

Violent Crime in Danville

Danville City Council

Work Session

December 6, 2016

Violent Crime 2015

- Total of 294 violent crimes:
 - Murder – 6
 - Robbery – 85
 - Abduction – 12
 - Aggravated Assault – 147
 - Forcible Sex - 44

Violent Crime Facts for 2015

- An estimated 200 out of 294 violent crimes were between people who knew each other
- Danville is second among Virginia cities in its crime rate
- If no violent crime had occurred, Danville would still be in second place
- 1,407 simple assaults, 1,360 larcenies, 815 vandalisms, 684 drug/narcotic, 320 burglaries comprised 91.4% of the 5,020 crimes in 2015

Violent Crime Percentages

- The 294 violent crimes were 5.8% of the total of 5,020 crimes
- For comparison:
 - Petersburg – 11.0%
 - Lynchburg – 9.0%
 - Radford – 8.5%
 - Charlottesville – 6.6%
 - Martinsville – 5.5%
 - Richmond – 3.6%
 - Roanoke – 3.5%

Murder in Danville

- Average of almost five per year since 1953
- Murder is the most visible perception of crime despite its low percentage (0.1%) of total crime
- Fourteen to date in 2016 – a record high
- Record 25 year lows of only three in both 2012 and 2014

From Record Low to Record High In Two Years - Why?

- Murders have always occurred in cycles
- Cycles are generational and cohort driven
- Cycle duration is shortening
 - Younger offenders
 - Gang affiliation
 - Social media – insults and bravado
 - Access to firearms – illegal and stolen

2016 Homicides - Overview

- All deaths were by gunshot wounds
- Major relevant factor:
 - Gang – 5
 - Argument – 4
 - Domestic – 2
 - Other criminal activity – 2
 - Robbery – 1
- Other relevant factors include parenting, poverty, housing, education, employment.

New Trends

- The gang factor increased significantly in 2016
- Age range of most gang members is approximately 14 to 25 years of age
- Access to firearms is alarming
 - 89 firearms stolen since January 1, 2016
 - 42 from unlocked vehicles
 - Unknown number of straw purchases

Murder By Firearm Is Statewide Problem

- From the 12-3-16 *Richmond Times Dispatch*:
 - Richmond is experiencing a 40% increase in murders from last year
 - Quote from Learned Barry, Richmond Deputy Commonwealth's Attorney:
 - “In the last year, there doesn't seem to be any way we can get people to stop getting and using guns anymore.”

Preliminary Statistics for 2016

- Total violent crime numbers will likely increase slightly
 - Murders
 - Aggravated assaults (because of drive-by retaliation shootings into homes)
- Overall crime will likely decrease by at least 10%
- Significant reductions in burglaries and larcenies

Focus Area #1

Established by City Council

Implement Long and Short Term
Strategies to Reduce Violent Crime

Police Focused Efforts

- Create Gang Task Force of various agencies
- Focused deterrence on gangs
 - Intelligence
 - Informants
 - Search warrants
 - Prosecution
 - Intervention
 - Investigation
- Increase funding for informant fund
- Continue successful burglary reduction program (to reduce stolen firearms)

Police Focused Efforts

- Additional Community Policing Activities
 - Housing incentive program for any law enforcement officer
 - Fixed-base presence in at least two at-risk areas
 - Increased police visibility – foot beat, bicycle, motorcycle
 - Increased interactions with citizens by permanent beat officers
 - Development of “safe zones” for children and others to go to when they feel threatened
 - Closer collaboration with schools

Police Focused Efforts

- Develop public awareness campaigns
 - Gang awareness education
 - Promote responsible firearm ownership
- Expand use of technology
 - Enhance transparency with Community Crime Map
 - Expand use of fixed video monitoring
 - Fund acquisition of gunshot detection system

Police Focused Efforts

- Budget requests:
 - Crime Analyst positions
 - Property and Evidence Technician position
 - False alarm reduction program
 - Additional patrol vehicles

Other Efforts

- Youth Services Task Force
- Neighborhood Revitalization
 - Property maintenance code
 - Graffiti abatement
 - Rental inspection districts
 - Community Development Corporation

Other Efforts

- Parks and Recreation Programming for At-Risk Children and Youth
- Community Wealth Building Task Force
 - Workforce Development
 - Initiatives to Combat Poverty