



Town of Atherton

Department of Police Annual Report

2020



About Us

It is an honor and privilege to have been selected as the newest Chief hired in 2017.

Our full-time sworn staff of 21, plus a Training Manager, 5 Communications Dispatchers, 1 Code Enforcement Officer, 1 Support Services Coordinator, 5 level One Reserve Officers and 6 Per Diem dispatchers make up this professional team.

The department provides a full range of police services to a population of more than 7,100 residents. The Town's population increases sharply during weekdays due to the nine private and public schools within the Town limits and on-going construction projects.

The men and women of the Atherton Police Department serve with unmistakable pride and integrity, which has garnered the organization tremendous community support. Subscribing to a philosophy of community policing, they provide a unique and personalized brand of customer service seldom seen in other police agencies. Through strong police / community partnerships, the Town of Atherton enjoys an extremely low crime rate, which contributes to a very desirable quality of life for our residents.

Twitter: #AthertonPolice
Steven McCulley - Chief of Police

Atherton's History

Fair Oaks

In 1866, Atherton was known as Fair Oaks, and was a flag stop on the California Coast for the Southern Pacific Railroad between San Francisco and San Jose for the convenience of the owners of large estates living north of Menlo Park. The entire area was called Menlo Park. It was part of the Rancho de las Pulgas, which is now southern San Mateo County.

Incorporation of Atherton

In 1923, Menlo Park wanted to incorporate its lands to include Fair Oaks. During a meeting of the representatives of the two communities, the Fair Oaks property owners maintained their community as a strictly residential area and they would incorporate independently. Both groups rushed to Sacramento but the Fair Oaks committee arrived first. It was at that time they realized that they could not keep the name Fair Oaks, as it was already the name of a town near Sacramento. It was decided to honor Faxon Dean Atherton who had been one of the first property owners in the south peninsula and name the town for him. Atherton was incorporated on September 12, 1923.

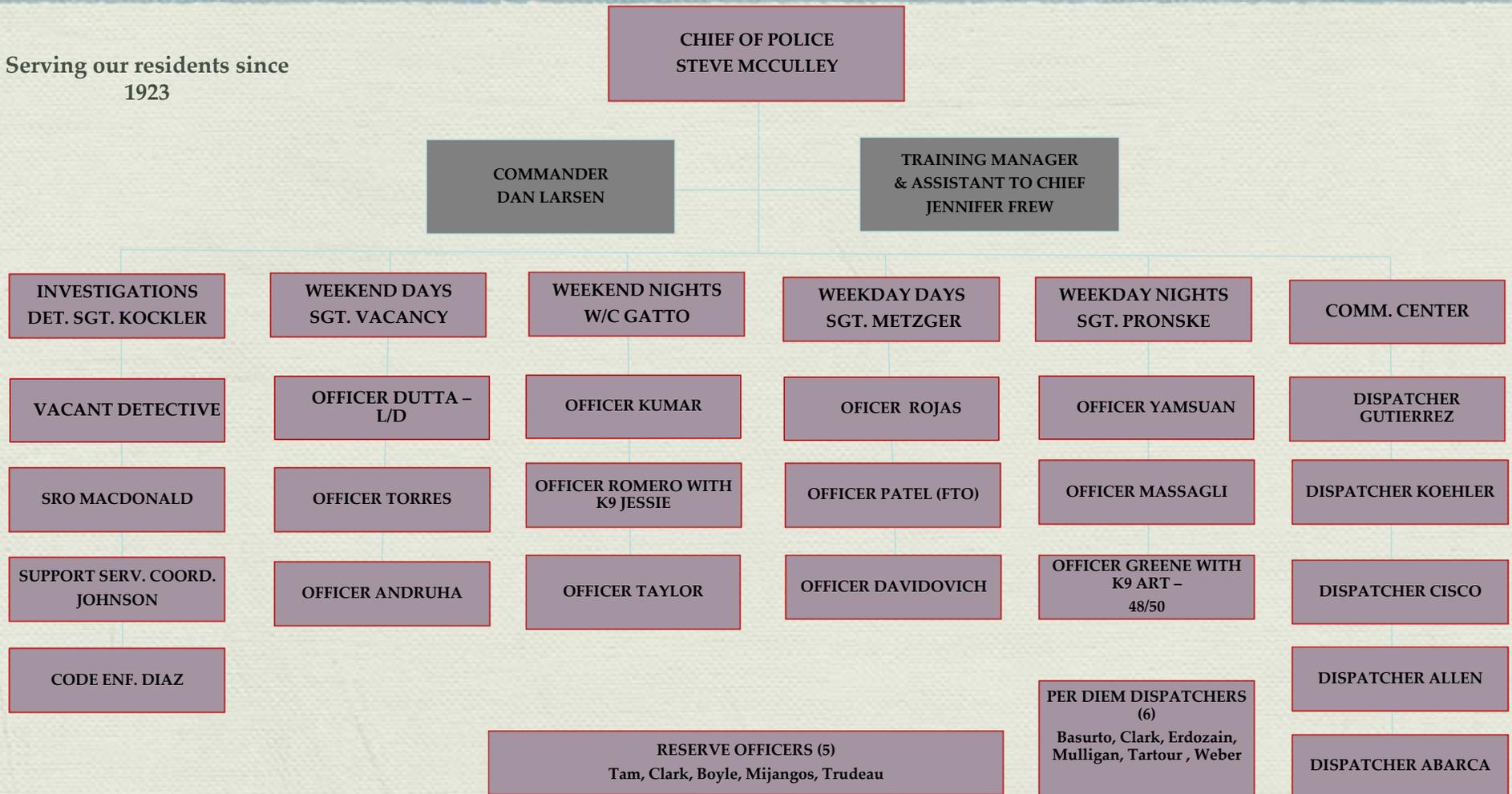
History ...

Town Name

- Faxon D. Atherton, originally from Massachusetts, had spent several years as a trader in tallow, hides, and merchandise. His friend and business associate, Thomas Lark, had written to him about the opportunities, for family and business, on the San Francisco peninsula. Atherton purchased over 600 acres in 1860. His home, Valparaiso Park, was built several years later.
- Atherton is still a plain of oaks. Native live oaks, white oaks, bays, redwoods, cedars, pines, and other ornamental trees cover the six square miles of town. There are approximately 50 miles of roads. The population is approximately 7,000 with approximately 2,500 households.
- Ms. Olive Holbrook-Palmer left Holbrook Palmer Park, 22 acre park, to the Town in 1958. It is an open, tree-covered park, which offers recreational programs, has facilities for functions including a little league baseball park.

ATHERTON DEPARTMENT OF POLICE

Serving our residents since
1923



Authorized – 21 sworn

Actual – 21 Police Trainee Rivera – April 2021 – Oct. 2021 Police Academy

Departmental Vision, Mission Statement, Value Statement and Motto

- Our Vision is to ensure the Town of Atherton is one of the safest municipalities in the State of California achieved through the delivery of quality law enforcement services.
- Our mission is to develop and support a team of professionals who consistently seek and find innovative policing strategies to affirmatively promote, preserve and deliver those quality services which enhance security and safety in our community and enhance the lives of our residents. To support this mission, we will work in strong partnership with the community and the citizens we serve.
- To Serve with Honor, Integrity and Professionalism.
- No Call Too Small.



Departmental Goals

1. **Customer Service** – Provide professional, courteous and quality police services.
2. **Proactivity** – Provide crime prevention through proactive policing methods.
3. **Traffic Safety** – Conduct enforcement operations, traffic safety education outreach and engineering observations.
4. **Training** – Provide quality training for all agency personnel.
5. **Disaster Preparedness** – Provide emergency police response and disaster readiness services to the community.
6. **Employee Safety and Wellness** – Provide all employees with the proper training, equipment and resources to safely conduct daily operations.

Atherton's Divisions

Administration

- The Atherton Police Department is committed to providing exceptional public safety services and believes in taking a leadership role in fostering community partnerships. By cooperating to identify and solve issues we can make this great town even greater. This unit includes the Chief of Police, Police Commander and the Assistant to the Chief/Training Manager.

Communications and Records

- The Police Communication Center is located at the front of the Police Department and operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Citizens who call the Police Department talk to a dispatcher who immediately radios the reported information to Officers in the field, thus enabling a very fast response time. The Communications Center is a modern facility utilizing the latest technology to efficiently and effectively handle complaints and concerns. Residents with alarm systems connected to the Police Department have their alarms monitored in the Communications Center.

Investigations Division

Investigations

- The Investigation Division is responsible for investigating cases reported through the Patrol Division. Some of the crimes investigated include thefts, home and auto burglaries, identity theft, crimes against children, and sexual assaults. The goal is to arrest the person(s) responsible for the alleged crime. In addition, the Investigations Division works closely with the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office to assist in the prosecution of the investigated cases.
- The Investigations Division is also responsible for keeping updated on legal issues and disseminating that information to the Patrol Division. The Detectives also work closely with the community to make sure they are informed of current crime trends.

Canine / Patrol Divisions

Canine Unit

- The Atherton Police Department's K9 Unit was created to help an atmosphere of service and safety in the community, utilizing canines in general and specialized patrol to enhance crime prevention, crime suppression, criminal investigation, and Police Officer/Citizen protection.

Patrol

- The backbone of a police organization, patrol officers and supervisors handle day-to-day calls on the radio, attend public meetings, perform inspections of citizen's homes for crime prevention preparedness, handle traffic collision investigations, write citations for moving violations and vehicle equipment violations, and conduct highly visible patrols throughout the Town. Patrol Officers are always uniformed and work 7 days a week and 24 hours a day. This is designed to deter criminal opportunity and leave our residents with the sense of security they have come to know and expect in Atherton.

Property / Evidence ~ Code Enforcement

Property/Evidence

- Atherton Police Officers and the Atherton Police Property section collect and recover many items of property each week. Once items are submitted as evidence or booked into the Property Room, only the property officer can handle or release items.
- All property releases are done by appointment only.

Code Enforcement

Code Enforcement is the prevention, detection, investigation and enforcement of violations of statutes or ordinances regulating public health, safety, and welfare, public works, business activities and consumer protection, building standards, land-use, or municipal affairs.

Traffic Division

Traffic

- The Atherton Traffic Safety Program was established in 1995, and was formed in response to the ever-increasing flow of traffic within the Town. The main goal of the program is to reduce fatal and injury collisions through both enforcement and education, with a high concentration in school zones.
- The Town of Atherton has 50 miles of paved roadway within its jurisdiction. 45.25 miles of which are small two-lane roadways not designed to carry a high volume of traffic or large, over sized vehicles. These officers also spend a great deal of time addressing areas where complaints have been received, as well as reducing the amount of commercial vehicles over 3 tons that use our roadways. Traffic Officers also change to work nighttime hours during the holidays such as DUI enforcement, Click It or Ticket and Distracted driver awareness.

ATHERTON

PART ONE CRIMES: 2020



Cases Reported Atherton	2019	2020
Homicide	0	0
Rape	2	2
Robbery	4	3
Aggravated Assault	8	10
Simple Assault	10	6
Burglary	33	40
Larceny	91	98
Stolen Vehicle	4	4
Arson	0	0
TOTALS	152	163



PART ONE CRIMES IN SAN MATEO COUNTY



Cases Reported – SM County	2019	2020
Homicide	14	Not Yet Available
Rape	294	
Robbery	551	
Assault	4445	
Burglary	6318	
Larceny	11,693	
Stolen Vehicle	1460	
Arson	n/a	
TOTALS	24,775	



PART ONE CRIMES IN CALIFORNIA

Year	2019	2020
Homicide	1679	Not Yet Available Until July 2021
Rape	14,720	
Robbery	52,050	
Aggravated Assault	104,756	
Burglary	151,596	
Stolen Vehicle	140,732	
Larceny	622,869	
Arson	8266	
TOTALS	1,096,668	



POLICE DEPARTMENT RESPONSE TIMES

Year	2019	2020
Priority 1 Response Time – Normal Calls for Service	5:02	4 minutes 33 seconds
Code 3 Response Time - Using Lights and Siren	2:29	2 minutes 18 seconds





TRAFFIC DIVISION

The Traffic Division is dedicated to promoting a safe environment for pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists alike. The Traffic Division uses education and enforcement to ensure the best delivery of services to the community we serve.

The Traffic Division is made up of two (2) Officers and one (1) Reserve Officer, and is overseen by a Sergeant.

The Traffic Division completes traffic enforcement on all streets within the Town of Atherton, and focuses heavily on areas with traffic complaints.

All marked police vehicles and police motorcycles are equipped with moving radar systems, and the Department currently possesses three (3) hand-held Lidar units. Both the radar systems and the Lidar units are used to measure the speed of motorists.

The Traffic Division handles traffic collision incidents and prepares reports for involved motorists, insurance companies and the District Attorney's Office.

The Traffic Division also handles the following additional duties: Working uniformed patrol as needed, training new officers, and administration functions as needed to keep the police department working in an efficient manner.

Traffic Safety Enforcement Statistics

Traffic Citations/Warnings	2019 Citations/Warnings	2020 Citations/Warnings
Other Moving	274 / 574	178 / 394
Speed	454 / 1067	426 / 1010
Bicycle	0 / 5	0 / 6
Pedestrian	1 / 0	0 / 2
Unlicensed Driver	217 / 3	206 / 2
Insurance	48 / 71	37 / 56
Suspended Driver	64 / 0	51 / 1
Drugs	11 / 0	21 / 0
DUI	10 / 0	14 / 0
Other Criminal	1 / 0	0 / 0
Mechanical	158 / 184	74 / 59
Parking	139 / 35	64 / 6
Truck Route	0 / 4	0 / 0



Traffic Collisions

Traffic Collisions	2019	2020
Non-Injury	62	27
Minor Injury	36	16
Severe Injury	1	0
Fatality	0	1
Total	99	44



Car vs. Bike Collisions & Car vs. Pedestrian Collisions

Auto vs. Bike Collisions	2019	2020
Driver at Fault	9	3
Bicycle at Fault	2	2
Passenger at Fault	1	0
Unknown Fault	2	1
Totals	14	6

Auto vs. Pedestrian Collisions	2019	2020
Driver at Fault	0	0
Pedestrian at Fault	1	1
Unknown Fault	0	0
Totals	1	1



INVESTIGATIONS



- **Investigations Division**
- The Investigations Division conducts follow-up criminal investigations on felony and misdemeanor crimes reported to the Police Department. Typically, a uniformed police officer responds to a call for service and prepares an initial police report which may require follow-up investigation. A detective is then assigned to conduct the follow-up investigation, often requiring many hours of work before an arrest is made or a case is closed.
- The Investigations Division consists of 1 sergeant and 1 detective. Police officers assigned to the Investigations Division are provided additional specialized training in order to prepare them for a specific investigative assignment. Cases handled by the Investigations Division consist of the following:
 - Homicide, Suicide, Sexual Assault, Robbery, Burglary, Theft, Identity Theft, Fraud, Child Abuse and Neglect, Elder Abuse and Neglect.
 - The Investigations Unit also handles the following additional duties:
 - Working uniformed patrol, Training new officers, and Administration functions to keep the police department working in an efficient manner.

INVESTIGATIONS

	2019	2020
Total Cases to Investigations	104	36
Information Only	6	1
Closed Cases	10	0
Suspended Cases	46	27
Referred – Hillcrest DA	4	1
Cited Adult	1	0
Referred – Outside Agency	3	6
Adult Arrest	4	3
Referred – Adult DA	14	8
Located/Returned	0	0
Unfounded	0	0
Cleared By Other Means	1	0
Referred to School	1	0
Cited - Juvenile	0	0
Juvenile Arrest	1	0
Active Cases	22	11



School Statistics 2020



School	Incidents	Community Outreach	Traffic Enforcement	Cases
Adelante Selby Lane	549	3	5	5
Encinal	485	7	8	0
Laurel	352	3	0	2
Las Lomas	583	4	6	0
Menlo-Atherton HS	870	55	1	30
Menlo College	601	0	0	12
Menlo School	117	2	0	2
Sacred Heart	131	0	0	10

School Resource Officer

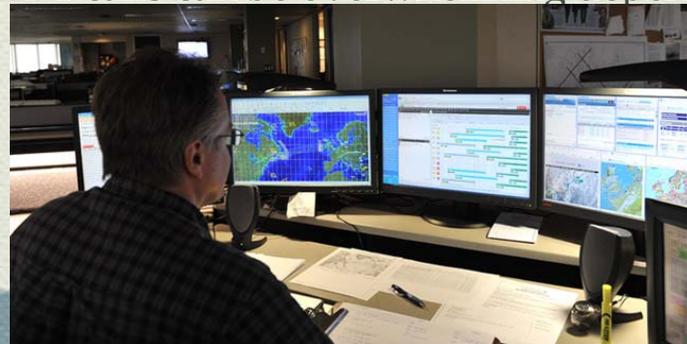
- We have defined a School Resource Officer (SRO) as a sworn officer assigned to a school on a long-term basis trained to perform three major roles: law enforcement officer, law-related counselor, and law-related educator. In addition, the officer works in collaboration with the school and the community as a resource for safety and security issues. As a law enforcement officer, the school becomes the officer's patrol. The SRO assists the school administration in maintaining a safe and secure environment. School administrators benefit from the SRO's training, knowledge, and experience in handling situations. The SRO provides a highly visible presence to deter or identify trespassers on campus. SROs are responsible for investigating violations of criminal law. An SRO's sworn duty to enforce the law does not contradict the need for the SRO to be a positive role model, but rather supports it. It is essential for an SRO to endorse high moral standards and use good judgment and discretion. Through this, students learn and understand what a professional police officer does.

Cases Taken at MAHS in 2020

- Grand Theft (3)
- Petty Theft (11)
- Possession of Controlled Substance (1)
- Battery (11)
- Child Protective Services Referral (1)
- Property for Destruction (1)
- Criminal Threats (1)
- Possession of Burglary Tools (1)
- Prowling With Intent To Commit Theft (1)
- Rape (1)
- Create a Disturbance at a School Meeting (1)
- Possession of BB Gun (1)
- Trespass (1)
- 5150 (1)
- Vandalism (11)
- Suspicious Circumstance (4)

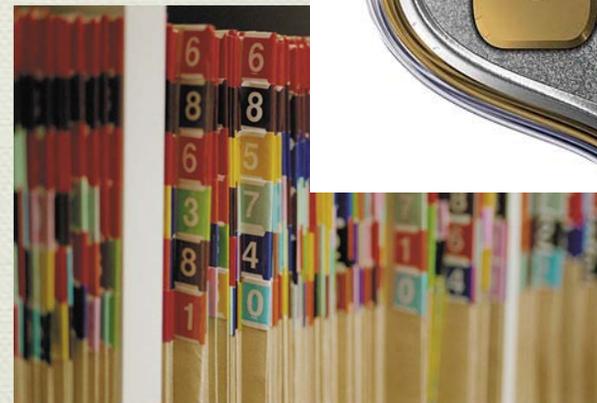
Communications Center

- The dispatcher is the first person to gather clues and cues about an emergency. An experienced, well-trained dispatcher is able to gather a lot of high quality, vitally important information that can help first responders form an early understanding of what they will be facing upon arrival at the emergency scene. In some dispatch centers the questions asked of callers are scripted or there may be prompts to help dispatchers gather the essential facts.
- Callers are often distraught when calling 9-1-1 and the dispatchers have the difficult task of both calming the caller and extracting quality information from them. If you have spent any time as a dispatcher or in a dispatch center during the processing of a critical emergency call you understand this can be a very challenging task. In haste, the callers often abbreviate what they are saying. Some may become agitated and scream at the dispatchers, complicating the ability to understand.
- Depending on the type of emergency, location and time of day, a dispatch center can get dozens of calls about an emergency. The massive influx of 9-1-1 calls can be overwhelming depending on the number of dispatchers on duty.



Dispatch/ Records

	2019	2020
Total Calls for Service	10,192	7426
Total Number of Cases	798	647
Cases sent to the DA	164	128
Misdemeanor Arrest	166	122
Felony Arrests	37	23
Citations processed	3279	2949
Parking cites routed	140	69
Clearance letters	133	93
Warrants entered/updated	75 / 82	34/20
CAD entries made	18,821	15,923
Phone calls handled	29,420	7426



K9 PROGRAM HISTORY



Since 1966, the Atherton Police Department K9 Unit has had over 15 dogs assist Atherton officers to help the department with its primary function, the preservation of life and property. The K9 Unit assists in achieving this goal by promoting an atmosphere of service and safety in the community, utilizing canines in general and specialized patrol to enhance crime prevention, crime suppression, criminal investigation, and Police Officer/Citizen protection.

A particularly unique, challenging, and useful position, K-9 handlers are very carefully chosen, because this assignment is a commitment to a highly trained animal, as well as to the police department and community. Police dogs are imported from other countries, such as the Czech Republic, Germany, and Holland. The Atherton Police utilizes German Shepherd dogs. The personality of the handler must be paired with that of the dog, and highly qualified trainers of police service dogs assist the department in this process. Then, the handler and his/her new partner train together for several weeks, then several hours each week for the rest of the time that dog works for the police department. The patrol cars are specially designed and modified for the comfort and safety of these dogs.

The officers must learn to speak a considerable vocabulary of words in the language of the dog's country of origin. Most of the police dogs in the US come here with about 2 years of intensive training in disciplines such as scent detection, searching for humans, apprehension, etc.

In Atherton, the police department is very grateful to specific residents who have come forward and donated funds to purchase our police dogs, to buy and set up the K-9 vehicles, and to pay for expenses such as high-quality canine food, veterinary care, and the tools and equipment used for K-9 training. While many of these citizens have requested to remain confidential, the police department will never forget their generosity and support of this important part of our department.

It is also important to note that surrounding communities often request the use of our K-9 teams to assist in searches of buildings and locations, so that dangerous suspects are apprehended quickly and safely. It often takes a trained K-9 team only minutes to check a building or large open area for suspects, where it might take hours and a host of officers to safely contain an area long enough to do a thorough search without the dogs.

Even when the K-9 teams are not being used to search for suspects, they are a great partner to have as backup on a car stop, or any other call involving a person who may not want to cooperate with the police. It is always amazing that when the K-9 team arrives, the suspects tend to become very cooperative, and they seldom try to run or hide from the officers.

Canine

K9 JESSIE



K9 Logs	2019	2020
Total Training Hours	200 hours Per K9	
Art – Jessie – Qancy -		0 47.5 47
Bites	0	0
Non-Bite apprehension	1	0
Cases	15	6



K9 ART

K9 QANCY



Training

- **Total training hours FY 19-20** **2,720**
- **Briefing Training Hours** **45.15**
- **POST Reimbursement** **\$ 29,004.02**

3 Major categories of training:

Mandatory, Essential and Desirable thru the Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training (POST). Training prevents and reduces risk liability, enhances skills and promotes career development along with succession planning.

Some areas of training include: Firearms, Taser, Defensive Tactics, Mental Health (CIT), Active Shooter, Driver training (EVOC) & Supervisory courses.

Code Enforcement



- **PARKING**
- **WORK HOURS**
- **MAINTENANCE**
- **TREE PROTECTION ZONE**

Code Enforcement

- Code enforcement is a function local governments perform that citizens consider important for accomplishing community goals, such as protecting property values and the environment. Traditionally, it has been a process whereby local governments use various techniques to gain compliance with duly-adopted regulations such as land use and zoning ordinances, health and housing codes, sign standards, and uniform building and fire codes. Contemporary code enforcement involves local enforcement officials in the job of ensuring compliance with policies, codes, rules, regulations, and permits in a proper, timely fashion within the limits of the law

Code Enforcement – 2020

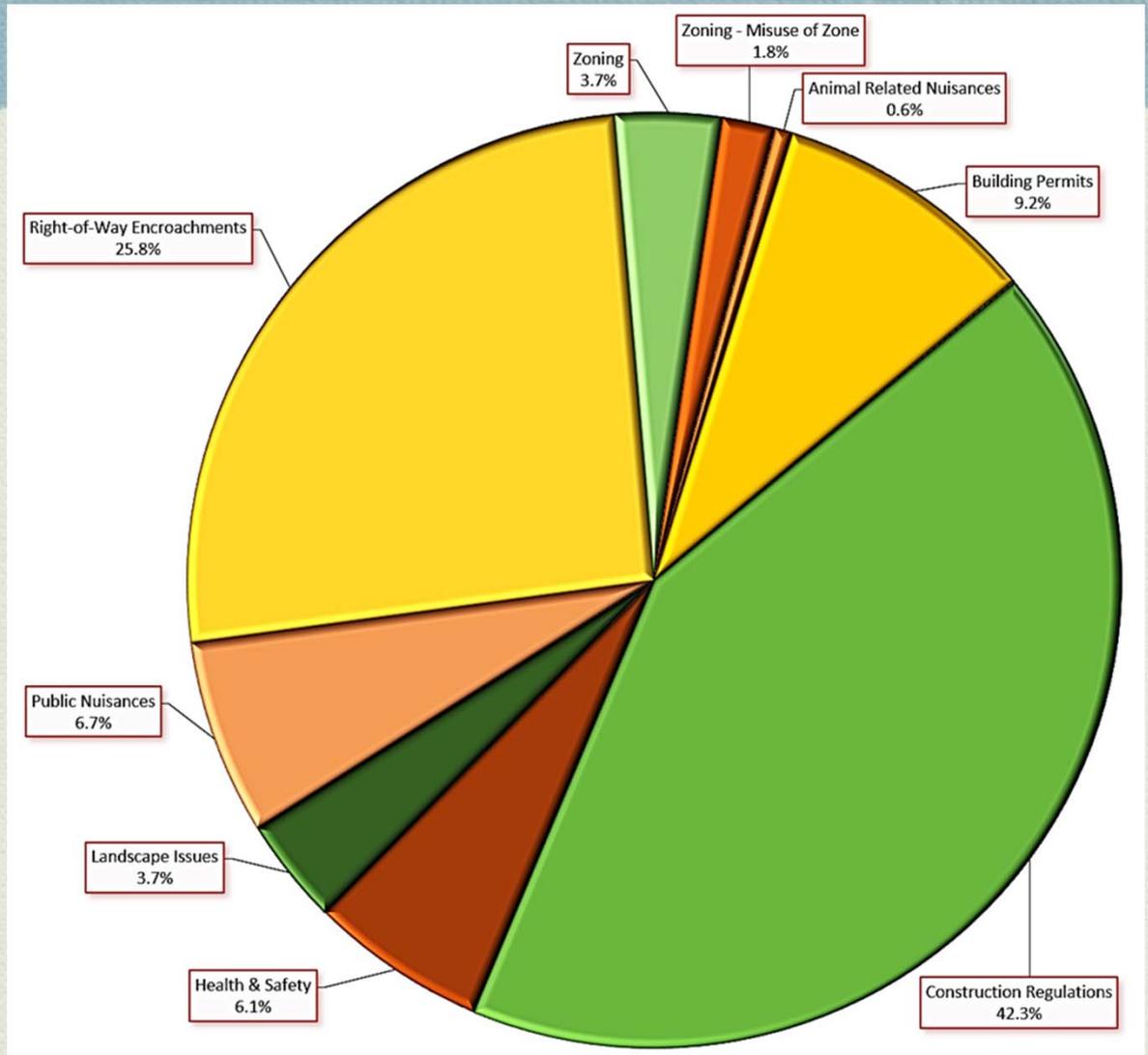
	2019	2020
Cases Opened Total:	289	241
Compliant Cases:	281	254
Cases Pending - Monthly Average:	181.33	183.67
Written/Formal Notices Issued Total:	139	143
Total Citations Issued:	354	300
Total Amount of Citations:	\$ 129,100	\$155,100
Number of CAD Incidents:	1114	1002
Paid Citations:	\$ 97,750	\$83,750
Citations Rescinded:	\$ (4300)	\$(32,100)
Heritage Tree Related Penalties (Paid):	\$ 88,170	\$85,470
Compliance Rate:	97.2%	105.4%
Citation Collection Rate:	78.3%	68.1%



CE Case Load Dec. 31, 2020

	Activity	Totals for December
1.	New Cases	12
2.	Closed Cases	30
3.	Total Open Cases (YTD)	163
4.	Written/Formal Notices Issued	0
5.	Citations Issued	1
6.	Amount in Citations	\$100

Open Cases - December 31, 2020		
Case Types	Amount	% of Case Load
Animal Related Nuisances	1	0.6%
Building Permits	15	9.2%
Construction Regulations	69	42.3%
Health & Safety	10	6.1%
Housing	0	0.0%
Landscape Issues	6	3.7%
Public Nuisances	11	6.7%
Right-of-Way Encroachments	42	25.8%
Zoning	6	3.7%
Zoning - Misuse of Zone	3	1.8%
Total	163	100.0%



SUPPORT SERV. COORD.

- Our Support Services Coordinator, formerly titled Community Service Officer, performs a variety of administrative, professional and technical tasks in support of the Department. She is also the Department liaison with several outside organizations. Her primary responsibilities include:
- Preserving the security and integrity of all evidence, upholds crucial chain of custody procedures, digital evidence duplication and maintenance ;
- Department liaison with San Mateo County Government agencies, including the Forensic Lab, District Attorney's office and both Criminal and Traffic courts;
- Production of all digital media recordings (body worn cameras, in car video, 911 calls, radio traffic);
- Monitoring and maintenance of the vehicle fleet, uniform equipment and business supplies;
- Police Dispatching.



PROPERTY AND EVIDENCE, LIAISON BETWEEN DISTRICT ATTORNEY AND COURTS

EVIDENCE SENT FOR LAB ANALYSIS IN CRIMINAL CASES TO SAN MATEO COUNTY CRIME LAB

TYPE OF TESTING	2019	2020
TOXICOLOGY	16	18
CHEMISTRY (DRUG TESTING)	11	12
FIREARMS	7	0
LATENT (FINGERPRINTS)	14	7
FORENSIC BIOLOGY (DNA)	7	6
TOTAL	55	43



ITEMS MANAGED WITHIN THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

TYPE OF PROPERTY	2019	2020
FIREARMS	49	24
CURRENCY	4	6
NARCOTICS	80	46
OTHER (ID, CREDIT CARDS, WEAPONS, CLOTHING, ETC.)	497	711
TOTAL	630	787



TYPE OF ARREST	2019	2020
MISDEMANOR	120	122
FELONY	25	23
WARRANT	42	25
JUVENILE	17	8
INFRACTION	3	3
TOTAL	207	181



Budget

Overtime

FY 19-20	Budgeted \$350,000	Adjusted \$550,000
FY 20-21	Budgeted \$350,000	Adjusted \$400,000+



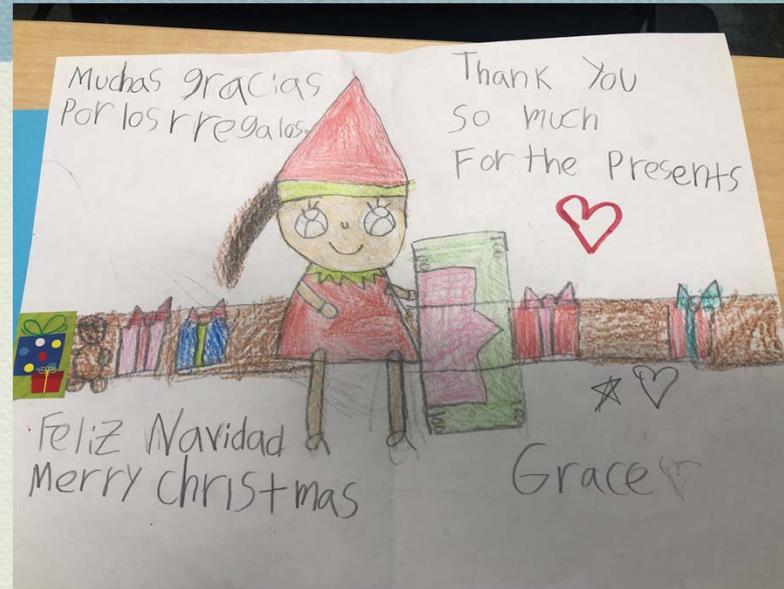
Main reasons for Overtime:

- Shift coverage = 2 + 1 model
- Court
- Training
- Vacation
- Sick Leave – 48/50 Light Duty

Community Outreach



Shop With A Cop – December 2020



Selby
Lane
Toy
Drive
2020



Alarm Vs. False Alarm Calls



	2019	2020
Total Alarms Processed (Does NOT include fire alarms)	2,503	2,037
Dispatch Center processed/ handled	1,284	819
Officers Responded To	1,219	455
False alarm cards mailed	383	134
New Alarm Permits	261	315



RESERVE OFFICER PROGRAM

- The Atherton Police Department's Reserve Officer unit assists with patrol. Reserve Officers are sworn officers, just like full time Police Officers, only they work part of the time. They still handle day-to-day calls on the radio, attend public functions, perform inspections of citizen's homes for crime prevention preparedness, handle traffic collision investigations, write citations for moving violations and vehicle equipment violations, and conduct highly visible patrols throughout the Town. The Reserve Officers also assist in filling vacant shifts which allows full time officers to take personal time off and attend trainings.
- The Atherton Police Department has five Reserve Officers; two who are also full time Firefighters in the Bay Area, two are a part of the Atherton Police Department traffic unit, and 1 owns her own business and is also a Per Diem Dispatcher.
- One unique trait of the Atherton Police Department Reserve Officer Unit is how it is one of the few units where the Reserve Officers are paid instead of volunteering their time.

Challenges

- Burglaries
- False Alarms
- Maintaining Officer staffing – 2 + 1 on each shift
- Minimizing over-time
- Retention
- Succession Planning



Questions ???



Questions are the path to learning