



Office of the City Manager

INFORMATION CALENDAR
February 21, 2006

To: Honorable Mayor and
Members of the City Council

From: *PK* Phil Kamlarz, City Manager

Submitted by: Douglas N. Hambleton, Chief of Police

Subject: Crime In Berkeley

INTRODUCTION

The City Council has directed the City Manager to provide quarterly reports on crime in Berkeley, including comparisons of Berkeley's crime rate to other jurisdictions in the Bay Area. During the council meeting of October 25, 2005 Council asked for additional strategies on property crime reduction.

DISCUSSION

Most law enforcement agencies in the United States report their crime statistics to the Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation using standardized reporting methods developed in the 1930s. The Uniform Crime Reporting Handbook lists crime events as consistent measures that can be used to compare crime statistics annually and among jurisdictions.

The statistics used for comparisons are Part I Crimes. These are sometimes shown as total Part I crimes or differentiated as Part I Violent Crimes; Homicide, Rape, Robbery, Aggravated Assault and Part I Property Crimes; Burglary, Theft, Auto Theft and Arson.

Crime rates are based on crimes reported to the police, and not necessarily the actual number of crimes committed. People are reluctant to report crimes for many reasons based on how confident they may feel toward the police, their past involvement in criminal activity, their perception that the crime event was not significant or the difficulty of making a police report. Unlike Berkeley, some agencies have policies that exacerbate the reporting difficulties such as requiring people to make reports in person rather than by phone. People are generally more likely to report violent crimes against persons, so these numbers may be more reliable when making comparisons.

Crime Rates and Rate Comparisons

The overall crime rate has declined in Berkeley over the past several years, a trend consistent throughout the Bay Area. During 2005, Part One Crimes in Berkeley decreased 7.9 percent compared to 2004. Part I Violent Crimes increased by 19 events (3.6 percent) while Part 1 Property Crimes decreased by 765 events (8.6 percent).

The following chart shows the trends in Part One Crime in Berkeley from 2000 to 2005.

Crime in Berkeley 2000 - 2005

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Homicide	4	1	7	5	4	3*
Rape	41	23	33	19	16	22
Robbery	332	398	411	411	352	356
Agg. Assault	377**	326**	280**	158	155	165
Violent Crime	754	748	731	593	527	546
Burglary	1124	1453	1450	1240	1377	1227
Theft	4889	6054	6798	6472	6252	5576
Auto Theft	921	1061	1371	1348	1189	1266
Arson	43	49	51	34	46	30
Total Prop. Crime	6977	8617	9670	9094	8864	8099
Total	7731	9365	10401	9687	9391	8645

* One of the three homicides listed for 2005 was the death of a victim from a 2003 assault case.

** As noted in the report of 10/25/05, aggravated assaults were not reported correctly prior to 2003.

There are 5 attachments to this report.

The first two show comparisons of the Part 1 Violent Crime and Property Crime rates per 10,000 population for Berkeley and six other Bay Area cities. These two charts are for the first 6 months of 2005, the latest available data from the California Department of Justice.

The next three attachments are 2005 crime maps for Berkeley. They show the concentration of Part I Violent Crimes, Part 1 Property Crimes and Auto Burglaries, which is the single highest component of the theft total.

Crime Reduction Strategies:

There are many social causes of crime and the police regularly work in collaboration with other City Departments and local service providers to address crime problems. Social conditions such as poverty, homelessness, drug abuse, availability of youth programs, educational opportunities, the state of the economy, employment opportunities (particularly youth jobs), are some of the factors that impact crime rates. Demographics are another factor that affect crime since many crimes are committed by those between the ages of 14 and 24, sometimes referred to as the "crime prone" years. These factors in neighboring communities impact our crime rate as criminals travel throughout the region.

Staff believes there are additional actions that can be taken by the police to address crime in our community. The police command staff along with the Area Coordinators and Neighborhood Services Liaisons meet weekly to develop crime reduction strategies. As a result of these meetings, the Department has set a goal of an annual 10 percent decrease in Part 1 property crimes when compared to the prior year's crime rate. They have proposed a number of strategies to achieve this goal as outlined below.

Staff also plans to institute monthly meetings with members from the City Manager's Office, Health and Human Services, Housing, Parks Recreation and Waterfront, Police, Public Works and other appropriate City staff as well as representatives from the University of California. These meetings will be used to develop multi-disciplinary plans to address city-wide issues, including crime problems.

Use of Existing Resources

With limited resources available for a property crime reduction effort and Chief Hambleton does not intend to make substantial shifts of staff from existing enforcement programs. In particular, narcotic enforcement by the Special Enforcement Unit (SEU) has been effective at combating street level drug dealing and the related violence and disorder that is associated with illegal drug trafficking. The priorities of the SEU will remain on drug enforcement. To the extent that property crimes are related to drug use, the SEU may be tasked with narcotic enforcement in areas that have high property crime rates.

Officers from Patrol, Bikes, Detectives, Community Services and other units have been asked to be more proactive in addressing property crimes utilizing traditional law enforcement techniques as well as non-traditional means. The use of overtime and periodic patrols by those assigned to other units may be utilized to increase police presence in areas where there is a high concentration of property offenses, such as the South Campus/Telegraph area.

Improved Communications and Coordination

The Department will continue holding weekly crime and problem coordination meetings to insure that the various units are sharing information and working together to address crime problems and related issues. During these meetings staff discusses crime problems and develops plans for effective analysis, coordination, enforcement, and prevention. .

The Community Services Bureau and the Area Coordinators have primary responsibility for internal coordination and working with those outside the department, both in the community and the rest of city government. Effective January 15, 2006 a lieutenant was assigned to the Community Services Bureau in order to manage the coordination process and improve the effectiveness of the unit.

Crime Analysis

The crime analysis function has been handled by part-time retirees for some time. Council approved a new Crime Analyst classification on December 13, 2005 and the Human Resources Department is working with the police on the recruitment and selection for this position. Once hired, the Crime Analyst will be assigned to the Community Services Bureau to assist the Department by analyzing crime data, identifying patterns and trends, and helping officers develop plans to target high crime locations, times of day and identified suspects. The analyst will be a full participant in the weekly crime and problem coordination meeting. Staff feels the addition of a full time analyst will result in earlier identification of crime trends and a faster and more successful response.

Public Education and Prevention Strategies

Police staff believes that many crimes in Berkeley can be prevented. For example, historically more than 30 percent of residential burglaries involve the thieves entering through unlocked or open doors and windows. Many of these crimes could be avoided through basic home security measures.

Over 50 percent of the Part I property crimes are vehicle-related (auto theft, auto burglary and thefts from autos). To prevent some of these crimes, the police will emphasizing the use of security systems such as steering wheel/brake lock devices and ignition cut off switches, particularly for the most vulnerable vehicles that thieves target, like older Hondas, Toyotas and Acuras. The public will also be educated not to leave valuables in their cars and to securing their property against theft.

Toward that end, the police department will communicate a consistent crime prevention message in the local media, at community meetings, and through the current network of neighborhood watch groups. The Public Information Officer (PIO) has already issued press releases regarding crime prevention. Several local television stations have aired interviews with our PIO where he discussed crime prevention issues. These activities will be expanded and staff will get the

prevention message out to residents through the police website and the Community Crime View system.

There have been some technical delays with the implementation of Community Crime View; however, the Information Technology Department staff plan to have it online in February. This system will provide a web-based, searchable map that will display information about crime incidents in Berkeley.

The Community Services Bureau will continue to offer security surveys and provide information to residents and the business community on Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design.

Community Involvement

The police have been successful in addressing crime and disorder problems in the past by working with community partners such as business groups, neighborhood associations and neighborhood watch groups. The community will have to play an important role in protecting themselves in order to achieve meaningful reductions in crime.

POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

Achieving the goal of an annual 10 percent decrease in property crimes may be limited in the long-term by available police staffing and other city resources needed to address the social causes of crime. Due to the cuts in available grant funding from the federal and state levels and other city budget cuts, the Police Department has reduced staffing from 203 sworn positions in FY-2001 to 186 positions in FY-2006. Other City Departments have had even more significant budget reductions. These reductions may impact the City's ability to respond to the social conditions that result in crime.

FISCAL IMPACTS OF POSSIBLE FUTURE ACTION

This report does not have any specific funding impacts at this time.

CONTACT PERSON

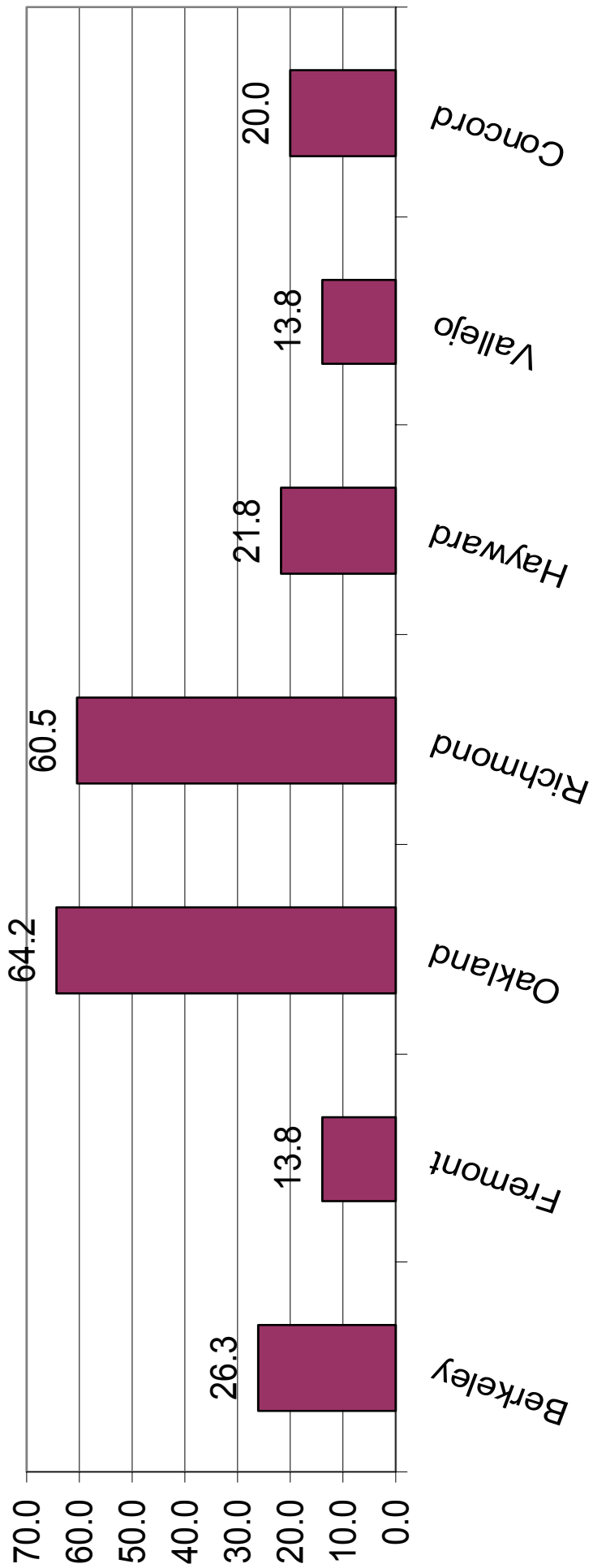
Douglas N. Hambleton, Chief of Police, 981-5700

ATTACHMENTS

1: Crime Charts and Maps

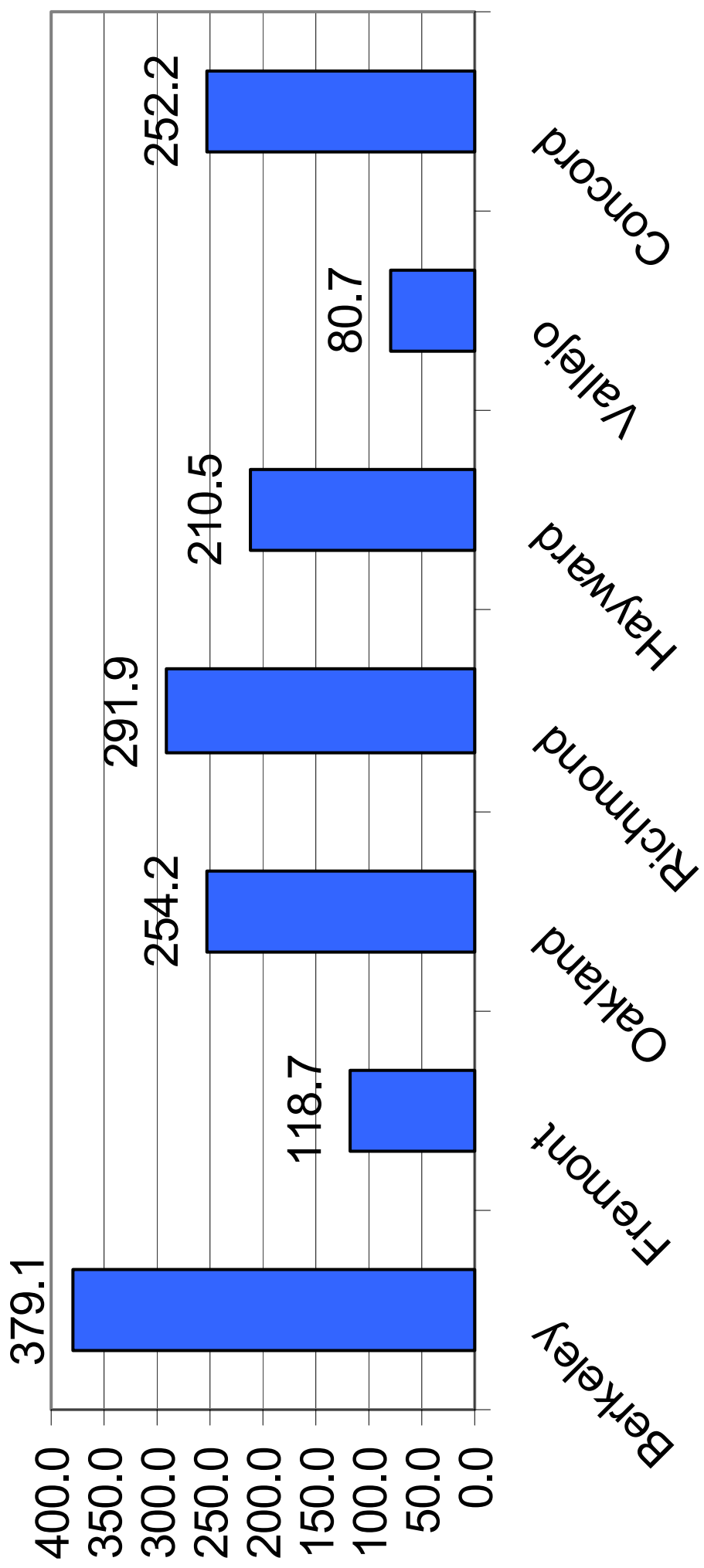
**Violent Part 1 Crimes
2005 Jan-Jun
Per 10,000 Population**

Violent Part 1 Crimes



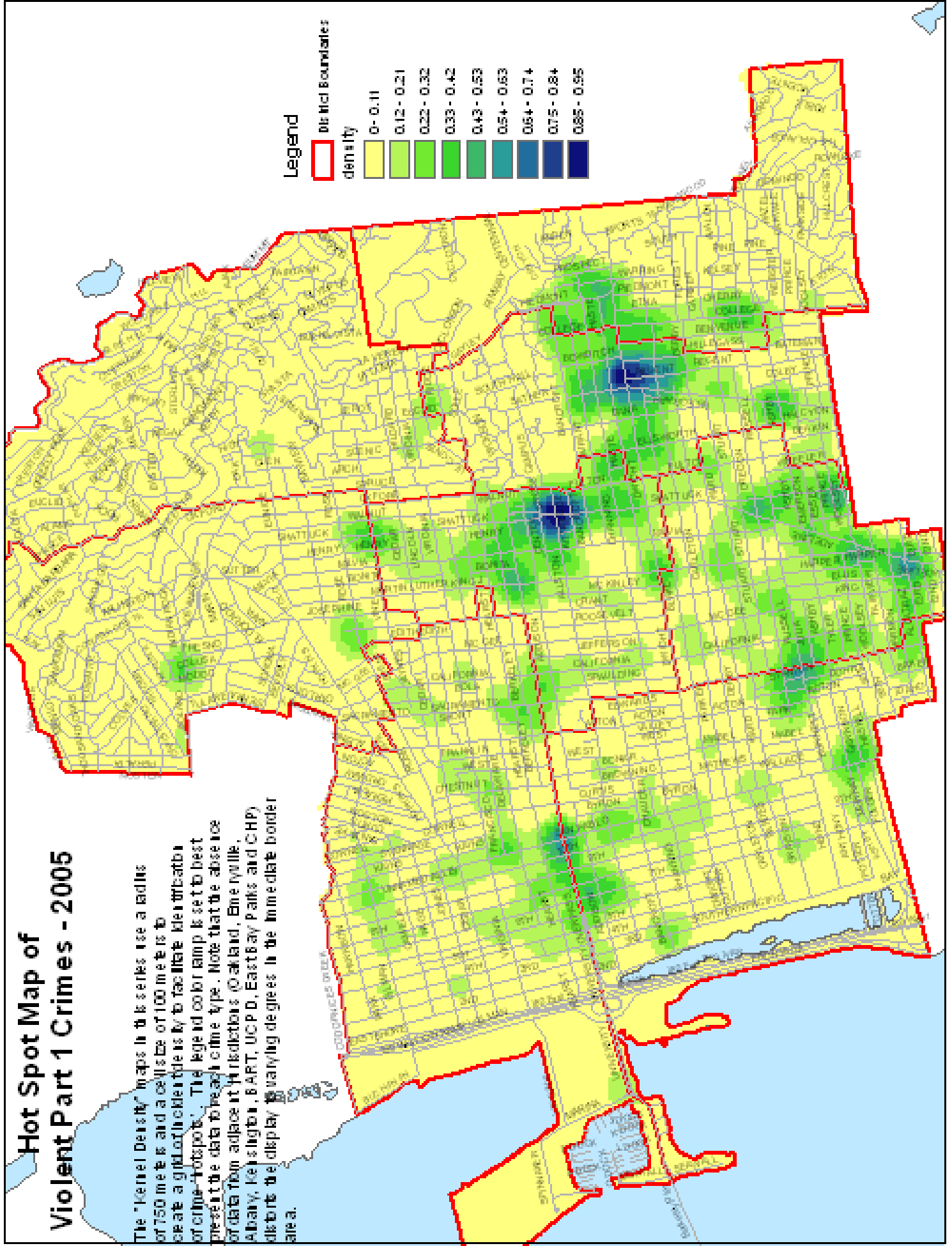
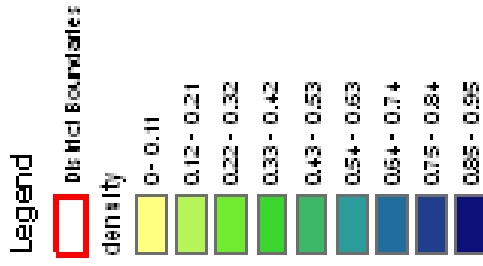
Property Part 1 Crimes
2005 Jan-Jun
Per 10,000 Population

■ Property Part 1 Crimes



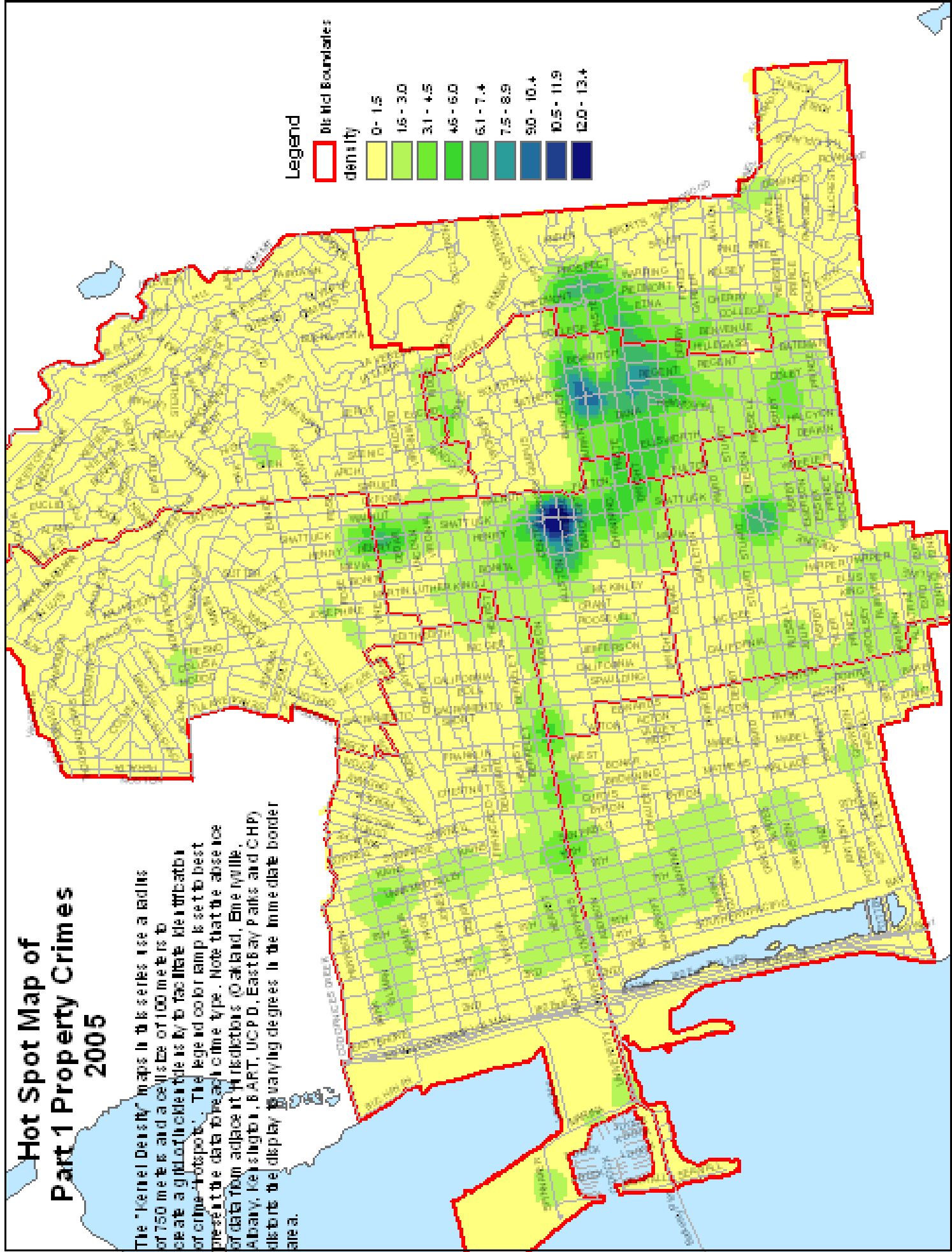
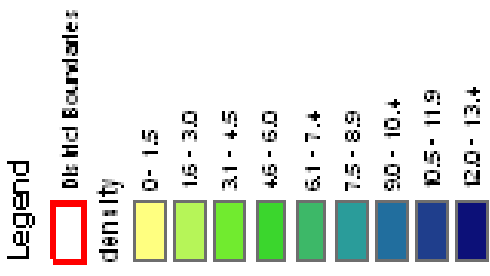
Hot Spot Map of Violent Part 1 Crimes - 2005

The "Kernel Density" maps in this series use a radius of 750 meters and a cell size of 100 meters to create a grid of cells in order to facilitate identification of crime hotspots. The legend color ramp is set to best present the data to reach crime type. Note that the absence of data from adjacent jurisdictions (Oakland, Emeryville, Albany, Kensington, BART, UC P.D., East Bay Parks and CHP) distorts the display by varying degrees in the immediate border areas.



Hot Spot Map of Part 1 Property Crimes 2005

The "Kernel Density" maps in this series use a radius of 750 meters and a cell size of 100 meters to create a grid of 100 meter cells to facilitate identification of crime-hotspots. The legend color ramp is set to best present the data for each crime type. Note that the absence of data from adjacent neighborhoods (Oakland, Emeryville, Albany, Kensington, BART, UCOP, East Bay Parks and CHP) disturbs the display by varying degrees in the immediate border areas.



Hot Spot Map of Auto Burglary 2005

The "Kernel Density" maps in this series use a radius of 750 meters and a cell size of 100 meters to create a grid of hotspots in order to facilitate identification of crime "hotspots". The legend color ramp is set to best present the data to reach a crime type. Note that the absence of data from adjacent jurisdictions (Oakland, Emeryville, Albany, Kensington, BART, MCPD, East Bay Parks and CHP) displays to varying degrees in the immediate border areas.

Legend

Distribution of data:

density

