

Lisa Clausen

From: Public Council Inbox
To: Karen Little
Cc: Mike Martin
Subject: RE: Burien City news article on "crime rate in Burien vs Annexation Area"

Ms. Little,

Please see below for a response to your inquiry to the City Council and City Manager. This will be included in the Correspondence for the Record for an upcoming City Council meeting.

Thank you-
L. Clausen
City Manager's Office

Because the populations are so vastly different, using the "straight volume" or any other direct comparison would skew the results and make them unusable. For example, during the period studied, Burien had reported 457 Residential Burglaries. For that same time period in North Highline had 160. Creating a chart with those numbers would show a huge gap between the numbers and make it appear that Burien has a significantly higher burglary problem than N. Highline.

The reason we used % of Dispatched Calls For Service (DCFS) is because we have found that in similar demographic areas, calls to the police tend to follow similar patterns. If we were comparing Burien with Maple Valley for example, using this method would probably not be accurately comparable.

The best way to do an analysis of this type is to use population, however, because we only have an estimate of the N. Highline population, we opted to use the % DCFS method instead, believing that would have a more accurate comparative value.

Hopefully, this addresses all of the questions, if not feel free to email back or give a call. Thanks,

Captain Carl Cole

Burien Police Department
206/296-3341 (W)
206/423-2941 (C)

From: Karen Little [<mailto:karenlittle@ix.netcom.com>]
Sent: Friday, September 02, 2011 9:48 PM
To: Mike Martin; Public Council Inbox
Subject: Burien City news article on "crime rate in Burien vs Annexation Area"

Hello,

I read the articles analyzing the Annexation Area with interest in the recently published newsletter, especially the Crime Rate analysis and graph.

First of all, does anyone understand the y-axis numbering scheme?

CFTR: 09/26/11

The graph on crime seemed like someone is a pro at choosing a graph that depicts the desired outcome in the best light (if people don't catch that the y-axis is out of sync). Why is the graph based on % of dispatched calls? This seems like an incomplete/misleading comparison of crime rates. Shouldn't there be graphs based on incidents per household, population or acre/mile? The graph printed in the newsletter leads readers to believe crime rates are truly lower than Burien and says "...Burien had the higher crime rate"; but it does nothing to give readers a feel for absolute crime volume comparisons. Comparisons as a percent of households, populations or square mile and a straight volume of dispatched calls would be a more accurate way or at least additional critical ways to compare "crime rate". The question is "does the Annexation Area have more crime and therefore need more city services, shared resource time and cost than what might appear on the surface?" The graph in the newsletter doesn't adequately answer the question.

Karen Little
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