

City of Alexandria, Virginia

MEMORANDUM

DATE: APRIL 25, 2005
TO: THE HONORABLE MAYOR AND MEMBERS OF CITY COUNCIL
FROM: JAMES K. HARTMANN, CITY MANAGER *J*
SUBJECT: BUDGET MEMO # 115 : PREVENTION AND REDUCTION OF CRIME

This memorandum is in response to the following questions from Councilman Macdonald: (1) What is currently being done to prevent and/or reduce this type of crime (robbery and burglary)?; (2) What at our current staffing levels and how does it affect the ability of the department to address such problems?; (3) How can our crime prevention efforts be strengthened?; (4) Can we actually reduce such crime?; and (5) provide a 10 year history of crime statistics for the City.

1. Prevention and/or Reduction of Crime (Robbery and Burglary)

The Police Department conducts crime analysis on a daily basis, which produces the data used to identify high crime or target areas. Areas with high levels of crime, including robbery and burglary, are addressed with special details comprised of officers or detectives who are experienced in these specific area of crime, or who volunteer to work temporarily on a special "task force" to intercept, prevent or apprehend robbery and/or burglary suspects. If appropriate, Criminal Investigations, Street Crimes, or Community Support officers may assist in the special enforcement efforts. In addition, officers normally "off duty" are hired back using overtime funds.

Special details are also established regularly during certain times of the year when increases in certain types of crime, such as robbery and burglary are expected, such as during the summer and the holiday shopping season.

2. Ability of the Department to Address Crime at Current Staffing Levels

During of peak crime periods, normal staffing is affected when Patrol staff are pulled off of their normal beats to address crime and staff special details or task forces. Detectives are also pulled off of regularly duty and ongoing investigations during these periods. The proposed additional 14 officers will put more officers on the street staffing beats and will free up resources as needed to address emergencies or periods of high or peak crime.

3. Crime Prevention Efforts

Police Department staff regularly analyzes crime statistics within the City to guide the department's targeted efforts. Staff receives and uses intelligence from neighboring jurisdictions, citizens and informants. Staff also uses some of the most innovative crime fighting technology available including the department's award winning Tactical Computer System. In addition, staff publishes brochures and flyers in both English and Spanish that contain safety tips on such things as securing homes and vehicles. Police Department staff aggressively pursues grants whenever possible for additional monies to fund overtime for Part I Crime task forces and to provide equipment for numerous law enforcement purposes.

4. Crime Reduction

In the year ending December 31, 2004, Part I Crimes (Violent Crimes (murder, rape, robbery and aggravated assault) and Property Crimes (burglary, larceny and vehicle theft)) decreased by 16.3 percent as compared to 2003. Violent Crimes increased 8.0 percent compared to 2003 and Property Crimes were down 18.3 percent. In particular, burglary decreased 14.3 percent and robbery increased 4.5 percent.

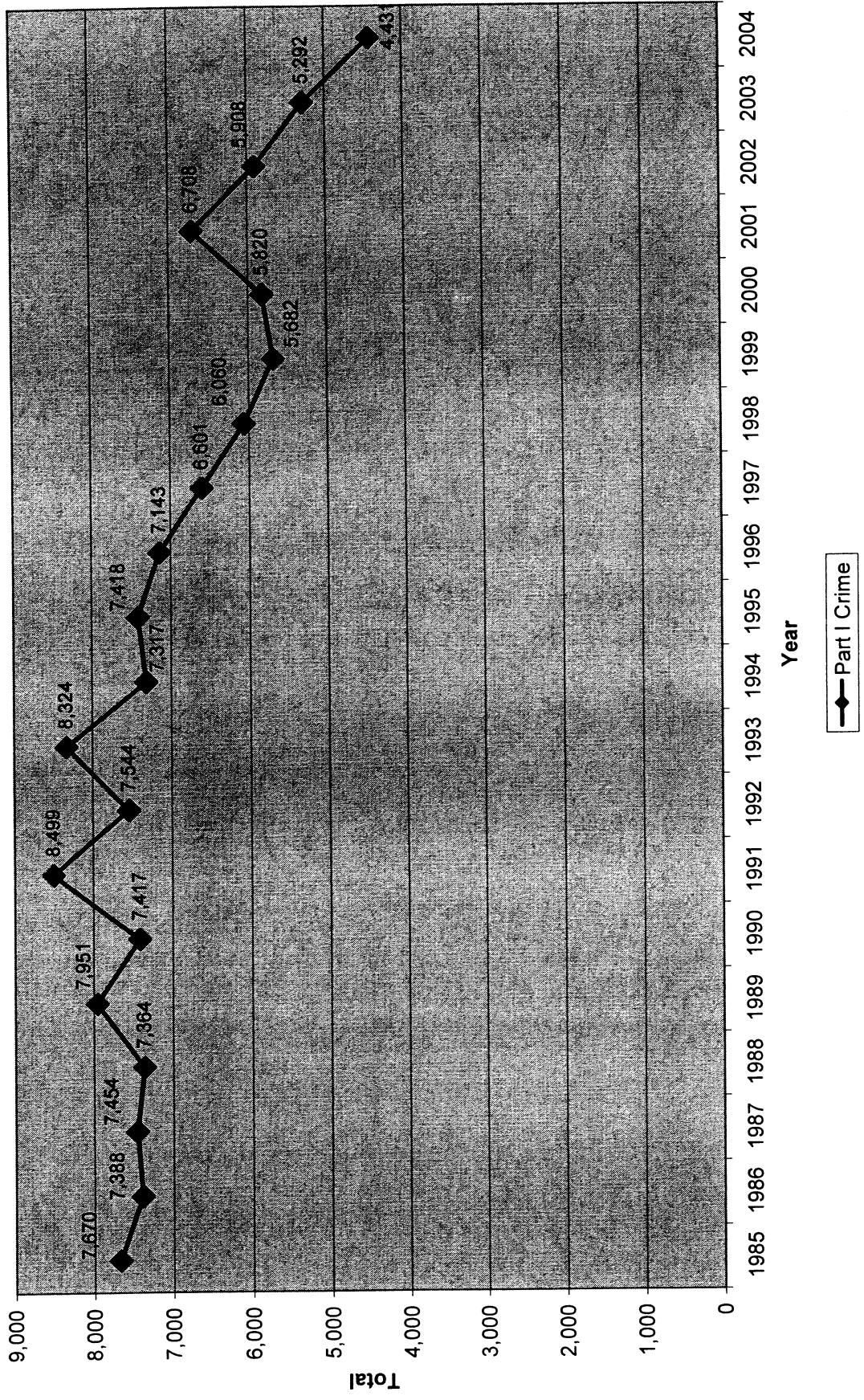
The Police Department has successfully reduced Part I Crimes, the most serious crimes against people and property, by 16.3 percent through a combination of techniques including task forces, surveillance, investigations, innovative technology, maintaining a relatively high rate of arrests, and maintaining strong community partnerships through the Citizens' Police Academy, Residential Police Officers, School Resource Officers and the Liaison Officer Program.

While these methods are highly labor intensive, they remain balanced with the daily needs to respond to emergency calls, calls for service and issues that require immediate response. Even with an increasing population, crime is steadily decreasing and the citizens of Alexandria are safer now than they were 10 to 20 years ago.

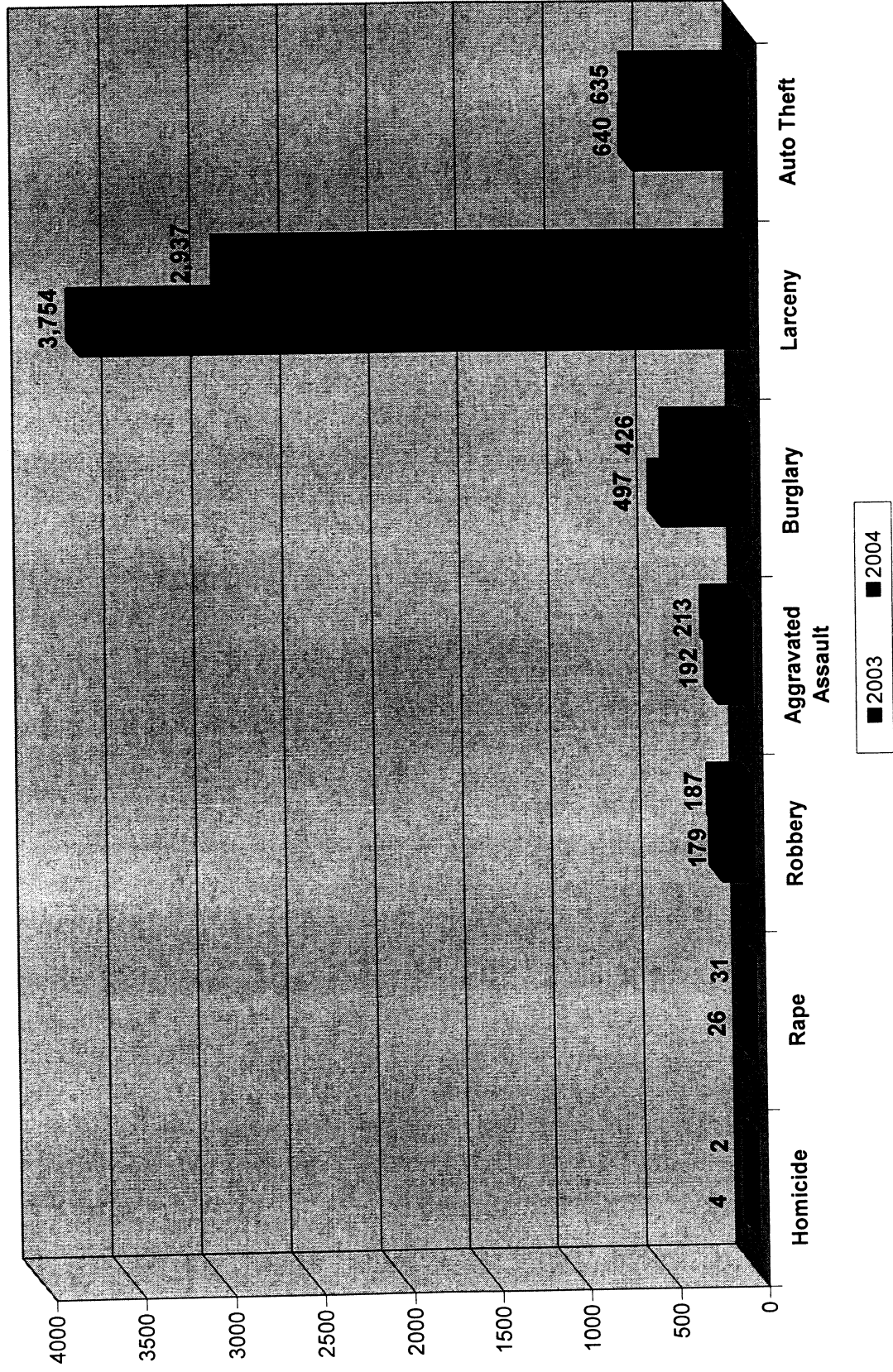
5. Crime Statistics

Attached are several graphs and tables which illustrate the steady decline in Part I Crimes since 1985. In addition there are also two graphs and a table which compares Part I Crime statistics in 2004 to 2003.

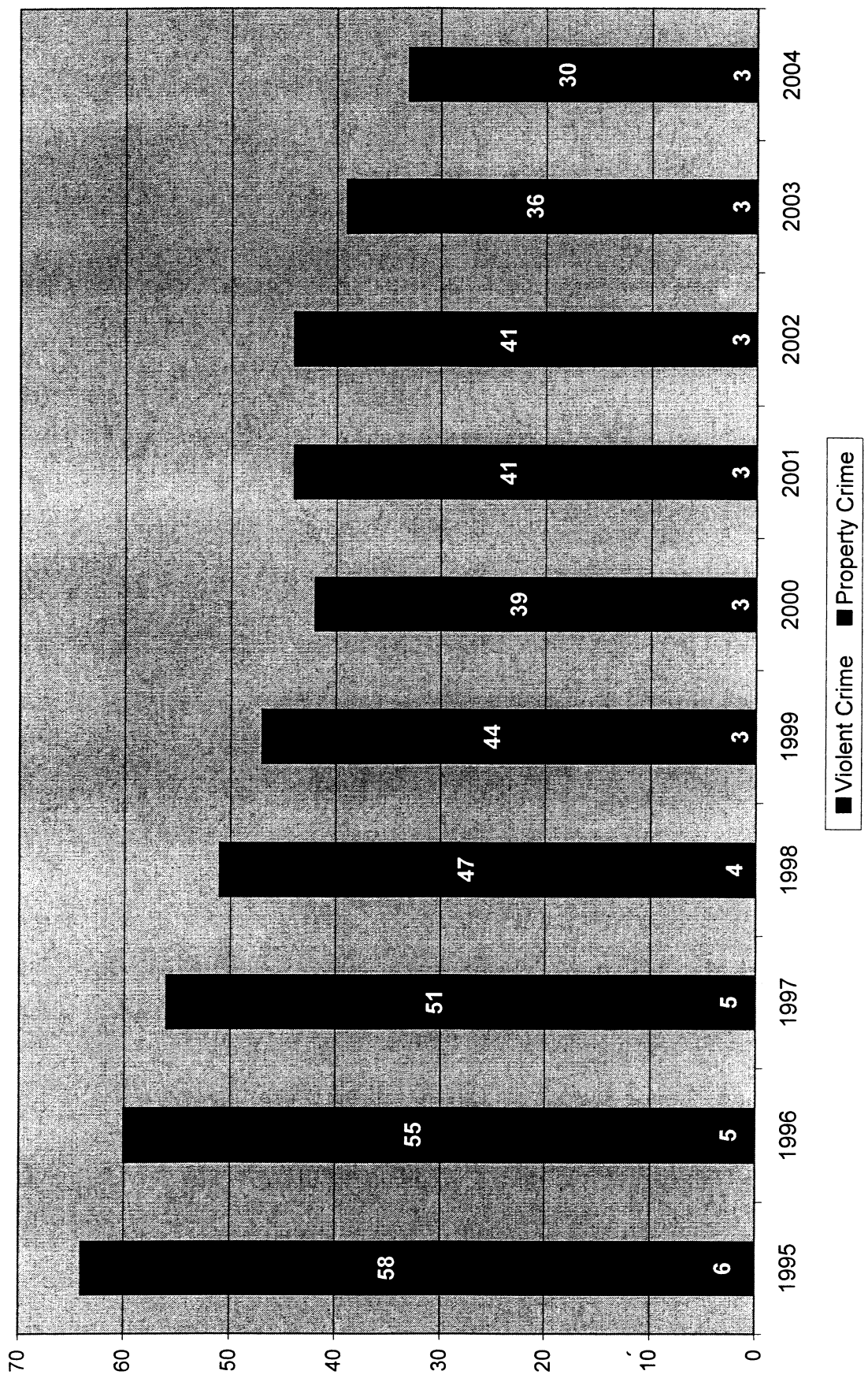
Part I Crime in Alexandria 1985 - 2004



Part 1 Crime Comparison 2003 - 2004



Violent Crime and Property Crime Per 1,000 Population 1995 - 2004



PART I CRIMES		2003	2004	Change	% Change
Violent Crimes	Homicide	4	2	-2	-50.0%
	Rape	26	31	5	19.2%
	Robbery	179	187	8	4.5%
	Aggravated Assault	192	213	21	10.9%
	Sub-Total	401	433	32	8.0%
Property Crimes	Burglary	497	426	-71	-14.3%
	Larceny	3,754	2,937	-817	-21.8%
	Auto Theft	640	635	-5	-0.8%
	Sub-Total	4,891	3,998	-893	-18.3%
	Total	5,292	4,431	-861	-16.3%

PERCENTAGE CHANGE IN VIOLENT CRIME

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Violent Crime	654	636	606	489	388	322	389	408	402	433
Percent Change	-7.2	-2.8	-4.7	-19.3	-20.7	-17	20.8	4.9	-1.5	7.7

POPULATION AND CRIME (CRIME PER 1,000)

	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004
Population	117,000	117,300	117,600	119,500	121,700	128,283	132,700	135,000	135,000	134,000
Violent Crime	6	5	5	4	3	3	3	3	3	3
Property Crime	58	55	51	47	44	39	41	41	36	30
Total Part 1 Crime	64	60	56	51	47	41*	44	44	39	33

Auto Theft Trend 1995 - 2004

