

**MOORPARK CITY COUNCIL  
AGENDA REPORT**

**TO:** Honorable City Council  
**FROM:** Ron Nelson, Captain *RN*  
**DATE:** February 11, 2009 (CC Meeting of 3/4/09)  
**SUBJECT:** Consider Report on the City of Moorpark's 2008 Part I Crime Statistics

**SUMMARY**

The Ventura County Sheriff's Department recently released the 2008 Part I crime statistics for the five incorporated cities that contract for police services, including the City of Moorpark (City), and the unincorporated county areas. Part I crimes are broken down into two main categories of crime; crimes of violence and property crimes. Crimes of violence include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. Property crimes include burglary, theft, and arson.

The following are the highlights for the City of Moorpark:

- Overall Part I crimes decreased 1% from 622 crimes in 2007 to 617 crimes in 2008
- Violent crimes increased 27% from 41 to 52.
  - This was driven by an increase in "Strong-arm Robberies" (increase from 12 to 22) wherein young local teenage gang members used the threat of harm to steal wallets and cell phones from their victims. Patrol officers made arrests in every single case and the suspects were lodged and kept in juvenile hall.
- Property crimes decreased 3% from 581 to 565.
  - Residential burglaries increased from 66 to 78 due mostly to two burglary crews committing daytime break-ins. One crew was a group of local teenage juveniles who were subsequently arrested. The second crew was an organized group from Glendale, responsible for break-ins all over Los Angeles and Ventura Counties, and they were also arrested.

- Theft crimes decreased from 468 to 429. The largest decrease was in the area of property taken from unlocked vehicles. The Police Department ran a large campaign to educate residents to protect their property by stowing valuables out of sight and locking their car doors.
- The crime rate per 1,000 residents fell slightly from 17.26 crimes to 16.76.
  - Within the Sheriff's Contract Cities and the unincorporated areas of the County, Moorpark ranked second behind Thousand Oaks, which had 15.03 crimes per 1,000 residents.

Refer to the attached chart for specific Part I crime rate details.

## **DISCUSSION**

During 2008, the Police Department ran four significant crime prevention campaigns, designed to educate and involve the residents and business leaders of Moorpark in the work of keeping their neighborhoods safe. These campaigns included increasing the participation in Neighborhood Watch, the initiation of a new e-mail network called "Moorpark City Watch," a program called "Knock and Talk" in which Police Officers and volunteers personally contacted residents at their front doors to discuss crime trends and safety points, and the increased use of the Volunteers in Policing.

Along with the two stated purposes of educating and involving residents and business leaders, a third goal was to get people in the community to call the Police Department whenever they observed crime or suspicious activity. Officers on patrol come across criminal activity under two situations. Either they personally observe the activity, or it is reported to them by the people in the community. Since a limited number of officers patrol at any given time, and they cannot be everywhere at once, the Police Department relies on the people of the community to report suspicious activity. The more people are encouraged to report suspicious activity, the more calls that officers respond to, and the more the crime rate may go up. During 2008, the officers assigned to the Police Department responded to 10,565 calls for service. This was an increase of about 200 calls from the previous year (10,359) or 2%. Although the number of calls increased, the overall Part I crime rate decreased.

### **Neighborhood Watch**

The Moorpark Police Department deploys a Community Service Officer, whose responsibilities include crime prevention and problem solving. As a crime prevention specialist, the Community Service Officer oversees the various Neighborhood Watch groups within the City. During 2008, eleven new groups were formed in residential neighborhoods, increasing the number to a total of thirteen neighborhood watch groups. Each group meets monthly to discuss crime trends and prevention techniques. One of

the benefits of Neighborhood Watch, is that the participating residents form relationships with one another that aid in them watching out for one another's lives and property.

As an example of the effectiveness of Neighborhood Watch, following the formation of a new group in the Villa Del Arroyo Mobile Home Park, the number of calls for service increased dramatically. During 2008, officers responded to 191 calls for service, compared with 112 calls during 2007, a 46% increase. The majority of calls were for suspicious subjects and suspicious vehicles. Officers made several arrests for various crimes.

### **Moorpark City Watch**

Moorpark City Watch is a new e-mail alert network system that was started during 2008, allowing the Police Department to communicate current crime trends through e-mailed alerts to a broad base of residents who have signed up to receive the alerts. So far, over 370 residents have signed up for the valuable service. It is also believed that many of those who receive the e-mailed alerts forward them to friends and family, thereby increasing the audience.

As an example of the effectiveness of the Moorpark City Watch program, during 2008 several women in a particular part of the city fell victim to a suspect who unlawfully exposed himself. An alert was sent out to participants of the City Watch program. Because of this, the Police Department gained valuable information that led to the arrest of the suspect and an end to his crimes.

Residents and businesses desiring to be a part of the City Watch Program can do so by e-mailing [mprkcity.watch@ventura.org](mailto:mprkcity.watch@ventura.org).

### **Knock and Talk**

During 2008, several neighborhoods were targeted by thieves who stole valuable property from unlocked vehicles. Anecdotally, our officers have frequently heard from residents that since they live in the safe city of Moorpark, they have not felt the need to remove valuables from their vehicle, nor lock their vehicle doors. In response to this situation the Police Department initiated the "Knock and Talk" program, in which uniformed officers and volunteers walked door to door during the early evening hours to talk with residents about the need to remove valuable property and lock their car doors, especially at night. To date, over 600 households have been contacted in this program. The Police Department will continue the program, with the goal of reaching every household in the next two years.

Following the time the Knock and Talk program began, the City saw a reduction in theft related crime. There were 166 reported thefts from unlocked vehicles during 2008, a

decrease from 204 during 2007, a reduction of 19%. An added benefit of the Knock and Talk program is the increase in new "Neighborhood Watch" groups that have formed.

There is a need for further efforts at preventing crime in the City of Moorpark, and the Police Department is committed to safeguarding lives and property of the residents of the City and to respond to public concerns in a manner which promotes neighborhoods free from the fear of crime.

### **Volunteers in Policing**

Probably one of the more successful and meaningful programs within the Police Department is that of the "Volunteers in Policing" (VIP). The department currently deploys a dedicated group of seventeen citizen volunteers who provide services such as patrol, crime reporting, vacation house checks, traffic control during collisions and other major events, office assistance, and short term child care for victims of crime among many other duties. The program allows for more eyes and ears on the street, and it frees up sworn officers from having to fulfill those duties, allowing the sworn officers to concentrate on more technically difficult law enforcement activities.

The VIP program has steadily grown in both the numbers of volunteers and the hours of service they provide. During 2008, volunteers provided over 4,100 hours of service to the community, which is equivalent to two full time paid officers. This year, a second new VIP patrol car was added to the fleet, allowing for more than one car to be on patrol at a time.

In addition to the obvious direct services the VIP program provides, the residents of Moorpark benefit indirectly due to the fact that the volunteers are Moorpark residents who actively take a role in keeping their community safe.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

None

### **STAFF RECOMMENDATION**

Receive and file report.

### **(ROLL CALL VOTE REQUIRED)**

Attachments:

1. Crime rate chart

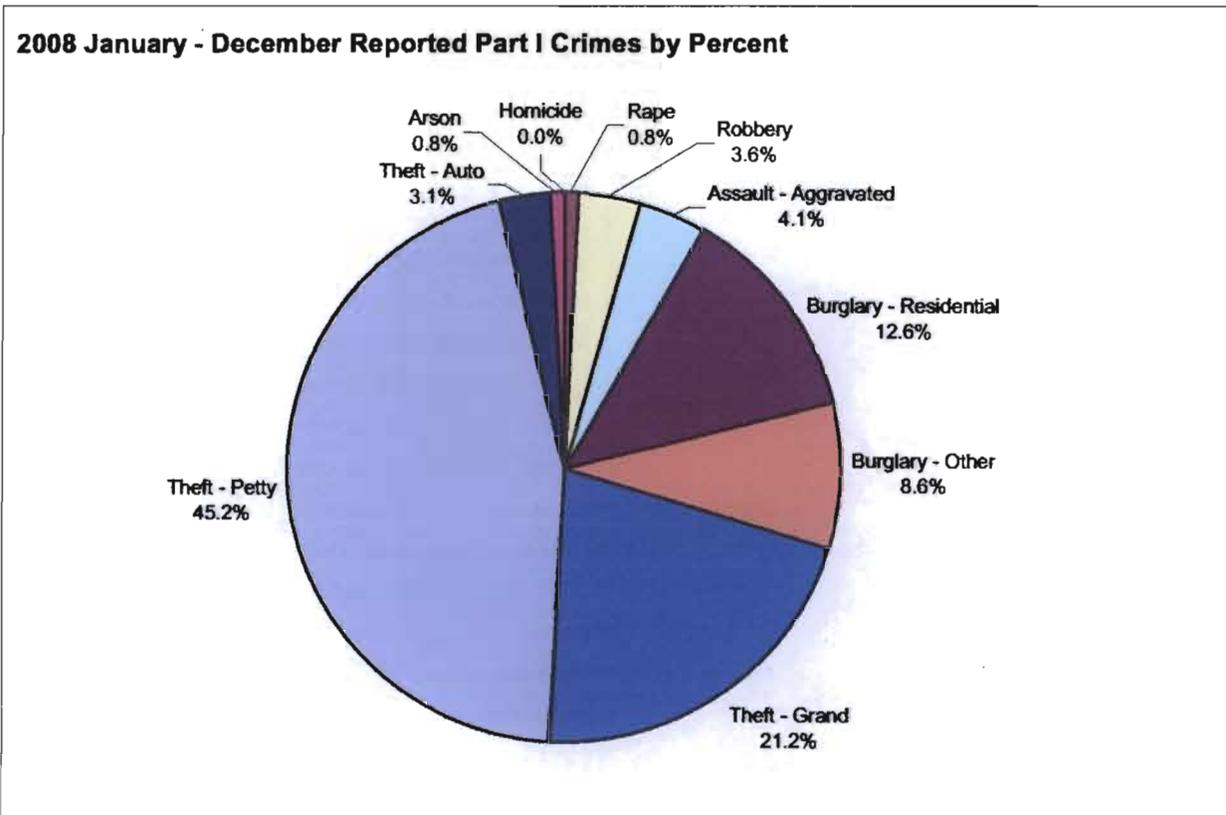
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**City of Moorpark  
2007 / 2008 January - December Comparison of Reported Crimes**

|                            | Jan - Dec<br>2007        | Jan - Dec<br>2008 | Numerical<br>Difference | Percent<br>Change | Jan - Dec<br>2007     | Jan - Dec<br>2008 | Percent<br>Change |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------|-------------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Population                 | 36,045                   | 36,814            | 769                     | 2%                |                       |                   |                   |
| <b>Part I Crimes</b>       | <b>Reported Offenses</b> |                   |                         |                   | <b>Rate per 1,000</b> |                   |                   |
| Homicide                   | 0                        | 0                 | 0                       | NC                | 0.00                  | 0.00              | NC                |
| Rape                       | 4                        | 5                 | 1                       | 25%               | 0.11                  | 0.14              | 22%               |
| Robbery                    | 12                       | 22                | 10                      | 83%               | 0.33                  | 0.60              | 80%               |
| Assault - Aggravated       | 25                       | 25                | 0                       | 0%                | 0.69                  | 0.68              | -2%               |
| <i>Total Violent</i>       | 41                       | 52                | 11                      | 27%               | 1.14                  | 1.41              | 24%               |
| Burglary - Residential     | 66                       | 78                | 12                      | 18%               | 1.83                  | 2.12              | 16%               |
| Burglary - Other           | 45                       | 53                | 8                       | 18%               | 1.25                  | 1.44              | 15%               |
| Theft - Grand              | 152                      | 131               | -21                     | -14%              | 4.22                  | 3.56              | -16%              |
| Theft - Petty              | 280                      | 279               | -1                      | 0%                | 7.77                  | 7.58              | -2%               |
| Theft - Auto               | 36                       | 19                | -17                     | -47%              | 1.00                  | 0.52              | -48%              |
| Arson                      | 2                        | 5                 | 3                       | 150%              | 0.06                  | 0.14              | 145%              |
| <i>Total Property</i>      | 581                      | 565               | -16                     | -3%               | 16.12                 | 15.35             | -5%               |
| <b>Total Part I Crimes</b> | 622                      | 617               | -5                      | -1%               | 17.26                 | 16.76             | -3%               |



NC = Not Calculable