

# Schenectady Arrest Demographics

*Transparent Review*



The analysis of collected city arrest demographic data will provide the capability to further understand arrest patterns and trends, data collection processes and potential areas for improvement. This report is intended to be fully transparent with all Schenectady city partners and stakeholders to further aid and support healthy and working community relationships.

**City of Schenectady  
Mayor Gary McCarthy**

**Schenectady Police Department  
Chief Eric Clifford**

**518-382-5200**

**Completed by Law Enforcement Analyst  
Director Matthew Douglas**

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction.....	2
Project Purpose	
Methodology (Data Sources / Data Source Description)	
Arrest Police and Procedures	
Annual Arrest & Crime Patterns & Trends	
Figure 1.1 (Arrest Chart, 2017 - 2019)	
Figure 1.2 (Crime CompStat Report)	
Neighborhood Arrest Trends.....	3
Figure 1.3 (Arrest by Neighborhood Chart 2017 - 2019)	
Figure 1.4 (City of Schenectady Zone Breakdown - Map)	
Understanding Neighborhood Arrest Patterns & Trends	
Figure 1.5 (Citizen Initiated Calls, 2017 – 2019, Density Map)	
Figure 1.6 (Reported Violent Crime, 2017 – 2019, Density Map)	
Figure 1.7 (Officer Initiated Calls, 2017 – 2019, Density Map)	
Arrest Racial Demographics & Trends.....	4
Race Arrest Percentages	
Understanding Arrest Demographic Data	
Figure 1.8 (City Arrest Demographics Chart, 2017 - 2019)	
Neighborhood Arrest Demographics.....	5
Figure 1.9 (Arrests of Blacks, 2017 – 2019)	
Figure 2.0 (Arrests of Whites, 2017 – 2019)	
Figure 2.1 (Arrests of Hispanics, 2017 – 2019)	
Figure 2.2 (Arrests of “Other” races, 2017 – 2019)	
Arrest Demographics by Race & Age.....	6
Figure 2.3 (Arrest Demographics by Race and Age, 3 Year Avg, 2017-2019 Line Chart)	
Victim, Complainant & Suspect Reporting by Neighborhood.....	7-8
Figure 2.4 (2019 Reported ‘Victims’ – Neighborhood Breakdown)	
Figure 2.5 (2019 Reported ‘Complainants’ – Neighborhood Breakdown)	
Figure 2.6 (2019 Reported ‘Suspects’ – Neighborhood Breakdown)	
Highlighted Findings	
Conclusion	

**Project Purpose:**

A comprehensive and thorough understanding of arrest data will provide a basis to understand and evaluate the current data collection process regarding arrests and lead group discussions regarding police department policies and practices. The findings, through the identification of arrest patterns and trends, will guide and support community discussions regarding the policing of Schenectady and its intersection with race and bias. A secondary, but equally as important purpose of this report is to provide transparency on law enforcement efforts for the community it serves.

**Methodology:**

To gain a comprehensive understanding of arrest demographic patterns and trends, multiple data sources will be used. Essential data sources included within this study for data analysis, operational analysis and strategic analysis will consist of the following:

Data Sources:

- ▶ Incident/Person Data: General annual arrest patterns (2017 - 2019),
- ▶ Incident/Person Data: Arrest demographics by year (2017 - 2019),
- ▶ Incident/Person Data: Victim & Suspect Demographics (2017 - 2019),
- ▶ Arrest Data: Arrest Locations – High Volume of Arrest Locations (2017 - 2019),
- ▶ CAD Data: Citizen Initiated Calls for Service - High Call Volume Locations (2017 - 2019),
- ▶ Incident Data: Locations of where Crimes disproportionately occur (2017 – 2019) and,
- ▶ Arrest Policy and Operational Procedures (Method of collecting arrest data)

Data Source Description:

- ▶ Incident/Person: Includes all persons associated with a call resulting in an incident report being generated; this will include victims, suspects, complainants, witnesses, and those arrested.
- ▶ Arrest Data: For this study arrest data will include only persons arrested for a crime.
- ▶ CAD Data: Reflects all 911 calls dispatched from the Schenectady County Unified Communications Center
- ▶ Incident Data: Calls resulting in a crime where an incident report is generated
- ▶ Arrest Policy and Operational Procedures: Interviewed Police Desk Sergeants on arrest booking procedures and arrest system requirements

**Arrest Policies and Procedures:**

During the arrest booking process, held at police headquarters, the person’s identity is recorded into a system that requires fields including name, date of birth, self-reported race, and ethnicity. It is important to note that all fields listed must be completed by a computerized system during the booking process, prior to submitting arrest information. The person arrested then provides their personal identification information, at which time verification measures are followed to ensure the stated information is accurate.

**Annual Arrest and Crime Trends & Patterns:**

The city of Schenectady has observed a 16.8% (4324/3596) reduction in total arrests in 2019 compared to the prior two years. Figure 1.1 provides the annual arrest totals over the last three years (2017 – 2019). A monthly and annual law enforcement CompStat report captures Part I crime (murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, and motor vehicle theft) and compares the current year to a five-year average. The five-year comparison provides a baseline as a means of a standard measure of current crime patterns and trends. The 16.8% reduction in arrests for 2019 closely mirrors the 15.7%

Figure 1.1

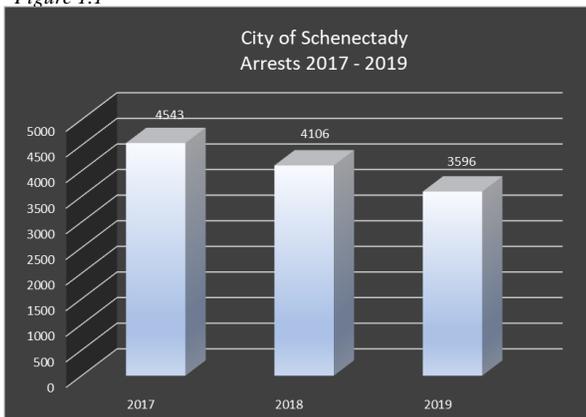


Figure 1.2

	Law Enforcement CompStat Report		
	2019	5 Year Avg.	% Change
Murder	3	4.6	-34.8%
Rape	39	54.2	-28.0%
Robbery	135	139.8	-3.4%
Assault	307	298	3.0%
Burglary	268	448.4	-40.2%
Larceny	1493	1767.8	-15.5%
MV Theft	152	129.6	17.3%
<b>Total Part I Crime</b>	<b>2407</b>	<b>2856.2</b>	<b>-15.7%</b>

reduction in reported part I crime during 2019 compared to a five-year average. One potential hypothesis is the correlation between the reduction in reported crime and arrest activity.

**Neighborhood Arrest Trends:**

Further analysis illustrates when arrest trends are broken down by neighborhood a similar downward trend across the board is shown over a three-year time period, as shown in figure 1.3. The chart reveals the Hamilton Hill neighborhood has the most frequent total of arrests at 751 for 2019, followed by Mont Pleasant (625), Downtown (575), Central State (510), Upper Union (355), Northside (316), Bellevue (204), and lastly Woodlawn, with 161 total arrests for 2019. Figure 1.4 provides an aerial view of the analyzed neighborhoods outlining their respective borders.

Figure 1.3

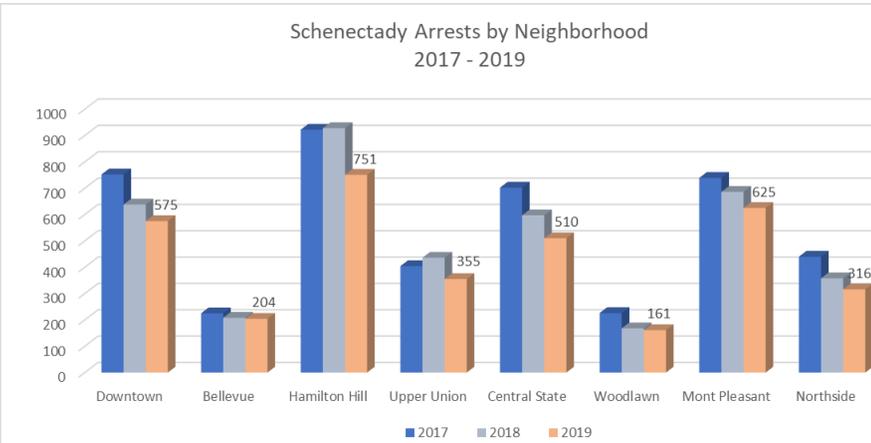
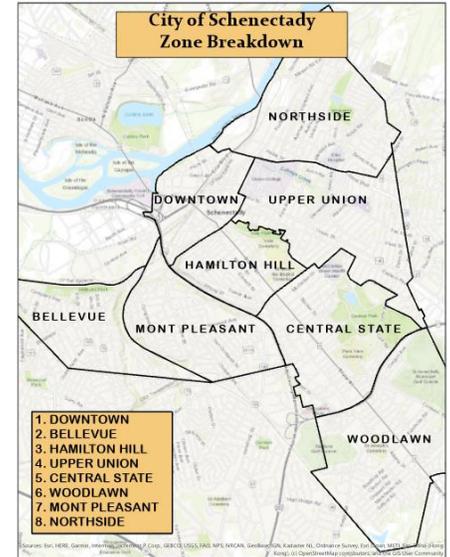


Figure 1.4



**Understanding Neighborhood Arrest Patterns & Trends:**

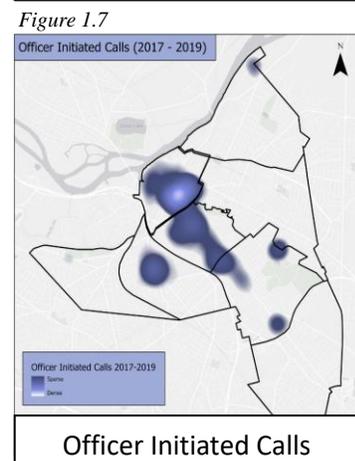
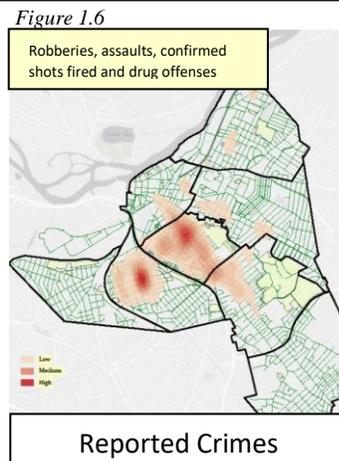
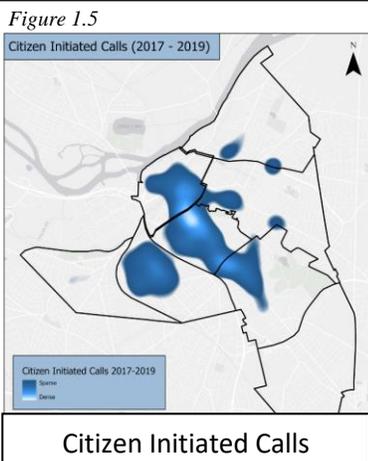
Utilizing data will also aid in understanding neighborhood arrest trends and patterns. Two key questions to consider are: (1) where do a disproportionate rate of citizen-initiated calls for service occur within the city of Schenectady? and (2) where do a higher concentration of reported crimes take place?

Analyzing three years of citizen-initiated call data reveals that the areas in which officers are demanded more heavily are primarily within the Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant Neighborhoods, followed by the downtown business district. Figure 1.5 illustrates where citizen-initiated calls disproportionately occur throughout the city of Schenectady. Figure 1.6 shows similar trends but focuses on where reported violent crime activity historically takes place. The findings in both citizen-initiated calls and where reported crimes disproportionately take place overlap in the Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods. Responding to these calls and reported crimes falls under a reactive policing philosophy as the community is requesting a timely resolution to respond and resolve the complaint.

Proactive policing, captured through officer-initiated calls, is the result of patrol officers witnessing activity that warrants attention. This generates a call, and if a crime is committed, an incident report follows. Officer initiated calls are primarily in the downtown business district, followed by Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods (Figure 1.7).

**Reactive Policing**

**Proactive Policing**



**Arrest Racial Demographics - Patterns & Trends:**

Race Arrest Trends: A breakdown of arrest demographics over the last three years, 2017 – 2019, shows an overall arrest reduction can be observed amongst each race, with Hispanics showing the greatest reduction in 2019 arrests at 36% (150/96) followed by a 14.9% (1195.5/1003) reduction in arrests of Blacks, 13.3% (206.5/179) reduction in arrests of “Other” races and a 9.2% (1069.5/971) reduction in arrests of Whites (Figure 1.8).

Race Arrest Percentages: Blacks represent 28% of all arrests, followed by Whites at 25%, “Other” at 5%, Hispanics at 3%, and the remaining races including Asian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern combined represent less than 1% of all arrests (Figure 1.8).

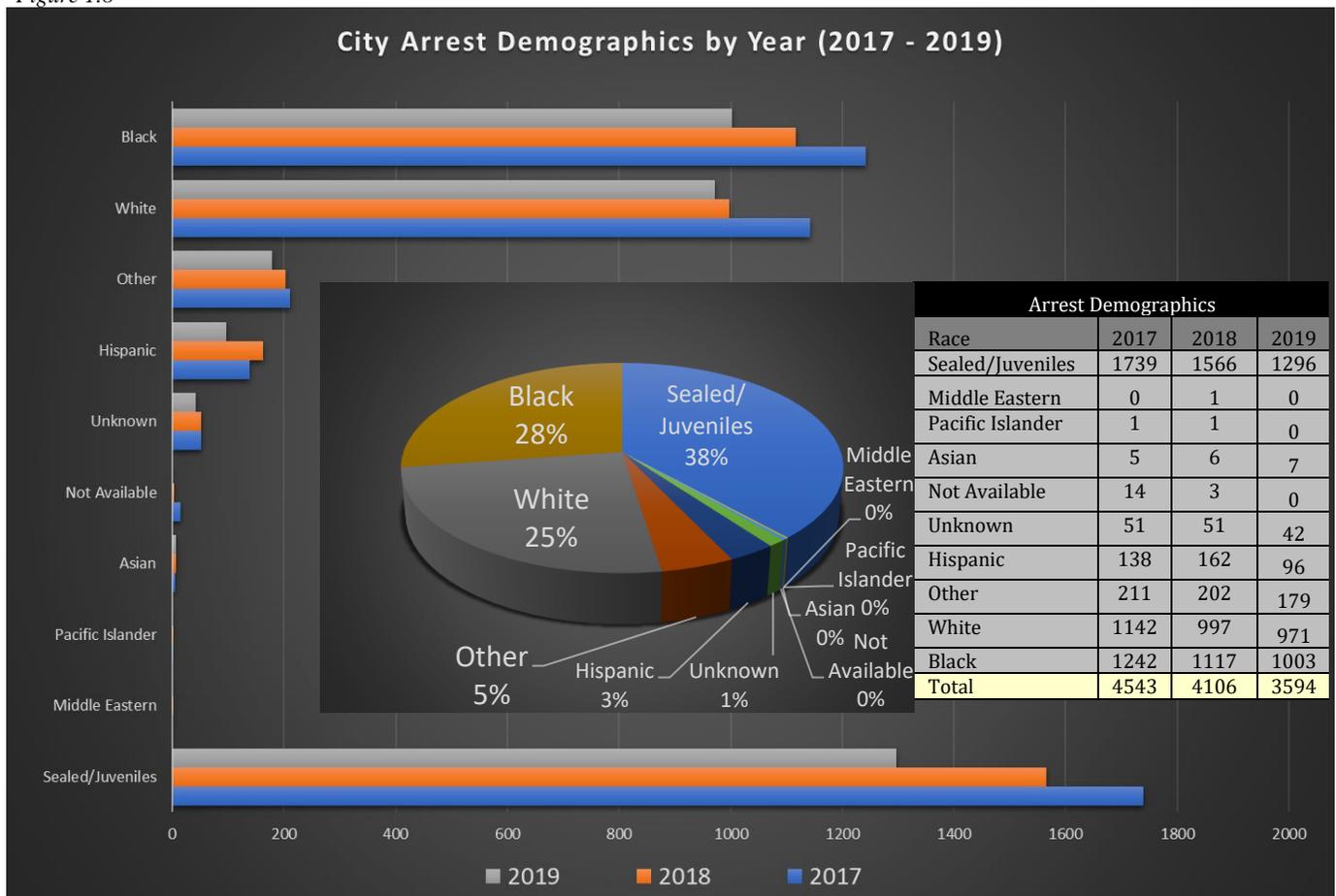
Understanding Arrest Demographic Data

“Unknown” - Recorded in approximately 1% of all arrests. This occurs when the arrestee refuses, or is unable to provide, or expresses their race is unknown. If those conditions occur and when an officer is unsure of the arrestee’s race and no further system validation can be provided “Unknown” is recorded.

“Not Available” - Recorded 14 times in 2017, 3 times in 2018 and not once in 2019 arrests. After reviewing all the arrests within this category all cases were found to be sealed.

“Sealed/Juveniles” - Represents 38% of the arrest demographics and is the result of predominately sealed cases and/or cases involving juveniles. “New York allows a person to seal their criminal record if the person has no more than 2 misdemeanors or no more than 1 felony and 1 misdemeanor conviction and have been crime-free for 10 years and/or If the person has successfully completed a drug treatment program. Certain convictions listed under the Rockefeller Drug Law Reform can be conditionally sealed. In addition the following cases are closed or sealed without a person having to do anything: Cases where the person got a good result, crimes committed by children, crimes committed by youthful offenders, violations and traffic infractions like disorderly conduct and trespass are partially sealed” (NYcourts.gov/COURTHELP/Criminal/sealedRecords.shtml)

Figure 1.8



**Neighborhood Arrest Demographics:** The analysis of racial arrest demographics by neighborhood provides a further understanding of racial arrest patterns and trends. Figure 1.9, 2.0, 2.1 and 2.2 categorize racial arrests by neighborhood over a three-year period (2017 – 2019). The findings indicate that Blacks and races defined as “Other” are more frequently arrested in Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant, whereas Whites are most frequently arrested in the Downtown neighborhood and Hispanics are arrested in Hamilton Hill, Downtown and the Mont Pleasant neighborhood rather equally.

Figure 1.9

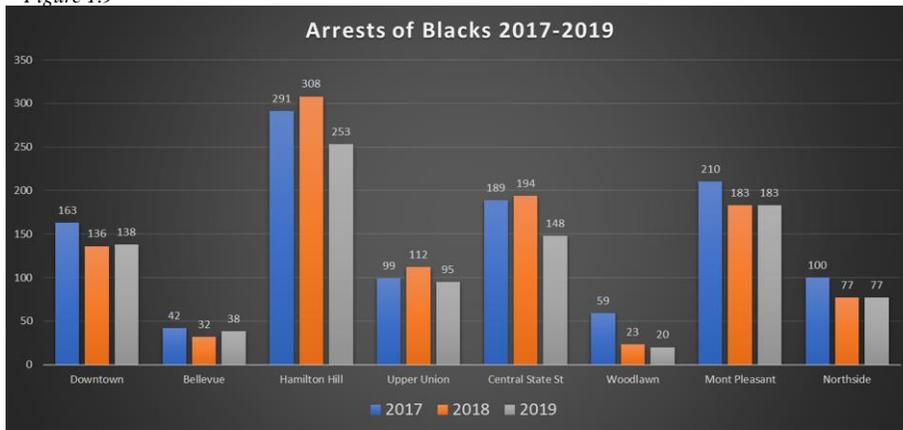


Figure 2.0

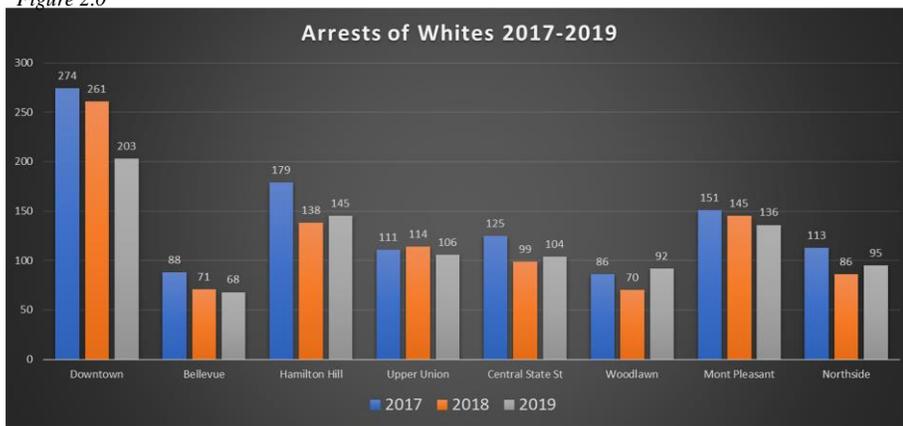


Figure 2.1

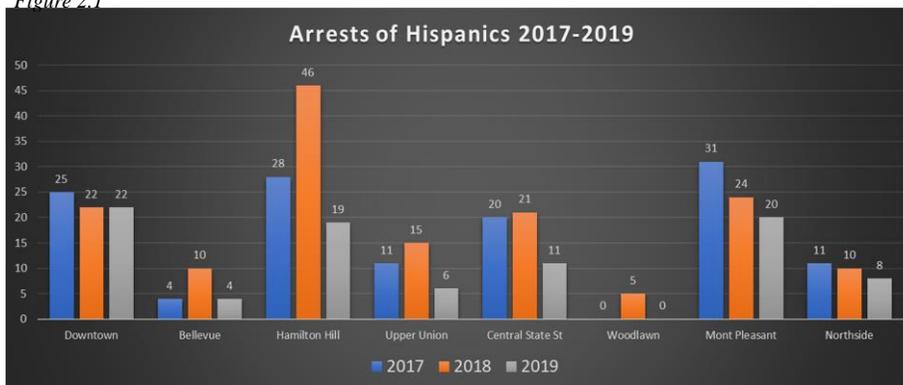


Figure 2.2

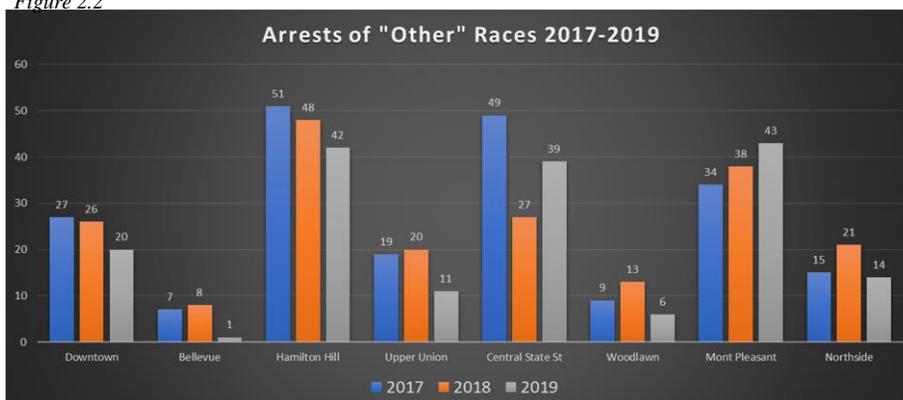


Figure 1.9 shows that arrest of Blacks has decreased in Hamilton Hill, Central State Street, Woodlawn, and the Upper Union neighborhoods. Neighborhoods remaining consistent or close to consistent, from 2018 to 2019 include: Mont Pleasant, Northside, Downtown and Bellevue. Hamilton Hill has significantly more arrests of Blacks than any other neighborhood.

Figure 2.0 illustrates that Whites are predominately arrested in the Downtown neighborhood and there is less fluctuation in arrests across the neighborhoods as compared to Blacks or Hispanics.

Hispanics, depicted in figure 2.1, are equally likely to be arrested in the Downtown, Hamilton Hill, or Mont Pleasant neighborhoods, and least likely to be arrested in Woodlawn according to the last three years of arrest data.

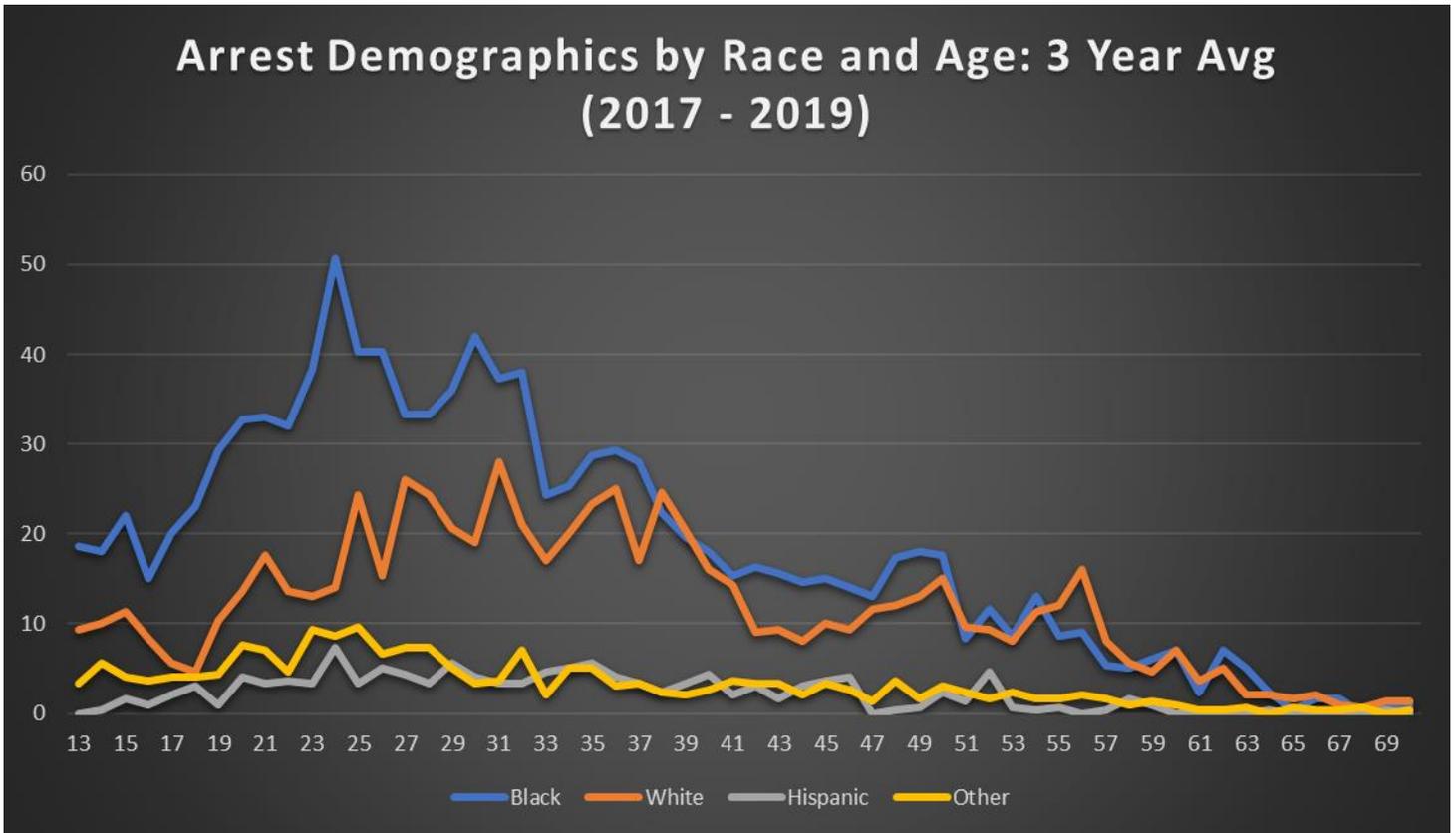
Races falling outside of the collected race categories, labeled as “Other” races, are more frequently arrested in Hamilton Hill, Central State, and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods as compared to the other five zones (Figure 2.2).

**Arrest Demographics by Race and Age:**

Figure 2.3 includes 2017, 2018 and 2019 arrest ages between 13 and 70 years old for Blacks, Whites, Hispanics, and “Other” races. Based on a three-year average, Blacks are more likely to be arrested between the ages of 21 – 32 years old, with a spike around 24 years of age. Whites primarily range from 24 to 39 years of age where arrests are more likely to occur. Hispanic

arrests are low overall, and therefore show no significant trend in the age at which Hispanics are arrested. Races defined as “Other” share a similar trend to Hispanic arrests. Blacks appear to have the greatest fluctuation and range in arrest age trends. As a reference, Blacks have a 466% (9/51) greater likelihood of being arrested at their peak arrest age of 24 compared to age 55. Whites are 158% (12/31) more likely to be arrested at their peak arrest age of 31 compared to age 55.

Figure 2.3



**Victim, Complainant & Suspect Reporting by Neighborhood:**

Capturing victim, complainant and suspect reporting by neighborhoods provides needed attention to the victim side of policing. Figures 2.4, 2.5 and 2.6 illustrate reported victim, complainant and suspect levels broken down by neighborhoods within the city. Black, White, and Hispanic races are listed independently, and each are color coded illustrating the top three neighborhoods of involvement with the darkest color representing highest neighborhood involvement.

Hamilton Hill, our neighborhood with the highest rates of reported crime and calls for service, reveals that victims of crime are disproportionately people of color; Blacks represent a 43% (247/355) greater likelihood of becoming a victim of a crime compared to Whites (Reference Figure 2.4). Communities of color commonly express concern not only about over-policing but under policing; the data reflects the community need and elevated request for policing in communities of color.

Figure 2.4

	2019 Reported 'Victims' - Neighborhood Breakdown								
	Downtown	Bellevue	Hamilton Hill	Upper Union	Central State St.	Woodlawn	Mont Pleasant	Northside	Total
Black	118	67	355	157	258	40	264	145	1404
White	306	188	247	259	238	105	325	262	1930
Hispanic	34	18	63	35	66	9	63	34	322
Total	458	273	665	451	562	154	652	441	3656

Figure 2.5

2019 Reported 'Complainants' - Neighborhood Breakdown									
	Downtown	Bellevue	Hamilton Hill	Upper Union	Central State St.	Woodlawn	Mont Pleasant	Northside	Total
Black	128	57	282	162	228	29	283	115	1284
White	187	154	183	215	222	94	252	199	1506
Hispanic	22	17	49	47	56	11	65	51	318
Total	337	228	514	424	506	134	600	365	3108

Figure 2.6

2019 Reported 'Suspects' - Neighborhood Breakdown									
	Downtown	Bellevue	Hamilton Hill	Upper Union	Central State St.	Woodlawn	Mont Pleasant	Northside	Total
Black	283	118	539	298	455	60	472	239	2464
White	209	164	221	223	245	115	280	236	1693
Hispanic	51	31	79	57	83	13	103	61	478
Total	543	313	839	578	783	188	855	536	4635

Further findings indicate that although victims in Hamilton Hill are predominately black, 53%, the correlation between victims and suspects is apparent as 64% of all suspects in Hamilton Hill are also Black while Whites predominately make up 68% of victims and 61% of all known suspects in the Woodlawn neighborhood. The racial differences noted in the Hamilton Hill and Woodlawn neighborhood are consistent with the racial demographics of the neighborhoods. When examining the victim/suspect trends amongst Whites the data suggests Whites have the greatest rate victimization, reported complaints and highest rate of suspect classification in the Mont Pleasant neighborhood compared to any other neighborhood within the city. Another finding worth noting is Mont Pleasant represents the highest rate of complainants across Blacks, Whites and Hispanics (Figure 2.5).

**Highlighted Findings:**

- ▶ Arrest Booking Procedures
  - During the arrest booking process, the arrestee’s identity is recorded into an arrest system that requires fields including name, date of birth, race, and ethnicity prior to submission. This ensures that no race or ethnicity is left unrecorded.
- ▶ Overall arrest trends have shown a reduction over the last three years which is observed amongst each race independently
  - Hispanics showing the greatest reduction in 2019 arrests at 36% (150/96)
  - 14.9% (1195.5/1003) reduction in arrests of Blacks
  - 13.3% (206.5/179) reduction in arrests of “Other” races
  - 9.2% (1069.5/971) reduction in arrests of Whites
- ▶ Arrest Locations
  - Officers are requested, via citizen-initiated calls for service, primarily within the Hamilton Hill, Mont Pleasant and lower downtown business district neighborhoods (Reactive Policing Philosophy)
  - Reported violent crime activity historically takes place in the Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant Neighborhoods (Reactive Policing Philosophy)
  - Officer initiated calls indicate the downtown business district, followed by Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant neighborhoods are where greater proactive efforts are deployed (Proactive Policing Philosophy)
- ▶ City Arrest Demographics (2017 – 2019 Average)
  - 28% of all arrests are reported as arrests involving Blacks
  - 25% of all arrests are reported as arrests involving Whites
  - 5% of all arrests are reported as arrests involving “Other” races
  - 3% of all arrests are reported as arrests involving Hispanics

- 1% make up of all arrests are reported as “unknown”, Middle Eastern, Pacific Islander or Asian
- ▶ Studying arrest age tendencies amongst races can be a tool used to develop support programs for individuals and groups during those higher risk years or potentially aimed prior to those years to reduce the projected curve.
  - Blacks are more likely to be arrested occur between the ages of 21 – 32 years old and spike age at 24
  - Whites are more likely to be arrested occur between the ages of 24 – 39 years old and spike age at 31
- ▶ Neighborhood Race Demographics
  - Blacks and races defined as “Other” are more frequently arrested in Hamilton Hill and Mont Pleasant
  - Whites are most frequently arrested in the Downtown neighborhood
  - Hispanics are arrested in Hamilton Hill, Downtown and the Mont Pleasant neighborhood rather equally
- ▶ Victim, Complainant & Suspect Reporting by Neighborhood
  - Whites have the greatest rate victimization, reported complaints and highest rate of arrests within the the Mont Pleasant neighborhood
  - Blacks represent a 43% (247/355) greater likelihood of becoming a victim of a crime compared to Whites in Hamilton Hill
  - 64% of all suspects in Hamilton Hill are Black
  - Mont Pleasant represents the highest rate of complainants across Blacks, Whites and Hispanics

**In Conclusion:**

Understanding arrest decision making, resource deployment, and the arrest booking and recording process, as well as identifying general and racial arrest patterns and trends, provides the necessary framework to lead discussions with community partners to actively address underlying risk factors. The analysis of arrest data, as expressed in this study, can support policy and practices, improve transparency with law enforcement and community needs, and further support service programs. Efforts should be placed on alternative measures that deter undesirable activity with arrests being a last resort. Alternative measures will best be developed through strengthening existing programs such as community CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) involvement, education programs, outreach worker initiatives, drug rehab, social service support in job training, resume building, transportation, and any additional alternatives the community, elected officials and department heads collaboratively set forth and put in motion.