

CITY OF KENT POLICE DEPARTMENT

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



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MESSAGE FROM THE CHIEF



The year 2020 was a time of challenge and change for all of us, and the Police Department was no exception. COVID-19 and the social unrest we saw around the country contributed to an environment which created new challenges for our department and the community. The retirement of Chief Michelle Lee in June led to my promotion to Chief of Police during very trying times, but her leadership and vision for the department provided a strong foundation which enabled me to pick up where she left off.

The COVID-19 pandemic played a major role in the direction and activities of our department in 2020. In the early stages of pandemic planning, the City formed a unified command team to lead its efforts to combat the coronavirus and, as the Chief of Police, I was part of that team. Unified command required frequent meetings as city leaders worked together to keep Kent safe and ensure the city government was providing the best service possible to the community.

Just before summer, we began to see social unrest around the country relating to police relations with minority populations. Here in Kent, we dealt with several demonstrations related to this issue, but our administrative approach led to positive interaction between police and demonstrators and aided in keeping all the demonstrations calm and peaceful. Recognizing that the root cause of unrest is a lack of trust between police and those we serve is a key component to that approach. Building relationships and developing trust with minority communities will help Kent continue to thrive and avoid some of the significant problems we saw around the country this summer.

One of my passions is youth engagement and with the members of our administrative team, I have started to work on opportunities and programs to assist our department with youth engagement initiatives. Additionally, I have had the opportunity to engage with members of the minority community to begin building more relationships with the goal of making Kent a better community for all of us.

Stay safe,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Chief Nick Shearer #201". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Chief Nicholas Shearer



ADMINISTRATION

The administrative division of the Kent Police Department consists of the Chief, the Operations Captain, the Services Captain, the Administrative Lieutenant, and the Administrative Assistant to the Police Chief. The administrative team is responsible for external training approval and scheduling, the police budget of over \$7.6 million, policies and procedures, community policing programs, equipment purchase approval, personnel development and hiring, planning and researching initiatives, special projects, news media, social media, internship programs, and special events.

DETECTIVE BUREAU

The members of the detective bureau aid the patrol division in the investigation of felony and complex investigations, provide support in crime scene processing, and process all the department's evidence. The Kent Police evidence detective processed 1,934 pieces of evidence logged in by patrol officers in 2020. A Lieutenant and Sergeant command a team consisting of two general case investigators, one drug task force agent, two juvenile investigators, one evidence officer and a civilian juvenile counselor (this position is currently vacant).

PORTAGE COUNTY DRUG TASK FORCE (PCDTF)

In 2020, Kent PD detectives worked with and collaborated with multiple county, state and federal agencies. Kent PD currently has one full time detective dedicated to the PCDTF. Kent, Ravenna, Streetsboro, PCSO and the Prosecutor's Office participate in the task force. The Task Force has been successful enough that they have not required department funding and have been operating self-sufficiently for over 11 years.



TASK FORCES

In addition to the PCDTF, the Kent Police Department participates in other regional task forces. This participation provides access to resources our department does not have. In 2020, the Kent Police Department participated in the following task forces:

- ★ **Intelligence Liaison Officer through the U.S. Department of Homeland Security**
- ★ **Internet Crimes Against Children Task Force**
- ★ **Sexual Assault Response Team with Kent State University**
- ★ **Northern Ohio Violent Fugitive Task Force through the US Marshals Office**

Two officers assigned to the task force worked 22 days each and made 46 arrests. Four of the arrests were KPD warrants and other KPD warrants were attempted. Other KPD warrants were forwarded to other regional US Marshals led task forces. When we had a missing juvenile this year, the task force and US Marshals assisted in our investigation and locating the missing female.

- ★ **Metro SWAT**

We have three officers assigned to Metro SWAT. This duty is in addition to the officers' regular assignments and is not a full-time position.

- ★ **Multi-Disciplinary Team (MDT)**

Investigation of child abuse cases

- ★ **Portage County Honor Guard Team**

We have three officers assigned to the honor guard team. The honor guard team was formed so that local police departments can participate in police funerals and other public events. This duty is in addition to the officers' regular assignments and is not a full-time position.

Tip 411

In May of this year, we rolled out the Tip 411 program. This is a software program that allows our department to receive anonymous tips related to crime. Since May when it was introduced, we received 65 anonymous tips. We anticipate the program will be even more successful as more people become aware of Tip 411.



PATROL DIVISION

As with any law enforcement agency, patrol is the backbone of our department. These are the men and women in uniform who respond to calls for service. They are the visible members of the department who work day and night to keep the community safe. Our patrol division staffs three primary shifts with full-time officers working eight-hour days, five days per week. We also maintain officers working a swing shift to overlap during shift change.

COVID-19 Protocols

The pandemic brought many changes to our patrol division in 2020. Beginning in March, our patrol officers began taking non-emergency calls - those which did not require a physical response - via phone. Although not the preferred method, it gave us a way to provide service to the community while prioritizing the safety of officers and residents. Additionally, our patrol officers greatly reduced their proactive enforcement efforts. Because of the potential for COVID-19 outbreaks in jail populations, summons in lieu of arrest were issued whenever possible. However, our officers still made arrests when it was in the best interest of public safety. In addition to these measures, officers were issued N-95 respirators and gloves to wear when having contact with the public. Additional cleaning protocols were implemented in the police station and patrol cars, and we were also fortunate to be able to purchase ionization units for our HVAC system to remove viral particles from the air inside our building.

When the pandemic brought its second wave in the fall, our department began having administrative and detective bureau staff work remotely approximately three days per week. Staffing was staggered to reduce contact between members working remotely. The nature of patrol work obviously does not allow for remote work, so restrictions were put into place to prevent having more than two officers at the station at any given time, and requiring masks while at the police station.

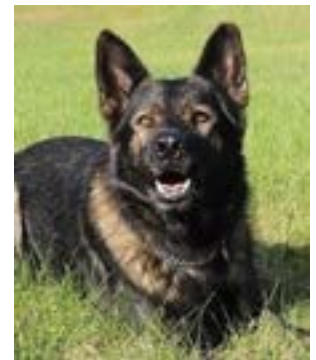
Overall, these restrictions required us to find new ways to safely perform our jobs. The willingness and ability of our personnel to adapt to these changes helped us continue to provide safe quality service to our community.

SCHOOL RESOURCE OFFICER

We have partnered with the Kent City Schools since 2014 to provide a seasoned police officer to work in the high school and middle school on a full-time basis during school hours. A school resource officer (SRO) works closely with administrators in an effort to create a safer environment for both students and staff. The responsibilities of SROs are similar to regular police officers in that they have the ability to make arrests, respond to calls for service, and document incidents. At the start of the school year in August of 2020, Officer Dominic Poe became our new SRO.

K-9 OFFICER

The K-9 program greatly enhances uniformed patrol in the detection and apprehension of criminal offenders, locating missing persons and children, and provides better safety for officers in physical confrontations and dangerous situations. K-9 teams are dedicated full time to the program, as the dogs are housed and cared for by the handlers 24 hours a day. In 2020, KPD had one K-9 team, and there are plans to acquire another K-9 unit in 2021.



COMPLIANCE OFFICERS

The department has two full-time civilian positions which are responsible for both parking and animal compliance. While assigned to parking compliance, the officers will respond to parking complaints and patrol neighborhoods for parking violations. The majority of their shift is spent in the downtown area where metered parking is prominent. Compliance officers are also responsible for animal complaints. Lost and found pets, dog bite complaints, dogs running-at-large, feral cats, and abandoned pets are a few of the persistent issues the officers handle regularly.

DETENTION OFFICERS

KPD detention officers are responsible for prisoner processing and maintaining our jail facility. We operate a 12-day jail facility consisting of 4 temporary holding cells, as well as permanent holding cells which are divided among two pods. The two pods, meant to separate females and males, offer showers, TV, tables and chairs, and telephone, all of which are required by state of Ohio standards. Longer term holding has single, double, and triple occupant cells, complete with toilets and sinks. A booking area for paperwork processing is located centrally in a large open space where detention officers are equipped with jail controls of doors and audio/video surveillance.

SUPPORT SERVICES DIVISION

The support services division is headed by Captain Jennifer Ennemoser. This division comprises three major functions within the department. The communications center falls under this division, as does the oversight of building maintenance. This requires collaboration with central maintenance and other vendors. Finally, it is this division's responsibility to manage the department's equipment inventory. This year, we purchased five new police cars and new laptop computers for our patrol cars. Additionally, the services captain managed a project to purchase the ionization units for our HVAC system.

Communications

Much like other areas of the department, COVID-19 had a significant impact on our communications center. Callers now had to be questioned about COVID symptoms to provide for the safety of responding officers and firefighters. Additionally, our dispatchers were required to spread out throughout the dispatch center. This presented a challenge because the dispatchers were used to sitting next to each other to facilitate ease of communication and workflow. However, the dispatchers soon grew accustomed to their dispersed locations, as well as talking on the phone and radio with masks on. One challenge we all adjusted to in 2020 was the sound of communicating through a mask.



TRAINING

Training and proficiency is essential in professional policing. Much of the debate over police issues that arose in 2020 called into question police department training and practices. Although all Ohio peace officers must complete the police academy, the State of Ohio seldom implements mandatory training requirements beyond the academy. Because of this, training can vary greatly from department to department, and our commitment to structured and professional training throughout an officer's career sets the Kent Police Department apart from some others.

Kent Police officers generally receive a minimum of 40 hours of in-service training every year. That training includes firearms, defensive tactics, Taser, and Active Threat Response, as well as other topics



Dispatcher Tiffanie Brown practices infant CPR during a training class.

such as legal updates, community engagement and officer wellness. In addition to in-house training, Kent PD officers attend several outside training sessions every year which are hosted by other law enforcement agencies or professional organizations. These trainings may be in advanced patrol skills, Crisis Intervention Training, Critical Incident Stress Management, or a number of other subjects. Due to COVID restrictions and cuts, our typical amount of training was not achievable in 2020, but officers still received varying levels of training both in-house and from outside agencies, either in-person or online.

Every member of Kent PD is permitted and encouraged to attend continued professional training and education. While patrol officers receive more than most, continued training is also a priority for our detectives, dispatchers, compliance officers, and our administrative assistants. Our collective bargaining agreement provides many employees with an allowance for professional, supervisory and technical development each calendar year for outside training or continuing education.

Employees are also encouraged to pursue educational courses to supplement their knowledge and increase their skills so that their job performance is broadened to meet the ever-changing demands directly or indirectly related to their particular position. KPD offers tuition reimbursement for our full-time employees up to 100% of their college tuition.

PERSONNEL

Among other changes, 2020 presented several changes in personnel within the department. In total for the year, we had seven employees retire or resign, we hired eight new employees, and had five promotions.

Retirement

Chief Michelle Lee
Officer Eric Dreger
Detective Karen Travis
Juvenile Counselor Jeff Langstaff

Resignation

Detention Officer John Rayle
Detention Officer Homer Hood
Administrative Assistant to Chief, Patti Long

Promotions

Chief Nicholas Shearer
Captain Jennifer Ennemoser
Lieutenant Ryan Gaydosh
Sergeant Josh Nelson
Administrative Assistant to Chief, Tanya Bzdil

New Employees

Officer Ben Schmitt
Dispatcher Jonathan Foss
Detention Officer Julie Loomis
Officer Kevin Luff
Officer Matthew Moore
Secretary to Chief, Kathleen Coleman
Detention Officer Cheri Kleinknecht
Detention Officer Mark Burson



Pictured left to right: Lt. Gaydosh; Cpt. Ennemoser; retired Chief Lee; Chief Shearer; Sgt. Nelson

INTERNSHIPS

The Kent Police Department recognizes the importance of learning opportunities for individuals who are studying in criminal justice-related fields and provides an internship program for qualified students. Internships provide a valuable opportunity for students to participate in the day-to-day functioning of a justice-related agency. They also give us an opportunity to build relationships with college students seeking employment in law enforcement-related fields. Interns observe police functions in a regulated and productive manner. Since we started our internship program, we have hired several interns to work for the department. In 2020, we had two interns from Kent State University, one who interned with the patrol division, and one who worked with the detective bureau.

EMPLOYEE RECOGNITION

Enforcement Officer of the Year: Ptl. Charles Ellis
OVI Enforcement Officer of the Year: Sgt. Jared Bowen
Supervisor of the Year: Sgt. Jared Bowen
Officer of the Year: Ptl. Matthew Noah
Civilian of the Year: Tanya Bzdil

Firearm Excellence

Firearm Top Shot: Lt. Ryan Gaydosh

Sgt. Jared Bowen
Ptl. Ben Darrah
Ptl. Sean Driscoll
Ptl. Charles Ellis

Ptl. Neal Hilbruner
Ptl. Lenny Kunka
Lt. Mike Lewis
Ptl. Kevin Luff

Det. Dave Marino
Ptl. Drake Oldham
Ptl. Dominic Poe
Lt. Ed Wheeler

Fitness Excellence

Ptl. Lee Allen
Ptl. Kyle Auckland
Sgt. Jared Bowen

Ptl. Matthew Brooks
Ptl. Sean Driscoll
Ptl. Charles Ellis

Lt. Ryan Gaydosh
Lt. Ed Wheeler

20 Year Longevity

Ptl. Ben Darrah
C/D Nichole Jacobs
C/D Elizabeth Sadowski

Perfect Attendance

Ptl. Samantha Burton
Det. Mike Domer
Ptl. Charles Ellis
Ptl. Jim Fuller
Ptl. Drake Oldham
C/D Rebecca Schneider
Ptl. Mitch Smith

Crisis Intervention Team Officer of the Year

Officer Matthew Butcher was named a Crisis Intervention Team (CIT) Officer of the Year by the Mental Health and Recovery Board of Portage County. The award recognizes officers for effectively practicing communication and de-escalation techniques in dealing with individuals who are experiencing a mental health crisis or are struggling with addiction.



MEET THE KPD OFFICERS OF THE YEAR



Chuck Ellis, Enforcement Officer of the Year

This Buffalo, NY native has been with the Kent Police Department for nearly two years. Prior to joining us, Chuck worked with the Portage County Sheriff's Office and the Akron Police Department. He is currently serving in the US Marine Corps Reserve and has been active with the Marines since August 2001. Chuck is married with two kids and shares the house with two dogs, a pitbull and a mastiff. He enjoys playing ice hockey and has an identical twin brother.



Jared Bowen, Supervisor of the Year and OVI Enforcement Officer of the Year

Jared has been with the Kent Police Department for 10 years. He previously worked for the Ohio Dept. of Natural Resources, as well as doing carpentry and construction work. Jared is a Native American history buff who searches for and collects Native American artifacts. When asked to relate something most people don't know about his job, Jared replied, "Most people don't know the true reality of what police officers face each day and how strong their desires are to serve their communities."



Matthew Noah, Officer of the Year

Matt has been with the Kent Police Department for 3 years and previously worked with the Garrettsville Police and the Portage County Drug Task Force. He is an outdoor enthusiast who loves backpacking, boating, and fishing, and also enjoys smoking meats and barbecuing. Matt is married with two kids and has two large dogs.



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Although the COVID-19 pandemic hindered our opportunities to engage with the community as much as we'd like, we were still able to be involved with some events and activities with our residents in 2020. In addition to the events below, we also held blood drives, fundraising efforts to support local cancer patients, a school supply drive, Halloween visits to Kent elementary schools, and the annual Fill-A-Cruiser event in December.



Top left: Officer Hadaway shows off his cruiser to members of Boy Scout troop #3256, who toured the station in January.

Top right: C/D Rebecca Schneider and Donya Buchanan, Director of Domestic Violence and Visitation Services for Safer Futures, pose with handbags donated by KPD family and friends in support of the 10th Annual Hope in a Handbag fundraiser for Safer Futures.



Bottom left: The Kent/Ravenna Mayors' Food Drive Challenge was planned to kick off on April 1, 2020. Unfortunately, this annual event ended up being cancelled due to COVID-19. Pictured are: Marquice Seward of Kent Social Services, KPD C/D Schneider, Kent Mayor Jerry Fiala, and KPD Lt. Mike Lewis.



Top left: Chief Shearer and Lt. Lewis present a check to Kent Social Services on behalf of the Kent Police and Citizens Association (KPCA).

Bottom left: Mayor Fiala, C/D Schneider, Ofc. Aukland, Marilyn Sessions, Chief Shearer, and Kelli Hepfner, KPCA Alumni, help prepare food for the annual Lord's Luncheon at Trinity Lutheran Church.

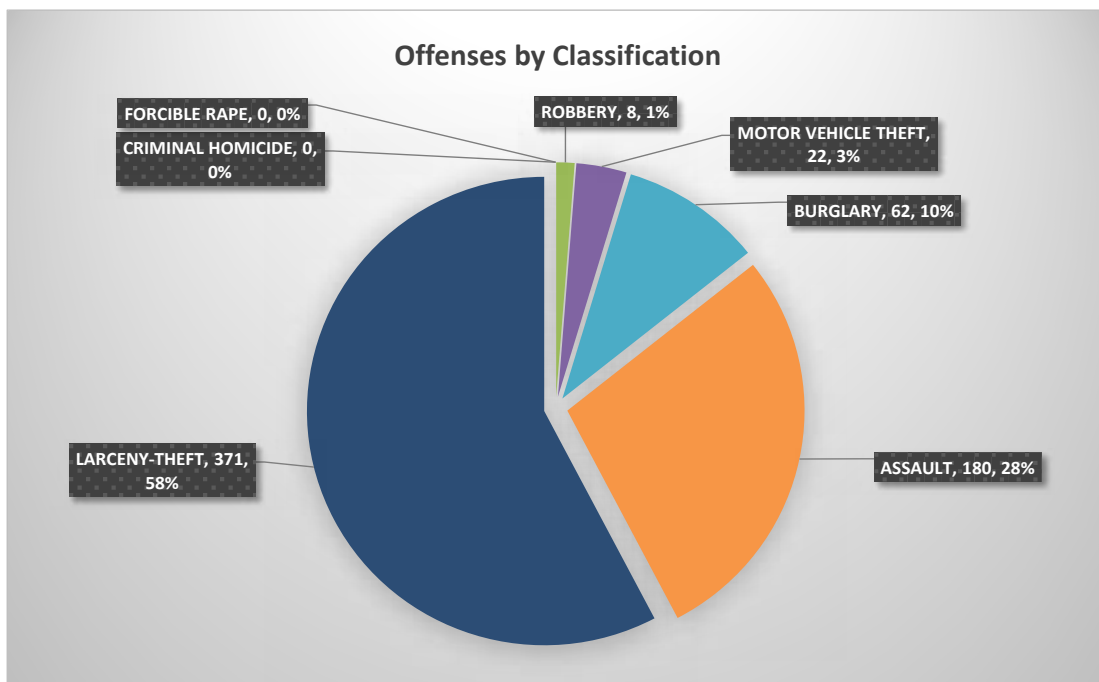
Right: Thin Gold Line banners were flown downtown on the West Main Street bridge in recognition of dispatchers during Telecommunicators Week.

STATISTICS

The following pages provide departmental statistics for the year 2020. These are meant to capture a “snapshot” of the department’s activities, but do not represent the full scope of the work we do. More detailed statistics can be found on our webpage at www.kentohio.org.

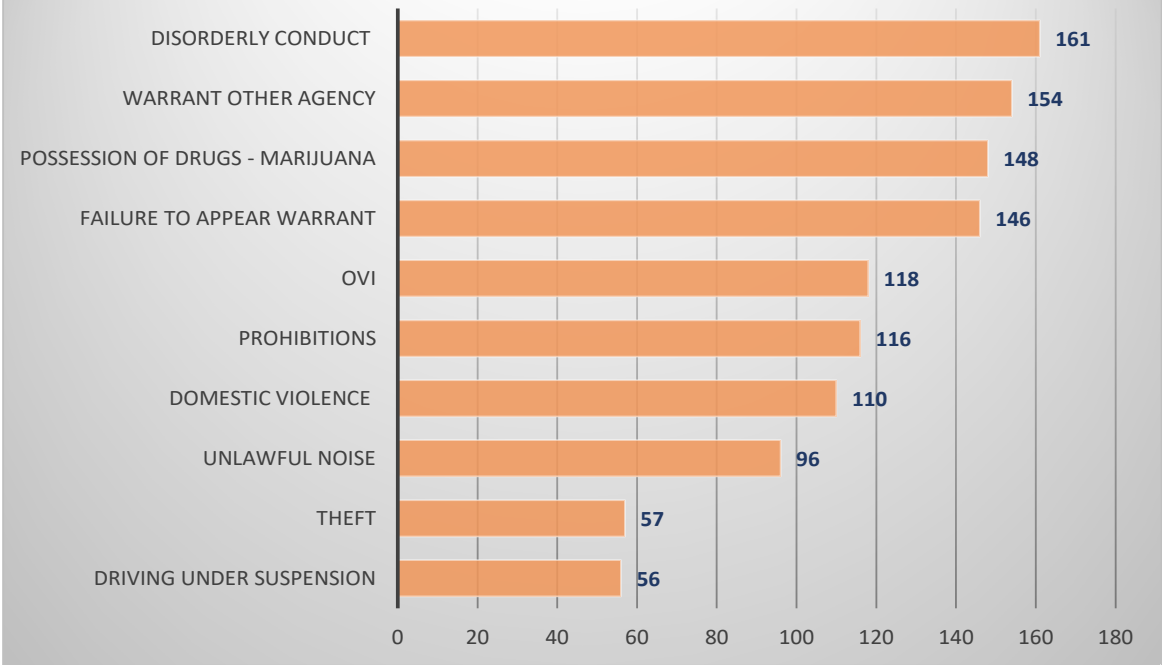
General Operational Data

	2019	2020	% (+/-)
Personnel Employed	66	65	-1.5%
Calls for Service	27,981	21,067	-24.7%
Fire Department Calls	4,673	4,293	-8.1%
<i>Ambulance Calls</i>	3,539	3,250	-8.2%
<i>Fire Calls</i>	1,011	1,036	2.5%
<i>Voided Run Numbers</i>	20	7	-65.0%
Arrests, Total	1,679	1,204	-28.3%
Juvenile Arrests	91	52	-42.9%
OVI Arrests	175	119	-32.09%
Traffic Citations	3,119	2,025	-35.1%
Parking Tickets	11,106	7,886	-29.0%

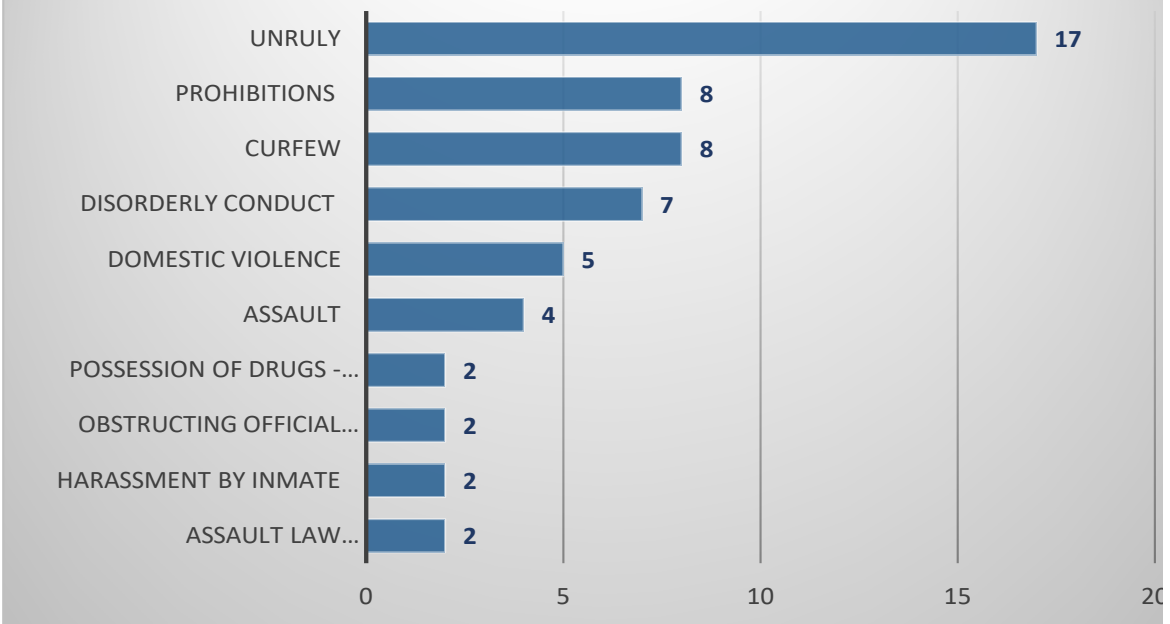


Additionally, there was one case of arson in 2020, and four instances of assault on police officers.

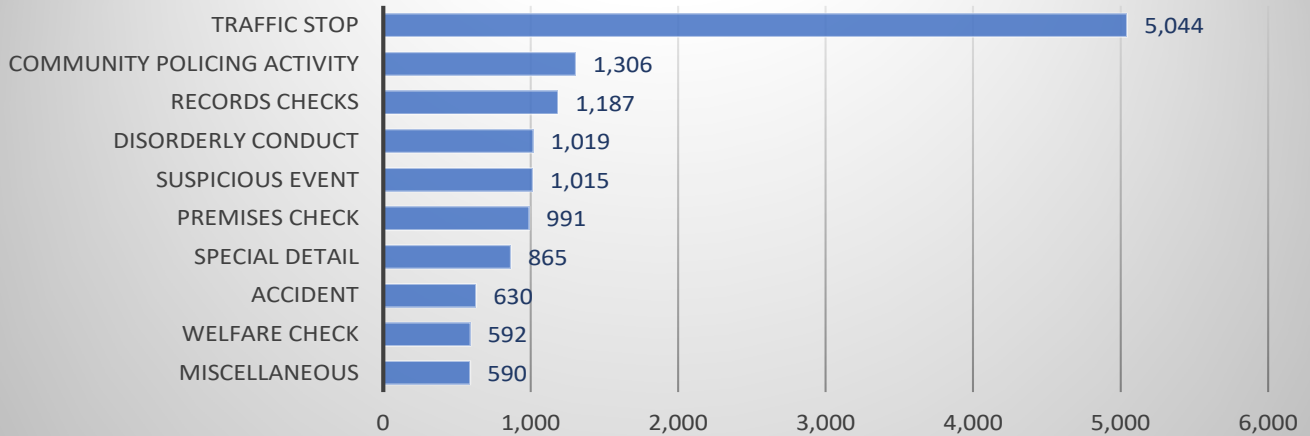
Top 10 Adult Arrest Categories 2020



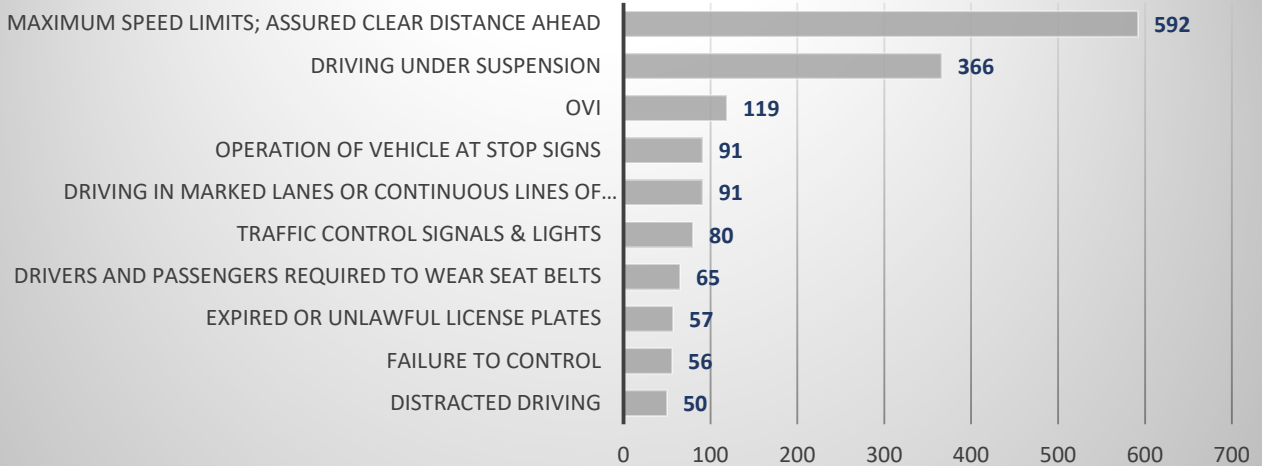
Top 10 Juvenile Arrest Categories 2020



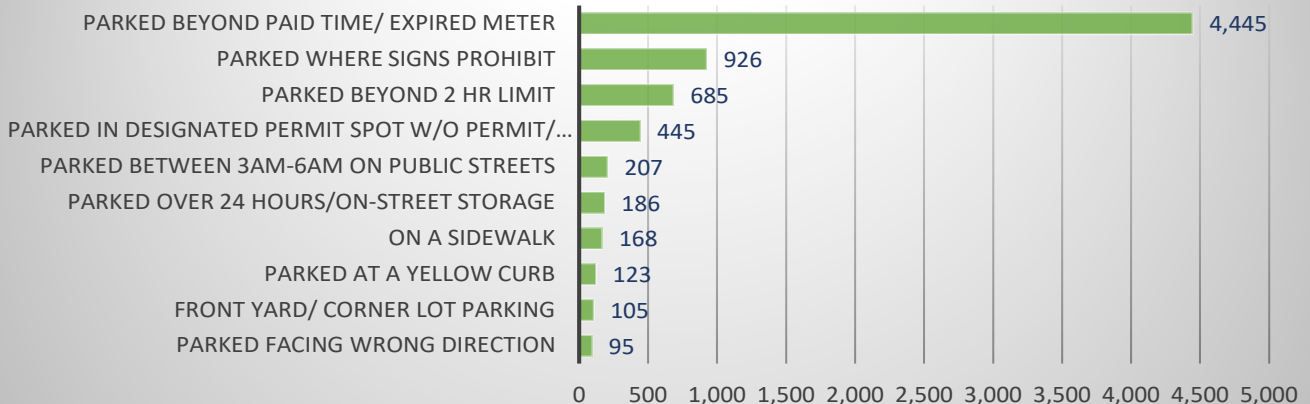
Top 10 Calls for Service Categories 2020



Top 10 Traffic Citation Categories 2020



Top 10 Parking Violations 2020



City of Kent 10-Year Crime Index and Statistics

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
Murder	2	1	1	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
Rape	6	7	5	2	2	0	1	3	3	0
Robbery	17	18	24	15	9	13	11	9	8	8
Assault	235	279	260	316	266	233	190	135	185	181
Burglary	146	168	134	103	127	95	72	79	58	62
Larceny	472	450	511	458	357	385	359	330	314	369
Auto Theft	32	18	16	17	7	16	17	12	13	21
Arson	16	10	4	10	4	2	1	3	1	1
Human Trafficking - Sex Acts	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Human Trafficking - Servitude	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Crime Index	926	951	955	921	773	745	651	598	582	642
Clearance Rate (%)	31.8	33.4	32.4	37.0	38.9	41.6	37.5	33.1	41.6	40.7

Traffic Accidents	856	843	861	815	1,067	1,015	753	705	713	493
<i>Injury</i>	125	125	88	110	104	114	96	105	149	75
<i>Fatal</i>	0	1	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0

Arrests	2,066	2,391	2,102	2,261	2,208	2,222	1,878	1,605	1,679	1,204
<i>Domestic Violence</i>	106	101	98	132	84	101	93	85	91	136
<i>Juvenile</i>	208	168	126	194	137	117	137	90	91	52
<i>OVI</i>	238	277	205	187	186	182	164	145	175	119

Citations	2,841	3,393	2,576	3,023	3,366	3,541	2,872	2,869	3,119	2,025
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Calls	19,470	19,680	18,062	20,534	22,949	28,545	25,701	25,069	27,981	21,067
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Ohio Collaborative 2020 Traffic Stops

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	TOTALS
M/A	4	6	2	0	1	0	3	4	3	7	6	4	40
M/B	80	74	26	5	37	26	62	64	39	55	86	16	570
M/N	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	2
M/P	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
M/W	306	289	66	10	170	144	166	207	160	191	283	55	2,047

F/A	5	5	1	0	3	2	3	3	1	2	5	0	30
F/B	44	35	17	1	19	23	26	35	20	40	36	12	308
F/N	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1
F/P	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
F/W	258	199	45	7	109	103	135	145	130	167	246	31	1,575

STOPS	697	608	158	23	340	298	395	458	353	462	664	118	4,574
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KENT POLICE

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