

# PUBLIC SAFETY

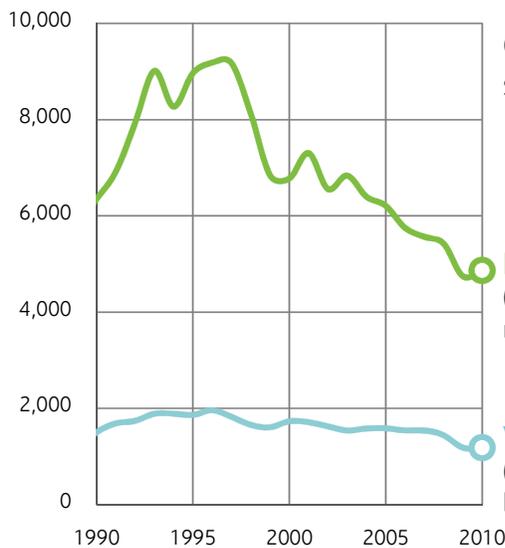


## DID YOU KNOW?

- » Public safety was identified as the third highest priority in the NashvilleNext Issues Survey.
- » The Nashville public shows a high level of community satisfaction with Metro Police: In 2012, 88% report being very or somewhat satisfied.
- » A study of satisfaction levels from 2006 - 2009 showed little variation across race and ethnic groups: black Nashvillians were 78% satisfied, compared with 83% of white Nashvillians.
- » Since 2000, Metro Police has assigned Community Coordinators to maintain relations with communities throughout Nashville.
- » A new crime and DNA lab is scheduled to open in 2014, allowing Metro Police to use and test DNA in hundreds more cases each year.
- » Despite tight budgets since the recession, Metro has expanded public safety services over that time.
- » In 2011, fires in Nashville caused 12 deaths and \$15 million in property damages.
- » Metro Fire maintains 36 stations throughout Davidson County's 530 square miles.
- » Most stations are in the urban core, where response times average 3 minutes. Beyond the urban core, response times average 5 - 7 minutes.

## Crime in Nashville

Crimes per 100,000 residents



Crime in Nashville has declined since its peak in the mid-1990s.

**Property crimes** (such as burglary and auto theft) are the most common and have dropped the most.

**Violent crimes** (such as murder and assault) have declined less, but are still down 40% since 1996.

**334,000** Calls for fire & emergency response from 2006 — 2008

**63%** were for a medical emergency

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This background report is one of several developed to provide input to the NashvilleNext planning process and provide a starting point for broader community discussion. Any final policies and recommendations endorsed by the NashvilleNext Steering Committee for the consideration of the Metropolitan Planning Commission will be the result of the entire planning process and upcoming community engagement and discussion. This is a brief summary of the Public Safety background report. The reader is encouraged to read the entire report at [www.nashvillenext.net](http://www.nashvillenext.net)

# PUBLIC SAFETY

Police, the Fire Department, and the Sheriff's Office have a number of goals to ensure a safe community. These agencies approach their tasks with policies, procedures and resources often unknown to the general public, but must nevertheless maintain public confidence and trust.

One way to build public confidence is to engage in practices that work and are seen by the community at large to work. Since the 2008 recession, Metro has focused on maintaining levels of service across all departments, while carefully paring back its budget wherever possible. Public safety has been one of three priority areas where direct services were not reduced. Nevertheless, Nashville is not alone in finding pressure to do more with the same or fewer resources.

Design of the built and natural environment plays a major role in improving public safety in urban areas. The physical planning and design of the urban context can organize and coordinate urban elements to form a safe, cohesive system of urban open spaces, parks and plazas, transportation and related circulation, buildings, and other structures. This systematic, designed organization of urban components establishes a safe and pleasant public environment. The quality of the urban context is created to a large extent through careful planning and design of all related elements.

Some of the categories of best practices identified in the report include:

- » Problem-oriented policing, to increase police presence and visibility in high-crime areas or with high-risk individuals.
- » Evidence-based policing, to monitor national trends in crime enforcement.
- » Data mining, to respond more quickly or proactively to actual or likely increases in crime.
- » Smart911, to connect emergency responders to voluntarily provided health and emergency profiles.
- » Ongoing monitoring of fire risk factors.

