

Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department

Office of Public Information

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Joseph Lombardo, Sheriff

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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LVMPD Shows Decrease in Violent Crime in 2017 Statistics Show Majority of Murder Cases Solved

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department found two very encouraging signs when looking back at 2017: Enforcement efforts have pushed the number of violent crimes down from the previous year, and tenacious investigators with more resources successfully solved the majority of murder cases in Clark County.

“We began last year committed to reducing violent crimes and we were able to deliver that promise,” said Sheriff Joe Lombardo. “We still have more ground to cover, but we’re headed in the right direction.”

By the end of 2017, the number of murders recorded by LVMPD stood at 141, down by 10.2 percent from 2016. Robbery dropped down even further to 11.3 percent from 2016. Overall, the total number of violent crimes, which include Murder, Robbery, Rape, and Aggravated Assault went down by .9 percent. The statistics did not include the 58 people murdered on October 1.

LVMPD’s 2017 violent crimes statistics provides the community the clearest picture of crime caused by people actively causing harm to others or taking lives. It does not include homicides. Homicide is a general term that covers a wide range of deaths including accidental deaths as well as those that resulted from self-defense.

Additionally, LVMPD numbers for property crimes went down overall by 2.9 percent in 2017. Property crimes are not considered a violent crime.

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Efforts to make the needle move downward on violent crimes began in earnest at the start of 2017 by using more accurate technology to find suspects, sharing intelligence between area commands and employing programs like neighborhood engagement teams and launching the Violent Crime Initiative to saturate hotspots with officers.

“It’s more of a team approach (to solving Murders) now,” said Homicide Lt. Dan McGrath. “We have a handful of homicide detectives who are using all of the resources of our agency at their disposal to solve cases.”

McGrath said aside from using information pushed out from LVMPD’s Central Intelligence Unit, detectives take every case personally. They knock on doors, gathering every detail available to them and relentlessly follow up on leads. That sort of tenacious attitude has lent itself to driving the Homicide Unit’s murder solvability rate to 83 percent.

“It’s more of a directed approach as opposed to a general approach to fighting crime,” HSCB Captain Robert Plummer said. “Our detectives are taking new avenues toward solving crimes. For us, victims of violent crime are a priority and we take that very seriously.”

Plummer said that detectives are going to places where people convene, putting their ear to the ground, getting together with Community Oriented Police officers who have established relationships with neighbors. They are taking active roles in several ways. Homicide Detectives now attend Patrol Briefings for the first time. Area Command Captains invite new ideas to solve crimes, like staging a dummy to look like a sleeping homeless person to catch a killer. Another detective spent days inside a barber shop and finally got the lead he needed to solve a case.

Violent crime numbers will likely be reduced in the future by the increase in patrol officers due to funding from the More Cops Initiative along with advances in technology and Forensic Science.

Despite the dip in the number of murders and robberies, Rape and Aggravated Assaults increased last year by 8.4 and 4.8 percent, respectively. One disturbing trend is the number of drug-related altercations where someone gets robbed or killed over a relatively small amount of drugs or marijuana. LVMPD officials are now setting their sights on finding ways to address that emerging issue.

A collage of some of the murder suspects arrested last year, along with a fact sheet on violent and property crimes accompany this release.

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