenses ⁵	5,115	9,245	858
Victims ⁶	5,115	9,750	858
Known Offenders ⁷	4,798	3,400	928
Rate/100,000	838.61	1,515.42	141.00
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-2.85	-8.07	-5.81
2024			
Incidents ⁴	4,956	9,128	679
Offenses ⁵	5,464	9,352	679
Victims ⁶	5,464	9,695	679
Known Offenders ⁷	5,058	3,294	710
Rate/100,000	855.31	1,463.93	106.29
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	1.99	-3.39	-24.61
2025			
Incidents ⁴	4,846	8,510	696
Offenses ⁵	5,394	8,615	696
Victims ⁶	5,394	9,078	696
Known Offenders ⁷	4,935	3,062	721
Rate/100,000	839.89	1,341.42	108.37
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-1.80	-8.36	1.96

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table FBCSO 2: Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

		Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020								
	Incidents ¹	4,426	173	11	117	618	3,747	349
	Offenses ²	4,990	178	14	117	683	3,747	375
	Victims ³	4,990	178	14	174	784	3,902	359
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,655	188	16	174	675	4,052	379
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	915.13	32.64	NA ⁵	21.46	125.26	687.17	68.77
2021								
	Incidents ¹	4,031	185	17	107	560	3,706	395
	Offenses ²	4,540	197	17	107	642	3,706	431
	Victims ³	4,540	197	17	164	692	3,935	406
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,234	194	18	153	579	3,908	417
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	799.40	34.69	NA ⁵	18.84	113.04	652.55	75.89
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-12.64	6.28	NA ⁵	-12.21	-9.76	-5.04	10.35
2022								
	Incidents ¹	4,467	146	10	129	770	4,387	402
	Offenses ²	4,912	150	10	129	822	4,387	443
	Victims ³	4,912	150	10	188	941	4,532	419
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,593	151	12	148	485	2,460	228
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	831.74	25.40	NA ⁵	21.84	139.19	742.84	75.01
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	4.05	-26.78	NA ⁵	15.94	23.13	13.84	-1.16
2023								
	Incidents ¹	4,468	153	12	148	599	3,918	478
	Offenses ²	4,938	153	12	148	606	3,918	508
	Victims ³	4,938	153	12	238	709	4,079	497
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,606	159	18	162	262	1,437	171
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	810.59	25.09	NA ⁵	24.26	99.36	642.38	83.29
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-2.54	-1.23	NA ⁵	11.11	-28.62	-13.52	11.04
2024								
	Incidents ¹	4,754	176	17	112	547	4,138	358
	Offenses ²	5,521	184	20	112	732	4,138	397
	Victims ³	5,251	184	20	160	657	4,346	368
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,851	179	18	124	194	1,476	121
	Rate/100,000	864.23	28.80	NA ⁵	17.53	114.58	647.75	62.14
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	6.61	14.78	NA ⁵	-27.73	15.31	1.00	-25.39
2025								
	Incidents ¹	4,688	142	7	104	652	3,780	391
	Offenses ²	5,230	148	7	104	738	3,780	410
	Victims ³	5,230	148	7	154	803	3,959	406
	Known Offenders ⁴	4,773	150	6	108	253	1,326	108
	Rate/100,000	814.35	23.04	1.09	16.19	114.91	588.58	63.84
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-5.81	-20.00	NA ⁵	-7.63	.28	-9.13	2.73

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table FBCSO 3: Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	77.09	12.39	60.71
% Cleared by Arrest	21.71	5.23	54.17
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	55.38	7.16	6.55
Total Incidents	4,426	8,449	672
Total Incidents Cleared	3,412	1,047	408
Cleared by Arrest	961	442	364
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,451	605	44
2021			
% Cleared	74.20	10.76	72.50
% Cleared by Arrest	17.24	3.63	61.09
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	56.96	7.12	11.41
Total Incidents	4,263	8,283	640
Total Incidents Cleared	3,163	891	464
Cleared by Arrest	735	301	391
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,428	590	73
2022			
% Cleared	66.98	8.83	76.24
% Cleared by Arrest	17.01	2.62	71.83
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	49.97	6.20	4.41
Total Incidents	4,655	9,643	884
Total Incidents Cleared	3,118	851	674
Cleared by Arrest	792	253	635
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,326	598	39
2023			
% Cleared	72.41	9.54	73.49
% Cleared by Arrest	23.95	3.20	69.30
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	48.46	6.33	4.18
Total Incidents	4,651	9,206	860
Total Incidents Cleared	3,368	878	632
Cleared by Arrest	1,114	295	596
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,254	583	36
2024			
% Cleared	64.18	7.72	62.30
% Cleared by Arrest	23.97	3.31	59.35
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	40.21	4.41	2.95
Total Incidents	4,956	9,128	679
Total Incidents Cleared	3,181	705	423
Cleared by Arrest	1,188	302	403
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1,993	403	20
2025			
% Cleared	70.92	9.59	66.95
% Cleared by Arrest	23.90	3.14	62.07
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	47.03	6.45	4.89
Total Incidents	4,846	8,510	696
Total Incidents Cleared	3,437	816	466
Cleared by Arrest	1,158	267	432
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2,279	549	34

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office

Agency Context

The findings presented below should be interpreted within the operational context of the agency's jurisdiction, organizational responsibilities, and community characteristics discussed above.

As the largest law enforcement agency in Fort Bend County, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office (FBCSO) serves a unique role within the county's criminal justice system. Unlike municipal police departments, the Sheriff's Office provides law enforcement services throughout the county's unincorporated areas while also maintaining countywide responsibilities that include operating the county jail, providing courthouse security, serving civil process, executing warrants, supporting county courts, and assisting municipal agencies during major incidents and specialized investigations. These diverse responsibilities influence both the volume and characteristics of the crime data reported by the agency and should be considered when interpreting the findings presented in this section.

The Sheriff's Office patrols approximately 875 square miles encompassing rapidly growing residential communities, rural areas, major transportation corridors, commercial developments, and county facilities. Unlike municipal agencies that primarily serve incorporated cities, deputies routinely respond to incidents occurring across a geographically diverse jurisdiction that includes Interstate 69, State Highway 99 (Grand Parkway), Highway 90A, and numerous expanding residential developments. Continued population growth and commercial expansion throughout the county have increased demands for patrol services, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and emergency response.

The Sheriff's Office also serves as the primary operator of the Fort Bend County Jail and provides numerous countywide public safety services that extend beyond traditional patrol operations. Consequently, staffing, budgeting, and operational priorities are often influenced by responsibilities that municipal agencies do not share. These broader responsibilities provide important context when interpreting crime trends, clearance rates, and overall agency workload.

Operational Context

Discussions with Sheriff's Office leadership indicated that continued residential growth, commercial development, and increasing traffic volumes throughout the county continue to influence service demands. Agency representatives also identified staffing and recruitment challenges, increasing calls for service, and the need to balance patrol operations with detention, court security, warrant service, and investigative responsibilities as important operational considerations.

Because the Sheriff's Office serves both rapidly developing suburban communities and more rural portions of Fort Bend County, deputies routinely encounter a wide variety of crime types and policing environments. Major transportation corridors, expanding residential neighborhoods, new commercial development, and continued population growth contribute to increasing demands for proactive patrol, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and emergency response. These operational realities provide important context for understanding the agency's reported crime statistics and should be considered when evaluating year-to-year changes.

Crime Trends

Table FBCSO 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office between 2020 and 2025. The Sheriff's Office reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted crime rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate modest long-term declines in both person and property offense rates, while offenses against society exhibited greater year-to-year variability consistent with proactive law enforcement activity.

Person offense rates demonstrated a modest long-term decline despite relatively limited annual variation. Person offense rates decreased from **915.13 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **839.89 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **8.2% reduction** over the six-year study period. Following a decline during 2021, person offense rates increased modestly in 2022 before declining during each of the remaining years of the analysis. Overall, the findings indicate relatively stable violent crime patterns, with only modest fluctuations occurring between years.

Property offense rates likewise demonstrated a sustained long-term decline over the six-year study period. Property offense rates decreased from **1,566.18 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,341.42 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **14.4% reduction**. Although property offense rates increased during 2022, rates declined during each of the subsequent three years, resulting in the lowest property offense rate observed during the study period. These findings suggest that property crime remained comparatively stable while exhibiting an overall downward trajectory across the six-year analysis.

Offenses against society demonstrated greater annual variability than either person or property offenses. Society offense rates declined during 2021, increased substantially during 2022, decreased during both 2023 and 2024, and increased modestly during 2025. Overall, society offense rates declined from **123.24 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **108.37 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **12.1% reduction** despite considerable year-to-year variation. Because many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive enforcement activities, are influenced by enforcement initiatives and policing priorities, annual fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, these offenses frequently reflect proactive law enforcement activity in addition to reported criminal incidents.

Across the study period, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office experienced relatively stable crime patterns throughout the six-year study period. Person and property offense rates both demonstrated modest long-term declines despite normal annual variation, while offenses against society exhibited greater fluctuations associated with proactive enforcement activity. These findings reinforce the importance of evaluating long-term trends across multiple offense categories rather than relying solely on individual annual changes.

Selected Offense Trends

Table FBCSO 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office between 2020 and 2025. Overall, the findings indicate that assault and theft remained the Sheriff's Office's primary contributors to reported person and property crime throughout the study period. While several offense categories exhibited normal year-to-year fluctuations, most demonstrated either stable or declining long-term trends over the six-year analysis.

Assault offenses remained the primary driver of reported violent crime throughout the study period while demonstrating an overall long-term decline. Assault offense rates decreased from **915.13 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **814.35 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **11.0% reduction**. Assault rates declined substantially during 2021, increased modestly during 2022 and 2024, and declined again during 2023 and 2025. Despite these annual fluctuations, assault rates remained relatively stable throughout the study period and concluded 2025 below 2020 levels. These findings indicate that reported assault offenses remained comparatively consistent while demonstrating a modest long-term downward trend.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon and exhibited greater annual variability. Robbery offense rates declined from **21.46 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **16.19 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **24.6% reduction**. Sex offense rates likewise declined from **32.64 to 23.04 offenses per 100,000 residents**, representing an overall **29.4% decrease** despite annual variation. Homicides remained rare throughout the study period, with reported incidents ranging from **7 to 17 offenses annually**. Because these offenses occurred relatively infrequently, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime.

Property crime trends were influenced primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft followed distinct longitudinal patterns. Theft remained the Sheriff's Office's most frequently reported property offense throughout the six-year study period. Theft offense rates declined from 687.17 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 588.58 per 100,000 in 2025, representing an overall 14.3% reduction. Burglary offense rates decreased from 125.26 to 114.91 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 8.3% reduction, despite a temporary increase during 2022 and modest increases during the final two years of the study period. Motor vehicle theft exhibited greater annual variation, increasing during 2021 and 2023 before declining during 2024 and increasing slightly during 2025. Nevertheless, motor vehicle theft rates concluded the study period modestly below their highest observed levels. These findings indicate that the Sheriff's Office experienced generally stable property crime patterns with gradual long-term reductions across several major offense categories.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that assault and theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported person and property crime within the Sheriff's Office's jurisdiction. While annual fluctuations occurred across several offense categories, most demonstrated either stable or declining long-term trends between 2020 and 2025. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific patterns independently, as individual offenses followed distinct longitudinal trajectories that collectively shaped the Sheriff's Office's overall crime trends.

Clearance Trends

Table FBCSO 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office between 2020 and 2025. The Sheriff's Office reported sufficient incident volumes to calculate standardized clearance rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate consistently strong investigative outcomes for person offenses, comparatively lower clearance rates for property offenses, and improving clearance rates for offenses against society over the six-year analysis.

Person offense clearance rates remained consistently high throughout the six-year study period despite moderate annual variation. Person offense clearance rates declined from

77.09% in 2020 to 70.92% in 2025, representing an overall **8.0% decrease**. Clearance rates declined during 2021 and 2022, increased to 72.41% in 2023, declined again during 2024, and rebounded during 2025. Throughout the study period, person offense clearance rates consistently exceeded 64%, reflecting comparatively strong investigative outcomes for violent crime. Arrest clearances accounted for approximately one-quarter of person offense clearances, while exceptional clearances consistently represented a substantial proportion of successfully resolved investigations. These findings illustrate the importance of interpreting overall clearance rates alongside both arrest and exceptional clearance measures when evaluating investigative outcomes.

Property offense clearance rates remained comparatively low throughout the study period while exhibiting moderate annual variation. Property offense clearance rates decreased from 12.39% in 2020 to 9.59% in 2025, representing an overall **22.6% decline**. Following a decline during 2021, clearance rates remained relatively stable between 8.83% and 10.76% through 2025. Although property offense clearance rates were considerably lower than those observed for person offenses, this pattern is consistent with the greater investigative challenges commonly associated with property crime, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, and reduced opportunities for witness identification. Throughout the study period, arrest clearances accounted for a relatively small proportion of reported property offenses, while exceptional clearances consistently exceeded arrest clearances.

Clearance rates for offenses against society improved overall despite annual fluctuations. Society offense clearance rates increased from 60.71% in 2020 to 66.95% in 2025, representing an overall **10.3% increase**. Clearance rates increased substantially during 2021 and 2022, remained above 73% during those years, declined during 2024, and increased again during 2025. Because many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive enforcement activities, originate through officer-initiated enforcement, clearance rates for these offenses are generally higher than those observed for many traditional property crimes. These findings reflect both proactive policing activity and favorable investigative outcomes for offenses against society.

Viewed collectively, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office maintained consistently strong investigative outcomes for person offenses while experiencing comparatively lower, but generally stable, clearance rates for property offenses. Clearance rates for offenses against society improved overall throughout the study period, reflecting the proactive nature of many society offenses. Collectively, these findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and the operational characteristics associated with different categories of reported crime.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office experienced relatively stable crime patterns across the six-year study period. Person offense rates declined from 915.13 to 839.89 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 8.2% reduction, while property offense rates declined from 1,566.18 to 1,341.42 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 14.4% decrease. Offenses against society likewise concluded the study period below 2020 levels despite exhibiting greater year-to-year variability. These findings indicate that reported crime within the Sheriff's Office jurisdiction remained relatively stable while demonstrating modest long-term reductions across the three major offense categories.

The selected offense analyses indicate that assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported person and property crime throughout the study period. Assault offense rates declined approximately 11.0%, while theft offense rates decreased approximately 14.3% between 2020 and 2025. Robbery and sex offenses likewise demonstrated overall declines, while burglary and motor vehicle theft exhibited modest annual variation but generally remained at or below levels observed at the beginning of the study period. These findings suggest that no single offense category was responsible for the Sheriff's Office's long-term crime trends; rather, modest reductions occurred across multiple offense categories.

Investigative outcomes varied across offense categories while remaining generally consistent throughout the study period. Person offense clearance rates remained comparatively high, exceeding **64%** annually despite a modest overall decline. Property offense clearance rates remained substantially lower than person offense clearance rates, reflecting the inherent investigative challenges associated with property crimes. In contrast, clearance rates for offenses against society improved overall during the six-year analysis, reflecting both proactive enforcement activity and favorable investigative outcomes for officer-initiated offenses. These findings illustrate that clearance patterns differ considerably by offense type and should be interpreted within the context of investigative complexity and enforcement practices.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader context of the Sheriff's Office's countywide public safety responsibilities. Unlike municipal police departments, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office serves diverse unincorporated communities ranging from rapidly developing suburban neighborhoods to rural areas while simultaneously supporting countywide law enforcement operations through patrol services, criminal investigations, civil processes, courthouse security, detention operations, and specialized enforcement functions. These varied operational responsibilities create a policing environment that differs substantially from that of municipal agencies and provide important context for interpreting reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office maintained relatively stable crime patterns throughout the six-year study period while experiencing modest long-term reductions across most major offense categories. Strong investigative outcomes for person offenses, improving clearance rates for offenses against society, and stable trends across the Sheriff's diverse service area reflect the importance of evaluating crime within the context of the agency's broad countywide mission and varied operational responsibilities. These findings underscore the value of examining long-term offense-specific trends and clearance outcomes rather than relying solely on annual fluctuations or aggregate crime measures.

Key Findings

Overall reported crime remained relatively stable while demonstrating modest long-term declines across the major offense categories. Between 2020 and 2025, person offense rates declined approximately **8.2%**, property offense rates declined approximately **14.4%**, and offenses against society concluded the study period below 2020 levels despite greater annual variability. These findings indicate that reported crime within the Sheriff's Office jurisdiction remained comparatively stable throughout the six-year study period.

Assault and theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported person and property crime. Assault offense rates declined approximately **11.0%**, while theft offense rates decreased approximately **14.3%** between 2020 and 2025. Robbery and sex offenses also

demonstrated overall declines, while burglary and motor vehicle theft exhibited modest annual variation but remained generally consistent with or below levels observed at the beginning of the study period.

Investigative outcomes differed across offense categories. Person offense clearance rates remained consistently high throughout the study period, exceeding **64%** annually despite a modest overall decline. Property offense clearance rates remained comparatively lower, reflecting the greater investigative complexity commonly associated with property crimes, while clearance rates for offenses against society improved overall and remained comparatively strong.

Crime trends should be interpreted within the context of the Sheriff's Office's unique countywide mission. Unlike municipal police departments, the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office serves diverse unincorporated communities while simultaneously providing countywide law enforcement services, including patrol operations, criminal investigations, detention operations, civil process, courthouse security, and specialized enforcement functions. These operational responsibilities influence both reported crime patterns and investigative outcomes and provide important context for interpreting the findings presented in this report.

Long-term trend analysis provides a more meaningful assessment of crime than isolated annual changes. Although individual offense categories experienced normal year-to-year fluctuations, the six-year analysis demonstrates relatively stable crime patterns characterized by modest long-term reductions across multiple offense categories. Evaluating offense-specific trends over time provides a more comprehensive understanding of public safety conditions than relying solely on single-year comparisons.

Table FPD 1: Fulshear Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	8	89	55
Offenses ⁵	9	90	55
Victims ⁶	9	100	55
Known Offenders ⁷	8	28	69
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2021			
Incidents ⁴	27	131	75
Offenses ⁵	27	131	75
Victims ⁶	27	133	75
Known Offenders ⁷	27	44	91
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	520.48	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2022			
Incidents ⁴	39	164	100
Offenses ⁵	40	165	100
Victims ⁶	40	198	100
Known Offenders ⁷	39	84	110
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	481.56	291.85
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	-7.48	NA ⁸
2023			
Incidents ⁴	41	185	115
Offenses ⁵	42	191	115
Victims ⁶	42	224	115
Known Offenders ⁷	40	115	127
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	448.19	234.65
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	-6.92	-19.60
2024			
Incidents ⁴	54	156	138
Offenses ⁵	64	156	138
Victims ⁶	64	172	138
Known Offenders ⁷	58	100	155
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	285.56	252.61
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	-36.28	7.65
2025			
Incidents ⁴	43	107	216
Offenses ⁵	50	107	216
Victims ⁶	50	119	215
Known Offenders ⁷	43	53	238
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	165.56	334.21
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	-42.02	32.30

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁸ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table FPD 2: Fulshear Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020							
Incidents ¹	8	--	--	--	5	46	5
Offenses ²	9	--	--	--	6	46	5
Victims ³	9	--	--	--	8	49	6
Known Offenders ⁴	8	--	--	--	2	15	2
Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2021							
Incidents ¹	24	3	--	--	7	67	11
Offenses ²	24	3	--	--	7	67	11
Victims ³	24	3	--	--	7	68	11
Known Offenders ⁴	24	3	--	--	1	26	7
Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2022							
Incidents ¹	37	2	--	--	10	80	12
Offenses ²	38	2	--	--	10	80	13
Victims ³	38	2	--	--	16	95	13
Known Offenders ⁴	37	2	--	--	4	36	9
Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2023							
Incidents ¹	40	1	--	--	9	92	3
Offenses ²	41	1	--	--	15	92	3
Victims ³	41	1	--	--	22	106	4
Known Offenders ⁴	39	1	--	--	5	77	6
Rate/100,000 ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2024							
Incidents ¹	54	--	--	1	16	80	--
Offenses ²	63	--	--	1	16	80	--
Victims ³	63	--	--	2	20	84	--
Known Offenders ⁴	57	--	--	4	7	62	--
Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2025							
Incidents ¹	40	3	--	2	10	49	--
Offenses ²	47	3	--	2	10	49	--
Victims ³	47	3	--	2	14	51	--
Known Offenders ⁴	40	3	--	3	5	28	--
Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table FPD 3: Fulshear Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	8	89	55
Total Incidents Cleared	6	2	10
Cleared by Arrest	6	2	10
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2021			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	3.05	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	3.05	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	27	131	75
Total Incidents Cleared	9	4	25
Cleared by Arrest	9	4	25
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2022			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	4.27	17.00
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	4.27	17.00
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	39	164	100
Total Incidents Cleared	8	7	17
Cleared by Arrest	8	7	17
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2023			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	3.24	26.09
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	3.24	26.09
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	41	185	115
Total Incidents Cleared	13	6	30
Cleared by Arrest	13	6	30
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2024			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	5.13	19.57
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	5.13	19.57
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	54	156	138
Total Incidents Cleared	32	8	27
Cleared by Arrest	32	8	27
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2025			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	4.67	22.22
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	4.67	22.22
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	43	107	216
Total Incidents Cleared	16	5	48
Cleared by Arrest	16	5	48
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Percent and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Fulshear Police Department

Agency Context

The findings presented below should be interpreted within the context of the agency's jurisdiction, organizational responsibilities, community characteristics, and operational environment. These contextual factors provide important information for understanding observed crime patterns and should be considered when interpreting the quantitative findings presented throughout this section.

The Fulshear Police Department serves one of the fastest-growing communities in Fort Bend County and one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the United States. Unlike many jurisdictions included in this report, Fulshear has experienced sustained residential and commercial expansion over the past decade, fundamentally changing the demands placed on municipal government and local law enforcement. Consequently, changes in reported crime should be interpreted alongside the city's unprecedented population growth, expanding infrastructure, and increasing demand for public safety services (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026i; City of Fulshear, 2025).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2026i), Fulshear's population increased from 16,856 residents at the 2020 Census to an estimated 64,630 residents by July 1, 2025, representing one of the fastest rates of population growth in the nation during that period. Between 2024 and 2025 alone, the city's population increased by approximately 21%, while between 2023 and 2024 Fulshear ranked among the fastest-growing incorporated places in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025b, 2026i).

This rapid growth has been driven by continued residential development, expanding commercial investment, highly rated school districts, and the city's location along the western edge of the Greater Houston metropolitan area. The City of Fulshear has continued to approve new residential development and infrastructure improvements, including the expansion of master-planned communities and municipal services designed to accommodate sustained population growth. The city's recent redistricting process itself reflects the extraordinary pace of development, with city officials noting that the population had nearly doubled since the previous redistricting effort only a few years earlier (City of Fulshear, 2025).

The Fulshear Police Department provides law enforcement services within a geographically compact jurisdiction that continues to evolve from a small rural community into a rapidly developing suburban city. As new neighborhoods, schools, commercial developments, and transportation corridors continue to emerge, the department must continually adapt staffing, patrol operations, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and community policing initiatives to meet increasing service demands. These conditions provide essential context for interpreting reported crime trends throughout the study period because observed changes may reflect not only changes in criminal activity but also substantial increases in population, development, and opportunities for police-citizen contact (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026i; City of Fulshear, 2025).

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that managing rapid population growth remains the agency's most significant operational challenge. Continued residential development has

increased demands for patrol services, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and community engagement while simultaneously requiring ongoing investments in personnel, equipment, technology, and officer training. Department representatives indicated that staffing has expanded in response to these increasing service demands and that continued organizational growth will be necessary as development continues throughout the jurisdiction.

Unlike many established municipalities where policing demands remain relatively stable from year to year, the Fulshear Police Department operates within an environment characterized by continual population growth and ongoing residential construction. New master-planned communities, expanding commercial corridors, increasing traffic volumes, and continued economic development have collectively contributed to changing policing demands throughout the study period. Consequently, observed changes in reported crime should be interpreted within the context of one of the fastest-growing communities in the nation rather than as isolated changes in criminal activity alone (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026i; City of Fulshear, 2025).

Crime Trends

Table FPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Fulshear Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Given Fulshear's extraordinary population growth throughout the study period, these findings should be interpreted alongside the substantial increase in residents, businesses, roadways, and opportunities for police-citizen interactions discussed in the preceding sections. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized crime rates and annual percentage changes are not reported for offense categories with annual incident counts below 100 because such estimates are statistically unstable. Accordingly, the discussion below focuses on reported incident trends while interpreting those findings within the context of one of the fastest-growing communities in the United States.

Person offenses remained below the reporting threshold for standardized rate calculations throughout the six-year study period but demonstrated an overall increase in reported incidents. Reported person offense incidents increased from **8 incidents** in 2020 to a high of **54 incidents** in 2024 before declining to **43 incidents** in 2025. Although the absolute number of reported incidents increased during much of the study period, these changes occurred concurrently with extraordinary population growth, substantial residential development, and expanding opportunities for crime reporting and police-citizen contact. Consequently, increases in reported person offenses should not be interpreted independently of the city's rapidly expanding population and changing operational environment.

Property offenses followed a markedly different trajectory than person offenses and demonstrated substantial long-term declines in population-adjusted crime rates. Following increases in reported incidents between 2020 and 2023, property offenses declined during both 2024 and 2025. Population-adjusted property crime rates decreased from **520.48 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2021 to **165.56 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **68.2% reduction** over the period for which standardized rates were available. These findings indicate that reported property crime did not increase proportionately with Fulshear's rapid population growth and instead demonstrated substantial long-term declines despite continued residential and commercial expansion.

Offenses against society demonstrated greater year-to-year variability than either person or property offenses. Reported incidents increased from **55 incidents** in 2020 to **216**

incidents in 2025, while population-adjusted rates increased from **291.85 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2022 to **334.21 per 100,000 residents** in 2025 following temporary declines during 2023 and 2024. Because offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and similar violations, are frequently influenced by proactive law enforcement activity, enforcement priorities, and officer-initiated investigations, annual fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, these findings likely reflect both proactive policing activity and changing operational priorities within a rapidly growing jurisdiction.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that crime patterns within the City of Fulshear evolved alongside one of the most significant periods of population growth experienced by any community in Fort Bend County. While reported person offenses increased in absolute numbers, property offense rates declined substantially during the latter portion of the study period, and offenses against society demonstrated greater variability consistent with proactive enforcement activity. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting reported crime within the broader demographic and operational context of a rapidly expanding community rather than relying solely on changes in aggregate offense counts.

Selected Offense Trends

Table FPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Fulshear Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized offense rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated for most individual offenses because annual incident counts remained below the reporting threshold. Accordingly, the discussion below focuses on reported offense counts while interpreting those findings within the broader context of Fulshear's extraordinary population growth and rapidly changing operational environment.

Assault remained the primary contributor to reported person offenses throughout the six-year study period while demonstrating substantial growth in reported incidents. Assault incidents increased from 8 reported incidents in 2020 to a peak of 54 incidents in 2024 before declining to 40 incidents in 2025. Although reported assault incidents increased considerably during much of the study period, these changes occurred concurrently with one of the fastest rates of population growth in the United States. Consequently, increases in reported assaults should be interpreted within the context of the city's rapidly expanding residential population, increasing opportunities for police-citizen contact, and continued community development rather than as evidence of disproportionate growth in violent crime.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported sex offenses fluctuated between zero and three incidents annually, while no homicides were reported during the six-year study period. Robbery likewise remained infrequent, with no reported incidents between 2020 and 2023, one reported incident during 2024, and two reported incidents during 2025. Because these offenses occurred in very small numbers, relatively minor changes in reported incidents can produce substantial proportional differences and therefore should not be interpreted as evidence of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime.

Property crime trends were driven primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft remained comparatively infrequent. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense throughout the study period, increasing from 46 reported incidents in 2020 to a peak of 92 incidents in 2023 before declining to 49 incidents in 2025. This downward trend during the latter portion of the

study period suggests that theft activity did not increase proportionately with the city's continued residential expansion. Burglary demonstrated modest annual variation, increasing from 5 reported incidents in 2020 to 16 incidents in 2024 before declining to 10 incidents in 2025. Motor vehicle theft likewise remained relatively uncommon, increasing modestly through 2022 before declining during the remaining years of the study period. These findings indicate that although property crime fluctuated during periods of rapid growth, several major property offenses declined during the latter years of the analysis.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that assault and theft remained the principal contributors to reported person and property crime within the City of Fulshear throughout the study period. While reported incidents increased across several offense categories during periods of rapid residential expansion, serious violent offenses remained uncommon, and several major property offenses demonstrated declining trends during the latter portion of the study period. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting offense-specific trends within the broader context of Fulshear's extraordinary population growth and evolving policing environment rather than relying solely on changes in reported offense counts.

Clearance Trends

Table FPD 3 presents clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Fulshear Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized clearance rates were not calculated for offense categories with fewer than 100 reported incidents because percentages derived from very small numbers are statistically unstable. Accordingly, the discussion below emphasizes long-term clearance patterns while interpreting the findings within the context of Fulshear's rapid population growth and relatively small annual offense counts.

Person offenses remained below the reporting threshold for standardized clearance rate calculations throughout the six-year study period. Nevertheless, the number of cleared person offense incidents generally increased alongside the growth in reported offenses. The department cleared **6 person offense incidents** in 2020, increasing to **32 cleared incidents** in 2024 before recording **16 cleared incidents** in 2025. Although annual fluctuations occurred, these changes should be interpreted in conjunction with the increasing number of reported person offenses and the substantial expansion of the population served by the department. Given the relatively small annual incident counts, the number of cleared offenses provides a more meaningful indicator of investigative activity than unstable clearance percentages.

Property offenses represented the only major offense category for which standardized clearance rates could be calculated consistently during much of the study period. Property offense clearance rates remained relatively stable, fluctuating between **3.05%** and **5.13%** before concluding at **4.67%** in 2025. Although comparatively low, these clearance rates are consistent with the investigative challenges commonly associated with property crimes, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, fewer available witnesses, and reduced opportunities to recover physical evidence. Overall, the findings indicate relatively stable investigative outcomes for reported property offenses despite the city's continued residential and commercial expansion.

Clearance rates for offenses against society demonstrated greater year-to-year variability than property offenses. Standardized clearance rates increased from **17.00%** in 2022

to **26.09%** in 2023, declined to **19.57%** in 2024, and increased again to **22.22%** in 2025. Because offenses against society frequently originate through officer-initiated activities such as proactive patrol, drug investigations, and weapons enforcement, fluctuations in reported clearance rates may reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, and policing strategies in addition to changes in investigative outcomes. Consequently, these findings should be interpreted within the broader context of proactive law enforcement activity rather than solely as measures of investigative performance.

Unlike several larger agencies included in this report, the Fulshear Police Department reported no exceptional clearances during the study period. All reported clearances were accomplished through arrest, reflecting both the department's reporting practices and the comparatively small number of reported incidents across several offense categories. Collectively, these findings indicate that clearance trends remained generally stable despite substantial increases in population and police service demands. Given the relatively small number of reported incidents, greater emphasis should be placed on long-term clearance patterns than on individual year-to-year fluctuations when interpreting investigative outcomes.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the City of Fulshear experienced substantial demographic expansion throughout the six-year study period, requiring reported crime trends to be interpreted within the context of one of the fastest-growing communities in both Fort Bend County and the United States. Unlike many jurisdictions examined in this report, Fulshear's rapid residential development, increasing commercial activity, and expanding transportation network substantially increased both the population at risk and opportunities for police-citizen interactions during the study period. Consequently, changes in reported crime should be evaluated alongside the city's extraordinary population growth rather than through aggregate offense counts alone.

The overall crime analyses indicate differing longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Reported person offenses increased in absolute numbers as the city continued to expand, although annual incident counts remained below the reporting threshold required for stable rate calculations. In contrast, property offense rates declined substantially between 2021 and 2025, decreasing approximately 68.2% despite continued residential and commercial development. Offenses against society demonstrated greater year-to-year variability, reflecting both proactive law enforcement activity and changing operational priorities within a rapidly growing jurisdiction. These findings suggest that reported crime did not increase proportionately with the city's remarkable population growth and continued development.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that assault and theft remained the principal contributors to reported person and property crime throughout the study period. Assault incidents increased alongside the city's rapidly expanding population, while serious violent offenses—including homicide, robbery, and sex offenses—remained comparatively uncommon. Theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime but declined during the latter years of the study period following earlier increases associated with continued residential growth. Burglary and motor vehicle theft likewise remained relatively infrequent and demonstrated modest annual variation. These findings illustrate that offense-specific trends varied considerably and should be interpreted within the broader context of Fulshear's evolving community characteristics.

Investigative outcomes remained generally consistent despite substantial increases in population and police service demands. Person offenses remained below the reporting threshold for stable clearance rate calculations, while property offense clearance rates remained relatively stable throughout the study period despite the increasing complexity associated with policing a rapidly expanding jurisdiction. Clearance rates for offenses against society demonstrated greater annual variability, reflecting the proactive nature of many officer-initiated enforcement activities. These findings suggest that investigative performance remained relatively consistent while the department adapted to the changing operational demands associated with one of the fastest-growing municipalities in the region.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader operational context of the Fulshear Police Department. During the study period, the department experienced substantial increases in population served, residential subdivisions, commercial development, roadway infrastructure, and calls for police service. Unlike more established municipalities where demographic conditions remained relatively stable, Fulshear's rapid expansion fundamentally altered the environment in which policing occurred. These community and operational characteristics provide essential context for understanding the reported crime trends and investigative outcomes presented throughout this chapter.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Fulshear's reported crime trends were shaped not only by changes in criminal activity but also by extraordinary population growth and rapid community development. While reported incidents increased across several offense categories, property crime rates declined substantially, serious violent crime remained comparatively uncommon, and investigative outcomes remained generally stable throughout the six-year study period. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting crime trends within the demographic and operational context of rapidly growing communities and reinforce the value of longitudinal, offense-specific analyses over isolated annual comparisons.

Key Findings

- **Crime trends should be interpreted within the context of Fulshear's extraordinary population growth.** During the six-year study period, Fulshear experienced one of the fastest rates of population growth in Fort Bend County and the United States. Consequently, changes in reported crime occurred alongside substantial increases in residents, businesses, roadway infrastructure, and opportunities for police-citizen interactions, making demographic context essential when interpreting reported crime trends.
- **Property crime rates declined substantially despite continued residential and commercial expansion.** While reported property offense incidents fluctuated throughout the study period, population-adjusted property crime rates declined approximately **68.2%** between 2021 and 2025. These findings indicate that property crime did not increase proportionately with the city's rapid population growth and expanding development.
- **Assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported person and property crime.** Assault incidents increased alongside the city's expanding population, while theft remained the most frequently reported property offense despite declining during the latter portion of the study period. Serious violent offenses, including homicide, robbery, and sex offenses, remained comparatively uncommon throughout the six-year analysis.

- **Investigative outcomes remained generally stable despite increasing operational demands.** Property offense clearance rates remained relatively consistent throughout the study period, while offenses against society demonstrated greater variability consistent with proactive enforcement activity. Person offenses remained below the reporting threshold required for stable clearance rate calculations, highlighting the importance of interpreting investigative outcomes within the context of relatively small annual offense counts.

- **Longitudinal, population-adjusted analyses provide a more meaningful assessment of crime than aggregate offense counts alone.** Fulshear illustrates how rapidly growing communities can experience increasing numbers of reported incidents while simultaneously demonstrating declining crime rates after accounting for population growth. These findings reinforce the importance of evaluating long-term offense-specific trends within their demographic and operational context rather than relying solely on annual changes in reported crime.

**Table MPPD 1: Meadows Place Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020⁴			
Incidents ⁵			
Offenses ⁶			
Victims ⁷			
Known Offenders ⁸			
Rate/100,000			
2021			
Incidents ⁵	14	165	15
Offenses ⁶	15	165	15
Victims ⁷	15	168	15
Known Offenders ⁸	16	26	17
Rate/100,000	NA ⁹	3,470.03	NA ⁹
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁹		NA ⁹
2022			
Incidents ⁵	16	162	16
Offenses ⁶	17	166	16
Victims ⁷	17	164	16
Known Offenders ⁸	17	23	17
Rate/100,000	NA ⁹	3,553.84	NA ⁹
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁹	2.42	NA ⁹
2023			
Incidents ⁵	17	132	23
Offenses ⁶	20	134	23
Victims ⁷	20	134	23
Known Offenders ⁸	21	39	25
Rate/100,000	NA ⁹	2,915.58	NA ⁹
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁹	-17.96	NA ⁹
2024			
Incidents ⁵	14	138	17
Offenses ⁶	14	138	17
Victims ⁷	14	142	17
Known Offenders ⁸	14	82	19
Rate/100,000	NA ⁹	2,943.06	NA ⁹
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁹	1.00	NA ⁹
2025			
Incidents ⁵	14	120	22
Offenses ⁶	16	120	22
Victims ⁷	16	125	22
Known Offenders ⁸	18	63	22
Rate/100,000	NA ⁹	2,639.68	NA ⁹
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁹	-10.30	NA ⁹

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ The Meadow Place Police Department transitioned to NIBRS late. There is no data reported for the agency in 2020.

⁵ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁶ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁷ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁸ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁹ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table MPPD 2: Meadows Place Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020¹							
Incidents ²							
Offenses ³							
Victims ⁴							
Known Offenders ⁵							
Rate/100,000							
2021							
Incidents ²	14	--	--	1	4	110	18
Offenses ³	15	--	--	1	4	110	18
Victims ⁴	15	--	--	1	4	112	18
Known Offenders ⁵	16	--	--	1	1	14	1
Rate/100,000	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	2,313.35	NA ⁶
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	--	NA ⁶
2022							
Incidents ²	15	1	--	3	4	108	27
Offenses ³	16	1	--	3	4	108	31
Victims ⁴	16	1	--	5	4	108	27
Known Offenders ⁵	16	1	--	4	2	9	6
Rate/100,000	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	2,312.14	NA ⁶
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	.05	NA ⁶
2023							
Incidents ²	16	1	--	--	8	93	13
Offenses ³	19	1	--	--	8	93	15
Victims ⁴	19	1	--	--	8	94	13
Known Offenders ⁵	20	1	--	--	2	27	4
Rate/100,000	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶
2024							
Incidents ²	14	--	--	2	17	97	4
Offenses ³	14	--	--	2	17	97	4
Victims ⁴	14	--	--	3	17	98	4
Known Offenders ⁵	14	--	--	2	11	56	4
Rate/100,000	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶
2025							
Incidents ²	11	2	1	1	7	85	4
Offenses ³	13	2	1	1	7	85	4
Victims ⁴	13	2	1	1	7	89	4
Known Offenders ⁵	15	2	1	2	8	43	1
Rate/100,000	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶	NA ⁶

¹ The Meadows Place Police Department transitioned to NIBRS late. There is no data reported for the agency in 2020

² Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

³ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁴ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁵ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁶ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table MPPD 3: Meadows Place Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020⁴			
% Cleared			
% Cleared by Arrest			
% Cleared by Exceptional Means			
Total Incidents			
Total Incidents Cleared			
Cleared by Arrest			
Cleared by Exceptional Means			
2021			
% Cleared	NA ⁵	6.67	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁵	6.06	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	.60	--
Total Incidents	14	165	15
Total Incidents Cleared	5	11	13
Cleared by Arrest	5	10	13
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	1	--
2022			
% Cleared	NA ⁵	4.94	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁵	4.94	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁵	--	--
Total Incidents	16	162	16
Total Incidents Cleared	2	8	14
Cleared by Arrest	1	8	14
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1	--	--
2023			
% Cleared	NA ⁵	6.06	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁵	5.30	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	.76	--
Total Incidents	17	132	23
Total Incidents Cleared	6	8	16
Cleared by Arrest	6	7	16
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	1	--
2024			
% Cleared	NA ⁵	5.07	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Arrest	--	3.62	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁵	1.45	--
Total Incidents	14	138	17
Total Incidents Cleared	2	7	11
Cleared by Arrest	--	5	11
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2	2	--
2025			
% Cleared	NA ⁵	10.00	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁵	8.33	NA ⁵
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁵	1.67	--
Total Incidents	14	120	22
Total Incidents Cleared	4	12	16
Cleared by Arrest	2	10	16
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2	2	--

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ The Meadow Place Police Department transitioned to NIBRS late. There is no data reported for the agency in 2020.

⁵ Percent and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Meadows Place Police Department

Agency Context

The Meadows Place Police Department serves the City of Meadows Place, a small, incorporated municipality located in northeastern Fort Bend County approximately 20 miles southwest of downtown Houston. Incorporated in 1983, Meadows Place encompasses approximately one square mile, making it one of the smallest jurisdictions included in this report. Despite its relatively small geographic footprint, the city maintains a full-service municipal police department responsible for providing patrol services, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and community policing within its jurisdiction while maintaining close working relationships with neighboring law enforcement agencies (Morales, 2011; City of Meadows Place, 2025).

Unlike several rapidly growing communities examined in this report, Meadows Place is a mature, primarily residential municipality with a relatively stable population. According to the **2020 U.S. Census**, the city had a population of **4,767 residents**, and subsequent population estimates indicate comparatively modest demographic change relative to other jurisdictions in Fort Bend County (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020). Consequently, changes in reported crime are less likely to reflect rapid population expansion than in communities experiencing substantial residential growth. Instead, crime trends should be interpreted within the context of a well-established suburban community whose public safety needs have remained comparatively stable over time.

Although the resident population is relatively small, the city's location substantially influences its policing environment. Meadows Place is bordered by the City of Sugar Land, the City of Stafford, and the City of Houston and is situated immediately adjacent to U.S. Highway 59/Interstate 69 and in close proximity to Beltway 8. These major transportation corridors generate significant commuter and through traffic, resulting in daily police activity involving both residents and non-residents. The department therefore operates within a regional transportation environment that differs considerably from many similarly sized municipalities and requires ongoing coordination with neighboring law enforcement agencies (City of Meadows Place, 2025).

The department's compact jurisdiction also creates operational efficiencies and unique policing challenges. Because the city is substantially developed and geographically constrained, officers patrol a relatively concentrated service area while simultaneously addressing traffic safety, residential quality-of-life concerns, and criminal incidents associated with regional travel patterns. These characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented in the following sections, as reported crime reflects not only the activities of local residents but also the influence of a strategically located community situated within one of the Houston metropolitan area's busiest transportation corridors.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Meadows Place Police Department's operational environment is shaped primarily by the city's strategic location within the Greater Houston metropolitan area rather than by rapid population growth or geographic expansion. Although Meadows Place encompasses approximately one square mile, officers routinely respond to policing demands associated with substantial commuter traffic, regional travel patterns, and the movement of individuals through the city. These conditions require the department to balance traditional

neighborhood policing responsibilities with traffic enforcement, crash response, and public safety concerns associated with major transportation corridors.

Department representatives emphasized the importance of maintaining a visible police presence while providing a broad range of services with a relatively small agency. In addition to routine patrol operations, officers are responsible for criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community engagement, and other public safety functions typical of a full-service municipal police department. Because of the department's size, personnel frequently perform multiple operational responsibilities and maintain close working relationships with neighboring law enforcement agencies to address incidents requiring additional resources or specialized capabilities.

Unlike several rapidly growing jurisdictions examined in this report, Meadows Place's operational demands are influenced less by continuing residential expansion and more by its mature development pattern, regional transportation network, and proximity to surrounding municipalities. Consequently, changes in reported crime should be interpreted within the context of a stable residential community that experiences substantial daily commuter activity and regional traffic flow. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table MPPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Meadows Place Police Department between 2021 and 2025. Because the Meadows Place Police Department transitioned to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) after 2020, comparable agency-level data are unavailable for 2020. Accordingly, the analyses presented in this section focus on the five-year period from 2021 through 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized crime rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated for person offenses and offenses against society because annual incident counts remained below the reporting threshold of 100 incidents. Consequently, the discussion below emphasizes reported incident trends while interpreting the findings within the context of Meadows Place's stable population and unique operational environment.

Person offenses remained comparatively uncommon and demonstrated little long-term variation throughout the study period. Reported person offense incidents fluctuated modestly between **14 and 17 incidents annually**, increasing from **14 reported incidents** in 2021 to a high of **17 incidents** in 2023 before returning to **14 incidents** during both 2024 and 2025. Given the consistently small number of reported incidents, these fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and do not indicate evidence of a sustained long-term increase or decrease in person crime. Rather, the findings suggest relatively stable violent crime patterns throughout the five-year analysis.

Property offenses accounted for the largest proportion of reported crime throughout the study period and demonstrated a gradual long-term decline. Population-adjusted property crime rates increased slightly from **3,470.03 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2021 to **3,553.84** in 2022 before declining during each of the remaining years of the study period to **2,639.68 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2025. Overall, property offense rates declined approximately **23.9%** between 2021 and 2025. These findings indicate that reported property crime decreased over time despite Meadows Place's location along heavily traveled regional transportation corridors and continued commuter activity.

Offenses against society remained comparatively infrequent while exhibiting greater year-to-year variation than either person or property offenses. Reported incidents increased from **15 incidents** in 2021 to **23 incidents** in 2023, declined to **17 incidents** during 2024, and increased again to **22 incidents** in 2025. Because offenses against society frequently result from officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing initiatives, annual fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, these findings may also reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, or policing strategies occurring during the study period.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that the Meadows Place Police Department experienced relatively stable crime patterns throughout the five-year study period. Person offenses remained consistently low, property crime demonstrated a gradual long-term decline, and offenses against society exhibited the variability commonly associated with proactive policing activity. These findings should be interpreted within the context of Meadows Place's mature residential character, stable population, and unique operational environment as a geographically compact municipality situated along major regional transportation corridors.

Selected Offense Trends

Table MPPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Meadows Place Police Department between 2021 and 2025. Because the department transitioned to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) after 2020, comparable offense data are unavailable for 2020. Additionally, most offense categories remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized rate calculations throughout the study period. Accordingly, the discussion below emphasizes reported offense counts and long-term offense patterns while interpreting the findings within the context of Meadows Place's stable residential population and unique operational environment.

Assault remained the primary contributor to reported person offenses throughout the five-year study period while demonstrating remarkable long-term stability. Reported assault incidents fluctuated only modestly, ranging from **11 to 16 incidents annually** between 2021 and 2025. Assault incidents increased slightly between 2021 and 2023 before declining during the final two years of the analysis. Given the relatively small number of reported incidents and the absence of sustained increases or decreases across the study period, these findings indicate that violent crime remained comparatively stable throughout Meadows Place.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported robberies fluctuated between **zero and three incidents annually**, while sex offenses ranged from **zero to two reported incidents** each year. The department reported **one homicide during 2025**, representing the only homicide reported during the five-year analysis. Because these offenses occurred in very small numbers, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime. Rather, modest year-to-year differences reflect the variability expected when offenses occur infrequently.

Property crime trends were influenced primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft demonstrated differing longitudinal patterns. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense throughout the study period. Reported theft incidents remained

relatively stable between 2021 and 2022 before declining from **108 incidents** in 2022 to **85 incidents** in 2025, representing an overall **21.3% reduction**. Burglary remained comparatively uncommon, fluctuating between **4 and 17 reported incidents** before declining from a study-period high of **17 incidents** in 2024 to **7 incidents** in 2025. Motor vehicle theft also remained relatively infrequent and declined substantially over the study period, decreasing from **18 reported incidents** in 2021 to **4 incidents** during both 2024 and 2025. Collectively, these findings indicate that several major property offenses declined during the latter portion of the study period despite Meadows Place's location within a heavily traveled regional transportation corridor.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that Meadows Place experienced relatively stable violent crime throughout the five-year study period while several major property offenses demonstrated long-term declines. Assault remained consistently low, serious violent offenses occurred infrequently, and theft, burglary, and motor vehicle theft all declined during the latter years of the analysis. These findings reinforce the broader crime trends presented previously and suggest that Meadows Place maintained relatively stable public safety conditions despite the operational challenges associated with policing a geographically compact municipality situated within a major metropolitan transportation network.

Clearance Trends

Table MPPD 3 presents clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Meadows Place Police Department between 2021 and 2025. Because the Meadows Place Police Department transitioned to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) after 2020, comparable clearance data are unavailable for 2020. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized clearance rates were not calculated for person offenses and offenses against society because annual incident counts remained below the reporting threshold of 100 incidents. Accordingly, the discussion below focuses on long-term clearance patterns while emphasizing property offense clearance rates, which provide the most meaningful basis for longitudinal comparison.

Person offenses remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized clearance rate calculations throughout the study period. Nevertheless, the department consistently cleared reported person offenses each year, with the number of cleared incidents ranging from 2 to 6 annually. Although annual fluctuations occurred, these differences should be interpreted cautiously given the relatively small number of reported person offenses. Overall, the findings indicate generally consistent investigative outcomes for person offenses throughout the five-year analysis rather than evidence of meaningful changes in investigative performance.

Property offenses represented the largest category of reported crime and provide the clearest opportunity to examine longitudinal clearance trends. Property offense clearance rates fluctuated modestly between **4.94%** and **10.00%** during the study period. Following a decline from **6.67%** in 2021 to **4.94%** in 2022, clearance rates increased to **6.06%** in 2023, declined slightly to **5.07%** in 2024, and increased substantially to **10.00%** in 2025, representing the highest property offense clearance rate observed during the five-year analysis. Although property offense clearance rates remained comparatively modest, the overall trend suggests improved investigative outcomes during the final year of the study period despite declining reported property crime. As with other agencies included in this report, comparatively lower property crime clearance rates should be

interpreted within the context of the investigative challenges commonly associated with property offenses, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, and fewer available witnesses.

Offenses against society likewise remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized clearance rate calculations. Although annual clearance percentages were not calculated, the department consistently cleared a substantial proportion of reported society offenses, with **11 to 16 incidents** cleared annually between 2021 and 2025. Because many offenses against society originate through officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing initiatives, clearance patterns should be interpreted within the broader context of enforcement priorities and operational activity rather than solely as measures of investigative effectiveness.

Across the study period, Meadows Place maintained generally consistent investigative outcomes throughout the five-year study period despite relatively small annual offense counts. Property offense clearance rates improved during the latter portion of the analysis, while person offenses and offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold for standardized clearance rate calculations. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and the relatively small number of reported incidents characteristic of Meadows Place.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Meadows Place Police Department experienced relatively stable crime patterns between 2021 and 2025 while serving one of the smallest municipalities in Fort Bend County. Because the department transitioned to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) after 2020, the longitudinal analyses begin in 2021. Unlike several jurisdictions examined in this report that experienced substantial residential growth during the study period, Meadows Place remained a mature, primarily residential community with a relatively stable population. Consequently, observed changes in reported crime are more likely to reflect normal year-to-year variation, localized crime patterns, and operational activity than rapid demographic change or community expansion.

The overall crime analyses indicate differing longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Reported person offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the five-year study period and exhibited only modest annual variation, remaining between 14 and 17 reported incidents annually. Property crime accounted for the largest proportion of reported offenses and demonstrated a gradual long-term decline, with property offense rates decreasing from 3,470.03 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2021 to 2,639.68 per 100,000 residents in 2025, representing an overall 23.9% reduction. Offenses against society remained relatively infrequent while exhibiting the year-to-year variability commonly associated with proactive law enforcement activity. These findings indicate relatively stable overall crime patterns despite Meadows Place's location within a heavily traveled metropolitan transportation corridor.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that assault remained the principal contributor to reported person crime while demonstrating remarkable long-term stability. Serious violent offenses, including robbery, sex offenses, and homicide, occurred infrequently throughout the study period. Theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime but declined approximately **21.3%** between 2022 and 2025. Burglary and motor vehicle theft likewise remained comparatively uncommon and generally declined during the latter portion of the study period. These

findings suggest that no individual offense category demonstrated evidence of sustained long-term increases and that several major property offenses experienced overall reductions during the five-year analysis.

Investigative outcomes remained generally consistent throughout the study period despite the department's relatively small annual offense counts. Property offense clearance rates fluctuated between 4.94% and 10.00%, reaching their highest observed level in 2025. Person offenses and offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized clearance rate calculations, although the department consistently cleared reported incidents within both offense categories. These findings indicate relatively stable investigative outcomes while reinforcing the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of small annual incident volumes.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader operational context of the Meadows Place Police Department. Although Meadows Place encompasses approximately just one square mile, the department serves a community strategically located adjacent to major regional transportation corridors and neighboring municipalities. Consequently, officers routinely address policing demands associated with commuter traffic, regional travel patterns, and interagency coordination in addition to traditional neighborhood policing responsibilities. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the reported crime trends and investigative outcomes presented throughout this chapter.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Meadows Place maintained relatively stable public safety conditions throughout the five-year period. Person offenses remained consistently low, property crime demonstrated gradual long-term declines, serious violent offenses remained uncommon, and investigative outcomes remained generally consistent despite relatively small annual offense counts. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting longitudinal crime trends within the context of Meadows Place's stable residential population, unique transportation environment, and the methodological limitations associated with low-frequency offense categories.

Key Findings

- **Overall reported crime remained relatively stable throughout the five-year study period.** Because the Meadows Place Police Department transitioned to the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) after 2020, longitudinal analyses begin in 2021. During the study period, person offenses remained comparatively uncommon, property crime demonstrated a gradual long-term decline, and offenses against society exhibited the year-to-year variability commonly associated with proactive law enforcement activity.

- **Property crime declined despite Meadows Place's location along major regional transportation corridors.** Property offense rates decreased from **3,470.03 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2021 to **2,639.68 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **23.9% reduction** during the study period. These findings indicate that reported property crime declined over time despite substantial commuter traffic and the city's location within a heavily traveled metropolitan corridor.

- **Assault remained stable, while serious violent crime remained comparatively uncommon.** Assault continued to account for the largest proportion of reported person crime and demonstrated little long-term variation throughout the study period. Robbery, sex offenses, and homicide occurred infrequently, while theft remained the

most frequently reported property offense despite declining approximately **21.3%** between 2022 and 2025.

- **Investigative outcomes remained generally consistent throughout the study period.** Property offense clearance rates fluctuated between **4.94%** and **10.00%**, reaching their highest observed level in 2025. Person offenses and offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized clearance rate calculations; however, the department consistently cleared reported incidents within both offense categories, indicating generally stable investigative outcomes despite relatively small annual offense counts.

- **Crime trends should be interpreted within the context of Meadows Place's unique operational environment.** Although Meadows Place encompasses only approximately one square mile, its strategic location adjacent to major transportation corridors and neighboring municipalities results in policing demands influenced by commuter traffic, regional travel patterns, and interagency coordination in addition to the needs of its resident population. These operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the department's reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

**Table MCPD 1: Missouri City Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	406	1,117	172
Offenses ⁵	478	1,117	172
Victims ⁶	478	1,271	172
Known Offenders ⁷	477	1,351	217
Rate/100,000	643.69	1,504.19	231.62
2021			
Incidents ⁴	411	1,068	298
Offenses ⁵	480	1,112	298
Victims ⁶	480	1,180	298
Known Offenders ⁷	448	1,225	357
Rate/100,000	641.71	1,486.63	398.40
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	.31	-1.17	72.00
2022			
Incidents ⁴	490	1,278	247
Offenses ⁵	586	1,329	247
Victims ⁶	586	1,460	247
Known Offenders ⁷	567	1,474	283
Rate/100,000	766.01	1,737.25	322.88
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	19.37	16.86	-18.96
2023			
Incidents ⁴	523	996	253
Offenses ⁵	620	996	253
Victims ⁶	620	1,058	253
Known Offenders ⁷	604	664	289
Rate/100,000	807.58	1,297.33	329.54
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	5.42	-25.32	2.06
2024			
Incidents ⁴	551	1,137	328
Offenses ⁵	637	1,138	328
Victims ⁶	637	1,223	328
Known Offenders ⁷	604	653	377
Rate/100,000	832.04	1,486.45	428.43
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	3.02	14.57	30.01
2025			
Incidents ⁴	576	1,144	248
Offenses ⁵	687	1,148	248
Victims ⁶	687	1,247	248
Known Offenders ⁷	632	664	301
Rate/100,000	888.43	1,484.60	320.72
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	6.77	-.12	-25.14

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table MCPD 2: Missouri City Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

		Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020								
	Incidents ¹	382	21	1	41	88	555	57
	Offenses ²	453	21	2	41	88	555	57
	Victims ³	453	21	2	70	107	615	61
	Known Offender ⁴	442	26	1	83	101	655	64
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	610.03	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	747.38	NA ⁵
2021								
	Incidents ¹	387	23	1	34	71	568	60
	Offenses ²	454	25	1	34	115	568	60
	Victims ³	454	25	1	59	89	606	61
	Known Offender ⁴	424	23	1	53	89	640	68
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	606.95	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	153.74	759.36	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-.50	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1.60	NA ⁵
2022								
	Incidents ¹	464	22	4	23	90	685	76
	Offenses ²	560	22	4	23	141	685	76
	Victims ³	560	22	4	42	154	735	81
	Known Offender ⁴	540	23	4	24	107	796	86
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	732.03	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	184.31	859.42	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	20.61	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	19.88	17.92	NA ⁵
2023								
	Incidents ¹	485	33	3	21	48	563	92
	Offenses ²	580	34	3	21	48	563	92
	Victims ³	580	34	3	37	53	584	95
	Known Offender ⁴	563	35	4	20	29	390	47
	Rate/100,000 ⁵	755.47	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	733.33	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	3.20	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-14.67	NA ⁵
2024								
	Incidents ¹	520	27	3	21	76	680	68
	Offenses ²	605	28	3	21	77	680	68
	Victims ³	605	28	3	34	91	716	69
	Known Offender ⁴	573	27	3	15	32	430	26
	Rate/100,000	790.25	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	888.22	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	4.60	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	21.12	NA ⁵
2025								
	Incidents ¹	560	12	2	26	91	608	87
	Offenses ²	671	12	2	26	95	608	87
	Victims ³	671	12	2	37	117	642	94
	Known Offender ⁴	615	11	4	29	45	352	37
	Rate/100,000	867.74	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	786.27	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	9.80	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-11.47	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table MCPD 3: Missouri City Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	77.34	18.08	87.21
% Cleared by Arrest	40.15	9.49	86.04
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	37.19	8.59	1.16
Total Incidents	406	1,117	172
Total Incidents Cleared	314	202	150
Cleared by Arrest	163	106	148
Cleared by Exceptional Means	151	96	2
2021			
% Cleared	74.21	22.19	95.64
% Cleared by Arrest	36.74	14.14	94.97
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	37.71	8.05	.67
Total Incidents	411	1,068	298
Total Incidents Cleared	305	237	285
Cleared by Arrest	150	151	283
Cleared by Exceptional Means	155	86	2
2022			
% Cleared	81.43	20.26	89.07
% Cleared by Arrest	37.35	14.32	87.85
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	44.08	5.95	1.21
Total Incidents	490	1,278	247
Total Incidents Cleared	399	258	220
Cleared by Arrest	183	183	217
Cleared by Exceptional Means	216	76	3
2023			
% Cleared	80.88	24.60	81.03
% Cleared by Arrest	40.34	18.17	80.23
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	40.54	6.43	.79
Total Incidents	523	996	253
Total Incidents Cleared	423	245	205
Cleared by Arrest	211	181	203
Cleared by Exceptional Means	212	64	2
2024			
% Cleared	76.59	27.18	81.40
% Cleared by Arrest	40.65	21.81	79.57
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	35.93	5.36	1.83
Total Incidents	551	1,137	328
Total Incidents Cleared	422	309	267
Cleared by Arrest	224	248	261
Cleared by Exceptional Means	198	61	6
2025			
% Cleared	76.21	21.07	82.66
% Cleared by Arrest	46.87	14.42	81.45
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	29.34	6.64	1.20
Total Incidents	576	1,144	248
Total Incidents Cleared	439	241	205
Cleared by Arrest	270	165	202
Cleared by Exceptional Means	169	76	3

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

Missouri City Police Department

Agency Context

The Missouri City Police Department serves one of the largest and most diverse municipalities in Fort Bend County. Unlike the other municipal law enforcement agencies included in this report, Missouri City's jurisdiction extends across both Fort Bend and Harris counties, creating a policing environment characterized by diverse residential neighborhoods, expanding master-planned communities, established commercial corridors, and major regional transportation routes. These jurisdictional characteristics create a complex operational environment that differs substantially from many of the other agencies examined in this report.

Missouri City continues to experience residential growth while remaining one of Fort Bend County's most established suburban communities. Although growth has occurred throughout portions of the city, including continued development within the Sienna master-planned community, Missouri City differs from rapidly expanding municipalities such as Fulshear in that much of the community is already well established. As a result, the department serves neighborhoods representing varying stages of development, population density, housing characteristics, and community needs. This diversity contributes to a broad range of policing responsibilities across the city.

The city's location within the Greater Houston metropolitan area also significantly influences its policing environment. Missouri City is served by major transportation corridors, including State Highway 6, the Fort Bend Parkway Toll Road, and nearby U.S. Highway 59/Interstate 69, resulting in substantial commuter traffic and regional mobility. In addition, the city's proximity to Houston and its location within two counties require ongoing coordination with neighboring law enforcement agencies and other public safety partners. These regional transportation and jurisdictional characteristics contribute to policing demands that extend beyond those typically associated with a suburban residential community.

The Missouri City Police Department provides comprehensive law enforcement services across a community characterized by diverse residential, commercial, recreational, and transportation environments. Officers routinely address a wide range of public safety responsibilities, including patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community engagement, and proactive policing initiatives. Collectively, these community and jurisdictional characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Missouri City Police Department's operational environment is influenced by the complexity of policing one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities while balancing the public safety needs of established neighborhoods, expanding residential developments, commercial activity, and major transportation corridors. Department representatives emphasized the importance of maintaining a proactive policing strategy while continuing to strengthen community partnerships, support technological innovation, and provide comprehensive public safety services throughout the city.

A distinguishing characteristic of the Missouri City Police Department is its continued investment in technology to enhance operational effectiveness. The department was the first law

enforcement agency in Fort Bend County to implement an operational unmanned aircraft system (drone) program to assist with locating missing persons, searching for fleeing suspects, documenting critical incidents, supporting tactical operations, and enhancing officer safety. Since its implementation, the program has expanded substantially and now provides aerial support for neighboring law enforcement agencies throughout the region, illustrating the department's commitment to technological innovation and interagency collaboration.

Like many law enforcement agencies throughout Texas, the Missouri City Police Department continues to operate within a dynamic public safety environment characterized by evolving community expectations, continued residential development, increasing traffic volumes, and the ongoing need to recruit, develop, and retain highly qualified personnel. The department is currently led by Chief Troy Finner, who assumed leadership in April 2026 and has emphasized professionalism, community partnerships, organizational development, and public trust as guiding priorities for the department (City of Missouri City, 2026).

Missouri City's combination of continued residential growth, regional transportation influences, technological innovation, and diverse policing responsibilities distinguishes it from many other agencies included in this report. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the crime trends, clearance rates, and criminal justice outcomes presented throughout the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table MCPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Missouri City Police Department between 2020 and 2025. As one of the largest municipal law enforcement agencies in Fort Bend County, Missouri City reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted crime rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate that person offense rates increased steadily over the six-year analysis, property offense rates remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations, and offenses against society exhibited greater year-to-year variability consistent with proactive law enforcement activity.

Person offense rates demonstrated a sustained long-term increase throughout the six-year study period. Person offense rates increased from **643.69 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **888.43 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **38.0% increase**. Following relatively little change during 2021, person offense rates increased substantially during 2022 and continued to increase during each of the remaining years of the analysis. Overall, the findings indicate a gradual but consistent upward trend in reported person offenses throughout the study period.

Property offense rates remained comparatively stable despite moderate annual variation. Property offense rates decreased slightly between 2020 and 2021, increased during 2022, declined substantially during 2023, increased again during 2024, and remained essentially unchanged during 2025. Overall, property offense rates declined modestly from **1,504.19 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,484.60 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **1.3% reduction**. Despite noticeable year-to-year fluctuations, reported property crime concluded the study period at a level nearly identical to that observed at its beginning, suggesting relatively stable long-term property crime patterns.

Offenses against society demonstrated substantially greater annual variability than either person or property offenses. Society offense rates increased dramatically from **231.62 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **398.40 per 100,000 residents** in 2021, declined during 2022, remained relatively stable during 2023, increased again during 2024, and declined to **320.72 per 100,000 residents** in 2025. Overall, society offense rates increased approximately **38.5%** during the study period despite considerable annual variation. Because many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive enforcement activities, are influenced by officer-initiated enforcement and policing priorities, these fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, they frequently reflect proactive law enforcement activity in addition to reported criminal incidents.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Missouri City experienced differing long-term trajectories across the three major offense categories. Person offense rates demonstrated a sustained upward trend, property crime remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations, and offenses against society exhibited the variability commonly associated with proactive policing activities. These findings reinforce the importance of evaluating offense-specific trends independently, as aggregate crime measures may conceal meaningful differences in how individual offense categories change over time.

Selected Offense Trends

Table MCPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Missouri City Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Missouri City reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted rates for assault and theft throughout the study period and for burglary during portions of the analysis. For offense categories with fewer than 100 reported incidents, standardized rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated in accordance with the reporting methodology used throughout this report. Overall, the findings indicate that increases in reported person crime were driven primarily by assault offenses, while theft remained the dominant property offense despite moderating during the latter portion of the study period.

Assault remained the primary contributor to reported person crime and demonstrated a sustained long-term increase throughout the six-year study period. Assault offense rates increased from 610.03 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 867.74 per 100,000 residents in 2025, representing an overall 42.2% increase. Following relatively little change during 2021, assault rates increased substantially during 2022 and continued to rise during each of the remaining years of the analysis. The composition of this increase is important to interpretation: the broader assault category includes offenses of varying severity and should not be read as equivalent to increases in homicide, robbery, or sexual offenses, each of which remained comparatively infrequent. The overall increase in Missouri City's person offense rate was therefore driven largely by reported assault offenses rather than uniform growth across serious violent offense categories.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period despite normal annual variation. Reported sex offenses fluctuated between **12 and 33 incidents annually**, while homicides ranged from **one to four reported incidents** during the six-year analysis. Robbery incidents declined overall from **41 reported incidents** in 2020 to **26 incidents** in 2025, representing an overall **36.6% reduction** despite modest year-to-year fluctuations. Because these offenses occurred in comparatively small numbers, annual changes should

be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime. Rather, modest fluctuations are expected when offense frequencies remain relatively low.

Property crime trends were influenced primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft demonstrated differing longitudinal patterns. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense throughout the study period. Theft offense rates increased from 747.38 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to a peak of 859.42 per 100,000 residents in 2022 before declining during the remaining years of the study period to 786.27 per 100,000 residents in 2025. Although theft concluded the study period approximately 5.2% above its 2020 level, the findings indicate that theft activity moderated considerably following the increases observed during the early portion of the analysis. Burglary demonstrated greater annual variability, declining from 88 reported incidents in 2020 to 48 incidents in 2023 before increasing to 91 incidents in 2025. Motor vehicle theft likewise increased from 57 incidents in 2020 to 92 incidents in 2023 before declining modestly during the final two years of the study period. These findings suggest that individual property offenses followed differing trajectories despite the relative stability observed in Missouri City's overall property crime rate.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that Missouri City's long-term crime trends were shaped primarily by increases in reported assault offenses, while major property offenses demonstrated comparatively greater stability despite annual variation. Theft remained the largest contributor to reported property crime, serious violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon, and burglary and motor vehicle theft exhibited distinct longitudinal patterns rather than sustained increases or decreases. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently, as individual offenses contributed differently to the department's overall crime patterns throughout the six-year study period.

Clearance Trends

Table MCPD 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Missouri City Police Department between 2020 and 2025. As one of the largest municipal law enforcement agencies in Fort Bend County, Missouri City reported sufficient incident volumes to calculate standardized clearance rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate consistently strong investigative outcomes for person offenses and offenses against society, while property offense clearance rates demonstrated gradual long-term improvement despite normal annual variation.

Person offense clearance rates remained consistently high throughout the six-year study period despite moderate annual variation. Person offense clearance rates ranged from 74.21% in 2021 to a high of 81.43% in 2022 before concluding at 76.21% in 2025. Compared with the 2020 clearance rate of 77.34%, person offense clearance rates declined only modestly over the six-year analysis, representing an overall 1.5% decrease. Throughout the study period, approximately three-quarters or more of reported person offenses were cleared. This is particularly relevant when interpreting the upward trend in person offenses: although reported assault increased, clearance outcomes for the broader person-offense category remained consistently high. Person offenses were resolved through a combination of arrest and exceptional means, indicating sustained investigative effectiveness across violent and interpersonal offenses.

Property offense clearance rates demonstrated greater annual variation but improved overall during the study period. Property offense clearance rates increased from

18.08% in 2020 to **21.07%** in 2025, representing an overall **16.5% increase**, despite reaching a study-period high of **27.18%** during 2024. Although clearance rates declined during the final year of the analysis, they remained above the level observed at the beginning of the study period. As observed throughout this report, comparatively lower property offense clearance rates are consistent with the investigative characteristics of property crimes, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, fewer available witnesses, and reduced opportunities to recover physical evidence. These findings indicate gradual improvements in investigative outcomes despite the inherent challenges associated with property crime investigations.

Offenses against society consistently exhibited the highest clearance rates of the three major offense categories. Society offense clearance rates ranged from **81.03%** to **95.64%** throughout the study period and concluded at **82.66%** during 2025. Compared with the 2020 clearance rate of **87.21%**, society offense clearance rates declined modestly overall (**5.2%**) despite remaining above **80%** every year. Because many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other officer-initiated enforcement activities, originate through proactive policing efforts, these exceptionally high clearance rates reflect both proactive enforcement strategies and favorable investigative outcomes. Nearly all society offenses were cleared through arrest, with exceptional clearances accounting for only a very small proportion of resolved cases throughout the study period.

Across the study period, Missouri City's clearance data demonstrate consistently strong investigative performance throughout the six-year study period. Person offense clearance rates remained stable at comparatively high levels, property offense clearance rates improved overall despite annual fluctuations, and offenses against society consistently achieved exceptionally high clearance rates characteristic of proactive law enforcement activity. These findings illustrate the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and policing strategies when evaluating agency performance over time.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Missouri City Police Department experienced differing trends across the three major offense categories while maintaining consistently strong investigative outcomes throughout the six-year study period. As one of Fort Bend County's largest municipal law enforcement agencies, Missouri City serves a diverse community spanning both Fort Bend and Harris counties and characterized by established residential neighborhoods, continued residential development, commercial activity, and major regional transportation corridors. These community characteristics provide important context for interpreting the department's reported crime trends and criminal justice outcomes.

The overall crime analyses indicate distinct longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Person offense rates increased from 643.69 to 888.43 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 38.0% increase between 2020 and 2025. In contrast, property offense rates remained comparatively stable despite annual variation, declining only 1.3% over the same period. Offenses against society exhibited considerably greater year-to-year variability but concluded the study period approximately 38.5% above their 2020 level. These findings indicate that Missouri City's long-term crime trends differed substantially across offense categories, underscoring the importance of evaluating offense-specific patterns rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that increases in reported person crime were driven primarily by assault offenses, which increased approximately **42.2%** during the study period. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense and, after increasing during the early portion of the analysis, moderated during the latter years while remaining modestly above its 2020 rate. Robbery declined overall despite normal annual variation, while burglary and motor vehicle theft followed distinct longitudinal patterns characterized by periods of both increase and decline. These findings illustrate that individual offense categories contributed differently to Missouri City's overall crime trends and reinforce the importance of offense-specific analyses.

Investigative outcomes remained consistently strong throughout the six-year study period. Person offense clearance rates remained above **74% annually** despite modest fluctuations, while property offense clearance rates improved overall from **18.08% in 2020 to 21.07% in 2025**. Offenses against society consistently achieved clearance rates **exceeding 80%**, reflecting both proactive enforcement activities and favorable investigative outcomes. These findings indicate that the department maintained effective investigative performance while responding to the diverse public safety demands associated with policing one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader operational context of the Missouri City Police Department. Missouri City's jurisdiction spans two counties and encompasses established neighborhoods, expanding residential developments, commercial corridors, and major transportation routes that generate substantial commuter traffic and require extensive regional coordination. The department's continued investment in technology, including its pioneering unmanned aircraft system program, further distinguishes its operational environment from many other agencies included in this report. These community and organizational characteristics provide important context for understanding the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented throughout this chapter.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Missouri City maintained relatively stable overall public safety conditions despite differing offense-specific trajectories. Person offenses increased throughout the study period, while property crime remained comparatively stable and investigative outcomes remained consistently strong across all major offense categories. These findings underscore the importance of evaluating long-term, offense-specific trends within the broader context of the department's diverse operational environment and the complex policing responsibilities associated with serving one of Fort Bend County's largest and most multifaceted municipalities.

Key Findings

- **Crime trends differed across the three major offense categories throughout the six-year study period.** Person offense rates increased from **643.69 to 888.43 offenses per 100,000 residents**, representing an overall **38.0% increase**. In contrast, property offense rates remained comparatively stable, declining only **1.3%** between 2020 and 2025 despite normal annual fluctuations, while offenses against society exhibited greater variability but concluded the study period approximately **38.5% above** their 2020 level. These findings demonstrate the importance of examining offense-specific trends rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

- **Assault remained the primary driver of reported person crime, while theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime.** Assault offense rates increased approximately **42.2%** during the study period and largely

accounted for the overall increase in person offenses. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense, increasing during the early years of the analysis before moderating during the latter portion of the study period. Robbery declined overall, while burglary and motor vehicle theft exhibited distinct longitudinal patterns characterized by periods of both increase and decline.

- **Investigative outcomes remained consistently strong across all three major offense categories.** Person offense clearance rates remained above 74% throughout the study period, property offense clearance rates improved overall from 18.08% to 21.07%, and offenses against society consistently achieved clearance rates exceeding 80%. These findings reflect sustained investigative effectiveness while also illustrating the differing investigative characteristics associated with person, property, and society offenses.

- **Missouri City's operational environment provides important context for interpreting reported crime trends.** As one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities, Missouri City encompasses portions of both Fort Bend and Harris counties and includes established residential neighborhoods, expanding commercial corridors, and major regional transportation routes. These diverse community characteristics influence policing demands and underscore the importance of interpreting reported crime within the broader context of the department's multifaceted operational responsibilities.

- **Longitudinal analyses provide the clearest assessment of public safety conditions.** Although individual offense categories experienced normal year-to-year fluctuations, the six-year analysis demonstrates that Missouri City's crime trends differed substantially across offense types while investigative outcomes remained consistently strong. Evaluating long-term, offense-specific patterns provides a more comprehensive understanding of public safety than isolated annual comparisons or aggregate crime totals alone.

**Table NPD 1: Needville Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	15	16	1
Offenses ⁵	20	16	1
Victims ⁶	20	17	1
Known Offenders ⁷	16	5	1
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2021			
Incidents ⁴	26	29	1
Offenses ⁵	28	29	1
Victims ⁶	28	30	1
Known Offenders ⁷	24	12	1
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2022			
Incidents ⁴	31	48	2
Offenses ⁵	33	48	2
Victims ⁶	33	48	2
Known Offenders ⁷	29	14	2
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2023			
Incidents ⁴	22	35	4
Offenses ⁵	23	35	4
Victims ⁶	23	35	4
Known Offenders ⁷	21	4	4
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2024			
Incidents ⁴	16	22	1
Offenses ⁵	18	22	1
Victims ⁶	18	22	1
Known Offenders ⁷	16	6	1
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
2025			
Incidents ⁴	16	16	3
Offenses ⁵	17	16	3
Victims ⁶	17	16	3
Known Offenders ⁷	17	5	2
Rate/100,000	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁸	NA ⁸	NA ⁸

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, and human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁸ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table NPD 2: Needville Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

		Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020								
	Incidents ¹	15	--	--	--	--	4	--
	Offenses ²	20	--	--	--	--	4	--
	Victims ³	20	--	--	--	--	5	--
	Known Offenders ⁴	16	--	--	--	--	1	--
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	--	--	--	--	NA ⁵	--
2021								
	Incidents ¹	24	2	--	1	1	10	1
	Offenses ²	26	2	--	1	1	10	1
	Victims ³	26	2	--	1	1	11	1
	Known Offenders ⁴	22	2	--	1	--	3	2
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2022								
	Incidents ¹	31	--	--	1	2	28	3
	Offenses ²	33	--	--	1	2	28	3
	Victims ³	33	--	--	1	2	28	3
	Known Offenders ⁴	29	--	--	1	--	6	--
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2023								
	Incidents ¹	19	2	1	--	--	29	1
	Offenses ²	20	2	1	--	--	29	1
	Victims ³	20	2	1	--	--	29	1
	Known Offenders ⁴	19	1	1	--	--	2	1
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2024								
	Incidents ¹	15	1	--	--	2	11	2
	Offenses ²	16	2	--	--	2	11	2
	Victims ³	16	2	--	--	2	11	2
	Known Offenders ⁴	15	1	--	--	1	4	--
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
2025								
	Incidents ¹	14	2	--	--	3	5	1
	Offenses ²	15	2	--	--	3	5	1
	Victims ³	15	2	--	--	3	5	1
	Known Offenders ⁴	15	2	--	--	1	1	1
	Rate/100,000	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	--	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table NPD 3: Needville Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁴	--	--
Total Incidents	15	16	1
Total Incidents Cleared	8	--	1
Cleared by Arrest	1	--	1
Cleared by Exceptional Means	7	--	--
2021			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	--
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	--
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁴	--	--
Total Incidents	26	29	1
Total Incidents Cleared	18	1	--
Cleared by Arrest	7	1	--
Cleared by Exceptional Means	11	--	--
2022			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	--
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	--
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA ⁴	NA ⁴	--
Total Incidents	31	48	2
Total Incidents Cleared	17	3	--
Cleared by Arrest	2	1	--
Cleared by Exceptional Means	15	2	--
2023			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	22	35	4
Total Incidents Cleared	4	--	2
Cleared by Arrest	4	--	2
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2024			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	16	22	1
Total Incidents Cleared	7	--	1
Cleared by Arrest	7	--	1
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
2025			
% Cleared	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	NA ⁴	--	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	16	16	3
Total Incidents Cleared	4	--	1
Cleared by Arrest	4	--	1
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Percent and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Needville Police Department

Agency Context

The Needville Police Department serves the City of Needville, a small rural municipality located in southwestern Fort Bend County. Unlike many of the larger suburban jurisdictions examined in this report, Needville is characterized by a relatively small residential population, limited commercial development, and comparatively low reported crime volumes. These community characteristics create a policing environment that differs substantially from the larger municipal law enforcement agencies participating in this report and provide important context for interpreting the department's reported crime trends (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; City of Needville, 2025).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2025), Needville continues to maintain a relatively small population compared with other municipalities in Fort Bend County. Although the community has experienced modest residential growth, it retains its rural character and close-knit community identity. The city's development pattern is largely residential, with agricultural land and open space surrounding much of the municipality, creating public safety demands that differ from those associated with larger suburban communities (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; City of Needville, 2025).

The Needville Police Department is a small municipal law enforcement agency staffed by approximately six to eight sworn officers under the leadership of Chief Michael Dickerson. Because of the department's size, officers routinely perform multiple responsibilities, including patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, and community policing while maintaining close working relationships with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office and neighboring law enforcement agencies when additional resources or specialized services are required (City of Needville Police Department, 2025).

Needville's location along State Highway 36 also influences the department's operational environment. Although the city serves a relatively small resident population, officers routinely encounter commuter and commercial traffic traveling between rural communities and the greater Houston metropolitan area. Consequently, reported crime and policing activity reflect not only the needs of local residents but also the influence of regional travel patterns. Collectively, these community, geographic, and organizational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Needville Police Department's operational environment is shaped by the responsibilities associated with policing a small rural community while providing the full range of municipal law enforcement services. Although the department serves a comparatively small population, officers are responsible for patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community engagement, and other public safety functions typically performed by much larger agencies. Because of the department's size, personnel routinely fulfill multiple operational responsibilities while maintaining the flexibility necessary to respond to a wide variety of incidents.

Department leadership emphasized the importance of maintaining close relationships with the community through proactive policing and citizen engagement. As a small municipal police department, officers frequently interact with residents, businesses, schools, and community organizations, allowing the department to maintain a visible presence and respond quickly to local

concerns. The department also works collaboratively with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office and neighboring law enforcement agencies when incidents require additional personnel, specialized resources, or multi-agency coordination.

Needville's location along State Highway 36 further influences the department's operational environment. Although the city maintains a relatively small resident population, officers routinely encounter commuter traffic, commercial vehicles, and travelers passing through the community. Consequently, policing activities reflect not only the needs of local residents but also the demands associated with maintaining traffic safety and responding to incidents involving individuals traveling through the area.

Unlike several larger agencies examined in this report, the Needville Police Department operates within an environment characterized by comparatively low crime volumes and a close-knit community. These operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented in the following sections, as relatively small annual changes in reported offenses may produce noticeable fluctuations in the data despite representing only a small number of incidents.

Crime Trends

Table NPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Needville Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized crime rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated because annual offense counts remained below the reporting threshold required for statistically reliable rate estimates. Accordingly, the discussion below emphasizes reported incident trends while interpreting the findings within the context of Needville's small population, rural character, and comparatively low reported crime volume.

Person offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the six-year study period while exhibiting moderate annual variation. Reported person offense incidents increased from **15 incidents** in 2020 to a study-period high of **31 incidents** in 2022 before declining during each of the remaining years to **16 incidents** in 2025. Although annual fluctuations occurred, the department concluded the study period with only one additional reported person offense compared with 2020. Given the relatively small number of reported incidents, these fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and do not indicate evidence of a sustained long-term increase in violent crime. Rather, the findings suggest generally stable person crime patterns throughout the study period.

Property offenses accounted for the largest proportion of reported crime and demonstrated a temporary increase followed by a return to baseline levels. Reported property offense incidents increased from **16 incidents** in 2020 to a peak of **48 incidents** in 2022 before declining steadily during the final three years of the analysis to **16 incidents** in 2025. This pattern indicates that the increase observed during the middle portion of the study period was temporary rather than representative of a sustained long-term trend. By 2025, reported property crime had returned to the same number of incidents observed at the beginning of the analysis, suggesting generally stable long-term property crime patterns despite short-term variation.

Offenses against society remained infrequent throughout the study period while exhibiting the annual variability commonly associated with proactive law enforcement activity. Reported society offense incidents ranged from **one to four incidents annually**, with no sustained upward or downward trend observed over the six-year analysis. Because offenses against society frequently result from officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses,

weapons violations, and other proactive policing efforts, annual fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, they may reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, or policing strategies occurring during the study period.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that the Needville Police Department experienced consistently low reported crime volumes throughout the six-year study period. Although temporary fluctuations occurred across each offense category, person and property offenses concluded the study period at levels comparable to those observed at its beginning, while offenses against society remained comparatively uncommon. These findings reinforce the importance of emphasizing long-term patterns rather than isolated annual changes when interpreting crime trends within a small rural police department where relatively few incidents can produce noticeable year-to-year variation.

Selected Offense Trends

Table NPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Needville Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized offense rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated because annual offense counts remained below the reporting threshold required for statistically reliable rate estimates. Accordingly, the discussion below emphasizes reported offense counts while interpreting long-term offense patterns within the context of Needville's comparatively small population and consistently low reported crime volume.

Assault remained the primary contributor to reported person crime throughout the six-year study period while demonstrating temporary fluctuations rather than a sustained long-term increase. Reported assault incidents increased from **15 incidents** in 2020 to a study-period high of **31 incidents** in 2022 before declining during each of the remaining years to **14 incidents** in 2025. Although annual fluctuations occurred, the department concluded the study period with one fewer reported assault than at the beginning of the analysis. Given the relatively small number of reported incidents, these findings suggest that assault levels remained comparatively stable throughout the study period despite temporary increases during the middle years of the analysis.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported sex offenses fluctuated between **zero and two incidents annually**, while only **one homicide** was reported during the entire six-year analysis. Robbery likewise remained infrequent, with **one reported incident** occurring during both 2021 and 2022 and no reported robberies during the remaining years of the study period. Because these offenses occurred in very small numbers, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime. Rather, modest year-to-year differences are expected when offense frequencies remain low.

Property crime trends were driven primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft remained comparatively infrequent. Theft consistently represented the largest category of reported property crime, increasing from **4 reported incidents in 2020 to a peak of 29 incidents in 2023 before declining substantially to 5 incidents in 2025**. This pattern suggests that the increase observed during the middle portion of the study period was temporary rather than representative of a sustained long-term trend. Burglary remained uncommon throughout the analysis, fluctuating between zero and three reported incidents annually, while motor vehicle theft likewise occurred infrequently, ranging from zero to three incidents each year. These findings indicate

that serious property crime remained comparatively uncommon within Needville despite temporary fluctuations in theft activity.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that Needville maintained comparatively low levels of both violent and property crime throughout the six-year study period. Assault and theft accounted for the largest proportion of reported offenses, while homicide, robbery, burglary, and motor vehicle theft occurred only sporadically. These findings reinforce the broader crime trends presented previously and emphasize the importance of evaluating long-term offense patterns rather than isolated annual fluctuations when interpreting crime within a small rural police department.

Clearance Trends

Table NPD 3 presents clearance information for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Needville Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Consistent with the reporting methodology used throughout this report, standardized clearance rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated because annual incident totals remained below the reporting threshold required for statistically reliable estimates. Accordingly, the discussion below emphasizes reported clearance activity and long-term investigative patterns while recognizing that relatively small annual changes can produce noticeable variation in departments with low reported crime volumes.

Person offenses remained comparatively infrequent throughout the study period, resulting in relatively small numbers of cleared cases each year. The department cleared between **4 and 18 person offense incidents annually**, with the greatest number of clearances occurring in **2021**. During the first three years of the study period, person offenses were resolved primarily through **exceptional clearances**, whereas the latter years relied exclusively on **arrest clearances**. Given the relatively small number of reported person offenses, these annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and do not necessarily indicate meaningful changes in investigative effectiveness. Rather, the findings suggest generally consistent investigative activity across the six-year analysis.

Property offenses likewise occurred in comparatively small numbers, limiting meaningful year-to-year comparisons. Although property crime represented the largest category of reported crime within Needville, the department cleared between **zero and three property offense incidents annually** throughout the study period. As observed throughout this report, comparatively lower property crime clearance activity is consistent with the investigative challenges commonly associated with property offenses, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, fewer available witnesses, and reduced opportunities to recover physical evidence. Given the small number of reported incidents, individual annual differences should not be interpreted as evidence of meaningful changes in investigative performance.

Offenses against society remained uncommon throughout the study period while reflecting the proactive nature of many officer-initiated investigations. Reported society offenses ranged from **one to four incidents annually**, with the department clearing reported offenses during several years of the analysis. Because many offenses against society originate through proactive enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and similar officer-initiated investigations, annual fluctuations in clearance activity should be interpreted within the broader context of enforcement priorities rather than solely as measures of investigative effectiveness.

The comparatively small number of reported incidents further limits meaningful interpretation of year-to-year differences.

Across the study period, the clearance data indicate that the Needville Police Department maintained generally consistent investigative activity throughout the six-year study period despite comparatively low reported crime volumes. Because the department investigated relatively few incidents each year, greater emphasis should be placed on long-term investigative patterns than on isolated annual fluctuations. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance activity within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and the comparatively small number of reported incidents characteristic of rural municipal police departments.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Needville Police Department experienced consistently low reported crime volumes throughout the six-year study period while serving one of the smallest and most rural municipalities in Fort Bend County. Unlike many of the larger suburban agencies examined in this report, Needville's relatively small population, limited commercial development, and close-knit community result in comparatively few reported criminal incidents each year. Consequently, relatively small annual changes in offense counts can produce noticeable fluctuations that should be interpreted within the broader context of the department's rural operational environment and consistently low crime volume.

The overall crime analyses indicate generally stable long-term patterns across the three major offense categories. Reported person offenses increased from 15 incidents in 2020 to a temporary peak of 31 incidents in 2022 before declining to 16 incidents in 2025. Property offenses followed a similar trajectory, increasing from 16 incidents in 2020 to 48 incidents in 2022 before declining steadily to 16 incidents by 2025. Offenses against society remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period, fluctuating between one and four reported incidents annually. These findings indicate that both person and property crime returned to levels comparable with those observed at the beginning of the study period, suggesting generally stable long-term crime patterns despite temporary fluctuations during the middle years of the analysis.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported person and property crime throughout the study period. Assault incidents increased temporarily before declining to **14 reported incidents** in 2025, while theft increased from **4 incidents** in 2020 to **29 incidents** in 2023 before declining substantially to **5 incidents** during the final year of the analysis. Serious violent offenses, including homicide, robbery, and sex offenses, remained comparatively uncommon, while burglary and motor vehicle theft occurred only sporadically. These findings indicate that temporary increases observed during portions of the study period were not sustained and that Needville continued to experience comparatively low levels of serious violent and property crime.

Investigative activity remained generally consistent despite the department's comparatively small annual offense counts. Person offenses were routinely investigated and cleared through a combination of exceptional and arrest clearances during the early years of the study period, while later years relied primarily on arrest clearances. Property offenses produced comparatively few cleared incidents, reflecting both the relatively small number of reported property crimes and the investigative challenges commonly associated with those offenses. Society offenses likewise remained infrequent and reflected the proactive nature of many officer-initiated investigations. These findings indicate

consistent investigative effort throughout the six-year study period while reinforcing the importance of interpreting clearance activity within the context of comparatively low reported crime volumes.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader operational context of the Needville Police Department. As a small rural agency staffed by a limited number of sworn officers, department personnel routinely perform multiple responsibilities, including patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, and community policing, while maintaining close partnerships with neighboring law enforcement agencies when specialized resources or additional personnel are required. Needville's location along State Highway 36 also introduces commuter and commercial traffic that extends policing responsibilities beyond the city's resident population. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the reported crime trends and investigative activity presented throughout this chapter.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that the Needville Police Department maintained comparatively low reported crime levels and generally stable public safety conditions throughout the six-year study period. Although temporary fluctuations occurred across several offense categories, both person and property crime concluded the study period at levels similar to those observed at its beginning, while serious violent offenses remained uncommon and investigative activity remained consistent. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting crime trends within the context of Needville's rural environment, comparatively small population, and the methodological limitations associated with low-frequency offense categories.

Key Findings

- **Needville maintained comparatively low reported crime volumes throughout the six-year study period.** Person and property offenses exhibited temporary fluctuations during the middle years of the analysis but both concluded 2025 at levels nearly identical to those observed in 2020. These findings indicate generally stable long-term crime patterns and reinforce the importance of emphasizing longitudinal trends rather than isolated annual changes when interpreting crime within a small rural community.

- **Assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported person and property crime.** Assault incidents increased temporarily before declining from **15 reported incidents** in 2020 to **14 incidents** in 2025, while theft increased during the middle portion of the study period before declining from a peak of **29 reported incidents** in 2023 to **5 incidents** in 2025. Serious violent offenses—including homicide, robbery, and sex offenses—remained comparatively uncommon throughout the analysis.

- **Investigative activity remained generally consistent despite comparatively small annual offense counts.** Person offenses were routinely investigated and cleared throughout the study period using both arrest and exceptional clearances, while property offenses produced comparatively few cleared incidents consistent with the investigative characteristics of property crime. Offenses against society likewise reflected the proactive nature of many officer-initiated enforcement activities. These findings should be interpreted within the context of the department's comparatively low reported crime volume rather than isolated annual fluctuations in clearance activity.

- **Needville's rural operational environment provides important context for interpreting reported crime trends.** The department serves a comparatively small residential community while also policing commuter and commercial traffic traveling along State Highway 36. Officers routinely perform multiple operational responsibilities and

maintain close partnerships with neighboring law enforcement agencies to provide specialized services when needed. These organizational and geographic characteristics influence policing activity and should be considered when evaluating reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

- **Long-term analyses provide the most meaningful assessment of public safety conditions within small municipal agencies.** Because Needville experiences relatively few reported criminal incidents each year, modest changes in annual offense counts can appear substantial despite representing only a small number of events. Evaluating long-term offense patterns within the broader context of the department's rural environment provides a more accurate assessment of community public safety than relying solely on individual annual fluctuations.

**Table RichPD 1: Richmond Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses Rates, Percent
Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	112	228	24
Offenses ⁵	125	228	24
Victims ⁶	125	235	24
Known Offenders ⁷	111	138	29
Rate/100,000	1,075.08	1,960.95	NA ⁸
2021			
Incidents ⁴	151	257	42
Offenses ⁵	163	257	42
Victims ⁶	163	273	42
Known Offenders ⁷	149	158	47
Rate/100,000	1,381.36	2,177.97	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	28.49	11.07	NA ⁸
2022			
Incidents ⁴	107	383	71
Offenses ⁵	114	383	71
Victims ⁶	114	420	71
Known Offenders ⁷	100	247	84
Rate/100,000	910.54	3,059.11	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-34.08	40.46	NA ⁸
2023			
Incidents ⁴	152	414	67
Offenses ⁵	174	415	67
Victims ⁶	174	469	67
Known Offenders ⁷	155	306	83
Rate/100,000	1,357.68	3,238.14	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	49.12	5.85	NA ⁸
2024			
Incidents ⁴	132	455	75
Offenses ⁵	138	455	75
Victims ⁶	138	486	75
Known Offenders ⁷	140	409	95
Rate/100,000	1,096.80	3,616.28	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-19.21	11.67	NA ⁸
2025			
Incidents ⁴	148	250	119
Offenses ⁵	158	250	119
Victims ⁶	158	271	119
Known Offenders ⁷	154	144	141
Rate/100,000	1,180.07	1,867.20	888.78
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	7.59	-48.36	NA ⁸

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁸ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table RichPD 2: Richmond Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025. 12,582

	Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020							
Incidents ¹	99	9	--	12	23	125	23
Offenses ²	112	9	--	12	23	125	23
Victims ³	112	9	--	16	24	127	23
Known Offenders ⁴	98	9	--	13	9	86	11
Rate/100,000	963.28	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,075.08	NA ⁵
2021							
Incidents ¹	130	12	5	16	30	142	13
Offenses ²	142	12	5	16	30	142	13
Victims ³	142	12	5	19	31	154	13
Known Offenders ⁴	130	11	5	5	9	109	4
Rate/100,000	1,203.39	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,203.39	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	24.93	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	11.93	NA ⁵
2022							
Incidents ¹	100	7	--	12	38	237	16
Offenses ²	107	7	--	12	38	237	16
Victims ³	107	7	--	18	43	251	16
Known Offenders ⁴	93	7	--	7	11	179	8
Rate/100,000	854.63	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,892.97	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-28.98	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	57.30	NA ⁵
2023							
Incidents ¹	137	7	2	9	34	238	15
Offenses ²	157	7	3	9	35	238	15
Victims ³	157	7	3	11	39	255	16
Known Offenders ⁴	141	7	1	9	14	208	9
Rate/100,000	1,225.03	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,857.97	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	43.34	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-1.89	NA ⁵
2024							
Incidents ¹	120	10	--	7	35	322	9
Offenses ²	126	10	--	7	35	322	9
Victims ³	126	10	--	14	36	332	10
Known Offenders ⁴	127	8	--	16	27	326	7
Rate/100,000	1,001.43	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	2,559.21	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-18.25	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	37.74	NA ⁵
2025							
Incidents ¹	131	14	1	8	25	115	16
Offenses ²	137	16	1	8	25	115	16
Victims ³	137	16	1	11	25	122	16
Known Offenders ⁴	137	13	1	11	13	69	13
Rate/100,000	1,023.22	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	858.91	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	2.17	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-66.43	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Table RichPD 3: Richmond Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	56.25	27.63	NA
% Cleared by Arrest	51.79	26.32	NA
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	4.46	1.32	--
Total Incidents	112	228	24
Total Incidents Cleared	63	63	22
Cleared by Arrest	58	60	22
Cleared by Exceptional Means	5	3	--
2021			
% Cleared	43.71	36.96	NA
% Cleared by Arrest	43.05	36.58	NA
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	NA	NA	--
Total Incidents	151	257	42
Total Incidents Cleared	66	95	35
Cleared by Arrest	65	94	35
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1	1	--
2022			
% Cleared	41.12	32.38	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	39.25	32.11	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	1.86	.26	--
Total Incidents	107	383	71
Total Incidents Cleared	44	124	64
Cleared by Arrest	42	123	64
Cleared by Exceptional Means	2	1	--
2023			
% Cleared	42.11	23.19	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	39.47	22.95	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	2.63	.24	--
Total Incidents	152	414	67
Total Incidents Cleared	64	96	62
Cleared by Arrest	60	95	62
Cleared by Exceptional Means	4	1	--
2024			
% Cleared	30.30	46.37	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	29.55	46.15	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	0.76	0.22	--
Total Incidents	132	455	75
Total Incidents Cleared	40	211	65
Cleared by Arrest	39	210	65
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1	1	--
2025			
% Cleared	30.41	21.60	80.67
% Cleared by Arrest	30.41	21.60	80.67
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--
Total Incidents	148	250	119
Total Incidents Cleared	45	54	96
Cleared by Arrest	45	54	96
Cleared by Exceptional Means	--	--	--

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Percent and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Richmond Police Department

Agency Context

The Richmond Police Department serves the City of Richmond, the county seat of Fort Bend County and one of the county's oldest municipalities. Unlike many of the other jurisdictions examined in this report, Richmond functions as the center of county government, housing the Fort Bend County courthouse complex and numerous governmental offices that attract employees, attorneys, jurors, litigants, and visitors from throughout the region. Consequently, the city's daily population routinely exceeds its residential population, creating a policing environment that differs substantially from many of the primarily residential communities included in this report (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; City of Richmond, 2025).

According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2025), Richmond continues to experience steady residential growth while maintaining its role as a governmental, commercial, and civic center within Fort Bend County. In addition to serving local residents, the department routinely provides law enforcement services for individuals traveling to government offices, the historic downtown district, local businesses, and regional healthcare facilities. As a result, the population at risk for crime within Richmond frequently extends beyond the city's permanent residential population, an important consideration when interpreting crime rates calculated using resident population estimates (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; City of Richmond, 2025).

The Richmond Police Department is a full-service municipal law enforcement agency responsible for patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community policing, and specialized public safety functions throughout the city. Because Richmond serves as the county seat, the department maintains close working relationships with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office, county government, judicial officials, and numerous regional public safety partners. These collaborative responsibilities further distinguish Richmond from many of the other municipal agencies examined in this report (City of Richmond Police Department, 2025).

Richmond's location along U.S. Highway 90A and its proximity to major regional transportation corridors further contribute to the department's operational environment. The city experiences substantial daily commuter traffic in addition to visitors accessing governmental offices, healthcare services, businesses, and community events. Collectively, these governmental, transportation, and community characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Richmond Police Department's operational environment is shaped by the city's role as the county seat of Fort Bend County and the diverse public safety responsibilities associated with serving a governmental, commercial, and healthcare center. In addition to providing traditional municipal law enforcement services, officers routinely respond to incidents involving county government facilities, judicial operations, community events, and a substantial daytime population that extends well beyond the city's permanent residential base.

A distinguishing characteristic of the department's operational responsibilities is the presence of the Fort Bend County courthouse complex and numerous county government offices located within

the city. These facilities generate daily activity involving employees, elected officials, attorneys, jurors, litigants, and members of the public, requiring officers to provide security, traffic management, and law enforcement services associated with governmental operations. Consequently, policing demands frequently reflect the city's function as the administrative center of Fort Bend County rather than solely the needs of its resident population.

The presence of **OakBend Medical Center**, a regional healthcare provider serving Fort Bend County and surrounding communities, further contributes to the department's operational responsibilities. In addition to routine calls for service, officers regularly respond to incidents involving patients, visitors, emergency medical situations, and individuals experiencing behavioral health or mental health crises. These responsibilities require close coordination with healthcare providers and other public safety agencies while contributing to a broader range of calls for service than may be experienced by similarly sized municipalities.

Richmond's location along **U.S. Highway 90A** and its proximity to major regional transportation corridors also influence daily policing activities. Officers routinely encounter commuter traffic, commercial vehicles, and visitors traveling to governmental offices, healthcare facilities, businesses, and community destinations. These operational characteristics require the department to balance proactive policing, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and community engagement while maintaining strong working relationships with the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office and other regional public safety partners.

Collectively, Richmond's governmental responsibilities, regional healthcare services, transportation environment, and substantial daytime population distinguish its operational environment from many of the other agencies included in this report. These characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table RichPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Richmond Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Because Richmond reported sufficient annual offense counts for person and property offenses, standardized population-adjusted crime rates were calculated throughout the study period. Offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold required for standardized rate calculations until 2025 and therefore are interpreted primarily through reported incident counts and broader longitudinal patterns. Collectively, the findings indicate that person offense rates remained relatively stable despite annual fluctuations, property offense rates exhibited substantial variability but concluded the study period slightly below their 2020 level, and offenses against society increased considerably during the final year of the analysis.

Person offense rates fluctuated throughout the six-year study period but remained comparatively stable overall. Person offense rates increased from **1,075.08 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,180.07 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **9.8% increase**. Following an increase during 2021, person offense rates declined substantially in 2022, rebounded during 2023, declined again in 2024, and increased modestly during the final year of the analysis. Despite these year-to-year fluctuations, the overall findings indicate relatively stable long-term person crime patterns rather than evidence of a sustained upward or downward trend.

Property offenses represented the largest category of reported crime throughout the study period and demonstrated substantially greater annual variability than person offenses. Property offense rates increased steadily from **1,960.95 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to a study-period high of **3,616.28 per 100,000 residents** in 2024 before declining sharply to **1,867.20 per 100,000 residents** in 2025. Overall, property offense rates declined modestly by approximately **4.8%** during the six-year study period despite considerable annual variation. These findings indicate that the elevated property crime observed during the middle years of the analysis was not sustained through the end of the study period, with 2025 property offense rates falling slightly below those observed at the beginning of the analysis.

Offenses against society demonstrated the greatest longitudinal change among the three major offense categories. Reported society offense incidents increased from **24 incidents** in 2020 to **119 incidents** in 2025, resulting in the first year during the study period in which standardized rates could be calculated (**888.78 offenses per 100,000 residents**). Because offenses against society frequently result from officer-initiated activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive enforcement efforts, these findings should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding increases in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, they may reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, reporting practices, or other law enforcement activities occurring throughout the study period.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Richmond experienced distinct longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Person offense rates remained relatively stable despite annual fluctuations, property offense rates exhibited substantial short-term variation but concluded the study period slightly below their 2020 level, and offenses against society increased considerably during the final year of the analysis. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently, as aggregate crime measures may obscure meaningful differences in how individual offense categories change over time.

Selected Offense Trends

Table RichPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Richmond Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Richmond reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted rates for assault and theft throughout the study period. For offense categories with fewer than 100 reported incidents, standardized rates and annual percentage changes were not calculated in accordance with the reporting methodology used throughout this report. Collectively, the findings indicate that assault remained the primary contributor to reported person crime, while theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime despite substantial fluctuations during the six-year analysis.

Assault remained the primary contributor to reported person crime throughout the six-year study period while demonstrating relatively stable long-term patterns despite annual fluctuations. Assault offense rates increased from **963.28 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,023.22 per 100,000 residents** in 2025, representing an overall **6.2% increase**. Assault rates increased during 2021, declined substantially in 2022, rebounded during 2023, declined again during 2024, and increased modestly during the final year of the analysis. Although noticeable year-to-year variation occurred, the overall findings indicate relatively stable assault trends throughout the study period, with assault continuing to account for the majority of reported person offenses.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period despite moderate annual variation. Reported sex offenses fluctuated between **7 and 14 incidents annually**, while homicide remained rare, with only **one reported homicide** occurring during the six-year analysis. Robbery likewise remained comparatively infrequent, ranging from **7 to 16 reported incidents annually** without demonstrating a sustained long-term increase or decrease. Because these offenses occurred in comparatively small numbers, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime. Rather, modest year-to-year variation is expected when offense frequencies remain relatively low.

Property crime trends were driven primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft demonstrated comparatively modest variation. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense throughout the study period. Theft offense rates increased from 1,075.08 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to a peak of 2,559.21 per 100,000 residents in 2024 before declining sharply to 858.91 per 100,000 residents in 2025. **Overall, theft rates declined approximately 20.1% between 2020 and 2025 despite the substantial increases observed during the middle years of the analysis.** Burglary remained comparatively uncommon, fluctuating between 23 and 38 reported incidents annually, while motor vehicle theft ranged from 9 to 23 reported incidents without demonstrating a sustained long-term trend. These findings indicate that the substantial decline in theft during 2025 largely accounted for the overall reduction observed in Richmond's property offense rate.

Across the study period, the selected offense analyses indicate that Richmond's long-term crime trends were shaped primarily by changes in assault and theft offenses, while other violent and property crimes remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Assault continued to account for the largest proportion of reported person crime, theft remained the dominant property offense despite substantial fluctuations, and homicide, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and sex offenses occurred at relatively low frequencies. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently, as changes within a relatively small number of high-volume offenses substantially influenced Richmond's overall crime patterns throughout the six-year analysis.

Clearance Trends

Table RichPD 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Richmond Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Because Richmond reported sufficient incident volumes for person and property offenses, standardized clearance rates were calculated throughout the study period. Offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold for standardized clearance rate calculations until 2025. Collectively, the findings indicate that investigative outcomes varied considerably across offense categories, with person offenses generally achieving higher clearance rates than property offenses and offenses against society demonstrating exceptionally high clearance rates during the final year of the analysis.

Person offense clearance rates declined overall despite moderate year-to-year variation. Person offense clearance rates decreased from **56.25%** in 2020 to **30.41%** in 2025, representing an overall **45.9% decline** during the six-year study period. Clearance rates declined substantially between 2020 and 2021, remained relatively stable through 2023, decreased again during 2024, and remained essentially unchanged during 2025. Despite this overall decline, person

offenses consistently achieved higher clearance rates than property offenses, reflecting the greater likelihood that violent crimes involve identifiable victims, witnesses, or known suspects that facilitate investigative resolution. Throughout the study period, most person offense clearances resulted from arrests, while exceptional clearances accounted for only a small proportion of resolved cases.

Property offense clearance rates exhibited considerable annual variability and concluded the study period below their 2020 level. Property offense clearance rates fluctuated between **21.60%** and **46.37%** during the six-year analysis. Following moderate clearance rates between 2020 and 2023, the department experienced a substantial increase during 2024 before declining to **21.60%** in 2025. Overall, property offense clearance rates decreased from **27.63%** in 2020 to **21.60%** in 2025, representing an overall **21.8% decline**. As observed throughout this report, comparatively lower property offense clearance rates are consistent with the investigative characteristics of property crimes, including delayed reporting, limited suspect information, fewer available witnesses, and reduced opportunities to recover physical evidence. These findings illustrate the inherent challenges associated with investigating property crime despite continued investigative efforts by the department.

Offenses against society demonstrated the highest investigative outcomes among the three major offense categories. During 2025, offenses against society achieved a clearance rate of **80.67%**, substantially exceeding the clearance rates observed for both person and property offenses. Because many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and similar officer-initiated investigations, originate through proactive law enforcement activity, comparatively high clearance rates are generally expected. Accordingly, these findings should be interpreted within the context of proactive policing strategies and the unique investigative characteristics associated with offenses against society rather than as direct comparisons with person or property offenses.

Across the study period, the clearance analyses indicate that investigative outcomes differed substantially across offense categories throughout the six-year study period. Person offenses consistently achieved higher clearance rates than property offenses despite an overall decline, property offenses demonstrated considerable annual variability while reflecting the inherent investigative challenges associated with those crimes, and offenses against society achieved the highest clearance rates because of their proactive enforcement nature. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and agency operational responsibilities when evaluating investigative performance over time.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Richmond Police Department experienced distinct offense-specific crime patterns while serving one of Fort Bend County's most operationally complex municipalities. As the county seat, Richmond's policing responsibilities extend beyond its residential population to include county government facilities, judicial operations, healthcare services, businesses, and major transportation corridors. Consequently, the department's reported crime patterns reflect the public safety demands associated with both its resident population and the substantial daytime population that routinely travels into the city for governmental, commercial, and healthcare services. These operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends presented throughout this chapter.

The overall crime analyses indicate differing longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Person offense rates increased from 1,075.08 to 1,180.07 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 9.8% increase between 2020 and 2025 despite considerable year-to-year fluctuations. In contrast, property offense rates increased substantially through 2024 before declining to 1,867.20 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2025, concluding the study period approximately 4.8% below the rate observed in 2020. Offenses against society remained below the reporting threshold for standardized rate calculations until 2025 but increased from 24 reported incidents in 2020 to 119 incidents in 2025. These findings demonstrate that offense categories followed distinctly different trajectories throughout the study period, underscoring the importance of evaluating each category independently rather than relying on aggregate crime measures.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that assault and theft remained the principal contributors to Richmond's reported crime patterns. Assault offense rates increased modestly by approximately **6.2%** during the six-year analysis while remaining the largest category of reported person crime. Theft likewise remained the dominant property offense, increasing substantially during the middle years of the study period before declining sharply during 2025 to finish approximately **20.1% below** its 2020 rate. Homicide, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and sex offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the analysis and contributed less substantially to the department's overall crime patterns. These findings demonstrate that relatively small changes in high-volume offenses can substantially influence aggregate crime trends within a jurisdiction.

Investigative outcomes likewise varied across offense categories throughout the study period. Person offense clearance rates declined from 56.25% in 2020 to 30.41% in 2025, while property offense clearance rates decreased from 27.63% to 21.60% despite considerable annual variation. Offenses against society achieved an 80.67% clearance rate during 2025, reflecting the proactive and officer-initiated nature of many of these offenses. These findings indicate that investigative outcomes differed according to offense type and investigative complexity rather than reflecting uniform changes in departmental performance.

These findings should be interpreted within Richmond's unique operational environment. As the administrative center of Fort Bend County, the department provides law enforcement services for governmental operations, court functions, healthcare facilities, businesses, community events, and regional transportation corridors in addition to serving its residential population. This substantial daytime population and diverse range of policing responsibilities distinguish Richmond from many other municipal agencies included in this report and provide important context for understanding both reported crime patterns and investigative outcomes.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Richmond maintained relatively stable public safety conditions throughout the six-year study period despite differing offense-specific trajectories. Person offense rates increased modestly over time, property crime concluded the study period slightly below its 2020 level despite considerable annual variation, and investigative outcomes varied according to offense type and investigative complexity. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting reported crime within the broader context of Richmond's governmental role, regional service population, and the offense-specific analyses presented throughout this chapter.

Key Findings

- **Crime trends differed across the three major offense categories throughout the six-year study period.** Person offense rates increased from **1,075.08** to **1,180.07 offenses per 100,000 residents**, representing an overall **9.8% increase**. In

contrast, property offense rates fluctuated considerably throughout the study period but concluded at **1,867.20 offenses per 100,000 residents**, approximately **4.8% below** the rate observed in 2020. Offenses against society increased substantially during the final year of the analysis, reflecting both proactive law enforcement activity and changes in reported enforcement patterns. These findings demonstrate the importance of evaluating offense-specific trends rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

- **Assault and theft remained the primary contributors to Richmond's reported crime patterns.** Assault offense rates increased approximately **6.2%** during the study period while remaining the largest category of reported person crime. Theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime despite considerable annual variation, ultimately declining approximately **20.1%** between 2020 and 2025 after reaching substantially higher levels during the middle years of the analysis. Homicide, robbery, burglary, motor vehicle theft, and sex offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period.

- **Investigative outcomes varied across offense categories throughout the study period.** Person offense clearance rates declined from **56.25%** to **30.41%**, while property offense clearance rates decreased from **27.63%** to **21.60%** despite considerable annual variation. Offenses against society achieved an **80.67%** clearance rate during 2025, reflecting the proactive and officer-initiated nature of many of these investigations. These findings demonstrate that investigative outcomes should be interpreted within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and enforcement activity rather than as uniform measures of agency performance.

- **Richmond's unique governmental and regional service responsibilities provide important context for interpreting reported crime trends.** As the county seat of Fort Bend County, Richmond serves a substantial daytime population through county government operations, judicial services, healthcare facilities, businesses, and major transportation corridors. These responsibilities generate policing demands that extend well beyond those associated with the city's resident population and distinguish Richmond from many other municipal jurisdictions included in this report.

- **Longitudinal analyses provide the clearest assessment of public safety conditions within Richmond.** Although annual fluctuations occurred across several offense categories, the six-year analysis demonstrates that person offenses remained relatively stable overall. Property crime concluded the study period below its 2020 level despite considerable variation during the middle years of the analysis, and investigative outcomes differed according to offense type. Evaluating long-term, offense-specific trends within Richmond's unique operational environment provides a more comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of public safety than isolated annual comparisons or aggregate crime statistics alone.

**Table RosenPD 1: Rosenberg Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses Rates, Percent
Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	819	895	529
Offenses ⁵	962	899	529
Victims ⁶	962	1,024	529
Known Offenders ⁷	926	345	702
Rate/100,000	2,518.19	2,353.28	1,384.74
2021			
Incidents ⁴	744	849	588
Offenses ⁵	880	866	588
Victims ⁶	880	987	588
Known Offenders ⁷	809	370	726
Rate/100,000	2,229.65	2,194.18	1,489.81
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-11.46	-6.76	7.59
2022			
Incidents ⁴	696	1,001	585
Offenses ⁵	820	1,015	585
Victims ⁶	820	1,139	585
Known Offenders ⁷	766	482	729
Rate/100,000	2,012.81	2,491.47	1,435.97
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-9.73	13.55	-3.61
2023			
Incidents ⁴	659	894	511
Offenses ⁵	755	912	511
Victims ⁶	755	1,058	511
Known Offenders ⁷	662	441	598
Rate/100,000	1,836.80	2,218.76	1,243.19
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-8.74	-10.94	-13.43
2024			
Incidents ⁴	711	877	456
Offenses ⁵	828	878	456
Victims ⁶	828	980	456
Known Offenders ⁷	739	455	539
Rate/100,000	2,037.10	2,160.11	1,121.88
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	10.90	-2.64	-9.75
2025			
Incidents ⁴	597	815	489
Offenses ⁵	700	819	489
Victims ⁶	700	1,028	489
Known Offenders ⁷	600	430	569
Rate/100,000	1,639.30	1,917.98	1,145.17
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-19.52	-11.20	2.07

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table RosenPD 2: Rosenberg Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

		Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020								
	Incidents ¹	758	53	5	26	143	439	70
	Offenses ²	896	58	5	26	145	439	72
	Victims ³	896	58	5	32	173	500	72
	Known Offenders. ⁴	869	49	4	20	37	162	25
	Rate/100,000	2,345.43	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	379.56	1,149.15	NA ⁵
2021								
	Incidents ¹	703	36	4	22	83	442	57
	Offenses ²	838	37	4	22	99	442	58
	Victims ³	838	37	4	30	114	515	59
	Known Offenders. ⁴	861	39	7	15	32	170	31
	Rate/100,000	2,123.24	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,119.89	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-9.47	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-2.55	NA ⁵
2022								
	Incidents ¹	669	22	1	22	71	562	67
	Offenses ²	791	23	1	22	84	562	68
	Victims ³	791	23	1	37	88	611	72
	Known Offenders. ⁴	736	21	1	26	30	256	20
	Rate/100,000	1,941.63	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,379.51	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-8.55	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	23.18	NA ⁵
2023								
	Incidents ¹	629	29	1	10	67	527	74
	Offenses ²	724	30	1	10	84	527	75
	Victims ³	724	30	1	15	84	641	83
	Known Offenders. ⁴	634	26	2	5	29	247	40
	Rate/100,000	1,761.39	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,282.11	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-9.28	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-7.06	NA ⁵
2024								
	Incidents ¹	672	34	--	8	57	504	72
	Offenses ²	786	37	--	8	57	504	73
	Victims ³	786	37	--	12	72	555	78
	Known Offenders. ⁴	701	30	--	4	22	271	52
	Rate/100,000	1,933.76	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,239.97	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	9.78	NA ⁵	--	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-3.28	NA ⁵
2025								
	Incidents ¹	572	20	2	10	59	444	77
	Offenses ²	672	20	4	10	59	444	81
	Victims ³	672	20	4	17	74	502	89
	Known Offenders. ⁴	578	17	2	14	22	235	36
	Rate/100,000	1,573.73	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,039.79	NA ⁵
	Rate Pct. Inc./Dec	-18.61	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-16.14	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table RosenPD 3: Rosenberg Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	54.58	11.51	91.12
% Cleared by Arrest	53.85	11.06	91.12
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	.73	.45	--
Total Incidents	819	895	529
Total Incidents Cleared	447	103	482
Cleared by Arrest	441	99	482
Cleared by Exceptional Means	6	4	--
2021			
% Cleared	60.08	12.49	94.05
% Cleared by Arrest	58.06	12.37	94.05
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	2.02	.12	--
Total Incidents	744	849	588
Total Incidents Cleared	447	106	553
Cleared by Arrest	432	105	553
Cleared by Exceptional Means	15	1	--
2022			
% Cleared	65.37	16.18	94.19
% Cleared by Arrest	65.23	16.18	94.02
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	.14	--	.17
Total Incidents	696	1,001	585
Total Incidents Cleared	455	162	551
Cleared by Arrest	454	162	550
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1	--	1
2023			
% Cleared	64.49	15.77	91.39
% Cleared by Arrest	62.21	14.99	91.39
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	2.28	.78	--
Total Incidents	659	894	511
Total Incidents Cleared	425	141	467
Cleared by Arrest	410	134	467
Cleared by Exceptional Means	15	7	--
2024			
% Cleared	73.42	21.21	90.35
% Cleared by Arrest	57.81	15.96	90.13
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	15.61	5.25	0.22
Total Incidents	711	877	456
Total Incidents Cleared	522	186	412
Cleared by Arrest	411	140	411
Cleared by Exceptional Means	111	46	1
2025			
% Cleared	81.74	23.31	94.68
% Cleared by Arrest	63.32	15.95	94.68
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	18.43	7.36	--
Total Incidents	597	815	489
Total Incidents Cleared	488	190	463
Cleared by Arrest	378	130	463
Cleared by Exceptional Means	110	60	--

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

Rosenberg Police Department

Agency Context

The Rosenberg Police Department serves the City of Rosenberg, one of the fastest-growing municipalities in Fort Bend County and an important residential, commercial, and transportation center within the region. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2025), Rosenberg's estimated population reached 42,701 residents, representing an increase of approximately 11.6% since the 2020 Census. The department's jurisdiction encompasses approximately 37.2 square miles, serving a community that continues to experience residential expansion, commercial development, and increasing public safety demands associated with rapid population growth (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; Rosenberg Police Department, 2025).

Unlike many municipalities examined in this report, Rosenberg functions as both a residential community and a regional destination. The city's location along Interstate 69/U.S. Highway 59 and U.S. Highway 90A generates substantial commuter and commercial traffic while providing convenient access to businesses, retail centers, healthcare services, and county resources throughout Fort Bend County. Consequently, the department routinely provides law enforcement services for a daytime population that extends beyond the city's permanent residential population, an important consideration when interpreting reported crime trends and population-based crime rates (Rosenberg Police Department, 2025).

The Rosenberg Police Department is led by Chief Jonathan White, who has served as Chief of Police since 2018. The department currently consists of approximately 81 sworn officers and 25 civilian employees, providing patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community policing, and specialized law enforcement services throughout the city. Specialized operational units include K-9, SWAT, unmanned aerial systems (UAS), community engagement, and other specialized response capabilities that support both routine policing and critical incident response (Rosenberg Police Department, 2025).

Socioeconomic conditions also distinguish Rosenberg from many other municipalities within Fort Bend County. Although the city has experienced significant economic growth in recent years, poverty levels remain higher than county averages, and a substantial proportion of the housing market consists of renter-occupied housing. These community characteristics may influence calls for service, housing stability, and policing demands and therefore provide important context when interpreting reported crime patterns within the jurisdiction (U.S. Census Bureau, 2025; Rosenberg Economic Development Council, 2023).

An additional feature of Rosenberg's operational environment is the Fort Bend Epicenter, a regional entertainment and event venue that hosts concerts, sporting events, graduations, conventions, and other large public gatherings. The facility attracts visitors from throughout Fort Bend County and the greater Houston metropolitan area, increasing demands for traffic management, crowd control, public safety planning, and interagency coordination during major events. These activities contribute to the department's operational responsibilities beyond those associated with serving the city's residential population (Fort Bend Epicenter, 2023; Rosenberg Police Department, 2025).

Collectively, Rosenberg's continued population growth, regional transportation network, expanding commercial development, socioeconomic diversity, and role as a destination for

employment, commerce, and entertainment create a policing environment that differs from many other municipalities examined in this report. These characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Rosenberg Police Department's operational environment is shaped by the city's continued residential and commercial growth, increasing traffic volumes, and expanding role as a regional destination within Fort Bend County. In addition to providing traditional municipal law enforcement services, officers routinely respond to a diverse range of calls for service associated with established residential neighborhoods, expanding commercial corridors, major transportation routes, and large public events.

The department's location along Interstate 69/U.S. Highway 59 and U.S. Highway 90A contributes to substantial daily commuter and commercial traffic moving through the city. These transportation corridors increase demands for traffic enforcement, crash investigations, and proactive policing while also providing access to businesses, retail centers, schools, healthcare facilities, and other regional destinations. As a result, the department's operational responsibilities extend beyond policing the resident population and include serving a significant number of individuals who travel into and through the city each day (Rosenberg Police Department, 2025; Rosenberg Economic Development Council, 2023).

An important component of Rosenberg's evolving operational environment is the Fort Bend Epicenter, which hosts concerts, sporting events, graduations, conventions, community events, and other large public gatherings throughout the year. These events require additional planning for traffic management, crowd control, security operations, and coordination with partner agencies. Recent agreements between the City of Rosenberg and Fort Bend County have formalized law enforcement services for Epicenter events, reflecting the facility's continuing importance within the city's public safety operations.

Department leadership also indicated that continued population growth and commercial development have contributed to increasing service demands across patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, and community engagement. The department responds to more than 66,000 calls requiring a police response annually, illustrating the breadth of services provided across a rapidly growing municipality and reinforcing the importance of balancing proactive policing with the routine demands of day-to-day public safety operations.

Collectively, Rosenberg's expanding population, regional transportation network, growing commercial base, and role as a destination for major public events create a dynamic policing environment that differs from many other municipalities examined in this report. These operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table RosenPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Rosenberg Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Rosenberg reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted crime rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate that each offense category followed a distinct longitudinal pattern, reinforcing the importance of examining

person, property, and society offenses independently rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

Person offenses. Person offense rates declined from 2,518.19 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 1,639.30 per 100,000 in 2025, representing an overall 34.9% decrease during the study period. Although person offense rates increased modestly during 2024 before declining sharply in 2025, the overall six-year trend reflects a sustained reduction in reported person offenses. Following consecutive annual declines between 2020 and 2023, the temporary increase observed in 2024 was followed by the largest single-year decline of the study period (19.52%) during 2025. These findings suggest a meaningful long-term reduction in reported person offenses despite periodic year-to-year fluctuations.

Property offenses. Property offense rates declined from 2,353.28 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 1,917.98 per 100,000 in 2025, representing an overall 18.5% decrease across the six-year study period. Unlike person offenses, property crime demonstrated considerably greater annual variability. Property offense rates declined during 2021, increased substantially during 2022 (13.55%), declined during both 2023 and 2024, and decreased an additional 11.20% during 2025. Although property offenses remained the largest category of reported crime throughout the study period, the overall longitudinal trend indicates a moderate reduction in reported property crime between 2020 and 2025.

Offenses against society. Offenses against society declined from 1,384.74 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 1,145.17 per 100,000 in 2025, representing an overall 17.3% decrease during the study period. Society offense rates increased during 2021 before declining for three consecutive years between 2022 and 2024. A modest increase (2.07%) was observed during 2025; however, society offense rates remained well below 2020 levels. Because offenses against society frequently originate through officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing initiatives, these fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, they may also reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, or reporting practices occurring throughout the study period.

Across the study period, Rosenberg experienced overall reductions across all three major offense categories between 2020 and 2025. Person offenses demonstrated the largest long-term decline, property offenses exhibited greater year-to-year variability while declining overall, and offenses against society generally trended downward despite modest fluctuations during the study period. These findings indicate that the department experienced broad reductions in reported crime while individual offense categories followed distinct longitudinal patterns that are best understood through offense-specific analyses rather than aggregate crime measures alone.

Selected Offense Trends

Table RosenPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Rosenberg Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Collectively, the selected offense data demonstrate that individual offense categories followed distinct long-term patterns throughout the study period. While assault and theft remained the primary contributors to Rosenberg's person and property crime rates, several lower-frequency offenses experienced substantial changes over the six-year analysis.

Assault remained the most frequently reported violent offense throughout the study period and continued to account for the largest proportion of reported person crime. Assault offense rates declined from **2,345.43 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,573.73 per 100,000** in

2025, representing an overall **32.9% decrease**. Following consecutive annual declines between 2020 and 2023, assault rates increased modestly during 2024 before declining sharply (**18.61%**) during 2025. Despite these annual fluctuations, the six-year trend indicates a meaningful reduction in reported assault offenses.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported sex offenses declined from **58 offenses in 2020** to **20 offenses in 2025**, representing an overall reduction of approximately **65.5%**. Likewise, robbery offenses declined from **26 offenses** to **10 offenses**, an overall reduction of approximately **61.5%**. Homicides remained infrequent throughout the study period, fluctuating between zero and five reported offenses annually. Because these offenses occurred in comparatively small numbers, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime.

Theft remained the largest category of reported property crime throughout the six-year study period. Theft offense rates declined from **1,149.15 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,039.79 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **9.6% decrease**. Unlike assault, however, theft exhibited greater annual variability, increasing substantially during 2022 before declining during each of the final three years of the analysis. Burglary offenses declined markedly from **145 reported offenses** in 2020 to **59 offenses** in 2025, representing an overall reduction of approximately **59.3%**. In contrast, motor vehicle theft remained comparatively stable throughout the study period, increasing modestly from **72 offenses** in 2020 to **81 offenses** in 2025. Although motor vehicle theft fluctuated annually, it occurred considerably less frequently than theft and therefore contributed less substantially to Rosenberg's overall property crime trends.

Across the study period, the selected offense data indicate that Rosenberg experienced broad reductions across most major offense categories during the study period. Assault and theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported crime despite overall declines, while burglary, robbery, and sex offenses demonstrated substantial long-term reductions. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently, as changes within individual offense categories provide a more complete understanding of the department's overall crime patterns than aggregate crime measures alone.

Clearance Trends

Table RosenPD 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Rosenberg Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Rosenberg reported sufficient incident volumes to calculate standardized clearance rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate substantial improvements in investigative outcomes for person and property offenses while maintaining consistently high clearance rates for offenses against society.

Person offense clearance rates demonstrated a sustained long-term improvement throughout the six-year study period. Person offense clearance rates increased from 54.58% in 2020 to 81.74% in 2025, representing an overall 49.8% increase. Although clearance rates increased gradually between 2020 and 2023, more substantial improvements occurred during the final two years of the study period, with person offense clearance increasing from 64.49% in 2023 to 73.42% in 2024 and reaching its highest level (81.74%) in 2025. Arrest clearances also increased during the study period, while exceptional clearances demonstrated the largest relative increase, rising from 0.73% in 2020 to 18.43% in 2025. These findings indicate substantially improved investigative outcomes for reported person offenses.

Property offense clearance rates likewise demonstrated meaningful long-term improvement despite annual variation. Property offense clearance rates increased from **11.51%** in 2020 to **23.31%** in 2025, representing an overall **102.5% increase** and more than doubling over the six-year study period. Following modest improvements between 2020 and 2023, property offense clearance increased substantially during the final two years of the analysis. Arrest clearances remained the primary method of case resolution throughout the study period, while exceptional clearances increased from **0.45%** in 2020 to **7.36%** in 2025. Although property offense clearance rates remained lower than person offense clearance rates, the overall trend reflects considerable improvement in investigative outcomes.

Clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently high throughout the study period. Society offense clearance increased modestly from **91.12%** in 2020 to **94.68%** in 2025, representing an overall **3.9% increase**. Annual clearance rates consistently exceeded **90%**, reflecting the proactive and officer-initiated nature of many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other enforcement activities. Unlike person and property offenses, virtually all society offense clearances resulted from arrests, with exceptional clearances occurring only rarely during the study period.

Across the study period, the clearance data indicate substantial improvements in investigative outcomes across all three major offense categories between 2020 and 2025. Person offense clearance rates increased by nearly 50%, property offense clearance rates more than doubled, and offenses against society maintained consistently high clearance rates throughout the study period. These findings suggest meaningful improvements in investigative outcomes while reinforcing the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and proactive enforcement activities.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Rosenberg Police Department experienced overall reductions across each of the three major offense categories between 2020 and 2025, although the magnitude and pattern of change varied considerably by offense type. Person offenses demonstrated the largest long-term decline, decreasing approximately 34.9% over the six-year study period. Property offenses likewise declined overall (18.5%) despite exhibiting greater year-to-year variability, while offenses against society declined approximately 17.3% following an increase during 2021 and subsequent decreases over the remainder of the study period. These findings indicate broad reductions in reported crime while illustrating that individual offense categories followed distinct longitudinal patterns.

The selected offense analyses further demonstrate that assault and theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported violent and property crime throughout the study period. Assault offense rates declined approximately **32.9%**, while theft offense rates decreased approximately **9.6%** between 2020 and 2025. Burglary, robbery, and sex offenses experienced even larger long-term reductions, whereas motor vehicle theft remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations. These findings illustrate that the overall decline in reported crime was driven by improvements across multiple offense categories rather than by changes in a single offense type.

Investigative outcomes likewise improved substantially throughout the study period. Person offense clearance rates increased from 54.58% in 2020 to 81.74% in 2025, while property offense clearance rates more than doubled, increasing from 11.51% to 23.31%. Clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently above 90% throughout the analysis. These findings indicate

meaningful improvements in investigative outcomes while maintaining consistently high clearance rates for proactively enforced offenses.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader context of Rosenberg's evolving operational environment. Continued population growth, expanding residential and commercial development, increasing traffic volumes, regional transportation corridors, and the Fort Bend Epicenter have collectively contributed to a dynamic policing environment that extends beyond serving the city's resident population alone. Consequently, observed changes in reported crime reflect not only long-term crime trends but also the operational demands associated with policing one of Fort Bend County's fastest-growing regional centers.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Rosenberg experienced broad reductions in reported crime alongside measurable improvements in investigative outcomes during the six-year study period. Although annual fluctuations occurred across several offense categories, the overall trends suggest continued progress while reinforcing the importance of interpreting crime patterns within the context of the city's unique operational responsibilities, ongoing growth, and changing public safety demands.

Key Findings

- **Overall reported crime declined across all three major offense categories.**

Between 2020 and 2025, person offense rates declined approximately **34.9%**, property offense rates declined approximately **18.5%**, and offenses against society declined approximately **17.3%**, indicating broad long-term reductions in reported crime.

- **Person offenses experienced the largest long-term decline.** Person offense rates decreased from **2,518.19** to **1,639.30 offenses per 100,000 residents**, despite modest year-to-year fluctuations, representing the greatest reduction among the three major offense categories.

- **Property crime remained the largest category of reported crime.** Although property offense rates declined overall, annual fluctuations occurred throughout the study period. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense, while burglary, robbery, and sex offenses demonstrated substantial long-term reductions.

- **Investigative outcomes improved substantially during the study period.** Person offense clearance rates increased from **54.58%** to **81.74%**, while property offense clearance rates more than doubled from **11.51%** to **23.31%**. Clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently above **90%** throughout the six-year analysis.

- **Crime trends should be interpreted within the context of Rosenberg's evolving operational environment.** Continued residential and commercial growth, increasing traffic volumes, regional transportation corridors, and the Fort Bend Epicenter contribute to policing demands that extend beyond serving the city's resident population and provide important context for interpreting reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

**Table StaffPD 1: Stafford Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases and Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	261	815	160
Offenses ⁵	299	819	160
Victims ⁶	299	918	160
Known Offenders ⁷	295	713	193
Rate/100,000	1,692.52	4,636.02	905.69
2021			
Incidents ⁴	373	1,208	155
Offenses ⁵	454	1,217	155
Victims ⁶	454	1,320	155
Known Offenders ⁷	468	1,504	187
Rate/100,000	2,639.53	7,075.58	901.16
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	55.95	52.62	-.50
2022			
Incidents ⁴	281	1,156	97
Offenses ⁵	330	1,160	97
Victims ⁶	330	1,217	97
Known Offenders ⁷	347	1,417	117
Rate/100,000	1,893.61	6,656.34	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-28.26	-5.93	NA ⁸
2023			
Incidents ⁴	291	843	120
Offenses ⁵	340	846	120
Victims ⁶	340	911	120
Known Offenders ⁷	355	1,053	153
Rate/100,000	1,961.01	4,879.45	692.12
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	3.56	-26.69	NA ⁸
2024			
Incidents ⁴	240	718	73
Offenses ⁵	292	724	73
Victims ⁶	292	802	73
Known Offenders ⁷	297	868	88
Rate/100,000	1,663.34	4,124.18	NA ⁸
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-15.18	-15.47	NA ⁸
2025			
Incidents ⁴	237	677	207
Offenses ⁵	272	681	207
Victims ⁶	272	754	207
Known Offenders ⁷	259	669	267
Rate/100,000	1,507.50	3,774.31	1,147.25
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-9.36	-8.48	NA ⁸

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table StaffPD 2: Stafford Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020							
Incidents ¹	249	11	1	19	52	471	69
Offenses ²	287	11	1	19	52	471	73
Victims ³	287	11	1	21	63	534	73
Known Offenders ⁴	282	12	1	29	45	400	45
Rate/100,000	1,624.59	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	2,666.14	NA ⁵
2021							
Incidents ¹	349	24	--	30	77	674	117
Offenses ²	426	28	--	30	80	674	123
Victims ³	426	28	--	44	91	733	119
Known Offenders ⁴	442	26	--	55	100	830	132
Rate/100,000	2,476.74	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	3,918.61	715.12
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	52.45	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	46.98	NA ⁵
2022							
Incidents ¹	267	11	3	20	44	759	95
Offenses ²	316	11	3	20	44	759	99
Victims ³	316	11	3	24	52	797	95
Known Offenders ⁴	329	11	7	41	54	940	102
Rate/100,000	1,813.28	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	4,355.31	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-26.79	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	11.14	NA ⁵
2023							
Incidents ¹	273	17	--	11	36	526	103
Offenses ²	322	17	--	11	36	526	106
Victims ³	322	17	--	15	42	568	104
Known Offenders ⁴	331	19	--	19	37	683	115
Rate/100,000	1,857.19	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	3,033.80	611.37
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	2.42	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-30.34	NA ⁵
2024							
Incidents ¹	238	2	--	13	55	436	64
Offenses ²	290	2	--	13	55	436	70
Victims ³	290	2	--	25	65	481	68
Known Offenders ⁴	295	2	--	24	59	546	77
Rate/100,000	1,651.95	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	2,483.62	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-11.05	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-18.13	NA ⁵
2025							
Incidents ¹	224	12	1	17	38	378	48
Offenses ²	259	12	1	17	38	378	52
Victims ³	259	12	1	20	41	428	51
Known Offenders ⁴	248	10	1	21	40	358	44
Rate/100,000	1,435.45	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	2,095.00	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	-13.11	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-15.64	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table StaffPD 3: Stafford Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	67.05	15.95	33.75
% Cleared by Arrest	47.89	14.23	32.50
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	19.16	1.72	1.25
Total Incidents	261	815	160
Total Incidents Cleared	175	130	54
Cleared by Arrest	125	116	52
Cleared by Exceptional Means	50	14	2
2021			
% Cleared	67.56	17.80	33.55
% Cleared by Arrest	47.45	14.32	29.03
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	20.11	3.48	4.52
Total Incidents	373	1,208	155
Total Incidents Cleared	252	215	52
Cleared by Arrest	177	173	45
Cleared by Exceptional Means	75	42	7
2022			
% Cleared	58.01	21.89	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	39.50	19.03	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	18.51	2.85	NA ⁴
Total Incidents	281	1,156	97
Total Incidents Cleared	163	253	37
Cleared by Arrest	111	220	29
Cleared by Exceptional Means	52	33	8
2023			
% Cleared	49.83	28.94	77.50
% Cleared by Arrest	38.49	24.44	48.33
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	11.34	4.51	29.17
Total Incidents	291	843	120
Total Incidents Cleared	145	244	93
Cleared by Arrest	112	206	58
Cleared by Exceptional Means	33	38	35
2024			
% Cleared	32.92	14.48	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Arrest	32.50	13.79	NA ⁴
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	0.42	0.70	NA ⁴
Total Incidents	240	718	73
Total Incidents Cleared	79	104	48
Cleared by Arrest	78	99	27
Cleared by Exceptional Means	1	5	21
2025			
% Cleared	44.35	17.73	77.78
% Cleared by Arrest	35.98	15.81	71.01
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	8.37	1.92	6.76
Total Incidents	239	677	207
Total Incidents Cleared	106	120	161
Cleared by Arrest	86	107	147
Cleared by Exceptional Means	20	13	14

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Percent and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Stafford Police Department

Agency Context

The Stafford Police Department serves the City of Stafford, a unique municipality located within both Fort Bend and Harris Counties in the southwestern portion of the Houston metropolitan area. Although Stafford encompasses approximately 7 square miles and maintains a relatively modest residential population, the city serves as a significant regional commercial, industrial, and employment center. Its strategic location along Interstate 69/U.S. Highway 59, U.S. Highway 90A, and in close proximity to Beltway 8 contributes to substantial daily commuter, commercial, and freight traffic that extends well beyond the city's resident population (City of Stafford, 2025; U.S. Census Bureau, 2025).

Stafford is distinguished from many neighboring municipalities by its longstanding economic development strategy and commercial tax base. Since eliminating municipal property taxes in 1995, the city has attracted a diverse mix of corporate offices, retail centers, manufacturing facilities, hospitality businesses, and commercial development. As a result, Stafford experiences a substantial daytime population that exceeds its residential population, creating public safety demands associated with employment centers, commercial activity, and regional travel in addition to traditional neighborhood policing (City of Stafford, 2025).

The Stafford Police Department is a full-service municipal law enforcement agency responsible for providing patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community policing, and specialized public safety services throughout the city. Officers routinely respond to incidents occurring within residential neighborhoods while also policing major commercial corridors, industrial properties, hotels, restaurants, shopping centers, and heavily traveled transportation routes. These diverse responsibilities create an operational environment that differs from many predominantly residential communities within Fort Bend County (City of Stafford, 2025).

Stafford's commercial character also influences the types of criminal activity reported within the city. The concentration of businesses, retail establishments, and high-volume transportation corridors creates increased opportunities for property crime, retail theft, vehicle-related offenses, and other crimes associated with commercial activity and transient populations. Consequently, reported crime patterns should be interpreted within the context of Stafford's role as a regional employment and commercial destination rather than solely as a residential municipality (City of Stafford, 2025).

Collectively, Stafford's unique geographic location, dual-county jurisdiction, substantial commercial development, regional transportation network, and large daytime population create a policing environment that differs from many other municipalities examined in this report. These characteristics provide important context for interpreting the reported crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Stafford Police Department's operational environment is shaped by the city's unique combination of commercial development, regional transportation corridors, and relatively small residential population. Although Stafford encompasses only approximately seven square miles, officers routinely provide law enforcement

services for a population that extends well beyond city residents due to the concentration of businesses, employment centers, retail establishments, hotels, and restaurants located throughout the jurisdiction.

The city's location along Interstate 69/U.S. Highway 59, U.S. Highway 90A, and near Beltway 8 generates substantial commuter, commercial, and freight traffic each day. These transportation corridors increase demands for traffic enforcement, crash investigations, proactive patrol operations, and criminal investigations while also facilitating access to Stafford's commercial districts. As a result, the department's operational responsibilities extend beyond traditional neighborhood policing and include addressing public safety concerns associated with a high-volume daytime population and regional travel patterns (City of Stafford, 2025).

Department leadership further indicated that Stafford's commercial character influences both calls for service and policing priorities. Officers routinely respond to incidents occurring at retail centers, office complexes, hotels, industrial properties, and other commercial locations, requiring the department to balance proactive crime prevention, traffic enforcement, and community policing with the demands associated with protecting a major regional business district. These operational responsibilities differ from many predominant residential municipalities within Fort Bend County and provide important context for interpreting the city's reported crime patterns (City of Stafford, 2025).

Collectively, Stafford's dual-county jurisdiction, extensive commercial development, regional transportation network, and substantial daytime population create a dynamic policing environment that differs from many other agencies examined in this report. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table StaffPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Stafford Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Stafford reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted crime rates for person and property offenses throughout the study period. Offenses against society met the reporting threshold during selected years, although rates were not calculated in years where offense counts fell below the reporting threshold. Overall, the findings indicate that each offense category followed a distinct longitudinal pattern over the six-year study period.

Person offense rates demonstrated an overall downward trend despite a substantial increase early in the study period. Person offense rates increased from 1,692.52 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 2,639.53 per 100,000 in 2021, representing a single-year increase of 55.95%. Following this peak, person offense rates declined during 2022, increased modestly during 2023, and then declined during both 2024 and 2025. By the end of the study period, the person offense rate had decreased to 1,507.50 offenses per 100,000 residents, representing an overall 10.9% reduction from 2020 and a 42.9% reduction from the 2021 peak. These findings indicate that although person offenses fluctuated throughout the study period, the long-term trend reflects a sustained reduction following the unusually elevated rates observed during 2021.

Property offense rates likewise increased substantially during 2021 before declining steadily over the remainder of the study period. Property offense rates increased from 4,636.02 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 7,075.58 per 100,000 in 2021, representing a 52.62% increase.

Thereafter, property offense rates declined during each successive year, reaching 3,774.31 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2025. This represents an overall 18.6% decrease between 2020 and 2025 and a 46.7% reduction from the 2021 peak. Although property offenses remained the largest category of reported crime throughout the study period, the sustained declines observed after 2021 suggest meaningful long-term reductions in reported property crime.

Offenses against society followed a different longitudinal pattern than person and property offenses. Society offense rates remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2021 before declining below the reporting threshold during 2022 and 2024. Reportable rates resumed during 2023 and 2025, increasing from 692.12 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2023 to 1,147.25 per 100,000 in 2025. Because annual offense counts fell below the reporting threshold during portions of the study period, these fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously. In addition, offenses against society frequently result from officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing efforts. Consequently, changes in reported rates may reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, or reporting practices in addition to underlying criminal activity.

Across the study period, Stafford experienced differing longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Both person and property offense rates increased sharply during 2021 before demonstrating sustained declines through 2025, while offenses against society followed a more variable pattern influenced by reporting thresholds and proactive enforcement activity. These findings illustrate the importance of examining long-term trends rather than isolated annual changes and reinforce the value of interpreting reported crime within the context of Stafford's unique commercial and transportation environment.

Selected Offense Trends

Table StaffPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Stafford Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Overall, the findings indicate that the department experienced differing offense-specific patterns during the study period. Although several offenses increased substantially during 2021, many subsequently declined over the remainder of the study period, contributing to the broader reductions observed in overall person and property offense rates.

Assault offenses remained the primary driver of reported violent crime throughout the six-year study period while demonstrating an overall long-term decline. Assault offense rates decreased from **1,624.59 offenses per 100,000** residents in 2020 to **1,435.45 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **11.6% reduction**. Assault rates increased sharply during 2021 (**52.45%**) before declining substantially during 2022, remaining relatively stable during 2023, and declining again during both 2024 and 2025. Although annual fluctuations were observed, the overall trend indicates a moderate reduction in reported assault offenses over the six-year study period.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported robberies declined modestly from 19 offenses in 2020 to 17 offenses in 2025, while sex offenses remained relatively infrequent, fluctuating between 2 and 28 reported offenses annually without demonstrating a sustained long-term trend. Homicides were rare throughout the study period, with no more than three reported offenses in any year. Given the comparatively small number

of reported offenses, annual fluctuations in these categories should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime.

Property crime trends were influenced primarily by theft, although burglary and motor vehicle theft also declined over the study period. Theft offense rates decreased from 2,666.14 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 2,095.00 per 100,000 in 2025, representing an overall 21.4% reduction. Similar to assault, theft increased substantially during 2021 before declining during each of the subsequent four years. Burglary offenses decreased from 52 reported offenses in 2020 to 38 offenses in 2025, representing an overall 26.9% reduction, while motor vehicle theft declined from 73 offenses to 52 offenses, an overall decrease of approximately 28.8%. These findings indicate broad reductions across Stafford's principal property crime categories following the elevated offense levels observed during 2021.

Across the study period, the selected offense data indicates that Stafford experienced broad reductions across most major offense categories between 2020 and 2025. Assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported person and property crime despite declining over the study period, while burglary and motor vehicle theft also demonstrated meaningful long-term reductions. These findings reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently, as individual offense categories followed distinct longitudinal patterns that collectively contributed to the department's overall crime trends.

Clearance Trends

Table StaffPD 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Stafford Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Stafford reported sufficient incident volumes to calculate standardized clearance rates for person and property offenses throughout the study period. Clearance rates for offenses against society were not reported during years in which incident counts fell below the reporting threshold. Overall, the findings indicate differing investigative trends across offense categories, highlighting the importance of examining clearance outcomes independently rather than relying on a single overall measure.

Person offense clearance rates declined overall despite improving during the final year of the study period. Person offense clearance rates decreased from **67.05%** in 2020 to **44.35%** in 2025, representing an overall **33.9% decline**. Clearance rates remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2021 before declining during 2022, 2023, and reaching their lowest level (**32.92%**) in 2024. During 2025, person offense clearance rates rebounded to **44.35%**, representing an improvement over the previous year but remaining below levels observed during the first half of the study period. Arrest clearances remained the primary method of case resolution throughout the analysis, while exceptional clearances varied considerably from year to year. These findings suggest that investigative outcomes for person offenses fluctuated substantially over time rather than following a consistent long-term trajectory.

Property offense clearance rates demonstrated modest long-term improvement despite considerable annual variation. Property offense clearance rates increased from **15.95%** in 2020 to **17.73%** in 2025, representing an overall **11.2% increase**. Following steady improvements between 2020 and 2023, when clearance rates reached **28.94%**, property offense clearance declined substantially during 2024 before recovering modestly during 2025. Although property offenses consistently remained more difficult to clear than person offenses, the department concluded the study period with slightly higher property clearance rates than were observed at its beginning. This

pattern reflects the investigative challenges commonly associated with property crime while also illustrating the variability that can occur from year to year.

Clearance rates for offenses against society varied considerably throughout the study period. Society offense clearance rates remained near one-third of reported incidents during 2020 and 2021 before increasing substantially during years in which reportable rates were available. Because many offenses against society result from officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing efforts, and because standardized rates were not reported during portions of the study period due to reporting thresholds, these findings should be interpreted cautiously. Consequently, year-to-year fluctuations may reflect changes in enforcement activity, incident volume, or reporting thresholds in addition to investigative outcomes.

Across the study period, Stafford's clearance trends demonstrate differing investigative outcomes across offense categories. Person offense clearance rates declined overall but improved during the final year of the study period, property offense clearance rates exhibited modest long-term improvement despite considerable annual variation, and offenses against society demonstrated substantial fluctuations associated with proactive enforcement activity and reporting thresholds. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and annual incident volume rather than viewing clearance rates as a single indicator of agency performance.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Stafford Police Department experienced distinct patterns across person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society during the six-year study period. Person and property offense rates both increased substantially during 2021 before declining over the remainder of the study period, resulting in overall reductions between 2020 and 2025. Person offense rates declined approximately **10.9%** over the six-year period, while property offense rates declined approximately **18.6%** despite considerable year-to-year variation. In contrast, offenses against society followed a less consistent pattern, reflecting both fluctuations in reported offense counts and the influence of proactive law enforcement activity.

The selected offense analyses indicate that assault and theft remained the primary contributors to Stafford's reported violent and property crime throughout the study period. Assault offense rates declined approximately 11.6%, while theft offense rates decreased approximately 21.4% between 2020 and 2025. Burglary and motor vehicle theft likewise demonstrated meaningful long-term reductions, whereas robbery, sex offenses, and homicide remained comparatively infrequent and exhibited greater annual variability due to lower offense counts. These findings indicate that the overall reduction in reported crime resulted from improvements across multiple offense categories rather than changes in a single offense type.

Investigative outcomes varied across offense categories throughout the study period. Person offense clearance rates declined overall despite improving during 2025, while property offense clearance rates demonstrated modest long-term improvement following substantial year-to-year fluctuations. Clearance rates for offenses against society likewise varied throughout the study period and should be interpreted within the context of proactive enforcement activity and reporting thresholds. These findings illustrate that clearance patterns differed by offense type and were influenced by the unique investigative characteristics associated with each category.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader context of Stafford's unique operational environment. As a dual-county municipality with a substantial commercial and industrial base, major transportation corridors, and a daytime population that exceeds its residential population, Stafford experiences policing demands that differ from many predominantly residential communities within Fort Bend County. Consequently, reported crime patterns reflect not only the experiences of city residents but also the public safety responsibilities associated with serving a regional employment, commercial, and transportation center.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Stafford experienced overall reductions in reported crime following elevated offense levels during 2021 while maintaining differing investigative outcomes across offense categories. These trends underscore the importance of interpreting reported crime within the context of Stafford's unique commercial environment, regional transportation network, and evolving operational responsibilities rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

Key Findings

- **Overall reported crime declined following elevated offense levels during 2021.** Between 2020 and 2025, person offense rates declined approximately **10.9%**, while property offense rates declined approximately **18.6%**. Although both offense categories experienced substantial increases during 2021, each demonstrated sustained reductions over the remainder of the study period.

- **Assault and theft remained the primary drivers of reported crime.** Assault offense rates declined approximately **11.6%**, while theft offense rates declined approximately **21.4%** between 2020 and 2025. Burglary and motor vehicle theft also demonstrated meaningful long-term reductions, contributing to the overall decline in reported property crime.

- **Offenses against society followed a different pattern than person and property offenses.** Reported offense rates fluctuated throughout the study period and should be interpreted within the context of proactive enforcement activity, annual offense counts, and reporting thresholds rather than as direct indicators of changes in underlying criminal behavior.

- **Investigative outcomes varied across offense categories.** Person offense clearance rates declined overall despite improving during 2025, while property offense clearance rates demonstrated modest long-term improvement following considerable year-to-year variation. Clearance rates for offenses against society likewise fluctuated throughout the study period and should be interpreted cautiously due to reporting thresholds and the proactive nature of these offenses.

- **Crime trends should be interpreted within the context of Stafford's unique operational environment.** As a dual-county municipality with a substantial commercial and industrial base, major transportation corridors, and a daytime population that exceeds its residential population, Stafford experiences policing demands that differ from many other municipalities in Fort Bend County. These characteristics provide important context for interpreting reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

.

**Table SgldPD 1: Sugar Land Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses Rates, Percent
Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
Incidents ⁴	339	1,993	226
Offenses ⁵	377	1,994	226
Victims ⁶	377	2,181	226
Known Offenders ⁷	330	937	315
Rate/100,000	339.56	1,795.98	203.56
2021			
Incidents ⁴	388	2,119	306
Offenses ⁵	435	2,222	306
Victims ⁶	435	2,315	306
Known Offenders ⁷	372	601	404
Rate/100,000	395.45	2,020.00	278.18
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	16.46	12.47	36.66
2022			
Incidents ⁴	414	2,425	270
Offenses ⁵	466	2,426	270
Victims ⁶	466	2,707	270
Known Offenders ⁷	389	700	330
Rate/100,000	425.91	2,217.27	246.77
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	7.70	9.77	-11.29
2023			
Incidents ⁴	436	2,075	490
Offenses ⁵	481	2,079	490
Victims ⁶	481	2,331	490
Known Offenders ⁷	403	659	641
Rate/100,000	443.25	1,914.94	451.55
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	4.07	-13.63	82.98
2024			
Incidents ⁴	475	2,102	354
Offenses ⁵	514	2,139	354
Victims ⁶	514	2,314	354
Known Offenders ⁷	437	595	434
Rate/100,000	467.89	1,947.15	322.25
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	5.55	1.72	-28.63
2025			
Incidents ⁴	478	1,947	247
Offenses ⁵	537	1,965	247
Victims ⁶	537	2,122	247
Known Offenders ⁷	441	852	314
Rate/100,000	498.48	1,824.07	229.29
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	6.53	-6.32	-28.84

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

⁴ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

⁵ Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

⁶ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁷ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

Table SgldPD 2: Sugar Land Police Department: Select Offenses
Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025

	Assault	Sex Offenses	Homicide	Robbery	Burglary	Theft	Motor Vehicle Theft
2020							
Incidents ¹	308	22	5	20	111	1,097	88
Offenses ²	345	22	6	20	111	1,097	89
Victims ³	345	22	6	36	139	1,201	90
Known Offenders ⁴	302	20	5	17	51	557	28
Rate/100,000	310.74	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	99.98	988.05	NA ⁵
2021							
Incidents ¹	349	29	3	26	95	1,209	89
Offenses ²	394	31	3	26	197	1,209	90
Victims ³	394	29	3	45	118	1,340	91
Known Offenders ⁴	337	22	4	13	26	373	20
Rate/100,000	358.18	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	179.09	1,099.09	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	15.27	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	79.13	11.23	NA ⁵
2022							
Incidents ¹	391	21	--	33	132	1,518	118
Offenses ²	442	21	--	33	133	1,518	118
Victims ³	442	21	--	51	169	1,691	123
Known Offenders ⁴	368	19	--	13	61	404	26
Rate/100,000	403.97	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	121.56	1,387.39	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	12.78	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-32.13	26.23	NA ⁵
2023							
Incidents ¹	421	9	5	33	64	1,231	107
Offenses ²	465	10	5	33	68	1,231	107
Victims ³	465	10	5	46	92	1,387	112
Known Offenders ⁴	388	9	5	27	15	408	15
Rate/100,000	428.51	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,134.41	98.60
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	6.08	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-18.23	-8.56
2024							
Incidents ¹	457	14	1	25	93	1,264	103
Offenses ²	493	17	1	25	129	1,264	104
Victims ³	493	17	1	41	122	1,365	105
Known Offenders ⁴	422	13	1	25	28	361	33
Rate/100,000	448.78	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,150.63	94.67
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	4.73	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1.42	-3.98
2025							
Incidents ¹	458	14	5	19	80	1,182	66
Offenses ²	517	14	5	19	97	1,182	67
Victims ³	517	14	5	28	114	1,255	68
Known Offenders ⁴	419	16	5	19	40	576	22
Rate/100,000	479.92	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	1,097.23	NA ⁵
Rate Pct. Inc./Dec.	6.93	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	NA ⁵	-4.64	NA ⁵

¹ Incidents: An incident is an event or episode where a crime occurs.

² Offenses: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, multiple crimes may occur. This is a count of the number of crimes.

³ Victims: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one victim. This is a count of the number of victims.

⁴ Known offenders: At a criminal event or during a criminal episode, there may be more than one known offender. This is a count of the number of known offenders.

⁵ Rate and percent increase and decrease data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate rate and percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

**Table SgldPD 3: Sugar Land Police Department: Person, Property, Society Offenses
Clearance Rates, Percent Increases & Decreases
2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025**

	Person Offenses ¹	Property Offenses ²	Offenses Against Society ³
2020			
% Cleared	69.03	18.87	89.38
% Cleared by Arrest	52.51	13.80	80.09
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	16.52	5.07	9.29
Total Incidents	339	1,993	226
Total Incidents Cleared	234	376	202
Cleared by Arrest	178	275	181
Cleared by Exceptional Means	56	101	21
2021			
% Cleared	64.18	16.00	92.48
% Cleared by Arrest	53.35	11.51	91.83
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	10.82	4.48	.65
Total Incidents	388	2,119	306
Total Incidents Cleared	249	339	283
Cleared by Arrest	207	244	281
Cleared by Exceptional Means	42	95	2
2022			
% Cleared	72.22	16.20	92.59
% Cleared by Arrest	55.07	10.80	89.63
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	17.15	5.40	2.96
Total Incidents	414	2,426	270
Total Incidents Cleared	299	393	250
Cleared by Arrest	228	262	242
Cleared by Exceptional Means	71	131	8
2023			
% Cleared	67.66	17.26	95.51
% Cleared by Arrest	56.42	14.51	94.90
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	11.24	2.75	.61
Total Incidents	436	2,074	490
Total Incidents Cleared	295	358	468
Cleared by Arrest	246	301	465
Cleared by Exceptional Means	49	57	3
2024			
% Cleared	55.37	12.42	85.03
% Cleared by Arrest	48.21	10.99	84.75
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	7.16	1.43	0.28
Total Incidents	475	2,102	354
Total Incidents Cleared	263	261	301
Cleared by Arrest	229	231	300
Cleared by Exceptional Means	34	30	1
2025			
% Cleared	43.72	10.58	86.64
% Cleared by Arrest	37.45	8.89	85.83
% Cleared by Exceptional Means	6.28	1.69	0.81
Total Incidents	478	1,947	247
Total Incidents Cleared	209	206	214
Cleared by Arrest	179	173	212
Cleared by Exceptional Means	30	33	2

¹ Person offenses include assault offenses, homicide offenses, human trafficking, kidnapping/abduction, and sex offenses (forcible and non-forcible).

² Property offenses include arson, bribery, burglary/breaking and entering, counterfeiting/forgery, destruction/damage/vandalism, embezzlement, extortion/blackmail, fraud offenses, larceny/theft offenses, motor vehicle theft, robbery, and stolen property offenses.

³ Offenses against society include animal cruelty, drug/narcotic offenses, gambling offenses, pornography/obscene material, prostitution offenses, and weapons law violations.

Sugar Land Police Department

Agency Context

The Sugar Land Police Department serves the City of Sugar Land, one of the largest and fastest-growing municipalities in Fort Bend County. Encompassing more than **42 square miles** and serving a population exceeding **110,000 residents**, Sugar Land functions as a major residential, commercial, and employment center within the greater Houston metropolitan area. The city's strategic location along **Interstate 69/U.S. Highway 59, State Highway 6**, and other major transportation corridors generates substantial commuter traffic while providing convenient access to regional employment centers, shopping districts, entertainment venues, and healthcare facilities (City of Sugar Land, 2025; U.S. Census Bureau, 2025).

Sugar Land is characterized by an extensive network of master-planned residential communities combined with a thriving commercial sector that includes retail centers, corporate offices, restaurants, hotels, medical facilities, and regional entertainment venues. Destinations such as **Sugar Land Town Square, Constellation Field**, and the **Smart Financial Centre** attract large numbers of visitors throughout the year, substantially increasing the city's daytime and event-related population. Consequently, the Sugar Land Police Department is responsible not only for policing residential neighborhoods but also for providing public safety services during large-scale community events, concerts, sporting events, festivals, and other regional attractions (City of Sugar Land, 2025).

The department is a full-service municipal law enforcement agency staffed by approximately **240 personnel**, including approximately **180 sworn officers**, and provides patrol operations, criminal investigations, traffic enforcement, community policing, and specialized public safety services throughout the city. The department's operational responsibilities have expanded as Sugar Land has continued to grow, including the annexation of the **Greatwood** community, which increased both the city's geographic footprint and the population served by the department (City of Sugar Land, 2025).

Sugar Land's combination of continued residential growth, expanding commercial development, regional entertainment venues, and heavily traveled transportation corridors creates a policing environment that differs from many other municipalities examined in this report. Officers routinely balance neighborhood policing with the public safety demands associated with major events, commercial activity, commuter traffic, and a large daytime population. Collectively, these community, geographic, and operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting the reported crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Operational Context

Discussions with department leadership indicated that the Sugar Land Police Department's operational environment is shaped by the city's continued residential growth, regional commercial development, major entertainment venues, and extensive transportation network. As one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities, Sugar Land serves not only its resident population but also a substantial number of commuters, shoppers, employees, and visitors who travel into the city each day for work, recreation, healthcare, dining, and entertainment.

The city's regional attractions, including **Sugar Land Town Square, Constellation Field**, and the **Smart Financial Centre**, generate significant visitor activity throughout the year. Concerts,

sporting events, festivals, community celebrations, and other large public gatherings require officers to routinely manage crowd safety, traffic control, parking operations, and public order while maintaining normal patrol operations throughout the remainder of the city. These responsibilities create operational demands that differ from those experienced by many municipalities whose policing activities are primarily residential in nature.

Department leadership further indicated that Sugar Land's continued residential and commercial expansion has increased the complexity of police operations. The annexation of the Greatwood community expanded both the department's jurisdiction and the population served, while ongoing commercial development has increased calls for service across residential neighborhoods, business districts, and major transportation corridors. Officers must routinely balance proactive policing, traffic enforcement, criminal investigations, and community engagement across a diverse and continually growing jurisdiction.

Sugar Land's large residential population, regional entertainment destinations, expanding commercial development, major transportation corridors, and significant daytime visitor population create a complex policing environment that differs from many other municipalities examined in this report. The study period also encompasses a significant organizational transition following now former Chief Mark Poland's appointment in late 2022, including changes in leadership, accountability, employee engagement, training, and proactive enforcement. Because those changes overlap with several shifts observed in Sugar Land's recorded crime and clearance patterns, they are examined in greater detail in Chapter Seven rather than treated here as a causal explanation for the quantitative trends. These operational characteristics provide important context for understanding the crime trends and investigative outcomes presented in the following sections.

Crime Trends

Table SgldPD 1 presents longitudinal trends in person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Sugar Land Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Sugar Land reported sufficient offense counts to calculate standardized population-adjusted crime rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate that each offense category followed a distinct longitudinal pattern, demonstrating the importance of examining person, property, and society offenses independently rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

Person offense rates increased steadily throughout the six-year study period. Person offense rates increased from **339.56 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **498.48 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **46.8% increase**. Unlike several other agencies examined in this report, Sugar Land experienced annual increases in person offense rates during every year of the study period, with yearly increases ranging from **4.07%** to **16.46%**. Although the magnitude of annual increases moderated after 2022, the consistent upward trajectory indicates a sustained long-term increase in reported person offenses rather than isolated year-to-year fluctuations.

Property offense rates remained comparatively stable despite considerable annual variation. Property offense rates increased from **1,795.98 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,824.07 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall increase of approximately **1.6%** during the study period. Property offense rates increased during 2021 and 2022 before declining during 2023, increasing modestly during 2024, and declining again during 2025. Although annual fluctuations were observed, property offense rates at the conclusion of the study period remained

similar to those reported in 2020, suggesting overall stability despite changes occurring between individual years.

Offenses against society demonstrated the greatest year-to-year variability during the study period. Society offense rates increased from **203.56 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **229.29 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **12.6% increase**. However, this overall change masks substantial annual variation. Society offense rates increased during 2021, declined during 2022, increased sharply by **82.98%** during 2023, and then declined during both 2024 and 2025. Because offenses against society frequently result from officer-initiated enforcement activities, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other proactive policing initiatives, these fluctuations should not necessarily be interpreted as corresponding changes in underlying criminal behavior. Rather, they may also reflect changes in enforcement priorities, operational initiatives, or reporting practices throughout the study period.

Across the study period, Sugar Land experienced differing longitudinal patterns across the three major offense categories. Person offense rates increased consistently throughout the six-year study period, property offense rates remained relatively stable despite annual fluctuations, and offenses against society demonstrated substantial variability associated with proactive enforcement activity. These findings illustrate that changes in reported crime differed considerably by offense category and reinforce the importance of examining long-term offense-specific trends rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

Selected Offense Trends

Table SgldPD 2 presents longitudinal trends for selected offenses reported by the Sugar Land Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Collectively, the findings indicate that individual offense categories followed distinct long-term patterns throughout the study period. While assault and theft remained the primary contributors to reported violent and property crime, the two offenses exhibited markedly different trajectories, highlighting the importance of examining offense-specific trends independently.

Assault offenses demonstrated a sustained long-term increase and remained the primary driver of reported violent crime throughout the study period. Assault offense rates increased from **310.74 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **479.92 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **54.5% increase**. Annual assault rates increased during every year of the study period, with the largest single-year increase occurring between 2020 and 2021 (**15.27%**). Although the rate of increase moderated during the latter half of the study period, the consistent year-to-year growth indicates a sustained upward trend rather than isolated annual fluctuations.

Other violent offenses remained comparatively uncommon throughout the study period. Reported robberies fluctuated between **19 and 33 offenses** annually before declining to **19 offenses** in 2025, resulting in little overall long-term change. Sex offenses likewise remained relatively infrequent, declining from **22 reported offenses** in 2020 to **14 offenses** in 2025 despite annual variation. Homicides occurred infrequently throughout the study period, ranging from zero to five reported offenses annually. Because these offenses occurred in comparatively small numbers, annual fluctuations should be interpreted cautiously and are not necessarily indicative of meaningful long-term changes in violent crime.

Property crime trends were influenced primarily by theft, while burglary and motor vehicle theft exhibited differing longitudinal patterns. Theft remained the most frequently reported property offense throughout the six-year study period. Theft offense rates increased from **988.05 offenses per 100,000 residents** in 2020 to **1,097.23 per 100,000** in 2025, representing an overall **11.0% increase**. However, this overall increase reflects considerable annual variability, as theft rates peaked in 2022 before declining during the final three years of the study period. Burglary offenses decreased from **111 reported offenses** in 2020 to **80 offenses** in 2025, representing an overall **27.9% reduction**, while motor vehicle theft declined from **89 offenses** to **67 offenses**, representing an overall **24.7% reduction**. These findings indicate that although theft remained relatively stable over time, other major property offenses experienced meaningful long-term reductions.

Across the study period, the selected offense data indicate that Sugar Land experienced differing long-term trends across major offense categories. Assault offenses increased steadily throughout the study period, theft remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations, and burglary and motor vehicle theft declined overall. These findings demonstrate that changes in reported crime varied considerably across offense types and reinforce the importance of examining individual offenses rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

Clearance Trends

Table SgldPD 3 presents longitudinal clearance trends for person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society reported by the Sugar Land Police Department between 2020 and 2025. Sugar Land reported sufficient incident volumes to calculate standardized clearance rates across all three major offense categories throughout the study period. Overall, the findings indicate differing investigative trends across offense categories, with declining clearance rates for person and property offenses and consistently high clearance rates for offenses against society.

Person offense clearance rates declined overall despite annual fluctuations throughout the study period. Person offense clearance rates decreased from 69.03% in 2020 to 43.72% in 2025, representing an overall 36.7% decline. Clearance rates declined during 2021, increased to a study-period high of 72.22% in 2022, and then decreased during each of the final three years, reaching their lowest level in 2025. Arrest clearances remained the primary method of case resolution throughout the study period, while exceptional clearances declined from 16.52% in 2020 to 6.28% in 2025. These findings indicate that investigative outcomes for person offenses became less favorable over the latter half of the study period despite short-term improvements during 2022.

Property offense clearance rates likewise demonstrated an overall downward trend throughout the six-year analysis. Property offense clearance rates declined from **18.87%** in 2020 to **10.58%** in 2025, representing an overall **43.9% decrease**. Clearance rates remained relatively stable between 2020 and 2023 before declining substantially during 2024 and 2025. Arrest clearances continued to account for the majority of cleared property offenses, while exceptional clearances also declined over the study period, decreasing from **5.07%** in 2020 to **1.69%** in 2025. Although annual variation occurred, the overall trend indicates decreasing clearance rates for reported property offenses.

Clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently high throughout the study period despite modest annual variation. Society offense clearance rates decreased slightly from **89.38%** in 2020 to **86.64%** in 2025, representing an overall **3.1% decline**. Annual

clearance rates consistently exceeded **85%**, reflecting the proactive and officer-initiated nature of many offenses against society, including drug offenses, weapons violations, and other enforcement activities. Unlike person and property offenses, society offense clearance remained relatively stable throughout the six-year analysis despite fluctuations in reported offense rates.

Across the study period, Sugar Land's clearance trends demonstrate differing investigative outcomes across offense categories. Person and property offense clearance rates both declined over the six-year study period, while offenses against society maintained consistently high clearance rates despite modest annual variation. These findings reinforce the importance of interpreting clearance statistics within the context of offense type, investigative complexity, and the proactive nature of society offense enforcement rather than viewing overall clearance rates as a single measure of agency performance.

Longitudinal Summary

Viewed longitudinally, the Sugar Land Police Department experienced distinct trends across the three major offense categories between 2020 and 2025. Person offense rates increased consistently throughout the six-year study period, rising approximately 46.8% from 339.56 to 498.48 offenses per 100,000 residents. In contrast, property offense rates remained comparatively stable despite considerable year-to-year variation, increasing only 1.6% overall during the study period. Offenses against society likewise exhibited substantial annual fluctuations but concluded the study period only modestly above 2020 levels. These findings demonstrate that long-term crime trends varied considerably by offense category and reinforce the importance of examining offense-specific patterns rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

The selected offense analyses further indicate that assault remained the primary contributor to reported violent crime and demonstrated a sustained upward trend throughout the study period, increasing approximately 54.5% between 2020 and 2025. Theft continued to account for the largest proportion of reported property crime and remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations, while burglary and motor vehicle theft both experienced meaningful long-term declines. These findings indicate that changes in reported crime were not uniform across offense categories and that individual offenses contributed differently to the department's overall crime patterns.

Investigative outcomes followed a different trajectory than reported crime. Person offense clearance rates declined from **69.03%** to **43.72%**, while property offense clearance rates decreased from **18.87%** to **10.58%** over the six-year study period. In contrast, clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently high, exceeding **85%** annually despite modest year-to-year variation. These findings demonstrate that changes in reported crime and investigative outcomes occurred independently across several offense categories and should therefore be interpreted as complementary, but distinct, measures of agency activity and performance.

These findings should be interpreted within the broader context of Sugar Land's unique operational environment. As one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities, Sugar Land serves a large residential population while simultaneously functioning as a regional employment, commercial, healthcare, and entertainment destination. Major transportation corridors, continued residential and commercial development, large-scale public events, and substantial daytime visitor activity collectively shape the department's operational responsibilities and provide important context for interpreting reported crime patterns and investigative outcomes.

Across the study period, the findings indicate that Sugar Land experienced differing long-term trends across offense categories during the six-year study period. While person offense rates increased

steadily and property offense rates remained comparatively stable, investigative outcomes for person and property offenses declined over time, whereas offenses against society continued to exhibit consistently high clearance rates. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting crime trends within the context of Sugar Land's complex operational environment and evolving public safety responsibilities rather than relying on a single measure of crime or agency performance.

Key Findings

- **Person offense rates increased steadily throughout the six-year study period.** Person offense rates increased approximately **46.8%** between 2020 and 2025, representing the only major offense category to demonstrate consistent year-over-year increases throughout the study period.

- **Property crime remained comparatively stable despite annual fluctuations.** Although property offense rates increased during 2021 and 2022 before declining over the final three years of the study period, the 2025 property offense rate remained only **1.6%** higher than the rate observed in 2020, indicating relatively stable long-term property crime trends.

- **Assault offenses drove the long-term increase in reported person crime.** Assault offense rates increased approximately **54.5%** between 2020 and 2025, while theft remained the most frequently reported property offense despite relatively little long-term change. Burglary and motor vehicle theft both declined over the study period, illustrating that individual offense categories followed different longitudinal patterns.

- **Investigative outcomes differed from reported crime trends.** Person offense clearance rates declined from **69.03%** to **43.72%**, and property offense clearance rates declined from **18.87%** to **10.58%** between 2020 and 2025. In contrast, clearance rates for offenses against society remained consistently above **85%**, reflecting the proactive nature of many society offenses.

- **Crime trends should be interpreted within Sugar Land's unique operational environment.** As one of Fort Bend County's largest municipalities and a regional center for commerce, employment, healthcare, entertainment, and community events, Sugar Land experiences policing demands that extend beyond serving its resident population alone. These operational characteristics provide important context for interpreting both reported crime trends and investigative outcomes.

Summary of Agency-Level Quantitative Findings

The agency-level analyses presented throughout this chapter demonstrate that reported crime patterns varied considerably across Fort Bend County's participating law enforcement agencies between 2020 and 2025. Although each agency experienced unique trends, several consistent themes emerged across the quantitative analyses. Most notably, the findings demonstrate that meaningful interpretation of crime data requires consideration of long-term trends, offense-specific patterns, population characteristics, and each agency's unique operational environment rather than reliance on aggregate crime counts or isolated year-to-year changes.

One of the most consistent findings across agencies was that crime trends differed substantially by offense category. While some agencies experienced increases in person offense rates, others

remained relatively stable or experienced declines. Property crime likewise followed different trajectories across jurisdictions, with several agencies demonstrating long-term reductions despite continued residential and commercial growth. Offenses against society consistently exhibited greater year-to-year variability than either person or property offenses, reflecting the influence of proactive law enforcement activities, enforcement priorities, and officer-initiated investigations in addition to underlying criminal behavior. These findings reinforce the importance of evaluating person offenses, property offenses, and offenses against society independently rather than relying solely on aggregate crime measures.

The analyses also demonstrate that community context plays a critical role in interpreting reported crime trends. Larger municipalities such as Missouri City, Sugar Land, Rosenberg, Richmond, and the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office serve substantially different populations and operational environments than smaller jurisdictions such as Needville, Meadows Place, and Fulshear. Population size, residential and commercial development, transportation corridors, socioeconomic characteristics, commuter activity, and organizational responsibilities all influence reported crime patterns and policing activity. Consequently, direct comparisons between agencies should be made cautiously and only after considering these contextual differences.

Population growth further influenced interpretation of the findings in several jurisdictions. Rapidly growing communities may experience increases in reported incidents simply because more people live, work, and travel within the jurisdiction, creating additional opportunities for victimization, offending, reporting, and police-citizen interactions. Conversely, stable or declining crime rates occurring alongside substantial population growth may reflect improvements in public safety that would not be apparent through aggregate offense counts alone. These findings underscore the importance of interpreting reported crime within its demographic context rather than relying exclusively on changes in the number of reported offenses.

The offense-specific analyses further demonstrated that different crimes followed distinct longitudinal trajectories within the same jurisdiction. Assault and theft consistently represented the largest contributors to reported person and property crime across most participating agencies, while homicide, robbery, and many other violent offenses occurred comparatively infrequently. Several agencies experienced temporary increases in particular offense categories that were not sustained over the full study period, illustrating why longitudinal analyses provide a more meaningful assessment of public safety conditions than isolated annual comparisons.

Similarly, investigative outcomes varied considerably by offense type. Person offenses generally demonstrated substantially higher clearance rates than property offenses, reflecting differences in investigative complexity, victim-offender relationships, witness availability, and evidentiary considerations. Offenses against society frequently achieved comparatively high clearance rates because many originated through proactive enforcement activities initiated by law enforcement officers rather than through victim reporting. Accordingly, clearance statistics should be interpreted within the context of offense type and investigative circumstances rather than viewed as direct measures of overall agency performance.

Finally, the analyses illustrate the importance of matching statistical interpretation to the characteristics of the available data. Larger agencies generated sufficient incident volumes to support standardized rate calculations and more robust longitudinal analyses. In contrast, smaller jurisdictions frequently reported comparatively few incidents, requiring greater emphasis on long-term incident patterns rather than annual percentage changes derived from small baselines. This

distinction follows the conservative reporting rule established in Chapter Four and keeps interpretation proportionate to each agency's reporting volume.

These findings demonstrate that no single statistic adequately describes crime or public safety within Fort Bend County. Rather, meaningful interpretation requires consideration of offense-specific trends, demographic and community characteristics, agency responsibilities, investigative outcomes, and the broader operational environment in which policing occurs. Throughout this report, crime has therefore been examined not as a single measure, but as a multidimensional phenomenon that must be interpreted within its proper statistical, demographic, and operational context. Such an approach provides a more accurate, balanced, and evidence-based understanding of public safety than reliance on isolated statistics or single-year comparisons.

Overall Assessment of Public Safety in Fort Bend County

Across the agency-level analyses, Fort Bend County continued to demonstrate generally favorable public safety conditions despite substantial population growth, residential development, and increasing demands on law enforcement services. Individual jurisdictions did not move in a single direction: some experienced increases in particular offense categories, while others remained stable or declined. The absence of a uniform countywide pattern is itself analytically important because it demonstrates that public safety in Fort Bend is better understood through offense-specific, longitudinal, and jurisdiction-specific evidence than through any single statistic.

Several agencies experienced increases in particular offense categories, particularly person offenses, while others demonstrated stable or declining trends in property crime despite continued community growth. Temporary increases observed within individual jurisdictions frequently were not sustained over the full six-year study period, highlighting the value of longitudinal analyses over isolated annual comparisons. Similarly, several agencies serving rapidly growing communities experienced increases in reported incidents that occurred alongside substantial population expansion, illustrating why population-adjusted crime rates often provide a more meaningful assessment of underlying public safety conditions than aggregate offense counts alone.

The findings also demonstrate that public safety cannot be evaluated solely through crime occurrence. Investigative outcomes remained generally strong across participating agencies, particularly for person offenses and offenses against society, while differences in clearance rates reflected the inherent investigative characteristics of different offense types rather than differences in organizational effectiveness alone. Community demographics, transportation infrastructure, economic conditions, proactive enforcement activities, and agency-specific operational responsibilities all influenced reported crime patterns and should be considered when interpreting quantitative findings.

Collectively, the evidence suggests that Fort Bend County continued to maintain a relatively safe environment during the study period while facing many of the same evolving public safety challenges experienced by rapidly growing metropolitan communities throughout Texas. Importantly, this conclusion should not be interpreted to mean that crime affected all communities equally or that every offense category followed the same trajectory. Rather, the findings underscore that public safety is a multidimensional concept requiring consideration of offense-specific trends, demographic change, investigative outcomes, and local community characteristics. By examining these factors together, this report provides a more comprehensive and evidence-based assessment of public safety than could be achieved through any single crime statistic or annual comparison alone.

CHAPTER SIX: QUALITATIVE FINDINGS

Introduction

The quantitative analyses presented in the preceding chapter provide standardized measures of crime, victimization, offending, criminal justice activity, and agency performance across Fort Bend County. These analyses identify measurable patterns, trends, and differences over time; however, quantitative data alone cannot fully explain the organizational, investigative, and community contexts within which those patterns occur. Crime statistics describe what occurred, but they often cannot explain how criminal justice professionals and community members experience those events, how organizational processes influence measurable outcomes, or how residents interpret their interactions with the criminal justice system. Accordingly, the qualitative findings presented in this chapter provide an additional source of contextual evidence intended to complement, rather than replace, the quantitative analyses presented throughout this report.

Consistent with the mixed-methods research design described in Chapter Four, the qualitative findings presented in this chapter are drawn from three complementary studies examining criminal justice from distinct but interconnected perspectives. Structured nonparticipant observations documented routine police-community interactions occurring during publicly accessible community events throughout Fort Bend County. Investigator interviews explored detectives' and investigators' experiences with criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision-making within the Fort Bend County criminal justice system. Finally, resident interviews conducted in Fresno, Texas, examined how community members perceive, experience, and interpret police-community interactions within their everyday lives. Although each study addressed a different research question, collectively they provide insight into organizational practices, investigative decision-making, police-community relationships, and community experiences that cannot be adequately captured through administrative data alone.

Unlike the quantitative analyses presented in the preceding chapter, the qualitative findings are not intended to estimate population parameters or establish statistical relationships. Rather, they provide context, depth, and explanation by examining organizational processes, investigative experiences, police-community interactions, and resident perceptions as described by participants and observed within naturally occurring settings. When interpreted alongside the quantitative findings, these complementary qualitative studies contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of crime and criminal justice throughout Fort Bend County by illuminating the organizational, investigative, and community contexts within which measurable criminal justice outcomes occur.

The chapter is organized according to the three qualitative components of the study. The first section presents findings from the structured nonparticipant observations of police-community interactions conducted during community events throughout Fort Bend County. The second presents findings from investigator interviews examining criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision-making. The third presents findings from the ongoing Fresno resident perspectives study examining community perceptions of policing and police-community interactions. The chapter concludes with an integrated interpretation of the qualitative findings, followed by a discussion of methodological limitations and future directions for continued qualitative research.

The combined quantitative and qualitative evidence reflects the central premise guiding this research: understanding crime requires more than measuring crime. It also requires attention to the organizational processes, investigative decisions, and community experiences that give those measurements meaning.

6.1 Results: Nonparticipant Observations: Police and Citizen Community Interactions in Fort Bend County

Introduction

To complement the quantitative National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) analyses presented throughout this report, the research team conducted a structured nonparticipant observational study of police-citizen interactions occurring during publicly accessible community events across Fort Bend County. As described in Chapter Four, this qualitative component was designed to examine routine, non-enforcement interactions between law enforcement officers and community members that are not captured within traditional crime statistics or administrative datasets. While official crime data provide valuable information regarding reported offenses, arrests, victimization, and enforcement activity, they cannot document the informal interactions through which many residents develop perceptions of procedural justice, police legitimacy, and community trust. Accordingly, the observations presented in this section provide an additional source of contextual evidence within the report's broader mixed-methods research design.

The cumulative observational dataset consists of twenty-one community events representing multiple participating law enforcement agencies and a diverse range of community engagement activities conducted throughout Fort Bend County. The current reporting period expanded the original observational sample by incorporating eleven additional independently observed events, including the first observations conducted within Needville, thereby increasing geographic representation across participating jurisdictions. In addition, the observational protocol was expanded to include a second level of interaction-based coding designed to examine communication quality, citizen engagement, rapport, and overall interaction characteristics among a subset of individually coded adult and child/teen encounters.

Consequently, the findings presented below reflect a two-tier analytical framework consisting of cumulative behavioral frequency coding across all observed events and enhanced interaction-level coding conducted during the current observation period.

Observation Characteristics

Observations were conducted across twenty-one publicly accessible community events representing a broad range of policing contexts, including community engagement activities, educational presentations, public safety demonstrations, neighborhood outreach initiatives, civic celebrations, youth-oriented events, and other informal opportunities for police-community interaction. Collectively, these observations captured interactions involving both adult residents and children across multiple jurisdictions representing urban, suburban, and rural communities within Fort Bend County. The diversity of agencies, event types, participant populations, and community settings strengthened the breadth of the observational sample while providing opportunities to examine police-community interactions across varied contexts.

Consistent with the methods described in Chapter Four, findings are presented using a two-tier reporting structure. Tier One summarizes the frequency of observable behaviors recorded across the cumulative twenty-one-event sample and provides continuity with observations reported during previous reporting periods. Tier Two presents enhanced interaction-level coding conducted during the current observation period and examines individual police-citizen interactions in greater depth by documenting communication quality, citizen engagement behaviors, evidence of rapport, and overall interaction valence. This expanded coding framework was intentionally developed to move beyond simple behavioral frequencies and examine the quality of interactions occurring during community engagement activities.

Tables 6.1 and 6.2 present the cumulative behavioral frequency coding for interactions involving children/teens and adult citizens, respectively.

Table 6.1: Combined Themes: Police Interactions with Children and Teens (Cumulative, n = 21 Events)

Theme Category	Subtheme/Behavior	1st Ed.	This Ed.	Total
Positive Social Interactions	Officers playing games with children	19	16	35
	Fist bumps/high fives (officer-initiated, returned by child)	16	29	45
	Fist bumps/high fives (child-initiated, returned by officer)	11	27	38
	Friendly verbal joking (officer-initiated, returned by child)	3	9	12
	Friendly verbal joking (child-initiated, returned by officer)	2	14	16
	Verbal affirmations from officer	6	8	14
	Verbal affirmations from child	3	2	5
	Requests for logistical assistance (directions, parking, restrooms, event info)	—	11	11
Positive Safety Education (<i>new category</i>)	Officer reinforced or educated on safety behavior in a constructive, non-fear-based manner	—	17	17
Uncategorized Positive	Child enthusiastically runs to officer	1	2	3
	Officer plays peek-a-boo with young child	2	3	5
Neutral/Non-Engagement (<i>new category</i>)	Teen disengaged from officer-initiated contact (dismissive, non-hostile)	—	2	2
Negative Interaction	Officer greeting elicited fear in toddler	1	0	1
	Child declined prompted interaction during observed tantrum	—	2	2

Table 6.2: Combined Themes: Police Interactions with Adult Citizens (Cumulative, n = 21 Events)

Theme Category	Subtheme/Behavior	1st Ed.	This Ed.	Total
Positive Social Interactions	Citizens verbally thanked officers for their service	14	4	18
	Citizens asked clarifying questions about the event	11	8	19
	Citizens verbally greeted officers warmly	9	6	15
	Citizens used non-verbal greetings (handshakes, back pats)	7	7	14
	Officers used non-verbal greetings to initiate/respond	5	12	17
	Citizens approached officers to ask about crime/police presence	7	15	22
	Citizens initiated neutral-topic conversation (sports, weather)	6	10	16
	Citizens brought beverages to officers	3	3	6
	Citizens made playful/humorous comments to engage officers	2	3	5
	Requests for logistical assistance (directions, parking, restrooms, event info)	—	19	19

Theme Category	Subtheme/Behavior	1st Ed.	This Ed.	Total
Positive Social Interactions	Citizens verbally thanked officers for their service	14	4	18
Attempted/Incomplete Positive	Officer verbal efforts not clearly received (noise)	3	1	4
Neutral (<i>new category</i>)	Officer provided routine non-emergency medical assistance	—	2	2
	Adult did not comply with an officer's logistical request (non-safety-related)	—	3	3
Negative Interaction	No negative citizen-officer interactions observed	0	0	0

Table 6.3: Enhanced Interaction Coding: Adult Citizen-Officer Interactions, This Edition Only (n = 42 Interactions)

This table reflects a distinct, more granular coding pass applied to 42 individually coded adult citizen-officer interactions observed this cycle. These interactions are not double-counted in Table 2.

Category	Subtheme	Count
Interaction Type	Greeting	7
	Conversation	6
	Information sharing	8
	Problem solving	9
	Assistance	4
	Educational activity	5
	Social engagement	3
Communication Quality ¹	Eye contact	41
	Smiling	40
	Active listening	39
	Respectful tone	40
	Empathy	28
	Positive affect	31
	Extended conversation	24
Citizen Engagement	Asked questions	12
	Shared concerns	16
	Continued conversation	11
	Introduced others	4
	Returned later to re-engage (same event)	8
Overall Valence	Positive	39
	Neutral	3
	Negative	0
Rapport & Follow-Up	Evidence of rapport (of 39 Positive interactions)	36
	Follow-up requested (future contact, event, or specific information)	19

¹ Communication Quality indicators may co-occur within a single interaction; counts do not sum to 42.

Context for Table 3: Interaction group size ranged from 1 to 6 people directly engaged per interaction; total event attendance ranged from approximately 35 to several hundred attendees; number of officers present per event ranged from 2 to 14; individual interaction duration ranged from under 10 seconds to approximately 2 minutes.

Table 6.4: Enhanced Interaction Coding: Child/Teen Citizen-Officer Interactions, This Edition Only (n = 117 Interactions)

This table reflects a distinct, more granular coding pass applied to 117 individually coded child/teen citizen-officer interactions observed this cycle. These interactions are not double-counted in Table 1.

Category	Subtheme	Count
Interaction Type	Greeting	42
	Conversation	11
	Information sharing	2
	Problem solving	2
	Assistance	2
	Educational activity	14
	Social engagement	10
	Play/game	34
Communication Quality ¹	Eye contact	117
	Smiling	114
	Active listening	110
	Respectful tone	114
	Empathy	90
	Positive affect	115
	Extended conversation	46
Child/Teen Engagement	Asked questions	110
	Shared concerns	38
	Continued conversation	41
	Introduced others	32
	Returned later to re-engage (same event)	16
Overall Valence	Positive	113
	Neutral	2
	Negative	2
Rapport & Follow-Up	Evidence of rapport (of 113 Positive interactions)	101
	Follow-up requested (future contact, event, or specific information)	12

Narrative Summary

The original observation protocol was well suited to answering a foundational question: do officers and citizens engage positively in informal settings, and how often? Tables 6.1 and 6.2, now expanded to 21 combined events, continue to address that question. The pattern identified in the first edition remained evident in the larger sample: positive, spontaneous engagement between officers and both children and adults was observed far more frequently than negative interaction across the community events included in the study.

Frequency counts alone, however, cannot answer a different, equally important question: when a positive interaction occurs, what does it look like, and what relational characteristics are observable within the encounter? Tables 6.3 and 6.4 were introduced this cycle to examine that question in greater depth and provide more granular evidence regarding the quality of observed police-community interactions.

Of the 42 adult interactions coded under this enhanced protocol, 39 (93 percent) were rated positive overall, with zero rated negative. Of those 39 positive interactions, 36 (92 percent) also showed separately coded evidence of rapport, indicating that the interaction included relational markers beyond basic courtesy. Nearly half of all 42 interactions (45 percent) included some form of requested follow-up, whether a citizen asked how to stay in touch, sought information about a future program, or an officer offered to check on a specific concern later.

The child/teen enhanced sample showed an even more pronounced pattern at a substantially larger scale: of 117 coded interactions, 113 (97 percent) were rated positive, with only 2 neutral and 2 negative. Eye contact was observed in all 117 interactions, while communication-quality indicators such as smiling (114/117) and positive affect (115/117) were recorded in nearly the entire sample. Of the 113 positive interactions, 101 (89 percent) showed separately coded evidence of rapport. Notably, 46 of the 117 interactions (39 percent) occurred without a parent or caregiver visibly present, indicating that a meaningful share of these positive encounters occurred without visible caregiver involvement.

These findings provide substantially more information than a simple tally of greetings. In a meaningful share of observed encounters, the coding identified rapport and requests for follow-up, suggesting that some informal contacts created opportunities for continued engagement rather than functioning solely as isolated pleasantries.

Findings: Children and Teens

A high frequency of positive social interactions continued to be observed between officers and children across the expanded sample, and several subthemes grew substantially in this edition, most notably child-initiated friendly joking (2 to 14 cumulative) and officer-initiated fist bumps (16 to 45 cumulative). This growth is best explained as a function of this edition's event mix, which included several settings, a youth-oriented "touch-a-truck" event, a school-based safety program, and a Halloween trunk-or-treat, that naturally invite spontaneous child-officer engagement more than some of the settings sampled in the first edition. This should be read as a sampling effect reflecting which kinds of events were observed this cycle, not as evidence of a year-over-year trend in how children relate to officers.

This edition also surfaced two categories not previously captured. First, a Positive Safety Education theme (17 occurrences) was added to reflect officers proactively reinforcing safe behavior, for example, praising children for looking both ways before crossing a street, or discussing cell phone and stranger safety in constructive, non-fear-based terms that positioned officers and trusted caregivers as sources of protection rather than as figures of alarm. Second, a Neutral/Non-Engagement category was introduced to more accurately code two instances of teenage attendees declining an officer's attempt at conversation in a dismissive but non-hostile manner, behavior more consistent with ordinary adolescent social conduct in peer settings than with a negative relational response, and therefore kept distinct from genuinely negative interactions.

The negative-interaction count also grew modestly, from 1 to 3 across the combined sample, with the two new instances involving a child declining a prompted interaction with an officer while in visible emotional distress (a tantrum) rather than a case where the interaction itself appeared to provoke the response. Even with this addition, negative interactions remain rare, 3 in 21 events, and the expanded sample, if anything, produces a more credible and nuanced picture than the first edition's single data point allowed, rather than a materially different one.

Table 4's enhanced, interaction-level coding of 117 child/teen interactions this cycle both reinforces and deepens this picture. Interaction types skewed toward greetings (42) and play/game-based contact (34), consistent with the age composition of the sample, and only 2 interactions were rated negative overall, both consistent with the tantrum-related refusals noted above rather than reflecting a negative response to the officer specifically. The 2 interactions rated neutral align with the teen non-engagement pattern already discussed. Age in this dataset was estimated rather than confirmed, based on conversational and developmental indicators observed in the field rather than direct verification, and should be read with that caveat in mind; the sample clustered around two loose age bands (approximately 4 and 16 years) rather than a continuous distribution, suggesting the observed interactions concentrated among young children and teens rather than school-age children in between.

Findings: Adult Citizens

The pattern among adults was, if anything, even more consistently positive than among children. Across the combined 21-event sample, zero negative citizen-officer interactions have been observed to date. The largest single increase was in citizens approaching officers specifically to ask about crime or police presence in their area (7 to 22 cumulative), a pattern likely connected to this edition's inclusion of a formal public safety training event and a multi-service public safety showcase, both settings that would be expected to draw more direct safety-related questions than, for example, a holiday tree lighting.

This edition also introduced a small but analytically useful Neutral category for adults, distinguishing two kinds of non-negative but non-rapport-building moments that had not previously been coded separately: officers providing routine, non-emergency medical assistance (2 instances), and adults who did not comply with an officer's logistical request in a way that carried no safety implication (3 instances), for example, a request related to event flow or positioning rather than a matter of public safety. Coding these separately from both "positive" and "negative" avoids inflating either category with interactions that were simply unremarkable rather than meaningfully good or bad.

Integrated Interpretation

Across Tables 6.1 through 6.4, two levels of analysis and two age groups produce a consistent observational pattern: informal police-citizen contact at the community events studied was predominantly positive in frequency, and the more granular interaction-level coding was likewise characterized by attentiveness, respect, rapport, and opportunities for continued engagement among both adults and children/teens. This convergence strengthens the observational evidence regarding the quality of police-community interactions in the settings examined, while not establishing the level of community trust beyond those observed encounters.

6.2 Results: Investigator Perspectives on Criminal Case Referral and Prosecutorial Decision-Making

Introduction

To complement the quantitative analyses presented throughout this report, research conducted a qualitative interview study examining how Fort Bend County detectives and investigators experience the criminal case referral process to the District Attorney's Office. As described in Chapter Four, this component of the study was designed to provide contextual insight into investigative decision-making, prosecutorial communication, organizational collaboration, and the processes that occur before criminal cases proceed to formal prosecution. While quantitative data describe prosecutorial outcomes, filing decisions, and case dispositions, they cannot capture how investigators experience the referral process or the organizational factors that influence those experiences. The findings therefore provide contextual evidence concerning processes that administrative case data alone cannot measure.

The findings presented below reflect thematic analysis of interviews conducted with detectives and investigators representing multiple Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies. Consistent with the methodology described in Chapter Four, interviews were analyzed using an inductive thematic approach that identified recurring patterns across participant narratives while preserving the contextual richness of individual experiences. Six major themes emerged from the analysis, describing investigators' perceptions of the referral process, communication with prosecutors, investigative decision-making, organizational collaboration, procedural fairness, and structural challenges affecting criminal case processing.

Participant Characteristics

Interviews were completed with thirteen detectives and investigators representing seven Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies. Participants represented a range of investigative assignments and professional experience, including investigators who regularly filed cases in both Fort Bend County and neighboring Harris County. This cross-jurisdictional experience provided several participants with the opportunity to compare referral practices across prosecutorial jurisdictions while discussing their experiences within Fort Bend County.

The target sample size established during study design was successfully achieved, and interview durations averaged approximately 41 minutes. All interviews were audio-recorded with participant consent, professionally transcribed, and reviewed by the research team for accuracy prior to thematic analysis.

Table 6.5: Participant and Sample Characteristics (N = 13)

Characteristic	Detail
Total participants	13 detectives/investigators
Agencies represented	7 Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies
Target sample size	12–15 (target met)
Cross-jurisdictional experience	6 currently file in both Fort Bend and Harris County; 1 additional participant formerly did so
Average interview length	~41 minutes
Recording/transcription	Audio-recorded with consent; transcribed and personally reviewed by the researcher for accuracy
Analytic approach	Braun & Clarke six-phase thematic analysis

Overview of Themes

Thematic analysis identified six interconnected themes describing investigators' experiences with criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision-making. Although presented separately for organizational purposes, these themes frequently overlapped within participant narratives and collectively describe how investigators experience communication, evidentiary expectations, organizational collaboration, referral decision-making, and structural challenges throughout the criminal case referral process.

Table 6.6: Summary of Investigator Interview Themes

Theme	Summary	Participants Referenced
1. Overall Confidence in the Referral Process	Predominantly positive perceptions of working with the DA's Office, especially among those with cross-jurisdictional comparison experience	9 of 13 positive; remaining generally neutral
2. Experience Shapes Referral Decision-Making	Investigative experience described as central to confidence in referral timing; more experienced detectives gave richer accounts	11 of 13
3. Different Investigative Functions Produce Different Challenges	Violent crime investigators satisfied but noted high evidentiary thresholds; non-violent crime investigators cited backlog/slower misdemeanor processing	10 of 13
4. Victim-Centered Practice and Interagency Collaboration	DA's Office described as collaborative and victim-centered	7 of 13 raised this independently
5. Structural Rather Than Prosecutorial Challenges	Concerns centered on staffing, funding, training, and resources rather than prosecutor dissatisfaction	8 of 13
6. Procedural Fairness	High evidentiary standards acknowledged as necessary; some reservations about the grand jury process specifically; juvenile processing seen as fair	3 on evidentiary standards; 3 on grand jury reservations; 2 on juvenile fairness

Finding One: Overall Confidence in the Referral Process

The most consistently expressed finding across participant interviews was investigators' overall confidence in the criminal case referral process within Fort Bend County. Participants generally described positive working relationships with prosecutors and emphasized effective communication, accessibility, and collaborative problem-solving throughout the referral process. Investigators with experience filing cases in both Fort Bend and Harris County were particularly likely to describe Fort Bend's referral process favorably when making direct cross-jurisdictional comparisons.

Importantly, participants distinguished confidence in the referral process from agreement with every prosecutorial decision. Investigators generally recognized that prosecutors and investigators fulfill different roles within the criminal justice system and viewed differing opinions regarding evidentiary sufficiency as an expected component of collaborative case review rather than evidence of organizational conflict. Collectively, participant narratives suggest that investigators experienced the referral process as collaborative and professionally respectful rather than adversarial.

Finding Two: Investigative Experience Shapes Referral Decision-Making

Investigators consistently described professional experience as one of the most important factors influencing confidence in criminal case referral decisions. Participants explained that investigative experience contributes to a deeper understanding of evidentiary requirements, prosecutorial expectations, and the level of case preparation necessary before referral. More experienced detectives frequently described developing judgment through repeated interactions with prosecutors and through experience managing increasingly complex investigations.

Participants with fewer years of investigative experience often discussed relying more heavily upon supervisory guidance and prosecutor feedback while developing confidence in referral decisions. Collectively, these narratives suggest that referral decision-making develops through accumulated investigative experience rather than through procedural guidance alone.

Finding Three: Investigative Assignment Influences Referral Experiences

Participants described referral experiences that varied according to investigative assignment and case type. Detectives assigned to violent crime investigations generally reported positive experiences while acknowledging the extensive evidentiary requirements associated with felony prosecutions. Although these standards occasionally increased investigative workload, participants largely viewed rigorous evidentiary review as appropriate given the seriousness of violent offenses.

Investigators assigned to property crimes and other non-violent offenses more frequently identified challenges associated with misdemeanor processing, case backlog, and limited organizational resources. Importantly, participants generally attributed these concerns to broader structural and operational factors rather than dissatisfaction with prosecutors themselves.

Finding Four: Collaborative Relationships and Victim-Centered Practice

A recurring theme throughout participant interviews was the collaborative nature of interactions between investigators and prosecutors. Participants frequently described open communication, accessibility, and shared commitment to victim-centered case management as defining characteristics of the referral process. Investigators commonly emphasized that prosecutors remained available to discuss evidentiary issues, provide legal guidance during investigations, and collaborate on complex cases before formal filing decisions were made.

Rather than describing the referral process as a series of isolated prosecutorial decisions, participants consistently characterized it as an ongoing collaborative relationship between investigators and prosecutors working toward common public safety and victim service objectives.

Finding Five: Structural Rather Than Prosecutorial Challenges

When discussing opportunities for improvement, investigators overwhelmingly identified organizational and structural challenges rather than dissatisfaction with prosecutorial performance. Participants most frequently referenced their own department staffing shortages, funding limitations, training needs, forensic resource constraints, and broader criminal justice demands affecting investigative work.

Several investigators expressed interest in additional patrol officer training regarding criminal case preparation, while others discussed the need for continued organizational investment in investigative resources. Collectively, these findings suggest that investigators viewed many challenges associated with criminal case referral as systemic issues affecting multiple components of the criminal justice system rather than shortcomings attributable to any single agency.

Finding Six: Procedural Fairness Throughout the Referral Process

Participants consistently acknowledged the importance of maintaining rigorous evidentiary standards throughout the referral process, even when those standards occasionally delayed or complicated criminal case filings. Investigators generally recognized that thorough prosecutorial review served an important function in protecting case integrity and ensuring appropriate legal decision-making. Although several participants discussed reservations regarding specific aspects of the grand jury process, these concerns were generally distinguished from broader perceptions of fairness within the referral system.

Participant narratives generally characterized procedural rigor and evidentiary review as necessary features of criminal case processing rather than unnecessary barriers to prosecution.

Integrated Interpretation

The investigator interviews provide important contextual evidence regarding criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision-making that cannot be obtained through quantitative case-processing data alone. Administrative statistics describe filing decisions, prosecution outcomes, and case dispositions, but provide limited insight into the collaborative organizational processes through which criminal cases move from investigation to prosecution.

Across all six themes, investigators consistently described the referral process as collaborative, professionally respectful, and centered on shared public safety objectives. Although participants identified recurring organizational challenges involving staffing, training, resource limitations, and procedural complexity, these concerns were consistently framed as structural issues affecting the broader criminal justice system rather than dissatisfaction with prosecutorial decision-making. Investigators repeatedly emphasized communication, accessibility, evidentiary expectations, and collaborative problem-solving as defining characteristics of their interactions with the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office.

When considered alongside the quantitative analyses presented throughout this report, these findings contribute an important contextual perspective regarding the organizational processes that precede criminal prosecution. More broadly, they demonstrate how qualitative inquiry can provide insight into criminal justice decision-making that extends beyond what can be measured through administrative data alone.

6.3 Findings: Resident Perspectives on Police-Citizen Interactions

Introduction

To complement the quantitative analyses presented throughout this report, the research team conducted a qualitative interview study examining how residents perceive, experience, and interpret police-community interactions within Fresno, Texas. As described in Chapter Four, this component of the report was designed to capture perspectives that cannot be obtained through official crime statistics, administrative records, or law enforcement data alone. While quantitative measures describe reported crime, enforcement activity, victimization, and criminal justice outcomes, they cannot fully explain how residents interpret their interactions with law enforcement, develop

perceptions of procedural fairness, or form broader beliefs regarding police legitimacy and community trust.

The present analysis includes interviews with 53 adult residents and a youth subsample of 21 participants. Although data collection remains ongoing, several consistent patterns emerged across both participant groups. Rather than attempting to estimate the prevalence of attitudes within the broader population, the purpose of this preliminary analysis is to identify recurring patterns in how residents describe and interpret police-community interactions. These findings therefore provide contextual insight that complements the quantitative analyses presented elsewhere in this report while identifying areas warranting continued investigation as additional interviews are completed.

Collectively, the findings suggest that perceptions of policing are considerably more nuanced than simple measures of trust or distrust. Participants frequently distinguished between policing as a national institution and the officers serving their own community, described a broad range of police-community interactions extending well beyond enforcement, and emphasized that personal experience often differed from broader societal narratives regarding policing. Four major findings emerged from the thematic analysis.

Participant Characteristics

The current analysis includes interviews conducted with adult residents recruited through intercept sampling at a frequently visited neighborhood grocery store in Fresno, Texas, and a youth subsample recruited from Mustang Community Center and Park and Sundial Park. Consistent with the methodology described in Chapter Four, interviews were conducted using a standardized semi-structured interview guide designed to encourage participants to describe their experiences and perceptions of police-community interactions while allowing flexibility for individual narratives to develop naturally.

Adult interviews averaged 9 minutes and 40 seconds, while youth interviews averaged 7 minutes and 12 seconds. At the time this report was prepared, thematic analysis reflected the complete adult interview sample, 53 adult interviews, together with 21 youth interviews. Two additional youth interviews conducted by graduate research assistants were excluded from analysis because participant behavior during the interviews raised concerns regarding the validity of the substantive responses. Specifically, the participants appeared more interested in interacting socially with the interviewers than engaging meaningfully with the interview questions. Consequently, these interviews were excluded from coding to preserve the integrity of the qualitative dataset.

Overview of Major Findings

The preliminary thematic analysis identified four major findings describing how adult and youth participants perceived, experienced, and interpreted police-community interactions within Fresno, Texas. Although each finding is presented separately for organizational purposes, considerable overlap existed across participant narratives. Collectively, the findings suggest that perceptions of policing are shaped through a complex interaction of direct personal experience, indirect experiences shared by family members and peers, media exposure, neighborhood context, and routine interactions with local law enforcement. Rather than reflecting a single continuum of trust or distrust, participant narratives frequently distinguished between generalized beliefs about policing and evaluations of officers serving their own community.

Because data collection remains ongoing, the findings presented below should be interpreted as preliminary and subject to refinement as additional interviews are completed and analyzed. Nevertheless, several patterns emerged consistently across both adult and youth participants and provide important contextual insight into police-community relationships that complement the quantitative findings presented elsewhere in this report.

Table 6.7: Adult Participant Findings: Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Policing

Theme	53	Description
Neutral / No Notable Engagement with the Topic	9	Participants reported no recent interactions with local law enforcement and, when probed, offered little elaboration on attitudes toward policing generally.
Generalized Suspicion of / Concern About Policing	14	Participants expressed generalized suspicion or concern about policing, framed as broad statements rather than direct personal experience. Nine of the 14 had no personal police interaction to draw on and relied on anecdotal or news-based information.
Desire for Increased Police Presence	47	The most frequently expressed attitude. Forty-seven participants indicated a desire for increased police presence; 42 said they had previously expressed this same view elsewhere. Sub-reasons (not mutually exclusive): general patrol presence (31), more stops conducted (19), youth-focused programming (7), holiday presence (14), and presence during school breaks (10).

Table 6.8: Adult Participant Findings: Direct Interactions with Police

Theme	53	Description
Personal Interaction Reported Within the Suspicion/Concern Group	5	Of the 14 expressing generalized suspicion, 5 had a personal police interaction to draw on. Of the 2 with a Fort Bend interaction, both described being stopped for expired registration, receiving a warning, and neutral treatment.
Recent Fort Bend Traffic Interaction (Detailed Account)	22	Seventeen received a warning, 5 a citation. Nine spontaneously reported feeling treated fairly; 11 were neutral. Seven described a rapport-building moment involving an officer's local familiarity.
Perceived Unfair Treatment (Negative Interaction) ¹	2	Two felt the stop was not conducted for a fair reason; one described the stated reason (a vehicle light) as one the participant maintained was operational.
Perceived Suspicious Treatment During Stop ¹	2	Two described extended questioning about origin/destination despite no search or exit request. One received a citation; the other received nothing, with the outcome unclear.

¹ Not mutually exclusive with the 22 detailed-account total or with each other.

Table 6.9: Youth Participant Findings: Perceptions and Attitudes Toward Policing (N = 21)

Theme	n	Description
Generalized Fear and Apprehension of Law Enforcement	13	Generally expressed as broad concern rather than a specific encounter, referencing media coverage. Nine of 13 explicitly distinguished this from their view of local police, directing concern toward departments in larger cities. Two stated they did not believe they would ever trust police.

Table 6.10: Youth Participant Findings: Direct Interactions with Police (N = 21)

Theme	n	Description
Traffic Stop Experiences	8	Seven for moving violations. Participants described nervousness, several attributing this to being told by adults to behave cautiously during police encounters. None reported being searched. Six of 8 received a warning; 3 of those spontaneously described feeling treated fairly.
Secondhand/Witnessed Traffic Stops (Family or Peers)	4	Three described the experience neutrally. One described a positive experience involving an older uncle who was pulled over and characterized the officer as "really cool."
Other Direct Non-Traffic Interactions	9	Comprising two sub-patterns below.
— Missing Youth / Welfare Check Contact	2	Officers asked whether participants had seen a missing young person. Both neutral; one added it was good officers were searching.
— Non-Criminal Emergency Assistance Observed	7	Two car accidents, three medical calls (including a child injured on a scooter), one choking toddler. All characterized as positive, calm, competent, focused on stabilizing the person involved.

Theme	n	Description
Traffic Stop Experiences	8	Seven for moving violations. Participants described nervousness, several attributing this to being told by adults to behave cautiously during police encounters. None reported being searched. Six of 8 received a warning; 3 of those spontaneously described feeling treated fairly.
Recreational and Informational Contact	8	Recreational contacts included good-natured, mutual teasing during football/basketball. Informational contacts described officers as "cool," thanking participants and describing them as part of "the good people in the neighborhood."
School-Based Arrest of a Peer (Mixed Account)	1	Considered the arrest unwarranted but described the officer as respectful throughout.

Finding One: Generalized Attitudes Toward Policing Frequently Differed from Direct Local Experience

One of the most consistent findings to emerge from the interviews was the distinction participants made between generalized attitudes toward policing and their own direct experiences with local law enforcement. Adult participants expressing concern or suspicion toward policing frequently based those concerns on media coverage, stories from others, or broader societal discussions rather than personal interactions with Fort Bend County officers. Likewise, many youth participants expressed apprehension regarding law enforcement generally while simultaneously indicating that they did not believe officers serving their own community behaved in the manner often portrayed in national discussions.

This distinction represents an important preliminary finding because it suggests that residents evaluate policing at multiple levels. Participants often differentiated between national perceptions of policing and evaluations of officers with whom they had direct personal contact. Rather than expressing uniformly positive or negative attitudes, many participants demonstrated the ability to separate institutional concerns from local experiences.

Relationship to Existing Research

This finding is consistent with research demonstrating that perceptions of police legitimacy develop through both direct and indirect experiences. Procedural justice research has consistently shown that personal encounters characterized by fairness, respect, neutrality, and trustworthy decision-making are among the strongest predictors of police legitimacy (Tyler, 1990, 2004; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). At the same time, research on legal cynicism and vicarious experiences suggests that media coverage, family narratives, peer experiences, and neighborhood discourse also influence attitudes toward policing independent of direct police contact (Brunson, 2007; Brunson & Weitzer, 2009; Carr et al., 2007). The present findings suggest that both processes may operate simultaneously within the same individuals.

Finding Two: Direct Police Encounters Were Predominantly Described as Fair, Neutral, or Positive

Across both adult and youth participants, direct interactions with local law enforcement were most frequently described as neutral, fair, or positive. Adult participants describing recent Fort Bend traffic stops often reported receiving warnings rather than citations, and several voluntarily described officers as respectful, professional, or familiar with the local community. Youth participants similarly described officers positively during emergency responses, recreational interactions, welfare checks, and routine conversations occurring outside enforcement contexts. Although a small number of

participants reported encounters they perceived as unfair or unnecessarily suspicious, these accounts represented a relatively small proportion of the direct interactions discussed.

Several participants also spontaneously identified rapport-building behaviors, including friendly conversation, officer familiarity with the neighborhood, and respectful communication, as memorable aspects of their encounters. These accounts suggest that participants evaluated police encounters not solely on the outcome of the interaction but also on the manner in which officers conducted themselves.

Relationship to Existing Research

These findings closely align with procedural justice theory, which argues that perceptions of fairness during police encounters exert greater influence on police legitimacy than enforcement outcomes alone (Tyler, 1990, 2004; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003). Numerous studies have demonstrated that respectful communication, neutrality, opportunities for voice, and trustworthy motives increase public confidence in law enforcement and willingness to cooperate with police (Mazerolle et al., 2013; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). The present findings provide preliminary evidence that these principles may also characterize many routine police-community interactions within the study community.

Finding Three: Residents Expressed a Strong Desire for Increased Police Presence

Among adult participants, the most frequently expressed opinion was a desire for increased police presence throughout the community. Participants commonly requested more routine patrols, increased visibility during holidays and school breaks, additional youth-focused activities, and greater proactive engagement by officers. Notably, many participants indicated that they had previously expressed these same concerns during other community meetings or conversations, suggesting that these views represented established community priorities rather than responses generated solely by the interview process.

This finding was particularly noteworthy because it contrasts with assumptions that communities expressing concern about policing necessarily desire reduced police visibility. Instead, many participants simultaneously expressed support for increased police presence while emphasizing the importance of respectful, community-oriented policing.

Relationship to Existing Research

Community policing research has long demonstrated that residents often desire highly visible police officers who are accessible, familiar with neighborhood concerns, and actively engaged in community problem-solving (Skogan, 2006; Gill et al., 2014). Research also suggests that support for proactive policing and expectations of procedurally just treatment are not mutually exclusive. Rather, residents frequently seek both effective crime prevention and respectful police-community relationships (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). The present findings appear consistent with this broader body of literature.

Finding Four: Community Perceptions Were Shaped by a Broad Range of Police–Citizen Contacts

Participants described numerous interactions contributing to their perceptions of law enforcement beyond traditional enforcement encounters. Youth participants recalled officers assisting during medical emergencies, searching for missing children, participating in recreational activities, and engaging in informal conversations within neighborhood parks. Adults similarly described routine conversations, neighborhood familiarity, and non-enforcement contacts as meaningful aspects of their experiences with local officers.

These findings suggest that community perceptions develop through the cumulative effect of many different forms of contact rather than through traffic stops or arrests alone. Participants frequently referenced interactions occurring during ordinary community life, illustrating the importance of considering policing as an ongoing relationship rather than a series of isolated enforcement events.

Relationship to Existing Research

Contemporary police legitimacy research increasingly recognizes that everyday interactions contribute substantially to public perceptions of law enforcement (Bradford et al., 2009; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). Community policing scholars similarly argue that informal interactions outside enforcement contexts provide important opportunities for relationship building, trust development, and increased legitimacy (Skogan, 2006; Gill et al., 2014). The present findings are consistent with these observations: participants often remembered recreational, informational, and emergency-response interactions as vividly as traditional enforcement encounters.

Summary of Major Findings

Although preliminary, the resident interviews contribute an important qualitative perspective to the broader mixed-methods framework guiding this report. Collectively, the findings suggest that community perceptions of policing are multifaceted and cannot be adequately understood through crime statistics or enforcement data alone. Participants frequently distinguished generalized societal narratives regarding policing from their own local experiences, described direct encounters with local officers as predominantly fair or respectful, expressed substantial support for increased police presence within their community, and emphasized that perceptions of law enforcement develop through a wide range of everyday interactions extending beyond enforcement activity.

These findings are broadly consistent with contemporary procedural justice, police legitimacy, and community policing research. Existing scholarship has repeatedly demonstrated that trust in law enforcement is shaped not only through formal enforcement actions but also through respectful communication, opportunities for positive non-enforcement contact, community engagement, and procedural fairness during routine interactions (Tyler, 1990, 2004; Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Bradford et al., 2009; Gill et al., 2014; National Academies of Sciences, Engineering, and Medicine, 2018). The present findings add nuance by illustrating that residents may simultaneously express concern regarding policing at the societal level while maintaining favorable perceptions of officers serving their own community.

As additional interviews are completed, future analyses will allow these preliminary findings to be refined, expanded, and examined across demographic groups, community contexts, and patterns

of police-community interaction. When considered alongside the quantitative findings presented elsewhere in this report, these resident perspectives contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of police-community relationships and the broader organizational and community contexts within which crime and criminal justice occur throughout Fort Bend County.

Integration of Findings

The resident interviews also converge with the structured observations presented earlier in this chapter in one important respect: both forms of qualitative evidence show that police-community relationships are shaped through routine contacts extending beyond enforcement. Residents described emergency assistance, recreational interaction, welfare checks, neighborhood familiarity, and ordinary conversation as meaningful to their perceptions of local officers, while the observational study documented similarly positive non-enforcement interactions across community settings. This convergence does not establish the prevalence of trust throughout Fresno or Fort Bend County, but it strengthens the case for examining everyday police-community contact as an important part of the local public-safety environment.

Limitations of the Qualitative Findings

The qualitative findings presented throughout this chapter were designed to complement the quantitative analyses by providing organizational, investigative, and community context that cannot be captured through administrative data alone. Accordingly, the findings should be interpreted within the methodological framework and limitations inherent to qualitative inquiry. The purpose of these studies was not to estimate the prevalence of particular attitudes or experiences within the broader population, but rather to provide depth, context, and explanation that strengthen interpretation of the quantitative findings presented throughout this report.

As with most qualitative research, participants were selected using purposive sampling strategies designed to obtain information-rich cases rather than statistically representative samples. Consequently, the findings presented throughout this chapter should not be interpreted as generalizable estimates of attitudes or experiences among all Fort Bend County residents, investigators, or law enforcement personnel. Instead, the strength of the qualitative findings lies in their ability to illuminate organizational processes, investigative decision-making, and community experiences that cannot be adequately measured through quantitative methods alone.

Structured Nonparticipant Observation Limitations

The structured nonparticipant observations were conducted exclusively during publicly accessible community events voluntarily attended by residents and law enforcement personnel. Consequently, the observations likely reflect interactions among individuals already willing to participate in community engagement activities and should not be interpreted as representative of all police-community interactions occurring throughout Fort Bend County. Similarly, observations provide snapshots of interactions occurring within specific settings and time periods rather than comprehensive measures of countywide perceptions of law enforcement.

Several limitations are specific to the present observation period. The expanded observational sample occurred primarily during the fall and early winter months, with one additional spring

observation, and therefore may not capture seasonal variation in community events or interaction patterns. Furthermore, the enhanced interaction-level coding framework was applied only to observations collected during the current reporting period and has not yet been retrospectively applied to observations collected during earlier reporting periods. Consequently, comparisons of interaction quality across reporting cycles should not be inferred from the current findings. Although the expanded sample increased geographic representation through the inclusion of Needville, observations have not yet been conducted within Meadows Place. Finally, estimated age categories for youth participants were based upon observable developmental characteristics rather than verified demographic information and should therefore be interpreted as approximate.

Investigator Perspectives

The investigator interview findings reflect the experiences and perceptions of detectives and investigators representing participating Fort Bend County law enforcement agencies. Although participants represented multiple jurisdictions, investigative assignments, and levels of professional experience, the sample was intentionally designed to provide contextual insight into the criminal case referral process rather than to produce statistically representative estimates of investigator attitudes.

Because participation was voluntary, the possibility of self-selection bias cannot be entirely eliminated. In addition, interviews occurred during a specific organizational period within the Fort Bend County criminal justice system. Consequently, investigator perceptions may evolve as organizational leadership, prosecutorial practices, staffing levels, legislative requirements, or criminal justice policies change over time. The findings should therefore be interpreted as representing investigator perspectives during the period in which the interviews were conducted rather than as permanent characteristics of the referral process.

Resident Perspectives

The resident interview study remains an ongoing qualitative research project, and the findings presented throughout this report should therefore be considered preliminary. Additional interviews may further refine, expand, or modify the themes identified during the present analysis as data collection continues.

Resident participants were recruited through purposive intercept sampling within a single Fort Bend County community. Accordingly, the findings should not be interpreted as representative of all residents of Fresno or Fort Bend County. Instead, the study was designed to better understand how residents perceive and interpret police-community interactions within one community context. As with most qualitative interview studies, participant narratives were influenced by individual experiences, family relationships, peer interactions, media exposure, and community context, all of which may vary across neighborhoods and demographic groups. Future phases of the study will continue expanding the sample to strengthen thematic development and explore similarities and differences across participant groups.

Overall Interpretation of the Qualitative Findings

Although each qualitative component possesses methodological limitations, the three studies were intentionally designed to complement one another while addressing different aspects of criminal

justice within Fort Bend County. The structured observations documented naturally occurring police-community interactions, the investigator interviews provided insight into criminal case referral and prosecutorial decision-making, and the resident interviews examined how community members perceive and interpret police-community relationships. When considered alongside the quantitative analyses, document review, agency consultations, and contemporary criminal justice literature, these complementary sources of evidence strengthen the overall mixed-methods framework guiding this report.

Accordingly, the value of the qualitative findings lies not in statistical generalizability, but in their ability to provide organizational, investigative, and community context that enhances interpretation of the quantitative findings. Together, these complementary methods contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of crime and criminal justice throughout Fort Bend County than either quantitative or qualitative methods could provide independently.

CHAPTER SEVEN: DISCUSSION

7.1 Major Findings

Fort Bend County presents an uncommon and notably favorable public-safety profile, one that becomes most apparent when crime is examined beyond the headline numbers. One of the largest, fastest-growing, and most racially and ethnically diverse counties in Texas has continued to expand rapidly while maintaining comparatively low levels of crime and serious violence across the six-year period examined in this study. Importantly, that conclusion does not depend upon a single favorable statistic or isolated year. It emerges across multiple levels of analysis: six years of standardized crime data; aggregate and population-adjusted trends; individual offense patterns; agency-level differences; clearance outcomes; qualitative findings from law enforcement; and comparisons with Texas, the nation, surrounding counties, and demographically relevant jurisdictions. Across these different measures and perspectives, the findings converge on a remarkably consistent conclusion: substantial population growth and increasing community complexity have not been accompanied by a corresponding deterioration in public safety. Instead, Fort Bend County has maintained a distinctly favorable public-safety environment, characterized by comparatively low levels of serious violence, declining rates across important offense categories, and a broader pattern of stability that persisted even as the county continued to grow and change.

At the countywide level, reported crime remained comparatively stable despite continued growth. Person offenses increased modestly in absolute volume during portions of the study period, but the population-adjusted person-offense rate declined from 887.50 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 804.25 in 2025. Property crime demonstrated an even clearer long-term decline, decreasing from 1,675.13 offenses per 100,000 residents in 2020 to 1,409.15 in 2025. The latter portion of the study period was particularly favorable, with property-offense rates declining in 2023, 2024, and again in 2025.

These findings illustrate an important distinction between the number of crimes reported within a growing community and the rate at which those crimes occur relative to population. Texas DPS similarly distinguishes crime volume from crime rate and uses population-standardized rates to support comparisons among jurisdictions (Texas Department of Public Safety [TXDPS], 2026). Consequently, increases in aggregate offense counts should not automatically be interpreted as equivalent increases in the population-adjusted rate of reported crime.

Fulshear provides one of the clearest examples. The city experienced extraordinary population and development growth during the study period, accompanied by increases in the absolute number of some reported offenses. Once offenses were evaluated relative to population, however, the interpretation changed substantially. Fulshear's population-adjusted property-crime rate declined approximately 68.2% between 2021 and 2025 despite continued residential and commercial expansion.

A second major finding concerns the composition of broad offense categories. NIBRS provides substantially greater incident-level specificity than traditional aggregate reporting and is designed to support more detailed analysis of crime circumstances (Federal Bureau of Investigation [FBI], n.d.). In Fort Bend County, assault represented the largest component of person crime across most

participating agencies and therefore exerted the greatest influence on changes in the overall person-offense category. Homicide, robbery, and several other serious violent offenses occurred much less frequently. Thus, an increase in person offenses should not automatically be interpreted as an increase in the most serious forms of violence.

A similar pattern emerged for property crime. Theft consistently accounted for the largest share of reported property offenses and therefore played a substantial role in movement of the broader property-crime category. Theft increased during the middle of the study period before declining in 2024 and 2025; burglary generally declined following an increase in 2022; and motor vehicle theft increased through 2023 before declining during the final two years. Property crime therefore did not move uniformly across offense types.

Agency-level analyses further demonstrate that no single Fort Bend County crime pattern was shared equally across participating jurisdictions. Missouri City experienced a long-term increase in its person-offense rate, driven primarily by assault, while its property-offense rate remained comparatively stable and robbery declined overall. Despite the increase in person offenses, Missouri City continued to maintain comparatively high clearance rates, an important finding because the increase in reported crime was not accompanied by a corresponding decline in investigative outcomes. Rosenberg demonstrated broad long-term reductions across several major offense categories. Meadows Place maintained relatively stable person crime while experiencing a long-term decline in property crime, and Fulshear experienced increasing incident volumes alongside rapid population growth and declining population-adjusted property-crime rates.

An additional geographic pattern emerged when agency-level trends were considered in relation to their location within the county. Agencies serving communities along or closely connected to the Harris County/Houston boundary, including Missouri City, Stafford, Sugar Land, and Meadows Place, were more likely to demonstrate periods of increased crime or greater year-to-year variability in selected offense categories than several participating agencies located farther into Fort Bend County. The pattern was most apparent in person and selected serious offenses rather than as a uniform increase across all crime categories. Missouri City, for example, experienced a sustained increase in person offenses driven largely by assault, even while robbery declined and property crime remained comparatively stable. Stafford and Sugar Land experienced more pronounced fluctuations in selected offenses during portions of the study period, while small annual counts in Meadows Place produced visible year-to-year variation despite generally favorable longer-term conditions. By comparison, Rosenberg demonstrated broader long-term reductions across several major offense categories, Needville continued to record comparatively low offense volumes, and Fulshear's increases in raw offense counts were substantially moderated, and in some categories reversed, once extraordinary population growth was incorporated into the analysis. The contrast does not establish a Harris County effect, but it suggests that the eastern portion of Fort Bend County may operate within a different crime environment than communities located farther west and southwest.

Several characteristics could plausibly contribute to this pattern and warrant future examination. The eastern Fort Bend jurisdictions are more fully embedded within the continuous Houston metropolitan environment, with greater cross-county mobility, major transportation corridors, commercial activity, commuter populations, and jurisdictional boundaries that residents and offenders can cross without any meaningful change in the surrounding built environment. This interpretation is particularly noteworthy given the substantial difference identified in the 2025 regional comparison: using the same Texas DPS comparative methodology, Fort Bend County

recorded approximately **1.34 violent offenses per 1,000 population, compared with 6.39 per 1,000 among Harris County reporting jurisdictions**. The difference does not demonstrate that higher Harris County crime is responsible for offense patterns observed in neighboring Fort Bend jurisdictions. It does, however, provide empirical support for treating cross-county geography and mobility as potentially meaningful contextual factors rather than assuming that crime patterns stop at the county line.

The Fort Bend County Sheriff's Office requires somewhat different interpretation. Its service area extends across a large and geographically diverse unincorporated population, including areas adjacent to Harris County as well as communities located much farther from the county boundary. FBCSO therefore cannot be classified simply as either a Harris-border or non-border agency. Notably, its overall person- and property-offense rates ended the study period below their 2020 levels, even though portions of its service area experienced offense-specific fluctuations. Future geospatial analysis at the incident level would allow these patterns to be separated by location and would provide a more direct test of whether offenses occurring within the eastern portions of the county differ systematically from those occurring elsewhere.

The geographic pattern also highlights an important methodological consideration in interpreting agency-reported crime. Offenses appearing within the data of a Fort Bend County law enforcement agency should not automatically be assumed to have occurred physically within Fort Bend County. Participating agencies serving boundary areas described circumstances in which offenses included within their reported data occurred in Harris County or otherwise involved cross-jurisdictional activity. Similarly, an offense reported or investigated by a participating Fort Bend agency may ultimately fall within another prosecutorial jurisdiction. **This distinction is particularly relevant when interpreting trends among agencies operating along the Harris County boundary, where reporting jurisdiction, offense location, and prosecutorial jurisdiction may not always align.** The present study does not contain sufficiently detailed incident-location and prosecutorial-disposition data to quantify the extent of this phenomenon.

Future analyses should therefore distinguish, where possible, among the agency reporting the offense, the physical location in which the offense occurred, and the jurisdiction responsible for prosecution. Linking these measures with incident-level geospatial data would allow future research to determine whether the greater variability observed among several eastern Fort Bend agencies reflects crime occurring within those communities, cross-county mobility and enforcement activity, broader regional crime patterns, or some combination of these factors. These patterns suggest that where crime occurs within Fort Bend County, and how individual jurisdictions connect to the larger Houston metropolitan environment, may be increasingly important to understanding countywide crime trends.

Investigative outcomes provide an additional dimension of the county's public-safety picture. Across participating agencies, clearance patterns varied substantially by offense type and over time, but changes in reported crime did not necessarily correspond with declines in investigative outcomes. In several jurisdictions, agencies continued to demonstrate favorable or comparatively strong clearance performance even when particular offense categories increased, reinforcing the importance of considering crime trends and investigative outcomes together rather than treating them as interchangeable measures of agency performance. At the same time, clearance rates should be interpreted cautiously across jurisdictions because they are influenced by the types and volume of offenses an agency investigates, case characteristics, and other operational factors.

National NIBRS research similarly demonstrates substantial variation in clearance rates across crimes against persons, property, and society, cautioning against treating a single clearance percentage as a direct ranking of agency effectiveness (Avdija & Akgul, 2021). Within the present study, clearance outcomes are therefore most informative when considered longitudinally, by offense type, and alongside the broader crime and operational context of each agency.

Perhaps most importantly, the six-year analysis demonstrates the limitations of relying on isolated annual changes to characterize public safety. Several agencies experienced temporary increases in individual offense categories that were not sustained across the full study period, while some favorable long-term trends contained individual years in which reported offenses increased. Collectively, the evidence indicates that Fort Bend County continued to experience generally favorable public-safety conditions while also identifying offense-specific, geographic, and jurisdictional patterns that warrant continued monitoring.

7.2 Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Findings

The quantitative and qualitative components of this study were designed to provide complementary perspectives on crime and public safety. Quantitative analysis identified the direction, magnitude, and duration of crime and clearance trends, while qualitative inquiry provided information necessary to understand the organizational, demographic, operational, and community conditions within which those trends occurred. NIBRS provides detailed incident-level information, but administrative crime data still describe offenses known to and recorded by law enforcement; they do not independently explain why a particular statistical pattern occurred (FBI, n.d.).

The value of integrating quantitative and qualitative findings became particularly apparent when statistical patterns were considered alongside the demographic and operational environments in which individual agencies work. Stafford provides a particularly useful example. Although its residential population is relatively small, Stafford contains a substantial commercial and industrial base, major transportation corridors, and a daytime population that is not adequately represented by residential population alone. Consequently, a population-adjusted crime rate calculated using residential population provides an important standardized measure, but it does not fully capture the population routinely moving through the city or the demands placed upon the Stafford Police Department. This distinction is critically important when interpreting Stafford's trends, and cannot be understood when looking solely at the annual NIBRS data. Following elevated levels in 2021, person- and property-offense rates declined substantially; by 2025, the person-offense rate was approximately 42.9% below its 2021 peak and the property-offense rate approximately 46.7% below its peak. Across the full 2020–2025 period, person- and property-offense rates declined approximately 10.9% and 18.6%, respectively. The quantitative findings therefore demonstrate meaningful improvement, while the qualitative findings help explain why even population-adjusted rates require additional context in a jurisdiction where commercial activity, employment, transportation, and commuter populations contribute substantially to police demand.

Sugar Land illustrates a different way in which qualitative information changes the interpretation of quantitative trends. The city experienced a 46.8% increase in its person-offense rate between 2020 and 2025, while its property-offense rate increased only 1.6% across the full period and declined after reaching a peak in 2022. Society-offense rates also increased sharply during the middle of the study

period before declining substantially by 2025. Viewed in isolation, these figures identify meaningful changes in recorded crime, but the six-year trend spans two very different periods of community and policing activity that are important to its interpretation.

First, 2020 represents an atypical starting point for longitudinal comparison. The beginning of the study period coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic and the substantial disruption it produced in mobility, commercial activity, routine daily behavior, and police-community interactions. As communities returned to more typical patterns of movement and activity, comparisons with a 2020 baseline may capture some degree of normalization from pandemic-era conditions in addition to changes in underlying crime. This consideration is particularly relevant when interpreting percentage increases calculated across the full 2020–2025 period and cautions against assuming that the difference between the beginning and end of the series represents a continuous or uniform increase.

A second and more agency-specific transition occurred during the middle of the study period. Many of Sugar Land's changes in recorded offenses coincided with a period of significant organizational and operational change within the Sugar Land Police Department. Those changes were examined in greater detail in the previous edition of the *State of Crime and Criminal Justice in Fort Bend County*, which documented the organizational assessment and reform efforts undertaken by Chief Mark Poland following his appointment in late 2022. That work included extensive employee engagement, renewed emphasis on leadership and accountability, and the implementation of organizational principles centered on family, professionalism, leadership, growth and training, accountability, and community. The department also increased proactive enforcement activity during this period. In 2023 alone, traffic stops increased substantially, accompanied by increased weapons and narcotics seizures. This operational context is particularly relevant to offenses that may be identified through police activity because changes in proactive enforcement can influence the number of offenses detected and recorded, even in the absence of an equivalent change in crimes initially reported by members of the public.

The Sugar Land findings therefore demonstrate why changes in recorded crime cannot always be interpreted independently of the conditions under which those crimes are measured and detected. The quantitative data establish that particular offense categories increased during portions of the study period; they also show that those increases were neither uniform across offense categories nor sustained in the same direction throughout all six years. The qualitative findings add two important layers of context: the series begins during the extraordinary conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic, and its middle and later years coincide with substantial changes in agency leadership, organizational priorities, and proactive enforcement. Neither the pandemic nor the department's operational changes can be identified from the present data as the cause of Sugar Land's crime trends. Together, however, the quantitative and qualitative findings provide a substantially more complete explanation of what the observed changes may represent than either source of evidence could provide independently.

The cross-jurisdictional pattern identified in Section 7.1 provides another example of the value of integrating the two forms of evidence. The quantitative data identify greater variability among several agencies operating along or near the Harris County boundary, but they cannot independently establish where every reported offense occurred or which jurisdiction ultimately handled prosecution. Agency observations provide important context by identifying circumstances in which offenses appearing within participating departments' data occurred outside Fort Bend County or otherwise involved cross-jurisdictional activity. Although the available data do not permit the extent of this phenomenon to be quantified, the qualitative findings identify a meaningful limitation in treating agency-reported crime as geographically synonymous with crime occurring within Fort Bend County.

The same interpretive principle applies to offenses against society and clearance outcomes across participating agencies. Unlike many offenses initially reported by victims or members of the public, offenses against society may be identified through proactive or officer-initiated activity. Their recorded volume may therefore reflect changes in enforcement activity and operational priorities in addition to changes in underlying offending. Clearance outcomes present a different interpretive challenge: rates vary substantially according to offense type, investigative circumstances, and case characteristics, making direct comparisons across agencies potentially misleading when those differences are not considered (Avdija & Akgul, 2021). In both instances, the qualitative component helps identify the operational conditions necessary to interpret what the quantitative measure actually represents.

Importantly, contextual information was not used only to explain increases or potentially unfavorable findings. The same interpretive standard was applied to favorable outcomes. Declining crime rates, improving clearance rates, or comparatively low levels of serious violence require contextual examination just as increases do. A reduction in reported offenses may reflect a genuine decline, but administrative data alone cannot establish why that decline occurred or attribute it to a particular policy, practice, or agency action. The mixed methods approach therefore avoids attributing favorable outcomes to particular agency practices without sufficient evidence, just as it avoids interpreting increases as evidence of declining agency effectiveness without appropriate contextual examination.

Context does not replace crime statistics; it improves their interpretation. Throughout this study, the research process moved in both directions: quantitative findings prompted additional qualitative inquiry, while information obtained through agency interviews, operational records, and other contextual sources sometimes prompted renewed examination of the quantitative data. This iterative process allowed apparent anomalies to be examined more closely, competing explanations to be considered, and favorable as well as unfavorable trends to be evaluated against the conditions in which they occurred. The result is an interpretation of public safety that remains grounded in the reported crime data while recognizing that understanding what changed, and what those changes mean, often requires looking beyond the numbers themselves.

7.3 Crime and Community Safety

Viewed across six years, multiple measures, and participating jurisdictions, the findings describe Fort Bend County as a community with a distinctly favorable public-safety environment. This conclusion is particularly notable given the conditions under which it was maintained. During the study period, Fort Bend County continued to add residents, neighborhoods, businesses, transportation demands, and law-enforcement service responsibilities, yet that growth was not accompanied by a corresponding deterioration in population-adjusted crime. Instead, countywide crime remained comparatively stable, rates declined across important offense categories, several major property offenses improved during the latter years of the study, and the most serious forms of violence remained relatively infrequent. Although individual agencies experienced increases or temporary spikes in particular offenses, those changes did not develop into a widespread or sustained pattern of increasing crime across participating jurisdictions. The broader six-year picture is therefore not simply one of stability; it is one in which a rapidly growing and increasingly complex county continued to maintain comparatively low levels of serious crime while experiencing improvement across several important measures of public safety.

At the same time, a favorable public-safety environment should not be interpreted to mean that crime is absent, that every jurisdiction experienced improvement, or that every resident experiences safety in the same way. The agency-level analyses identified meaningful variation within Fort Bend County, including increases in particular person offenses, periods of greater volatility among some jurisdictions, and geographic patterns warranting continued examination. Those findings are important precisely because they exist within an otherwise favorable countywide environment. Identifying them allows emerging or localized concerns to be examined without allowing an isolated annual increase, a single offense category, or the experience of one jurisdiction to define public safety across a county of Fort Bend County's size and diversity.

Community safety, however, extends beyond the offenses recorded in law-enforcement databases. Residents experience safety through their neighborhoods, workplaces, schools, commercial areas, transportation corridors, and interactions with public institutions, and perceptions of safety do not necessarily move in direct correspondence with police-recorded crime. National victimization research demonstrates that a substantial share of nonfatal violence is never reported to law enforcement, which is why the National Crime Victimization Survey provides an important complement to police-recorded crime data (Tapp & Coen, 2025). Conversely, changes in recorded offenses may also reflect changes in reporting behavior, enforcement activity, or other conditions affecting whether an offense becomes known to police. Police-recorded crime therefore remains an essential measure of reported victimization and law-enforcement demand, but it represents one component of the broader experience of community safety.

Within those limitations, the consistency of the findings across multiple years and measures is important. A favorable result in one year can reflect temporary conditions, and a decline in one offense can occur alongside increases in another. The Fort Bend findings are more substantial because the overall assessment persists when the data are examined longitudinally, adjusted for population, separated by offense type, and disaggregated by agency. This does not eliminate areas requiring attention; rather, it provides a stronger basis for distinguishing those areas from the county's overall public-safety trajectory. For a county experiencing the scale of growth, demographic diversity, and regional interconnectedness that characterize Fort Bend, the ability to maintain comparatively low levels of serious violence and favorable long-term crime trends represents a significant public-safety finding.

That conclusion becomes particularly important when serious violence is considered beyond Fort Bend County itself. County-level trends establish how public safety changed internally over time, but they do not establish whether the level of violence experienced in Fort Bend is comparatively high or low. Examining violent crime against broader benchmarks therefore provides an additional test of the county's public-safety position. As the comparisons that follow demonstrate, Fort Bend County's favorable violent-crime profile is not simply a product of its own historical trend; it remains evident when the county is evaluated against Texas, the United States, surrounding counties, and other Texas counties selected to provide more meaningful demographic context.

Comparative Violent Crime Context

Violent crime provides a useful standardized measure for comparing Fort Bend County with broader state and national patterns. For purposes of this comparison, violent crime includes murder

and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault, the four offense categories used by the FBI in its national violent-crime measure (FBI, 2025).

This comparative measure is consistent with the offense categories extracted from NIBRS data for the Fort Bend County analysis, allowing the county’s reported violent crime to be evaluated against broader benchmarks without changing the NIBRS-based methodology used throughout this study. The 2025 Texas data indicate that violent crime declined statewide, with the violent-crime rate decreasing 13.19% from 2024 to 2025 (TXDPS, 2026). Nationally, the final 2024 FBI estimate was 359.1 violent crimes per 100,000 inhabitants, or 3.59 per 1,000, and the FBI’s preliminary 2025 release estimates that violent-crime volume declined an additional 9.3% from 2024 to 2025 (FBI, 2025, 2026). Because the final 2025 national violent-crime rate is not yet available, the 2025 national figure is presented as a preliminary trend rather than as a final population-adjusted rate.

Table 7.1. Fort Bend County, Texas, and U.S. Violent Crime Context ¹

Comparison	Rate per 1,000	Context
Fort Bend County, 2025	1.34	Final 2025 DPS county-jurisdiction data
Texas, 2025	3.48	Violent-crime rate decreased 13.19% from 2024
United States, 2024	3.59	Final FBI violent-crime rate
United States, 2025	—	Preliminary violent-crime volume decreased 9.3% from 2024

This comparison changes the interpretation from earlier editions of the report in an important way. The question is no longer simply whether Fort Bend's violent-crime rate is below Texas or national levels; it is also how Fort Bend compares with counties that provide a more meaningful regional or demographic context. Earlier comparisons emphasized large suburban counties such as Collin, Denton, and Montgomery. Those counties remain useful benchmarks for suburban growth, but they do not closely reproduce Fort Bend's distinctive racial and ethnic composition. The current report therefore expands the comparison framework to include both regional counties and counties selected because they share meaningful dimensions of Fort Bend's minority-population composition.

Demographically Relevant Texas Comparisons

Fort Bend County is difficult to match demographically within Texas. Current Census QuickFacts estimates indicate that Fort Bend is 22.5% Black, 23.9% Asian, 25.4% Hispanic or Latino, and 26.4% non-Hispanic White; 30.5% of residents are foreign-born (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026a). No single Texas county closely reproduces that combination. Accordingly, the counties below should be understood as demographically relevant comparisons rather than matched counties. Harris and Dallas closely resemble Fort Bend in Black and non-Hispanic White population shares while containing much larger Hispanic populations; Brazoria and Tarrant provide diverse metropolitan/suburban comparisons; Bell provides a particularly useful Black/Hispanic comparison; and Jefferson provides a comparison county with a substantially larger Black population share (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026a–2026g).

¹ Violent crime includes murder and nonnegligent manslaughter, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. The Fort Bend County rate was calculated from the 2025 Texas DPS county-jurisdiction data using the same offense categories. A final 2025 U.S. population-adjusted violent-crime rate was not available at the time of analysis; therefore, the preliminary 2025 national percentage change is reported for context rather than as a rate.

Table 7.2. Demographic Context for Selected Texas Comparison Counties ²				
County	Black %	Asian %	Hispanic/Latino %	White, non-Hispanic %
Fort Bend	22.5	23.9	25.4	26.4
Harris	20.5	8.1	46.1	24.9
Dallas	22.3	8.2	43.4	25.0
Tarrant	19.2	7.3	31.9	39.1
Brazoria	18.3	8.6	32.3	39.0
Bell	24.2	3.5	28.1	40.2
Jefferson	33.8	4.2	26.2	34.7

Table 7.3. 2025 Violent Crime in Fort Bend and Demographically Relevant Texas Counties ³							
County	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Total Violent	DPS Population	Rate / 1,000
Fort Bend	14	214	187	839	1,254	938,345	1.34
Brazoria	10	131	55	403	599	436,378	1.37
Bell	22	140	96	709	967	405,958	2.38
Tarrant	111	1,051	967	4,737	6,866	2,193,544	3.13
Dallas	193	915	2,784	7,909	11,801	2,976,957	3.96
Jefferson	16	151	221	1,182	1,570	252,425	6.22
Harris	409	2,820	6,580	22,757	32,566	5,099,150	6.39

Regional Comparison

The regional comparison serves a different analytical purpose than the demographic comparison above. Whereas the preceding analysis asks whether Fort Bend’s favorable violent-crime profile persists when compared with counties sharing important dimensions of its racial and ethnic diversity, the regional analysis considers the public-safety environment immediately surrounding Fort Bend County.

Fort Bend directly borders Harris, Brazoria, Waller, Austin, and Wharton Counties (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026h). For additional context and understanding, Galveston and Montgomery Counties are also included given their proximity within the broader Houston metropolitan region. This geographic perspective is particularly relevant given the cross-jurisdictional patterns identified in Sections 7.1 and 7.2, including greater variability among several agencies operating along or near the Harris County boundary and agency observations that crime, mobility, enforcement activity, and prosecutorial jurisdiction do not necessarily conform to county lines. The regional comparison therefore provides an opportunity to consider Fort Bend not only as an individual county, but as part of a larger and interconnected metropolitan public-safety environment.

² Note. Source: U.S. Census Bureau QuickFacts, current 2025 population/demographic profile pages. These counties are selected as demographically relevant comparisons, not as exact demographic matches.

³ Note. Calculated from Texas DPS, Index Crimes by Agency and County for 12 Months of 2025, current date June 23, 2026. Violent crime = murder and nonnegligent manslaughter + rape + robbery + aggravated assault. Rate per 1,000 = total violent offenses / DPS county jurisdictional population x 1,000. Specialized agencies with no separately assigned resident population may contribute offenses to county totals.

Table 7.4. 2025 Violent Crime in Fort Bend and Selected Regional Counties ⁴							
County	Murder	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated Assault	Total Violent	DPS Population	Rate / 1,000
Fort Bend	14	214	187	839	1,254	938,345	1.34
Brazoria	10	131	55	403	599	436,378	1.37
Austin	0	10	4	43	57	33,040	1.73
Montgomery	13	418	102	883	1,416	774,641	1.83
Galveston	24	239	99	467	829	383,188	2.16
Wharton	4	7	10	82	103	41,972	2.45
Waller	1	19	15	124	159	61,982	2.57
Harris	409	2,820	6,580	22,757	32,566	5,099,150	6.39

The regional results further reinforce Fort Bend County’s favorable public-safety position. Its 2025 violent-crime rate of 1.34 offenses per 1,000 population was the lowest among the regional counties examined, narrowly below neighboring Brazoria County at 1.37 and below Austin (1.73), Montgomery (1.83), Galveston (2.16), Wharton (2.45), Waller (2.57), and Harris (6.39).

The similarity in low rates shared by Fort Bend and Brazoria is noteworthy, but the nearly identical rates should not be interpreted as evidence that the two counties represent equivalent public-safety environments. The two counties differ substantially in population size and demographic composition. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates Fort Bend County's 2025 population at 975,191, more than twice Brazoria County's estimated 419,080 residents. The racial composition also differs meaningfully: 39.0% of Brazoria County's population is non-Hispanic White, compared with 26.4% of Fort Bend County's population, while Black residents comprise 18.3% of Brazoria County compared with 22.5% of Fort Bend County. The broader distribution differs as well, with Brazoria having a larger Hispanic or Latino population share (32.3% versus 25.4%) and Fort Bend having a substantially larger Asian population share (23.9% versus 8.6%) (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026). Thus, while Brazoria demonstrates that Fort Bend is not uniquely low within the surrounding region, the similarity in violent-crime rates is especially informative because it occurs across two neighboring counties with markedly different population sizes, demographic compositions, development patterns, and relationships to the larger metropolitan environment. **For Fort Bend, maintaining a violent-crime rate essentially equivalent to that of a smaller and more rural neighboring county is particularly notable given the scale, density, diversity, growth, and metropolitan interconnectedness of the population it serves.**

The contrast with Harris County is particularly notable given the geographic findings identified earlier in this chapter. Harris County’s 2025 violent-crime rate was approximately 4.8 times the Fort Bend County rate. This difference does not establish that the substantially higher level of violent crime in Harris County is the cause of the greater variability observed among some eastern Fort Bend jurisdictions, nor does a county-level comparison permit such a causal inference. It does, however, demonstrate that several Fort Bend law enforcement agencies operate immediately adjacent to a substantially different violent-crime environment. This finding provides additional context for the cross-jurisdictional observations identified in Sections 7.1 and 7.2 and strengthens the rationale for

⁴ Note. Calculated from Texas DPS, Index Crimes by Agency and County for 12 Months of 2025, current date June 23, 2026, using the same formula for every county. Smaller counties should be interpreted cautiously because relatively small changes in offense counts can produce larger rate changes.

future incident-level analysis of cross-county geography, mobility, offense location, enforcement activity, and prosecutorial jurisdiction.

More broadly, Fort Bend's position within the regional comparison is particularly noteworthy because the county has maintained its low violent-crime rate despite its location within one of the nation's largest metropolitan regions and amid substantial population growth, transportation connectivity, commercial activity, and cross-county movement. County boundaries do not constrain the routine movement of residents, commuters, commerce, or individuals engaged in criminal activity, yet Fort Bend's 2025 violent-crime rate remained below every regional county examined and substantially below most of them. Considered alongside the demographic comparisons presented above, these findings demonstrate that Fort Bend County's favorable violent-crime profile is not dependent upon a single comparison group or analytical frame. Rather, the same conclusion persists across multiple and increasingly demanding comparisons; Fort Bend maintains a remarkably low level of reported violent crime relative to its population, its regional environment, and counties sharing important dimensions of its demographic diversity. For a county approaching one million residents while continuing to experience substantial growth and extraordinary demographic complexity, the consistency of that finding represents one of the most significant indicators of public safety identified in this study.

Black Homicide Victimization in Fort Bend County

A low countywide crime rate can tell an important story about public safety while still leaving an important part of that story untold. Aggregate rates combine the experiences of hundreds of thousands of residents into a single measure, and in most circumstances that is precisely what makes them useful. But some forms of victimization are distributed so unevenly across the American population that an aggregate rate can obscure disparities of substantial public-safety importance. Nowhere is the need to look beneath the aggregate more apparent than in homicide victimization among Black Americans, who experience the highest homicide victimization rate of any racial group reported nationally.

Nationally, the burden of homicide experienced by Black Americans is extraordinary and persistent. In 2023, the Bureau of Justice Statistics estimated that Black persons experienced a homicide victimization rate of 21.3 per 100,000, compared with 3.2 per 100,000 among White persons, a rate more than six times as high (Remrey, 2025). Importantly for the present study, these estimates were produced through the BJS/FBI National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) Estimation Program, providing a particularly relevant national context for the NIBRS-based analysis conducted in Fort Bend County.

For younger Black Americans, the disparity is even more striking. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention identifies homicide as the leading cause of death among non-Hispanic Black or African American youth ages 10–24, the only racial or ethnic group for whom homicide holds that distinction (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC], 2024). Recent peer-reviewed research provides additional evidence of the magnitude of this disparity. An analysis published in *JAMA Network Open* examined an estimated 367,827 homicides occurring in the United States between 2000 and 2019 and found that 46.0% of homicide decedents were Black. The highest homicide rates identified across the race/ethnicity, age, and sex groups examined were among Black males ages 15–24 (74.6 per 100,000) and Black males ages 25–44 (70.0 per 100,000) (GBD US Health Disparities Collaborators, 2025).

Firearm related incidents further illustrate the severity of the disparity. In 2022, the national firearm-homicide rate among non-Hispanic Black persons was 27.5 per 100,000, compared with 2.0 among non-Hispanic White persons and 5.9 for the population overall. Although the Black firearm-homicide rate declined from its 2021 peak of 30.4, it remained substantially above its 2019 rate of 20.5 (Kegler et al., 2023). These measures describe more than a modest demographic difference in victimization. They identify homicide, and particularly firearm homicide, as a major and disproportionately concentrated public-safety burden within Black communities in the United States.

That national context is particularly relevant in Fort Bend County. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that 22.5% of Fort Bend County residents are Black, meaning that nearly one in four residents belongs to a population experiencing markedly elevated homicide victimization nationally. The county's 2025 population is estimated at 975,191, making this a substantial segment of a large and rapidly growing community (U.S. Census Bureau, 2026). A favorable countywide violent crime rate therefore answers an important question about Fort Bend County as a whole, but it cannot by itself determine whether a national disparity of this magnitude is also present locally.

This is the reason Black homicide victimization is examined separately in the present analysis. The decision is not intended to suggest that homicide victimization among White, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian or Alaska Native, or other residents is unimportant, nor does the analysis presume that national racial disparities will be reproduced within Fort Bend County. Other populations also experience important homicide disparities; the national JAMA analysis, for example, identified particularly elevated homicide rates among American Indian and Alaska Native males in several age groups (GBD US Health Disparities Collaborators, 2025). Rather, Black homicide victimization is isolated here because the magnitude, persistence, and severity of the national disparity provide a compelling empirical reason to examine it independently in a county where Black residents comprise nearly one-quarter of the population. A comprehensive assessment of public safety should be willing to look beneath an otherwise favorable aggregate rate when there is a strong empirical reason to do so.

The same principle is reflected in the qualitative components of this study. The Fresno resident-perspectives study was developed following concerns regarding the overrepresentation of Black motorists in traffic-stop data and was specifically designed to move beyond administrative statistics by engaging residents directly about their experiences with law enforcement. Interviews were conducted with Fresno residents in community settings, including a frequently visited grocery store and community parks. The Fresno inquiry and the homicide analysis address different research questions and should not be conflated; however, both reflect an important principle of this report's mixed-methods approach: when aggregate statistics may not fully capture the experience of a substantial segment of the county's population, additional examination can provide a more complete understanding of public safety.

Against this national context, the Fort Bend findings become especially meaningful. The analysis that follows examines homicide victimization among Black residents using NIBRS Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter (09A) victim data. Annual victim counts were evaluated relative to the estimated Black population of Fort Bend County to calculate population-adjusted homicide victimization rates per 100,000 Black residents. This approach permits the severe national disparity described above to be compared with what was observed within Fort Bend County rather than inferred from the county's overall violent-crime rate.

Table 7.5. Estimated Black Homicide Victimization in Fort Bend County ⁵

Year	Black Homicide Victims	Estimated Black Population	Rate per 100,000
2021	13	179,268	7.25
2022	5	186,078	2.69
2023	8	193,119	4.14
2024	9	199,642	4.51
2025	6	203,132	2.95
2022-2024 average	—	—	3.80

The 2023 comparison provides the most direct national benchmark because both the Fort Bend and BJS rates represent Black homicide victimization during the same calendar year. Fort Bend County's estimated Black murder and nonnegligent manslaughter victimization rate was 4.14 per 100,000 Black residents in 2023, compared with 21.3 per 100,000 Black persons nationally (Remrey, 2025). The Fort Bend rate was therefore approximately 80.6% lower than the national Black homicide-victimization rate for the same year.

The broader Fort Bend pattern is also important because annual homicide rates can fluctuate when the underlying number of events is small. Across 2022–2024, Fort Bend's average Black homicide-victimization rate was 3.80 per 100,000, approximately 82.2% below the 2023 national benchmark of 21.3. This three-year average provides useful evidence that the favorable 2023 finding was not dependent upon a single unusually low year; however, it should not be interpreted as a same-period national comparison because the available BJS benchmark represents 2023 rather than a 2022–2024 national average. For that reason, the 2023 comparison is the cleanest direct comparison, while the three-year Fort Bend average provides additional evidence of the stability of the local pattern.

These findings are important because they are derived from race-specific local victimization data rather than inference from countywide averages. A low countywide homicide rate cannot, by itself, establish that Black residents experience correspondingly low homicide victimization. The race-specific analysis permits that question to be examined directly. The present data indicate that Black residents of Fort Bend County experienced murder and nonnegligent manslaughter victimization substantially below the national Black homicide benchmark during the period examined.

The significance of this finding should not be understated. Black homicide victimization represents one of the most pronounced and persistent disparities in serious violence in the United States, yet the disparity observed nationally does not appear at anything approaching the same magnitude in Fort Bend County. In a county where Black residents comprise nearly one-quarter of the population, that is a particularly meaningful public-safety finding. The result adds important depth to the county's already favorable aggregate violent-crime profile: when the analysis moved beyond the countywide average and specifically examined a population experiencing exceptionally high homicide victimization nationally, the local findings remained strongly favorable.

The analysis cannot establish why Fort Bend differs substantially from the national pattern. Likewise, the observed difference cannot be attributed to certain policing practices, socioeconomic

⁵ Note. Local rates use NIBRS Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter (09A) victim counts. Annual counts are small and should be interpreted cautiously; the multi-year average provides a more stable descriptive estimate.

conditions, community characteristics, residential patterns, prosecutorial practices, demographic composition, or any single institutional factor. Nor should a comparatively low rate diminish the significance of individual lives lost to homicide or suggest that continued prevention efforts are unnecessary. What the analysis can establish, however, is both clear and consequential: Black residents of Fort Bend County experienced homicide victimization at rates dramatically below those experienced by Black Americans nationally. **Given the extraordinary burden that homicide continues to impose on Black communities across the United States, and the fact that nearly one in four Fort Bend County residents is Black, this represents one of the most important and encouraging public-safety findings of the present study.**

7.4 Investigative and Prosecutorial Coordination

Public safety does not end when a suspect is identified or an investigation is cleared. A criminal case must move from the agency that investigated it to the prosecutors responsible for evaluating the evidence and determining whether and how the case can proceed. That transition creates an institutional boundary that residents rarely see, but one that can matter considerably to the functioning of a local criminal-justice system. Investigators and prosecutors have different responsibilities and, at times, different perspectives; effective case processing therefore depends not upon their always agreeing, but upon their ability to communicate, identify evidentiary needs, resolve problems, and work across those institutional roles.

The investigator interview data provide notably favorable evidence about how that relationship is experienced in Fort Bend County. Thirteen investigators representing seven participating law-enforcement agencies were interviewed about criminal case referral, prosecutorial decision-making, communication, and interagency collaboration. Nine of the thirteen expressed predominantly positive perceptions of working with the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, while the remaining participants were generally neutral rather than negative. Investigators repeatedly described effective communication, accessibility, collaborative problem-solving, and professionally respectful relationships with prosecutors. **Perhaps most tellingly, investigators with experience filing cases across county lines were particularly likely to describe Fort Bend's referral process favorably when making direct comparisons with Harris County.**

The positive assessment was not simply a product of investigators describing an easy filing process. Detectives investigating violent crime acknowledged the extensive evidentiary requirements associated with felony prosecution and, at times, the additional work those standards required. Yet they generally regarded rigorous evidentiary review as appropriate given the seriousness of the cases being prosecuted. Investigators also distinguished disagreement with an individual prosecutorial decision from dissatisfaction with the system itself, describing differences over evidentiary sufficiency as an expected part of collaborative case review rather than evidence of organizational conflict. **That distinction is important: confidence in a criminal-justice partnership is arguably more meaningful when it persists despite professional disagreement and demanding evidentiary standards than when it is measured simply by whether every case is accepted.**

The victim-centered nature of the relationship emerged independently as another notable finding. Seven of the thirteen investigators described the District Attorney's Office as collaborative and victim-centered without that conclusion being imposed as a predetermined theme.

At the same time, concerns raised by investigators were more frequently directed toward structural challenges, including staffing, funding, specialized training, forensic resources, case volume, and misdemeanor delays, than toward dissatisfaction with prosecutors or the referral relationship itself. The interviews therefore describe a referral environment in which investigators generally perceived prosecutors not as a separate endpoint to which cases were simply delivered, but as accessible professional partners in the development and evaluation of criminal cases.

The significance of these findings extends beyond the simple observation that investigators reported positive relationships with prosecutors. These were confidential, semi-structured interviews designed to allow investigators to describe the referral process in their own words, including what worked, what did not, where they encountered frustration, and what they believed could be improved. Participants were drawn from seven different Fort Bend County law-enforcement agencies, worked in different investigative assignments, and brought different levels and types of professional experience to those conversations. They did identify challenges. Investigators discussed staffing and resource limitations, training needs, case backlogs, demanding evidentiary requirements, and frustrations with particular aspects of case processing. **Yet across those open-ended conversations, a remarkably consistent picture emerged regarding the relationship with the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office: investigators described prosecutors as accessible, communicative, collaborative, professionally respectful, and attentive to victims.**

That consistency matters. The investigators were not speaking as representatives of a single department, and they were not being asked to endorse a predetermined assessment of the District Attorney's Office. They were describing, confidentially and in their own words, how the criminal case-referral process works from the perspective of the people responsible for building and referring those cases. The consistency with which investigators across multiple agencies arrived at similar assessments, while also demonstrating a willingness to identify shortcomings elsewhere in the process, provides meaningful qualitative evidence of a strong working relationship between law-enforcement investigators and prosecutors in Fort Bend County.

That kind of institutional strength is largely invisible in traditional measures of crime and criminal-justice performance. A clearance rate cannot tell us whether an investigator can reach a prosecutor when a difficult evidentiary question arises. Filing statistics cannot show whether professional disagreement is handled collaboratively or adversarially. And a case count cannot reveal whether investigators believe prosecutors share their concern for the victims whose cases move between their institutions. The interviews can. **What they reveal is a criminal-justice system in which investigators from different agencies generally described confidence in the prosecutors they rely upon, even when the work was demanding and even when they did not always agree. In a system that ultimately asks separate institutions to turn an individual report of victimization into investigation, evidence, prosecution, and justice, that kind of working relationship is not incidental to public safety. It is one of the conditions that allows the system to function as a system.**

7.5 Police-Community Relationships

Public safety is not produced by law enforcement agencies alone. Police depend upon residents to report crimes, provide information, cooperate with investigations, serve as witnesses, and seek

assistance when they or others are at risk. In this sense, residents are not simply recipients of police services; they are active participants in the production of public safety itself. Whether residents are willing to assume that role depends, in part, on the relationship they have with the institutions responsible for protecting them.

That relationship is shaped by more than whether police respond effectively when called. Decades of research on procedural justice and police legitimacy demonstrate that residents are more likely to view police authority as legitimate, and to cooperate voluntarily with law enforcement—when they believe officers exercise authority fairly, treat people with dignity and respect, make decisions impartially, and provide individuals an opportunity to be heard (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2004, 2025). Police-community relationships therefore are not simply matters of public perception or agency reputation. Trust, legitimacy, and willingness to cooperate have practical consequences for whether crimes are reported, information reaches investigators, witnesses participate, and law enforcement agencies are able to perform their public-safety functions.

Viewed through this framework, the qualitative findings in this research reveal substantial and recurring investment in community engagement across participating Fort Bend County agencies. Citizens Police Academies, National Night Out events, neighborhood and business outreach, youth and senior programs, house-watch initiatives, victim assistance, public-information efforts, and direct officer interaction with residents appeared across multiple jurisdictions. The breadth of these activities matters. Community engagement was not confined to a single department, specialized unit, or annual event; rather, the qualitative evidence suggests that maintaining contact with residents has become an identifiable component of how multiple agencies approach their work.

Some of the most informative evidence, however, came not from formal programs but from routine police activity. Richmond Police Department beat reports documented officers entering their assigned neighborhoods, introducing themselves to residents, providing contact information, asking residents about concerns, responding to requests for additional patrol, and returning to those neighborhoods as part of continuing beat responsibilities. These interactions may appear modest when considered individually, but collectively they illustrate an important distinction in police-community engagement: relationships are not built only when an agency invites the community to an event; they can also be built when officers repeatedly enter communities, listen, respond, and return. The Richmond records are therefore particularly valuable because they document engagement as an ongoing practice rather than simply an organizational program.

At the same time, evidence that police agencies are reaching outward should not be confused with evidence that residents necessarily experience those efforts as trustworthy, fair, or legitimate. The existence of community programs demonstrates organizational activity; legitimacy is ultimately a judgment made by the public. An agency can create opportunities for contact, communicate with residents, and invest heavily in outreach, but those measures alone cannot establish how residents interpret their interactions with police (Sunshine & Tyler, 2003; Tyler, 2004). The present study did not include a representative countywide survey measuring trust, perceived legitimacy, procedural fairness, satisfaction with police services, or willingness to cooperate. That distinction is important because counting what agencies do is not the same as measuring how communities experience what agencies do.

This limitation also matters when interpreting the crime statistics presented throughout this report. National victimization research continues to demonstrate that a substantial amount of crime never comes to the attention of law enforcement (Tapp & Coen, 2025). Police-recorded crime therefore

reflects not only the occurrence of criminal behavior but also, in part, whether victims and witnesses report what occurred. **A higher number of recorded offenses cannot automatically be interpreted as evidence of a less safe community or a weaker relationship with police; in some circumstances, willingness to report victimization may itself reflect confidence that contacting law enforcement is worthwhile. Conversely, a low recorded-crime rate cannot independently establish that residents feel safe, trust police, or are willing to seek assistance.** Administrative crime data are indispensable, but they cannot answer every question that matters to public safety.

This is one reason the resident-perspective component of the Fort Bend research is particularly important. Rather than assuming that agency outreach necessarily translated into community trust, the Fresno inquiry created an opportunity to hear directly from residents about their experiences with law enforcement, perceptions of fairness and legitimacy, willingness to cooperate, and willingness to report crime or serve as witnesses. That work provides a different type of evidence from the agency interviews and administrative records: instead of asking only what agencies were doing to engage residents, it begins to ask how policing is experienced from the other side of the encounter.

The coexistence of extensive agency engagement, favorable crime trends, and comparatively strong public-safety outcomes across much of Fort Bend County is encouraging. It is also important not to claim more than the evidence establishes. The present research design cannot demonstrate that community-engagement initiatives caused lower crime, produced higher clearance rates, or generated greater public trust. Those relationships are likely to be influenced by numerous community, institutional, demographic, and situational factors. The appropriate conclusion is therefore not that Fort Bend's engagement programs *explain* its favorable public-safety outcomes, but that participating agencies demonstrated substantial efforts to create and maintain the kinds of relationships that decades of policing research identify as important to legitimacy and cooperation.

Perhaps the more important conclusion is that public safety cannot be understood completely from crime rates alone. The quantitative findings tell us a great deal about how much crime was reported, which offenses changed, how those patterns differed across jurisdictions, and how frequently cases were cleared. The qualitative findings add something those numbers cannot: evidence about how agencies attempt to remain connected to the people whose cooperation they depend upon. And the resident-perspective work begins to add another voice still, the people who experience those institutions in their own communities.

That distinction should shape how Fort Bend County thinks about public safety moving forward. A county can ask whether crime is low, whether serious violence is declining, or whether cases are being cleared. Those are essential questions, and the findings of this report provide many favorable answers. But a more complete question includes a discussion about whether residents feel able and willing to participate in the system that produces those outcomes: whether they will call when something happens, tell an officer what they know, remain involved as a witness, believe they will be treated fairly, and trust that seeking help is worth doing. Public safety is strongest when favorable crime outcomes and public confidence exist together. Measuring both would move future assessments beyond documenting how safe Fort Bend County appears in its administrative data toward understanding how safety is actually experienced by the people who live there.

7.6 Implications for Fort Bend County

Fort Bend County now has something few communities possess: a sustained, increasingly comprehensive body of evidence through which to understand its own public-safety story. Built through multiple years of analysis commissioned by the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office under District Attorney Brian Middleton, this cumulative work allows the county to move beyond the narrow question of whether crime increased or decreased from one year to the next. Across six years of crime data, population-adjusted trends, offense-specific analyses, agency-level comparisons, qualitative evidence from law-enforcement leaders and investigators, resident perspectives, and increasingly detailed state, national, regional, and demographic comparisons, a much richer picture has emerged. Fort Bend can now ask not simply whether public safety is changing, but where it is changing, for whom, under what circumstances, and within what larger community and criminal-justice context.

That distinction matters. Public discussions of crime often begin and end with a year-over-year percentage change, a single offense category, or a comparison with the previous year. In Fort Bend County, a one-year increase in a particular jurisdiction no longer has to stand alone. It can be placed within six years of movement, adjusted for extraordinary population growth, disaggregated into the offenses actually driving the change, considered alongside agency and community context, and compared with what is occurring elsewhere in Texas and the nation. **The result is not simply more data. It is the ability to distinguish a statistical change from a meaningful change in public safety.**

Perhaps the most important implication is that Fort Bend has something increasingly valuable to preserve. Across six years that included extraordinary population growth, pandemic-era disruption, continued regional development, and organizational change within law-enforcement agencies, the county did not experience a corresponding increase in population-adjusted crime across the major categories examined. Serious violence remained comparatively uncommon, property-crime trends were generally favorable, and Fort Bend's violent-crime rate remained low when examined against state and national benchmarks, demographically relevant counties, and the surrounding regional environment. These findings do not mean that every jurisdiction improved, every offense declined, or every community experienced identical conditions. **They demonstrate something more consequential: as Fort Bend has become larger, more diverse, and more complex, the county has thus far retained an exceptionally favorable public-safety position. The task moving forward is not simply to continue measuring that strength, but to understand it well enough to recognize when it changes and, where possible, preserve the conditions associated with it.**

Preserving that position requires resisting the temptation to reduce public safety to a single number. One of the clearest lessons of this study is that the meaning of a crime statistic frequently changes when the analysis moves beneath the aggregate. An increase in person offenses may largely reflect assault rather than homicide or robbery. Growth in offenses against society may accompany changes in proactive enforcement. Rising raw offense counts may occur while population-adjusted rates decline in a rapidly growing jurisdiction. Agency-reported offenses may cross county boundaries, and low-frequency crimes can produce dramatic percentage changes based on only a handful of incidents. **The question for Fort Bend should therefore extend beyond whether a number moved up or down to what moved, where it moved, what produced the statistical change, and whether that change represents a temporary fluctuation or a sustained shift in public safety.**

The six-year perspective provided by this study is particularly valuable for making those distinctions. Annual reporting remains essential because emerging changes should be identified promptly, but no annual increase or decrease should be interpreted without considering the years and the context surrounding it. This is especially important for homicide and other low-frequency offenses, where only a few incidents can produce a striking percentage change. **Longitudinal analysis provides something an annual snapshot cannot: the ability to distinguish movement from momentum.** A one-year increase tells Fort Bend that something changed; a sustained multi-year pattern provides stronger evidence that the underlying public-safety environment may itself be changing.

At the same time, longitudinal analysis should increasingly be paired with a willingness to look beneath favorable countywide averages. The Black homicide-victimization analysis provides perhaps the clearest example. Fort Bend's aggregate violent-crime rate was already favorable, but the extraordinary national concentration of homicide victimization among Black Americans provided a compelling empirical reason to ask whether that favorable countywide picture remained when this form of serious violence was examined separately. In a county where nearly one-quarter of residents are Black, that question could not be answered adequately by the aggregate rate alone. When the analysis looked more closely, the result strengthened rather than weakened the broader assessment: Black residents of Fort Bend experienced homicide victimization at rates dramatically below the national Black homicide-victimization rate during the period examined. The larger implication extends beyond this individual finding. A comprehensive public-safety assessment should be willing to interrogate even favorable statistics. When there is a sound empirical reason to ask whether an aggregate measure may conceal something important, looking more closely produces a more credible understanding of public safety, regardless of whether the resulting finding is favorable or concerning.

Fort Bend already possesses much of the data infrastructure necessary to continue asking these more sophisticated questions. NIBRS provides detailed information about incidents, offenses, victims, known offenders, locations, property, and investigative outcomes, permitting substantially greater analytical specificity than traditional aggregate reporting (FBI, n.d.). The value of that detail is demonstrated throughout this study. Broad movement in person or property offenses can be disaggregated to determine whether it reflects assault, robbery, theft, burglary, or another underlying offense; victim-level data can identify patterns hidden within countywide rates; and incident-level information creates opportunities for increasingly precise geographic and temporal analysis. **The next stage of public-safety assessment in Fort Bend therefore need not simply produce more statistics. It should make greater use of the information already available to ask better questions of those statistics.**

Used in this way, the report can become more than an annual assessment of what happened; it can function as a continuing public-safety planning tool. Longitudinal and contextual analysis creates an opportunity to identify emerging patterns while they are still developing, distinguish temporary fluctuations from sustained trends, and direct attention toward jurisdictions, populations, offense categories, or criminal-justice outcomes warranting closer examination. The purpose is not to treat every statistical movement as a problem requiring intervention, but to use changes in the data as signals that help determine where the next question should be asked.

That distinction is particularly important when conditions are generally favorable. Favorable countywide trends should not produce complacency, just as an isolated increase should not

automatically be characterized as evidence of deteriorating public safety. A sustained increase in assault, an unexpected shift in property crime, a meaningful change in clearance outcomes, or an apparent geographic concentration near a jurisdictional boundary can instead serve as an empirical signal for closer examination. **The value of the report is therefore not limited to identifying problems after they have become established. It can help Fort Bend recognize meaningful change early enough to understand what is occurring before deciding what, if any, response is warranted.**

That is an important evolution in how public-safety data can be used. Rather than allowing annual statistics to dictate a narrative after the fact, Fort Bend can use its accumulating evidence to identify questions, direct more focused analysis, inform conversations among agencies and policymakers, and determine where additional information is needed. In that sense, the report becomes not simply a record of the county's public-safety past, but a tool for making more informed decisions about its future.

Geography should be one of those questions. The agency-level findings suggest that several jurisdictions operating along or near the Harris County boundary experienced patterns that warrant continued examination, while agency observations further demonstrate that reported crime, investigative responsibility, physical offense location, and prosecutorial jurisdiction do not always align neatly with county boundaries. Fort Bend exists within a larger metropolitan environment characterized by substantial daily movement of residents, workers, commerce, and criminal activity. Future incident-level analysis could distinguish the physical location of offenses from the agency reporting them and the jurisdiction ultimately responsible for prosecution, allowing the county to examine whether patterns observed in its eastern and northeastern communities are associated with cross-jurisdictional mobility or other geographic factors. **For a county increasingly connected to the metropolitan region surrounding it, understanding where crime occurs may become as important as understanding which agency reports it.**

The findings also suggest that Fort Bend should think about public safety as a system rather than as the product of individual agencies operating independently. The investigator interviews make this particularly visible. Investigators from seven law-enforcement agencies, speaking confidentially through open-ended interviews, independently described many of the same favorable characteristics in their working relationships with the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office: accessibility, communication, collaboration, professional respect, rigorous evidentiary expectations, and attention to victims. The consistency of those findings across agencies is meaningful because investigators were also willing to identify frustrations, resource limitations, delays, and other challenges when they encountered them. **Preserving effective relationships between law enforcement and prosecution should therefore be understood not simply as an administrative concern, but as part of maintaining the county's public-safety infrastructure.** Traditional crime and case-outcome measures cannot capture whether the institutions responsible for moving a case from investigation toward prosecution are able to work effectively together, yet the functioning of the system depends upon precisely that kind of coordination.

That systems perspective extends beyond criminal-justice institutions to the community itself. Participating agencies demonstrated substantial investment in community outreach and engagement, while the resident-perspective component of this research illustrates the value of asking residents directly how policing is experienced rather than assuming that agency activity is equivalent to public trust. Future assessment should increasingly bring those perspectives together.

Crime data can describe reported victimization; clearance measures can illuminate investigative outcomes; investigator and agency interviews can reveal organizational practices and institutional relationships; and resident surveys and qualitative inquiry can examine whether people feel safe, believe they are treated fairly, trust law enforcement, and are willing to report crime or cooperate when assistance is needed. **No single one of these measures defines public safety. Together, they provide a much richer understanding of whether a criminal-justice system is functioning effectively for the community it serves.**

This also creates an opportunity for Fort Bend to broaden what it means to measure success. A favorable crime rate is important. So is the ability to solve serious offenses, develop cases capable of moving through prosecution, support victims, maintain public cooperation, identify emerging problems early, and respond to the different conditions confronting individual communities. Some of these outcomes can be measured quantitatively; others require asking investigators, prosecutors, victims, and residents about experiences that will never appear in NIBRS. **A mature public-safety assessment should be capable of holding all of those forms of evidence together rather than treating any single statistic as the definitive measure of whether a community is safe.**

The broader implication for Fort Bend County, then, is not simply that crime is low. It is that the county now has an opportunity to define public safety more ambitiously. The findings presented throughout this report describe a large, rapidly growing, extraordinarily diverse county that has maintained comparatively favorable crime conditions while its communities and criminal-justice institutions have continued to evolve. They also demonstrate why maintaining those conditions will require more than watching an annual crime rate. It will require identifying emerging patterns early, understanding differences among communities, examining outcomes beneath countywide averages, preserving effective relationships across criminal-justice institutions, listening directly to residents, and remaining willing to investigate both concerning and favorable findings with equal rigor.

Fort Bend County will continue to change. Its population will grow, its communities will develop, its connections to the surrounding metropolitan region will deepen, and the challenges confronting its public-safety institutions will evolve with them. The more consequential question is whether the county can preserve the favorable conditions documented in this study while continuing to understand them. **The six-year record provides substantial reason for confidence, but perhaps its most important implication is forward-looking: Fort Bend does not have to wait for public safety to deteriorate before studying it closely. It has the opportunity to use evidence, institutional collaboration, and community engagement to understand what is working while it is working, and to protect those strengths as the county enters its next period of growth.**

CHAPTER EIGHT: LIMITATIONS

The scope of the present study provides a comprehensive assessment of crime and criminal justice in Fort Bend County, but several limitations establish important boundaries around interpretation of the findings. These limitations primarily concern the characteristics and consistency of administrative crime data, differences in agency data systems and analytical capacity, comparability across jurisdictions and external benchmarks, the scope of the qualitative samples, and the extent to which an observational mixed-methods design can support causal conclusions. These limitations do not prevent meaningful interpretation of the findings; rather, they define what the available evidence can, and cannot, establish.

8.1 Administrative Crime Data and Reporting Systems

The quantitative analyses rely primarily on administrative crime data reported by participating law-enforcement agencies through NIBRS and related state reporting systems. These data describe offenses known to law enforcement and therefore do not capture crimes that were never reported to police or otherwise came to law-enforcement attention. Recorded crime may consequently be influenced by underlying offending, public reporting behavior, enforcement activity, and administrative reporting practices.

An additional limitation identified directly during this project involves the movement of information from agency Records Management Systems (RMS) into standardized state and NIBRS reporting systems. Participating agencies use different RMS platforms with differing data structures, coding practices, extraction capabilities, and levels of detail. During data compilation, discrepancies were identified between some internal agency records and data appearing in DPS/NIBRS sources. Agency representatives indicated that some discrepancies were known and had previously been reported for correction. Accordingly, standardized NIBRS/DPS data provide an essential basis for cross-agency analysis but should not be interpreted as entirely free from reporting, transmission, coding, or reconciliation error.

Differences in agency data infrastructure also affected the availability and comparability of supplemental information. Participating agencies varied in analytical staffing, software capabilities, data-storage practices, and their ability to extract information in uniform formats. In some instances, fulfilling research requests required personnel to retrieve or compile information outside routine reporting processes. **The study therefore prioritized measures that could be defined and compared with reasonable consistency and avoided treating unavailable or non-equivalent agency data as directly comparable.**

Agency-reported data should also not always be interpreted as geographically synonymous with offenses physically occurring within Fort Bend County. As discussed in Chapter 7, reporting agency, physical offense location, investigative responsibility, and prosecutorial jurisdiction may not align in every case. The available data did not permit those dimensions to be separated systematically across all agencies and all six years.

Population-based rates introduce additional uncertainty. Population estimates are themselves estimates, and rapidly growing jurisdictions may experience meaningful population change between

measurement periods. Rates involving small jurisdictions or low-frequency offenses require particular caution because relatively few incidents can produce substantial annual percentage changes. For this reason, the study emphasized counts, population-adjusted rates, offense-specific findings, longitudinal patterns, and contextual information rather than relying on isolated annual changes.

8.2 Comparative Analyses

State, national, regional, and demographic comparisons were used to place Fort Bend County within a broader public-safety context. These comparisons are benchmarks rather than controlled comparisons among otherwise equivalent communities. Counties differ in population size and density, demographic composition, socioeconomic conditions, development patterns, commercial activity, transportation networks, law-enforcement structure, and other characteristics that may influence recorded crime.

Comparisons also require attention to differences in reporting years, offense definitions, and data systems. Wherever possible, the study used comparable measures and same-year benchmarks and identified instances in which exact temporal or definitional equivalence was unavailable. These comparisons can establish whether Fort Bend's observed rates differ from relevant benchmarks; they cannot, by themselves, establish why those differences exist.

The Black homicide-victimization analysis requires similar caution. Local annual rates are affected by a relatively small number of homicide events, population denominators are estimated, and the available national comparison does not provide identical benchmarks for every year examined locally. These limitations do not negate the substantial difference documented between Fort Bend and the national Black homicide-victimization rate, but they appropriately constrain its interpretation. The analysis documents the pattern; it does not establish the combination of community, socioeconomic, institutional, demographic, policing, or other conditions responsible for it.

8.3 Qualitative Evidence

The qualitative components were designed to provide organizational, investigative, and community context rather than statistically representative estimates of opinion. The investigator study included 13 investigators representing seven Fort Bend County law-enforcement agencies. Although the consistency of several independently emerging themes across agencies strengthens their qualitative significance, those findings should not be generalized to every investigator, prosecutor, agency, or criminal case in Fort Bend County.

Resident participants were recruited through purposive intercept sampling within a single Fort Bend County community. Their accounts provide important evidence about how participating residents perceived and interpreted police-community interactions, but they should not be treated as representative of all residents of Fresno or Fort Bend County. Individual narratives may also reflect personal experiences, family and peer relationships, media exposure, and community context.

Similarly, agency interviews, consultations, observations, and documents reflect the agencies and personnel participating in those components of the research. Qualitative evidence is inherently shaped by the perspectives of those providing it. Its value in this study lies not in estimating the prevalence of a particular view across the county, but in identifying recurring themes, documenting institutional and

community experiences, and providing context that administrative crime statistics cannot supply. This is consistent with the intended mixed-methods design of the study.

8.4 Context, Integration, and Causal Interpretation

NIBRS provides substantial detail about offenses, victims, known offenders, locations, and investigative outcomes, but administrative crime records cannot independently explain why a statistical pattern occurred. The present study was intentionally designed to address some of that limitation by integrating quantitative findings with agency context, document review, observations, investigator perspectives, resident experiences, and relevant research. That integration substantially strengthens interpretation, but it does not transform association into causation.

For example, the study can document changes in recorded offenses during periods of organizational or enforcement change, favorable crime conditions alongside extensive community engagement, or positive investigator-prosecutor relationships alongside favorable criminal-justice outcomes. It cannot establish that one caused the other. Population growth, development, policing activity, public reporting behavior, agency resources, prosecutorial practices, regional mobility, community characteristics, and broader social conditions may operate simultaneously and interact in ways the present research design cannot isolate.

This distinction is particularly important because contextual explanation is one of the strengths of the study. Qualitative information can demonstrate that a statistical pattern occurred within a particular organizational, geographic, or community environment and may identify plausible explanations deserving further examination. It should not be used to convert those explanations into causal conclusions without evidence specifically designed to test them.

These limitations define the boundaries of the study without diminishing the breadth of evidence assembled within those boundaries. No single data source used here provides a complete measure of public safety. The strength of the design instead lies in the convergence of multiple forms of evidence: six years of administrative crime data, population-adjusted and offense-specific trends, agency-level analysis, comparative benchmarks, organizational and operational context, investigator perspectives, observations, and resident experiences. The strongest conclusions of this report are therefore those supported consistently across these complementary sources, while questions of causation, precise geographic attribution, and population-wide perceptions remain appropriately reserved for analyses designed specifically to answer them.

CHAPTER NINE: RECOMMENDATIONS

The value of a comprehensive public-safety assessment extends beyond documenting what has already occurred. The evidence developed through this study also identifies opportunities to strengthen future data collection, institutional collaboration, community engagement, public-safety planning, and research as Fort Bend County continues to grow and evolve. The recommendations that follow are grounded in the findings of this study and are intended for the law-enforcement agencies, prosecutors, county and municipal leaders, community stakeholders, and researchers who each contribute to the county's broader public-safety environment.

9.1 Strengthen and Standardize Public-Safety Data

Fort Bend County should continue investing in the quality, consistency, and accessibility of public-safety data across participating agencies. Differences in Records Management Systems, reporting practices, analytical capacity, and data-extraction capabilities remain barriers to seamless countywide analysis. Future reporting would benefit from common data definitions, standardized submission templates, consistent reporting periods, and continued processes for identifying and reconciling discrepancies between agency records and state/NIBRS data.

Where reliable and comparable data are available, future assessments should also expand beyond reported offenses to incorporate measures such as calls for service, investigative caseloads, staffing demands, specialized-unit activity, case referrals, and prosecutorial outcomes. **Better data should not simply produce more measures; it should allow agencies and decision-makers to identify emerging demands earlier and allocate resources more precisely.**

9.2 Preserve Collaboration Across the Criminal-Justice System

The favorable relationships identified between investigators and the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office represent a strength worth preserving. Investigators from multiple agencies independently described accessibility, communication, collaboration, professional respect, and attention to victims in their relationships with prosecutors. Because effective case processing depends upon institutions with different responsibilities working successfully across organizational boundaries, continued opportunities for investigator-prosecutor communication, case consultation, training, and collaborative problem-solving should remain a priority.

This recommendation extends to collaboration among law-enforcement agencies themselves. Crime, mobility, investigations, and prosecutorial jurisdiction do not always conform neatly to municipal or county boundaries. **As Fort Bend becomes increasingly integrated into the larger Houston metropolitan environment, strong relationships across agencies and jurisdictions will become more, not less, important.**

9.3 Expand Geographic and Cross-Jurisdictional Analysis

Future analysis should examine where crime occurs with greater precision. The patterns identified among several jurisdictions near the Harris County boundary, combined with the substantial difference between Fort Bend and Harris County violent-crime rates, provide a compelling reason for more detailed geographic analysis. Future research should distinguish, where possible, among the agency reporting an offense, the physical location of the offense, and the jurisdiction responsible for prosecution.

This should not begin with the assumption that proximity to Harris County causes crime or that crime is “spreading” into Fort Bend; the present study does not establish either conclusion. Rather, **geospatial analysis should be used to test whether the boundary pattern identified in this report persists when offenses are examined at the incident level and, if so, what that pattern actually represents.**

9.4 Continue and Expand Community Engagement

Law-enforcement agencies should continue the substantial community-engagement efforts documented throughout this study while increasingly evaluating those efforts from the resident perspective. Citizens Police Academies, neighborhood outreach, youth and senior programs, business engagement, victim assistance, direct officer contact, and routine neighborhood-level interaction represent meaningful investments in police-community relationships.

Future assessment should increasingly ask whether residents feel safe, believe police exercise authority fairly, trust law enforcement, are willing to report victimization, and would cooperate as witnesses or provide information when crimes occur. The Fresno resident interviews provide an important beginning, but broader countywide resident perspectives would allow Fort Bend to examine whether favorable administrative public-safety outcomes are accompanied by favorable experiences among the people those institutions serve.

9.5 Plan for Growth Before Growth Creates the Problem

Fort Bend's continued population, commercial, transportation, and infrastructure growth should be incorporated proactively into public-safety planning. Growth itself does not mean that crime will increase; indeed, one of the important findings of this study is that substantial population growth has occurred without a corresponding deterioration in population-adjusted public-safety conditions. But growth can increase calls for service, traffic and event demands, investigative caseloads, digital and cybercrime demands, and the complexity of providing services across rapidly developing communities.

Resource planning should therefore consider not only resident population or crime rates, but also changing service demands, commercial activity, transportation corridors, large events, investigative complexity, and agency-specific operational needs. **The objective should be to anticipate capacity needs while conditions remain favorable rather than waiting for existing systems to become strained before responding.**

9.6 Continue the Longitudinal Public-Safety Assessment

Finally, Fort Bend County should continue this work. The value of the present study comes in substantial part from its cumulative nature. Each additional year provides another point of comparison, allowing temporary fluctuations to be distinguished from sustained changes and creating opportunities to revisit questions identified in earlier reports.

Future iterations should preserve the mixed-methods framework while allowing the research questions to evolve with the evidence. Particular attention should be directed toward patterns that emerge from the data rather than predetermined areas of concern: changes in specific offenses, unusual shifts within individual jurisdictions, victimization among populations experiencing elevated national risk, geographic concentrations, clearance outcomes, institutional relationships, and resident experiences.

The goal should not be to produce the same report every year with a new column of numbers. It should be to build upon an increasingly valuable evidence base, asking better questions as the county changes and using what is learned to inform the people responsible for its future.

CHAPTER TEN: CONCLUSION

Criminal justice researchers spend considerable time trying to understand why crime concentrates where it does; why some communities experience persistent violence, why particular populations bear disproportionate burdens of victimization, why crime changes as communities grow and develop, and how social, geographic, economic, and institutional conditions shape those patterns. Much of the field is necessarily organized around explaining problems: why violence is high, why disparities persist, why particular places experience greater crime, and what conditions may contribute to those outcomes.

Fort Bend County has increasingly given this research team reason to ask the question from the other direction.

Why, amid extraordinary population growth, remarkable racial and ethnic diversity, rapid residential and commercial development, substantial regional mobility, proximity to a major urban center, and increasing metropolitan complexity, does serious violence remain ***so low***? **After years of examining this county and repeatedly looking beneath findings that seemed almost too favorable to accept without further scrutiny, that question has become one of the most compelling to emerge from this research.**

Fort Bend is not a small, isolated, homogeneous suburban county for which comparatively low crime would be particularly difficult to explain. It is a large and rapidly growing county situated within one of the nation's largest metropolitan regions and immediately adjacent to Harris County. Its communities are connected through extensive transportation networks and daily cross-county movement; residential and commercial development continues at a remarkable pace; and sustained population growth creates continually changing demands on public institutions. Fort Bend is also extraordinarily racially and ethnically diverse, including substantial populations belonging to groups that experience markedly elevated risks of particular forms of serious violent victimization nationally. These characteristics make the persistence of Fort Bend's favorable public-safety patterns particularly noteworthy.

And they have repeatedly made us look again.

Across successive iterations of this study, the research team has encountered findings that did not initially look the way experience or the broader research literature led us to anticipate. Our response has been to check them again, and then to check them differently. Rates have been reexamined. Broad offense categories have been disaggregated. Trends have been extended across additional years. Different comparison groups have been constructed. Individual jurisdictions have been examined separately. Agency and operational context has been incorporated. Particular forms of victimization have been isolated when national evidence suggested that countywide averages might conceal something important. Increasingly, the research has also moved beyond administrative data to ask investigators, agency personnel, and residents what the numbers alone could not tell us. **The more unexpected a favorable finding appeared, the more important it became not simply to report it, but to challenge it.**

What has made that process particularly compelling is what happened when we did. **Greater scrutiny has generally not made Fort Bend's public-safety story less favorable; in many instances, it has made it more compelling.** Not every finding is favorable. Not every agency

follows the same trajectory, and the analyses identify increases, variations, operational challenges, limitations, and unanswered questions that deserve continued attention. But repeated efforts to determine whether favorable aggregate findings were concealing a substantially different story beneath them have not overturned the broader countywide picture. In several important analyses, looking beneath the aggregate strengthened rather than weakened the original finding.

That is what makes Fort Bend County so interesting to study.

With each iteration, this report has therefore become less like an annual crime report and more like a continuing investigation into an increasingly important question: **why does public safety in Fort Bend County look the way it does?** Another year of data is added, but earlier findings are also challenged and revisited. New questions emerge from old ones. Quantitative findings lead to qualitative inquiry; conversations with agencies and residents send researchers back to the numbers; national research raises questions that can be examined locally; and findings that do not conform to expectations become the starting point for analyses that were never contemplated when the project began. The report changes because Fort Bend changes, but it also changes because understanding Fort Bend has required the research itself to change.

The independence afforded to this project has been fundamental to its evolution and to the final report the reader now holds. Although the research is commissioned by the Fort Bend County District Attorney's Office, the Office has deliberately maintained a remarkable degree of distance from the research as it unfolds. The research team determines what questions to pursue, what data to examine, what comparisons to make, what qualitative inquiry to undertake, and where emerging findings warrant additional investigation. The District Attorney's Office does not review or approve drafts, select or approve the data that is included or excluded, direct whom the research team speaks with, or know in advance what conclusions the completed research will reach.

That arrangement is more than a methodological detail; it is one of the defining strengths of this project. Commissioning research without attempting to shape its direction requires a willingness to accept that the work may uncover findings the commissioning institution did not anticipate, raise questions it did not initially ask, identify concerns alongside strengths, or ultimately tell a story different from the one anyone expected at the outset. The District Attorney's Office under the leadership of District Attorney Middleton has consistently allowed exactly that. Its involvement establishes the opportunity and supports completion of the work, while the substance of the inquiry, from the questions asked to the conclusions ultimately reported, remains with the research team. **That degree of independence deserves recognition.**

That separation has given this project something extraordinarily valuable: intellectual freedom. The research team has been free to follow an unexpected statistical pattern simply because it warranted another look; add analyses that were never contemplated when the project began; isolate a population because national evidence raised an important local question; examine geographic relationships emerging from agency-level findings; speak confidentially with investigators about their experiences working with prosecutors; enter communities and listen directly to residents; and return to the quantitative data when qualitative evidence suggested something else should be examined. **The report has been allowed to become what the evidence required it to become, rather than what anyone expected it to be.**

There is no single statistic in this report that explains Fort Bend County, and this research does not claim to have discovered a formula for producing public safety. **Nor can the present study**

establish why Fort Bend’s public-safety conditions look the way they do. The quantitative and qualitative evidence can identify patterns, relationships, institutional strengths, community experiences, operational practices, and questions worthy of additional investigation, but it cannot assign the county’s favorable outcomes to any single agency, program, policy, community characteristic, or criminal-justice practice.

That limitation does not diminish the value of what has been learned. In some respects, it makes the next question more important. If Fort Bend is producing favorable public-safety outcomes under conditions that make those outcomes particularly noteworthy, then understanding the environment in which those outcomes are occurring deserves continued attention. This report begins to document that environment: the practices agencies have developed, the ways they engage their communities, the relationships investigators describe with prosecutors, the operational changes occurring within individual departments, the challenges agencies identify, and the places where the quantitative and qualitative evidence intersect.

The hope is that this growing body of evidence can do more than explain Fort Bend County after the fact. It can help inform what comes next. As county, municipal, law-enforcement, prosecutorial, and community leaders make decisions in a county that will continue to grow and change, the longitudinal record developed through this project provides a resource for distinguishing enduring patterns from temporary fluctuations, recognizing emerging concerns, identifying institutional and community strengths, and asking better questions before decisions are made. Where the research documents practices and relationships that appear particularly constructive, those findings can also provide opportunities for agencies to learn from one another and for other jurisdictions to consider whether aspects of Fort Bend’s experience warrant examination within their own communities.

The distinction is important. **This report cannot say that a particular program, policing practice, prosecutorial relationship, or community characteristic caused Fort Bend’s favorable crime patterns. It can identify what is happening alongside them.** Over time, continued research may allow some of those relationships to be examined more rigorously. In the meantime, documenting what agencies are doing well has value of its own. Criminal-justice research should not only identify deficiencies to correct; it should also identify promising practices, productive institutional relationships, effective adaptations, and community investments worthy of closer examination. **Learning from what appears to be working can be as important as responding to what is not.**

This project has also reinforced something that even the most comprehensive crime dataset can obscure: **public safety is ultimately about people.** This report could not have developed into its present form without law-enforcement leaders willing to open their agencies to examination; analysts and records personnel willing to retrieve, explain, and sometimes reexamine data; investigators willing to speak candidly about what works and what does not; prosecutors and other criminal-justice professionals willing to explain processes that statistics cannot reveal; and residents willing to describe how policing and public safety are experienced outside those institutions.

The research team is deeply grateful for that access, candor, and trust. Some of the most valuable contributions to this research occurred when a participant complicated the story rather than confirmed it, when an agency explained why a statistic might not mean what it initially appeared to mean, when an investigator identified both strengths and frustrations, when a discrepancy required another examination of the data, or when a resident described an experience that could never be

represented adequately by a rate or percentage. Research of this kind is strengthened by participants willing to tell researchers what they may not expect to hear. Fort Bend's agencies, criminal-justice professionals, and community members have repeatedly provided that opportunity.

We are especially grateful to the residents who were willing to speak with the research team about their communities and experiences. Administrative data can tell us a great deal about crime, but they cannot tell us everything about safety. They cannot fully explain what it feels like to seek police assistance, whether someone believes an officer will listen, why a person chooses to report or not report victimization, or how residents understand the institutions operating within their communities. **The willingness of residents to add those experiences to the evidence is part of what allows a study of crime to become a study of public safety.**

For these reasons, this report is best understood as **a living document rather than a finished product**. Future iterations should not merely add another year to existing tables. They should follow the questions created by the evidence. Some of those questions are already visible: geography can be examined with greater precision; resident perspectives can be expanded; criminal-justice outcomes can be connected more fully across institutions; and the growing longitudinal record can reveal whether patterns that appear today persist, disappear, or develop into something new. Other questions have not yet emerged. **That is one of the great advantages of sustained research: each iteration does not simply provide another answer; it improves our ability to know what questions should be asked next.**

Fort Bend also presents an opportunity that criminal-justice research does not always have: **the opportunity to study favorable public-safety conditions as seriously as we study public-safety problems**. Much of criminal-justice research understandably begins with something demanding explanation, a rise in violence, a disparity, institutional failure, declining trust, or another concerning outcome. Fort Bend presents a different but equally important intellectual challenge: **what can be learned when many of the outcomes being examined are unexpectedly favorable?** What becomes visible when those findings are subjected to the same skepticism, disaggregation, contextual analysis, and methodological scrutiny that would be applied to troubling ones? And what might Fort Bend ultimately teach us, not as a model to be copied without evidence, but as a county whose experience deserves to be understood?

Those questions capture much of what has made this research so rewarding. The research team began this work to study crime and criminal justice in Fort Bend County; over time, the county itself has continually reshaped the questions being asked. Findings have surprised us. Assumptions have required reconsideration. Quantitative patterns have sent us into agencies and communities looking for context, while conversations with law-enforcement leaders, investigators, criminal-justice professionals, and residents have sent us back to the data looking for things we had not initially thought to measure. **That movement between evidence and inquiry is not a complication of the research process. It is one of its greatest strengths.**

After years of increasingly detailed examination, Fort Bend County continues to leave this research team with questions, and they are increasingly compelling ones. Why have so many favorable public-safety indicators persisted through substantial growth and change? What combination of community, institutional, geographic, and criminal-justice conditions helps explain what is occurring here? Which practices and relationships warrant closer examination? Which patterns will remain stable as the county enters its next chapter? Which will change? And what else will become visible when the research team returns with another year of evidence and better questions?

There is something particularly energizing about ending a criminal justice study with questions like these. Researchers in this field spend much of their professional lives examining violence, victimization, disparity, institutional failure, community harm, and the places where systems have fallen short. That work is necessary, and this study has not avoided difficult findings when the evidence revealed them. But there is a different kind of intellectual excitement in applying that same rigor to a place where so much of what the research has revealed is encouraging. To encounter a favorable result, question it because it seems almost too favorable, test it another way, look beneath it, and discover that the larger story still holds is an unusually rewarding research experience. **Fort Bend has given us the opportunity not simply to document what appears to be going well, but to become genuinely curious about it.**

That curiosity may ultimately be one of the most valuable products of this work. We cannot yet explain precisely why Fort Bend County looks the way it does, and this report does not attempt to assign its favorable public-safety conditions to any single agency, practice, institution, or community characteristic. But after years of examining the county, there is more here than a collection of low rates. There are practices worth studying more closely, institutional relationships worth understanding, community investments worth following, and questions that may eventually help Fort Bend's leaders recognize and strengthen what is working as the county continues to grow. There is also the possibility that what is learned here may matter beyond Fort Bend, not because its experience should simply be replicated elsewhere, but because understanding what is working in one community can help other communities ask better questions about their own.

And so, this report does not end with the research team believing the work is finished. Quite the opposite. We end it grateful to the District Attorney's Office for the extraordinary freedom to follow the evidence wherever it led; to the agencies and criminal-justice professionals who opened their work to examination; and to the residents who trusted us with experiences no dataset could ever capture. We end it encouraged by what the evidence has revealed, humbled by what we still cannot explain, and energized by how much remains to discover. For criminal justice researchers accustomed to asking what has gone wrong, Fort Bend County has given us the rare privilege of asking, with the same rigor and seriousness, what is going right, and why. We are not finished asking. We are ready to see where the data takes us next.

APPENDIX

Appendix Table FBCSO: Crime Rate 2020, 2021, 2022
Percent Increase/Decrease
Select Offenses

	2020	2021		2022	
	Rt./100,000	Rt./100,000	% I/D ¹	Rt./100,000	% I/D ¹
Aggravated Assault	110.59	102.65	-7.17	104.98	2.27
Burglary	123.97	107.58	-13.22	135.97	26.38
Forcible Fondling	7.70	14.97		10.67	
Forcible Rape	33.93	35.57		27.77	
Forcible Sodomy	5.69	4.75		4.23	
Credit Card-ATM Fraud	75.92	58.28		57.91	
Counterfeiting-Forgery	35.03	36.10		58.76	
Drug-Narcotics Violations	86.93	76.95		103.12	
Human Trafficking Offenses	0.00	0.00		0.00	
Intimidation-Stalking	87.85	78.00		76.71	
Kidnapping-Abduction	7.15	5.11		5.93	
Larceny-Theft	725.50	685.83	-5.47	782.97	14.16
Manslaughter	0.55	0.00		0.00	
Motor Vehicle Theft	72.26	72.90		71.12	
Murder and Non-Neg. Manslaughter	1.47	2.99		1.69	
Pornography-Obscene Material	18.52	19.02		23.88	
Robbery	22.01	20.07		23.37	
Stolen Property	0.00	0.00		0.00	
Sexual Assault with Object	0.00	0.00		0.34	
Simple Assault	666.63	594.80	-10.78	647.85	8.92
Destruction-Damage-Vandalism	302.05	284.90	-5.68	292.26	2.58

¹ Percent increases and decreases in data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Appendix Table MPPD: Crime Rate 2020, 2021, 2022
Percent Increase/Decrease
Select Offenses

	2020	2021		2022	
	Rt./100,000	Rt./100,000	% I/D ¹	Rt./100,000	% I/D ¹
Aggravated Assault		42.06 (2)		64.23 (3)	
Burglary		105.15 (5)		85.63 (4)	
Forcible Rape		63.09 (3)		21.41 (1)	
Credit Card-ATM Fraud		105.15 (5)		64.23 (3)	
Counterfeiting-Forgery		21.03 (1)		42.82 (2)	
Drug-Narcotics Violations		210.30 (10)		278.31 (13)	
Intimidation-Stalking		21.03 (1)		21.41 (1)	
Larceny-Theft		946.37 (45)		813.53 (38)	
Motor Vehicle Theft		378.55 (18)		578.03 (27)	
Simple Assault		273.40 (13)		321.13 (15)	
Destruction-Damage-Vandalism		147.21 (7)		128.45 (6)	

¹ Percent increases and decreases in data are unstable when the starting point (raw number) is low. As such, we do not calculate percent increases and decreases when the starting point is less than 100.

Appendix Table NPD: Contextualized Data, Crimes Reported by Agency

	Agg. Ass.	Spl. Ass.	Burglary	Cred.-Fr.	Intimidat.	Theft	Sex. Ass.	Misc./Van.
<i>Victim</i>								
Age	34 (4)	35 (25)	48 (11)	52 (27)	35 (6)	40 (24)	15 (5)	51 (19)
Male	3	11	6	11	3	12	4	11
Female	1	14	6	11	3	12	1	8
White	2	23	10	22	6	18	4	18
Black	2	2	--	--	--	4	1	1
Asian	--	--	2	--	--	2	--	0

Appendix Table NPD: Contextualized Data, Crimes Reported by Agency								
	Agg. Ass.	Spl. Ass.	Burglary	Cred.-Fr.	Intimidat.	Theft	Sex. Ass.	Misc./Van.
<i>Offender</i>								
Age	27.67 (3)	32 (24)	--	37 (7)	32 (5)	25 (9)	31 (5)	30 (10)
Male	2	17	--	6	4	5	5	7
Female	1	7	--	1	1	4	--	3
White	2	21	--	6	5	6	4	9
Black	1	3	--	1	--	2	1	1
<i>Relation.</i>								
Spouse/Ex	1	7	--	1	1	--	--	--
Oth. Fam.	--	2	--	--	--	1	1	--
Sibling	--	1	--	1	--	--	--	--
Acq./Frd.	1	3	--	2	3	5	2	6
Dating	1	6	--	1	--	--	2	2
Child	--	2	--	--	--	--	--	--
Stranger	--	1	--	3	1	2	--	1
<i>Location</i>								
Residence	2	23	8	10	4	12	3	13
Business	2	1	3	16	--	7	--	2
Pub. Spc.	--	1	3	2	--	6	--	5
School	--	--	--	--	1	--	--	--
Cyberspace	--	--	--	2	--	--	--	--
<i>Weapon</i>								
Handgun	3	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Personal	0	24	--	--	--	--	1	--

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