

PUBLIC SAFETY IN UNIVERSITY PLACE



City Council Votes to Add Public Safety Levy Proposal to November Ballot

At its meeting on July 18, the U.P. City Council voted unanimously to place a public safety levy proposal on the November ballot. If approved by voters, the levy would provide funding to allow the University Place Police Department to hire additional staff to reduce response times, enhance traffic enforcement and address neighborhood and business community concerns.

Public Safety Proposal

The dedicated funding provided by the levy would support the following additional positions in the Police Department:

1. Additional investigative staff (currently staffed with only one investigator) to address the growing number of property crime cases, and to enhance the Department's ability to investigate more complex cases in-house. Increasing the number of cases solved can have a deterrent effect.
2. Additional patrol officers, increasing police staffing from two officers on-duty for each shift to three officers per shift. This will improve police visibility and response times.
3. Additional traffic enforcement officers, providing sustained attention to speeding concerns and pedestrian safety issues.
4. A new Community Outreach Officer team, who will work within the Police Department to address lower-level public safety concerns. This team will allow patrol officers to focus on crimes and in-progress emergencies, while providing crime prevention education to homeowners, businesses, and apartment complexes. Additionally, the team will conduct safety patrols in our parks and business districts.

The levy would cost property owners approximately \$4.19 per month for every \$100,000 in a property's assessed value. For the average U.P. home of \$524,870 (the average taxable home value as determined by the Pierce County Assessor-Treasurer), the levy would cost approximately \$22 a month. Low-income seniors and low-income disabled homeowners may qualify for an exemption from this increase.

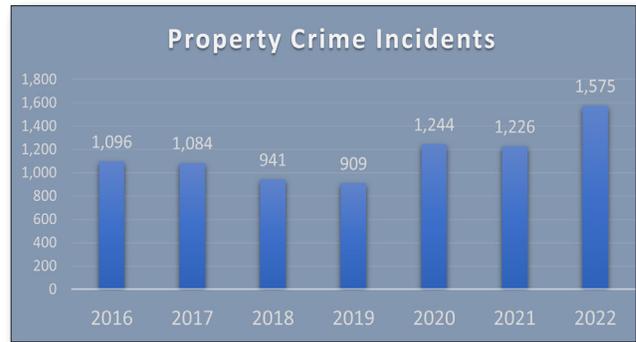
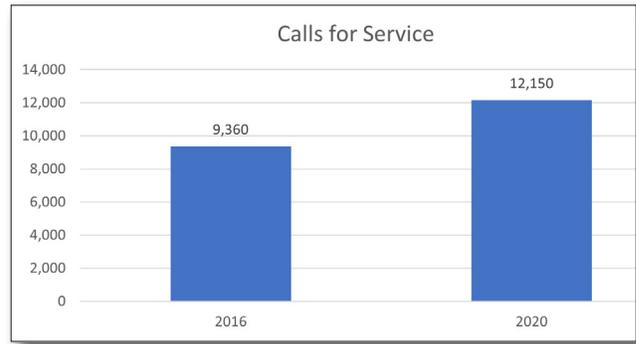
The City currently receives approximately six cents for every dollar taxpayers pay in property tax. The City dedicates all property taxes it receives to public safety.

Addressing Response Times & Property Crime Requires More Police on Our Streets

The Police Department's calls for service have increased dramatically over the past few years — by almost 30% since 2016.

Property crimes were identified as the highest area of concern in our recent survey. As shown in the chart to the right, the rise in property crimes has placed an additional burden on the University Place Police Department.

Please note that the 2022 incidents are a projection based on actual incidents between January and April.



Police Department Staffing Lags Community Growth



Even when fully staffed, the University Place Police Department currently has the fewest officers per 1,000 residents in the state. For similarly sized jurisdictions in Washington, with populations of 20,000–60,000 (52 cities and counties), the average staffing is 1.19 officers per 1,000 residents. University Place has a staffing ratio of 0.45 officers per 1,000.

This disparity is growing as our city grows. Between 2011-2020, University Place added three times the number of new residents compared to the previous decade. In that same time, the Police Department has added only two new positions. This growth has dramatically stretched law enforcement resources.

To learn more Scan the QR Code or visit www.CityofUP.com and visit the Public Safety Levy Discussion page or scan the QR Code. If you have questions or would like to provide feedback email UPPublicSafety@CityofUP.com.



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