STAFF REPORT

DATE: November 25, 2019

TO: City Council

FROM: Darren Pytel, Police Chief
              Deanne Machado, Deputy Director of Police Services

SUBJECT: Davis Crime Update

Recommendation
Receive report and consider potential next steps.

Fiscal Impact
There is no fiscal impact to this report. If Council provides direction, future actions could have fiscal impacts.

Council Goal(s)
This effort supports the following Goals/Objectives/Tasks:
- Ensure a safe, healthy, and equitable community

Background and Analysis

The City of Davis has historically enjoyed a relatively low violent crime rate compared to its neighboring, similarly sized jurisdictions. Specifically, reports of violent crime occurring within the city have always been low compared to property crime and are now at their lowest levels observed since 2014[1]. There has been a marginal increase in reported larceny (theft), which is reflective of recent anecdotal social media reporting that Davis is experiencing an increase in crime. The trend is also noticeable throughout California. However, property crime rates in Davis have always been high compared to neighboring jurisdictions and the recent trends were not necessarily unanticipated in light of significant shifts in the California criminal justice system from incarceration/punishment to community-based support, re-entry and treatment[2]. As more programs come online to support reform, there is hope that we will see those numbers drop over time.

While there are positive trends overall, Davis has recently experienced crime that may signal a shift that the City Council and community should at least be aware of. More specifically, Davis has experienced an increase in armed robberies in the last two months. Several were ultimately identified as a series and are linked to regional street gang activity. In all eight of the robberies the suspect(s) either produced or eluded to possession of a gun and in several of the cases the

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[1] See Table 1 for Part I chart.
[2] https://www.ppic.org/wp-content/uploads/r_0618mbr.pdf

suspect(s) carjacked the victims. This series is unique in that prior to its emergence, there had been no carjackings in Davis in over five years. Additionally, this series involves weapons, which is unusual. For example, in 2018, 11 out of 44 robberies involved a weapon of some kind. So far, in 2019, 14 out of 35 robberies have involved a weapon, most of which were a handgun.

While there have been arrests made in this series, the armed robberies and carjackings have continued to persist which is likely a product of their connection to gang networks and increasing gang crime within the region.

The purpose of this report is to provide the community and City Council with an update on current crime activity in Davis, crime prevention and outreach efforts of the Police Department, and to solicit initial City Council feedback on possible next steps. Any next steps that require utilization of surveillance technology tools would undergo review and consideration consistent with the City's Surveillance Technology Ordinance and process.

Staff intends to make crime update reports a recurring regular item for the City Council moving forward.

Crime Prevention Efforts & Community Outreach
The Davis Police Department has always endeavored to address crime in a strategic manner by focusing on a combination of analytics, outreach and directed enforcement.

Analytics
The Crime Analysis Unit (CAU) has prioritized the tracking and updating of crime related data. The CAU disseminates information to Department personnel, our Public Information Officer (PIO) and the social media team who distributes it to the public (see below).

The Department also makes a significant amount of information available to the public, including real-time crime data and mapping. Information relating to crime, wanted persons, missing persons, stolen vehicles, arrests, and crime charts can be located online at https://dpd.crimegraphics.com/2013/default.aspx. Those interested about crime in their neighborhood can use the tools to get an accurate picture of reported crime and calls for service.

Social Media
The Davis Police Department is committed to outreach and understands that a strong social media presence is a force multiplier and effective crime prevention tool. The Department currently use Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Nixle, Yolo-Alert and NextDoor.

The Davis Police Department uses Facebook and Instagram to promote Department news and events on a regular basis. The Police Department Facebook page will also publish press releases, notifications, announcements, tips and information related to crime prevention, requests that ask the community to engage in projects that are relevant to the Department mission, recruitment of personnel and other related topics.

Twitter is also used to promote Department news and events. The Police Department often cross populates Facebook and Twitter with the same information as noted above. You will frequently find links to our Facebook posts on Twitter.

Nixle is used to alert subscribers to lower level, Davis-specific events. Examples include: information about Department services, traffic collisions, crime alerts, checkpoint information, missing persons, fugitive subjects, and areas to avoid.

Yolo County has implemented Yolo-Alert (Everbridge) as a state-of-the-art emergency notification system to alert residents about emergencies and other important community news such as severe weather, evacuations of buildings or neighborhoods and other public health and safety alerts. The emergency notification system enables officials to provide essential information quickly when there is a threat to the health and safety of residents.

NextDoor is used by the City to promote news and events and also as a means to provide crime related public information, though one of the challenges with NextDoor is that while we can post information, it is not a reliable way to receive public information. Additionally, because the information is not regularly monitored we have found that it often contains false or misleading information, which can prove counterproductive.

Since the creation of a dedicated social media position in 2018, the Department's Facebook has grown from 3,400 to nearly 20,000 followers and we engage subscribers close to 115,000 times per month. Likewise, both Nixle and Yolo-Alert have increased substantially to about 34,000 subscribers total[3].

Additional information regarding social media and crime alerts can be found online at https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/social-media-notification-systems.

Neighborhood Watch

The Davis Police Department's Neighborhood Watch program is a crime reduction program where citizens work together with law enforcement to combat and prevent crime in their neighborhoods. Currently, the Department works with 155 Neighborhood Watch groups. A Neighborhood Watch group consists of neighbors, typically 15-20 homes, who are committed to maintaining the safety and quality of life on their residential block. The Neighborhood Watch program counts on citizens to organize themselves, work with the Department through a Neighborhood Watch Liaison, and keep a trained eye on their neighborhood while demonstrating their presence at all times. It is through that persistent presence that criminals are deterred.

In addition to the online communities, the Department has also leveraged all of the Neighborhood Watch groups to help spread information to their respective neighborhoods and social networks regarding crime in Davis and the recent robbery series.

Additional information regarding Neighborhood Watch can be found online at https://www.cityofdavis.org/city-hall/police-department/crime-prevention/neighborhood-watch.

Crime Free Multi-Housing Program

The Davis Crime Free Multi-Housing Program is designed to help residents, owners, and managers associated with rental properties (primarily apartment complexes) keep illegal activity

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[3] Yolo-Alert includes a special outreach to a UC Davis contact who can then determine whether they would like to issue a WarnMe alert which is sent to students. WarnMe is used as campus emergency alert system.

out of their respective communities. The Department provides tools and annual training to all multi-housing stakeholders in an effort to assist them with crime issues that are unique to shared properties. There are over 40 Crime Free Multi-Housing apartment complexes in Davis.

Student Education

The Department works closely with UC Davis and the UC Davis Police Department to provide crime education to students each year at their orientations. Because all students are required to attend the orientations, this has been an easy way to tell students about crime in Davis and how to undertake prevention efforts. The Department also regularly provides Cleary Act crime related information so that students, whether from Davis or any visiting campus, are aware of crime activity. Additionally, the Department regularly meets with various student groups regarding crime and crime prevention.

Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) Training

The RAD program teaches women basic crime prevention and self-defense to ward off attackers. The Department has several certified instructors and offers the training several times a year.

Bystander Intervention & Active Shooter Training

The Department has been actively teaching City personnel and the public the techniques used to de-escalate conflict and intervene to protect others from crime. This training has been provided almost monthly this year and was provided several times last year. Additionally, the Department has provided active-shooter training to various churches, the schools and other groups.

The Department will continue doing significant outreach to increase awareness of these programs and encourage even greater participation.

Items for Council Consideration & Further Discussion

Remote Public Safety Camera Systems (RPSCS)

The City Council has previously authorized the use of two RPSCS to monitor areas where crime has been reported, to surveille individuals suspected of committing crime and to monitor crowd size and dynamics at City events in order to better deploy resources[4]. The two existing cameras can be used for relatively short periods of time because of their limited storage and power capacity; they are not designed for long-term use at a single location.

There have been community questions and feedback raised as to whether installing cameras at or near entrances/exits to Davis might serve to visibly deter certain criminal activity and/or assist in the investigation, tracking of offenders and prosecution efforts after the fact. Some communities have installed automated license plate reader technology to the camera systems, which furthers the ability to monitor stolen vehicles that enter or leave the City.

The acquisition or use of additional cameras would require noticing and Council approval as required by the Surveillance Technology Ordinance. Additional funding would be necessary to

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[4]
http://documents.cityofdavis.org/Media/Default/Documents/PDF/CityCouncil/CouncilMeetings/Agendas/20181030/08F-Surveillance-Technology-Public-Safety-Cameras.pdf

procure the cameras and the necessary data storage. Furthermore, a Use and Record Retention Policy would need to be developed as part of the review under the Ordinance.

Accurint Virtual Crime Center (AVCC)

The AVCC is used by nearly every law enforcement agency in the greater Sacramento region to share crime information. Although Davis used to take part in the program (formerly called COPLINK), we have not in the last two years and the use is currently not authorized as it has not undergone review pursuant to the Surveillance Technology Ordinance adopted in 2018. The AVCC is a secure, online dashboard that enables crime data sharing, pattern analysis, crime mapping, predictive analytics and reporting for law enforcement. Participating law enforcement agencies can view, analyze and share their own crime and call data as well as access data from agencies in their region[5].

Using this data, AVCC creates graphs to help law enforcement visualize crime patterns and trends across jurisdictional lines. The program's analytical capabilities show how crime or calls for service have changed over time/across an area and can be used to predict future hot spot areas to assist in the appropriate deployment of resources. This system is not used in any way to track immigration. Furthermore, the Department does not need additional funds to take part in the information sharing.

Summary

From a statistical and comparative perspective, the City of Davis continues to be a safe place to live, work and learn. The instances of violent crime remain relatively low, particularly when compared to other cities in this area (see Table 2). Nevertheless, property crime is on the rise for a second year in a row which, although in line with statewide trends, is troubling and worthy of attention. Additionally, while the overall increase in property crime is relatively low, there has been significantly more public discussion around crime on social media, which may explain why some are feeling that there has been a rapid rise. As we have said before, there is crime in Davis – increasing awareness is important so that residents are not complacent and serves as a reminder to take measures to prevent crime.

From a victim or community perspective, what the statistics do not show is the harm that comes with crime. The reality is behind every crime statistic is a person who suffered harm. Behind those victims are others who fear crime and the deterioration of their community. This cannot be lost in the discussion.

Finally, the data appears to suggest a shift in seriousness of violent crime, with an increase in frequency of weapons and nexus to criminal street gangs. It is not yet known whether this will be a lasting trend. Better analytical and enforcement tools will likely be necessary to interrupt these series going forward. The Department is actively recruiting police officer candidates and the City Council has recently approved a new MOU with the Davis Police Officers Association that is geared towards retaining officers. As staffing improves, additional officers will be fielded without resorting to overtime.

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[5] It should be noted that data sharing between agencies is authorized pursuant to state and federal law and is already occurring on a need to know basis, usually by actual request. AVCC serves to increase the speed at which this same information is available to agencies through electronic request and subsequent transfer.

Table 1

Davis Part I Crime Data

	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019 (YTD)*	% Change '18-'19
Homicide	2	0	1	2	1	-50%
Rape	19	26	18	22	20	-9%
Robbery	40	31	35	44	35	-20%
Aggravated Assault	40	50	43	50	37	-26%
Burglary	281	267	272	233	224	-4%
Larceny	1337	1297	1231	1370	1579	**+15%**
Stolen Vehicle	105	110	126	91	83	-9%
Arson	9	7	8	7	4	-43%
TOTAL	1833	1788	1734	1819	1983	**+6%**

Table 2

2018 Part I Crime Data Comparison

City	Population	Homicide	Rape	Robbery	Aggravated assault	Burglary	Larceny-theft	Motor vehicle theft	Arson
Citrus Heights	88,603	1	47	86	190	410	1,739	329	12
Davis	69,486	2	22	44	50	233	1,370	91	7
Folsom	78,916	1	20	29	35	245	918	82	8
Rancho Cordova	74,863	3	26	74	169	257	934	197	1
Rocklin	65,969	0	13	16	23	172	699	81	6
Vacaville	101,146	2	22	63	143	163	1,804	191	12
West Sacramento	54,215	1	17	92	115	224	931	257	15
Woodland	60,679	1	16	67	136	252	1,146	204	25