




MEMORANDUM

TO: Parks and Recreation Board Members

FROM: Kimberly A. McNeeley, M.Ed., CPRP, Director
Austin Parks and Recreation Department 

DATE: May 27, 2022

SUBJECT: Property Crime in Parks

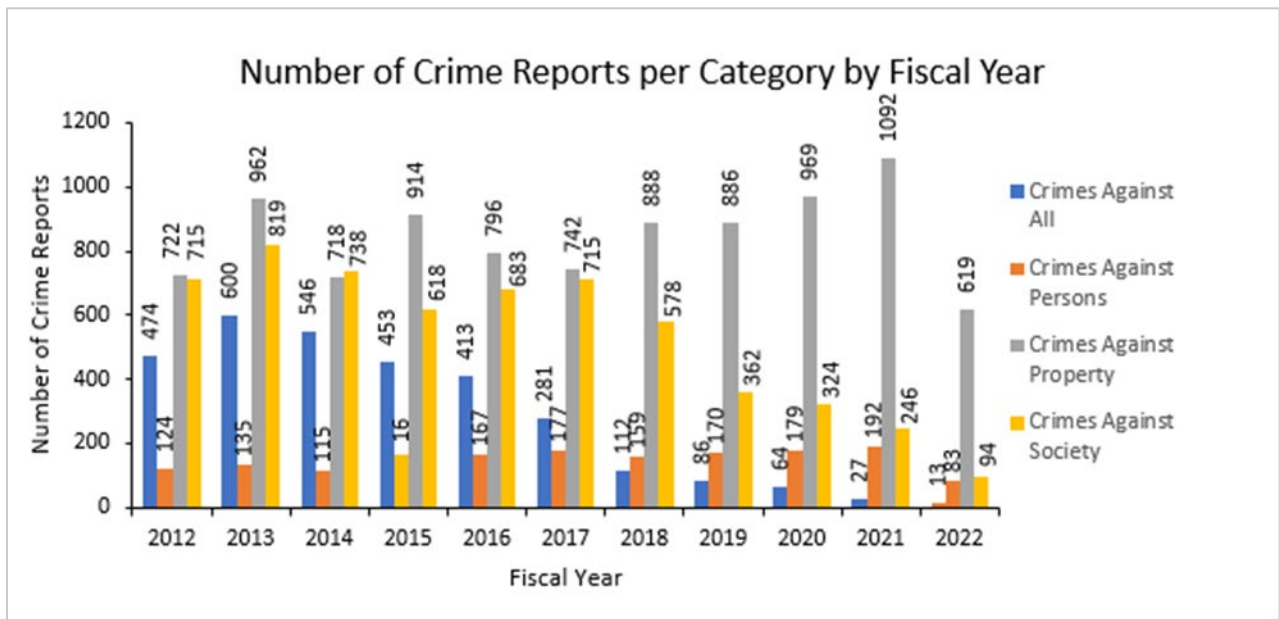
The purpose of this memorandum is to provide an update on property crimes occurring within or adjacent to City of Austin Parkland, and to share the information on the resources available to the Parks and Recreation Department (Department) for crime reporting.

The Austin Police Department (APD) maintains an open data portal to share crime data with the public. Police data is divided into three different categories:

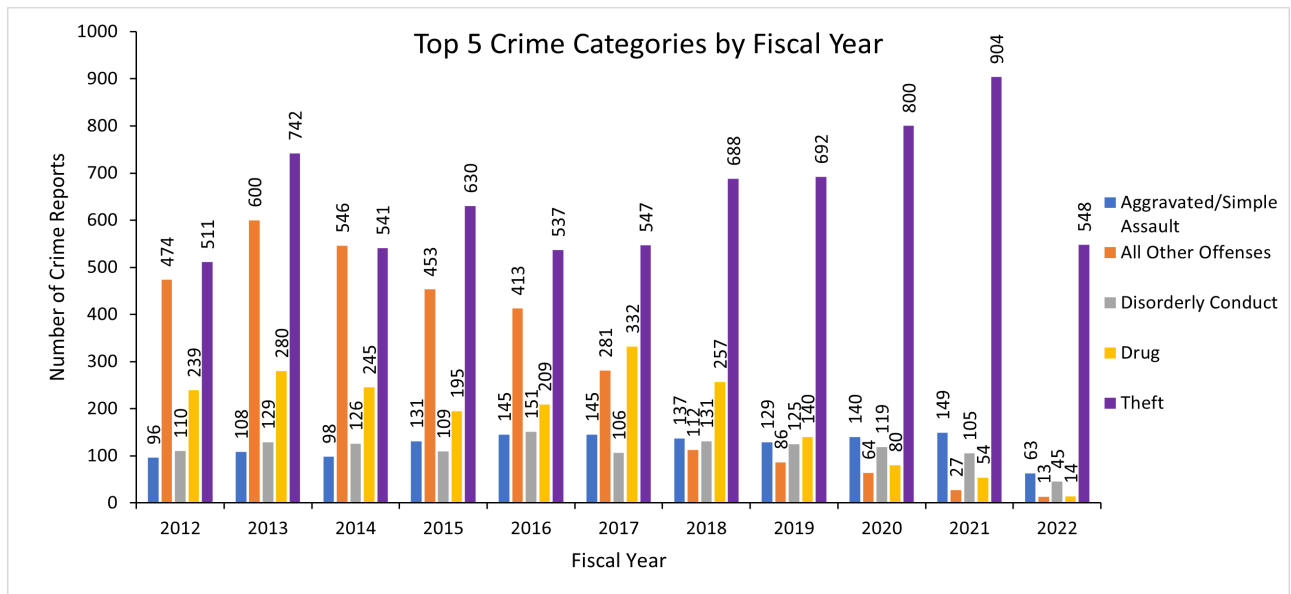
- 1) Crimes against people.
- 2) Crimes against society.
- 3) Crimes against property (property crime).

Property crime includes robbery, burglary/breaking and entering, theft and damage or vandalism of property. Crimes against people include assault, kidnapping or murder. Crimes against society include drug violations, prostitution, weapons law violations or animal cruelty. At the [Public Safety Commission meeting in November of 2021](#), the Austin Police Department provided an update on crime rates in Austin. Between 2020 and 2021, crimes against property reported within the City of Austin declined by 9%

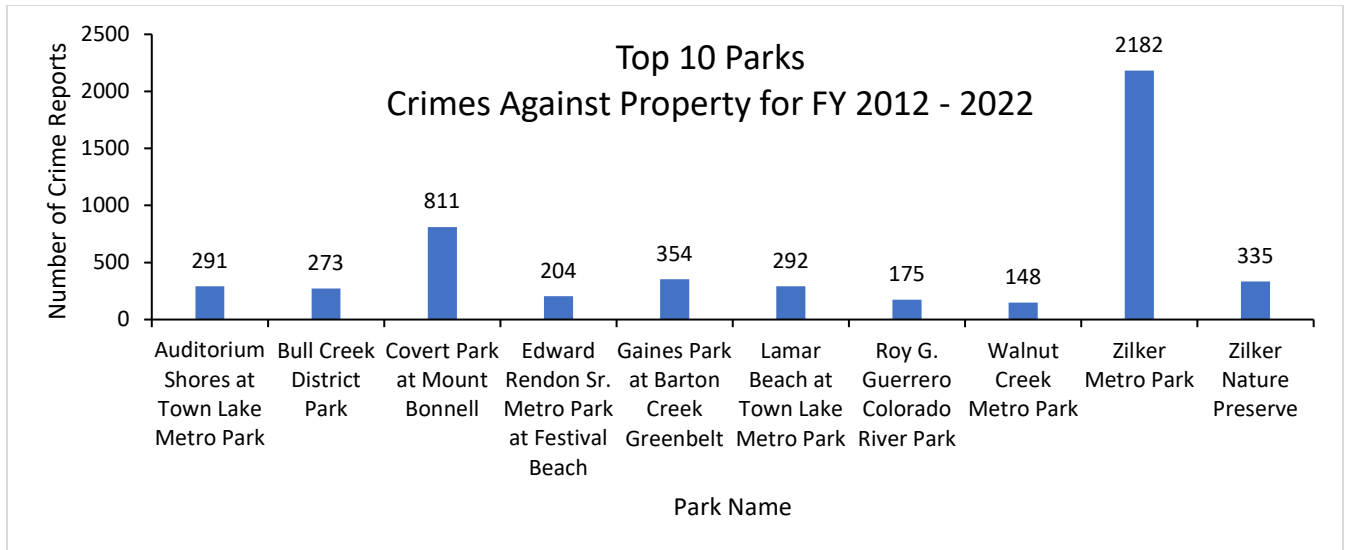
Property crimes are consistently the most reported category on parkland. Crime data cannot be specifically filtered to display crimes which occurred on City parkland, so Geographic Information System software mapped the crime data and within that system a 50-foot buffer was created around all park addresses. The following data presented in this memo involves crimes that occurred within 50 feet of a park address. There were 124 crimes against persons in 2012 and 192 in 2021. There were 722 crimes against property in 2012 and 1,092 in 2021. Lastly, there were 715 crimes against society in 2012 and 246 in 2021. The City population during this same timeframe grew by approximately 20%.



In Fiscal Year 2021, there were a total of 1,092 Property Crimes committed on or within 50 feet of parkland. To date in Fiscal Year 2022, there have been 619 Property Crimes committed on or within 50 feet of parkland. Theft is by far the largest property crime category each year occurring on parkland.



Zilker Metropolitan Park leads parks in the number of crimes against property with Covert Park at Mount Bonnell having the second most reported crimes against property. Instances of reoccurring crime concerns are shared with APD for assistance with addressing the issues.



APD is responsible for enforcing the rule of law throughout the City, including all parks. The Department values the important partnership with APD. In 2020, APD dissolved the Parks Police Unit and shifted all park specific officers to general patrol to meet city-wide officer needs. The Department continues to partner with the APD through the Park Ranger unit. This February 2021 [memo to City Council](#) details the partnership between APD and the Park Rangers. The Department realizes crime and the fear of crime can be a barrier to enjoying parks. The Department’s park managers, park rangers, facility managers and APD partner to problem-solving around crime.

Should you have any questions, please contact my office at (512) 974-6717.

cc: Jodi Jay, M.B.A., CPRP, Assistant Director
 Liana Kallivoka, PhD, PE, LEED Fellow, Assistant Director
 Lucas Massie, M.Ed., CPRP, Assistant Director
 Suzanne Piper, DBA, Chief Administrative Officer