

# Snohomish Police Department 2022 Annual Report

Chief Robert D. Palmer



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# SNOHOMISH POLICE DEPARTMENT

## ANNUAL REPORT TO THE COMMUNITY

### Message from the Chief

2022 is behind us and we are moving quickly into 2023; a year we all hope leaves the struggles and debris of 2020 and 2021 well behind us. We came through very difficult circumstances as a community the past two years, but I have never been happier to live and work in Snohomish.

The resiliency and support you have shown for yourselves, for each other, and especially to us at your police department, has often been overwhelming. Nowhere else I go in uniform do I get the nods, the thank you's, the smiles, and the statements of support for what we do than I do here in this city. Even in the face of significant law reforms and restrictions placed on policing because of bad acts committed by a minority in our profession, Snohomish is still a place that supports its police officers – I know that this is deeply appreciated by all of us who work for you in this role.



It has been my primary focus as your chief that we live up to that trust and support, that we continue to earn it, and to deserve it. I am proud of the work my officers and staff do every day, and the many unsung successes we have had in making Snohomish the safe community we all want it to be. I have worked to be innovative where we can, but to maintain the core principles and values of policing that our citizens expect. I am also proud that I was able to come in during a time of deep division and pain in our community and bring a sense of calm and order through teamwork with the community, city government, and my staff.

This will be my final report to Council and the community. I will be retiring in June of this year, which will complete a 3-year term - a commitment I gave to the City while being considered for this position. I will have spent just a bit shy of 35 years in law enforcement at that point, and I believe it is my time to hang up the cuffs and pass this great opportunity to someone new. It has truly been my honor, and the highlight of my long career, to have had the good fortune to be your Police Chief. It's the best job I've ever had!

My best wishes to all of you,

Robert D. Palmer  
Chief of Police

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## POLICE OPERATIONS

The Snohomish Police Department is a contracted services provider through the Snohomish County Sheriff's Office. We adhere to the Mission, Vision, and Values of our parent agency.

### *VISION*

*The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office will prioritize public trust and community safety by reducing crime through professional policing and correctional services, founded on accountability and compassion*

### *MISSION*

*Do the right thing, at the right time, for the right reason*

### *VALUES*

*Integrity – Dignity – Commitment – Pride*

### *Motto*

*Lead the way!*

### **The Snohomish PD has the following divisions:**

**Administration** is responsible for the day-to-day operations of financials, staffing, training, community engagement and the overall efficiency of the department. This is comprised of the Chief and Administrative Sergeant.

**Support Staff** is staffed by a Law Enforcement Secretary (LES) and a Lead Law Enforcement Technician (LLET). They are responsible for all report and ticket data entry, records management, fingerprinting and Concealed Pistol License processing for the city. They also handle procurement of supplies and customer service needs. There is also one Sheriff's Office Volunteer who primarily serves the PD.

**Patrol** is staffed by four sergeants and eight officers, providing 24-hour service 365 days of the year. They are responsible for the overall protection of lives and property, maintaining law and order and responding to requests for service - emergency and non-

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emergency - as well as criminal and non-criminal. Patrol enforces all criminal laws that are mandated by Federal, State or Municipal statute.

**Criminal Investigations** is comprised of two Detectives, overseen by the Administrative Sergeant. They are responsible for Criminal Investigations to include investigating all reports of violent crimes against persons and the investigations of all reports of property damage, theft, burglary, and other non-violent crimes. In addition, the CID is also responsible for providing crime scene processing and investigative services 24 hours a day.

**Community Outreach Officer** provides a variety of services including liaison with community groups and organizations to promote safety and community partnership, homeless outreach, and special projects such as public event management and security coordination.

There are 19 staff assigned to the Police Department full time.

## **2022 POLICE DEPARTMENT STAFF**

### **Chief of Police**

Captain Rob Palmer          June 2020 - Present

### **Sergeants**

Chris Veentjer – Administrative Sergeant

Scott Wells – Dayshift Supervisor

Chris Marino – Dayshift Supervisor

Brandon Charboneau– Nightshift Supervisor

Alex Ross – Nightshift Supervisor



### **Deputies**

Jordan DeBoer – Dayshift

Zach Marler – Dayshift

Brandon Freistat – Dayshift

Lars Teigen – Dayshift

Rebecca Bonnell – Nightshift

Jacob Holmes – Nightshift

John Smarr – Nightshift

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## Community Outreach Officer

Vacant

## Detectives

Judith Saarinen

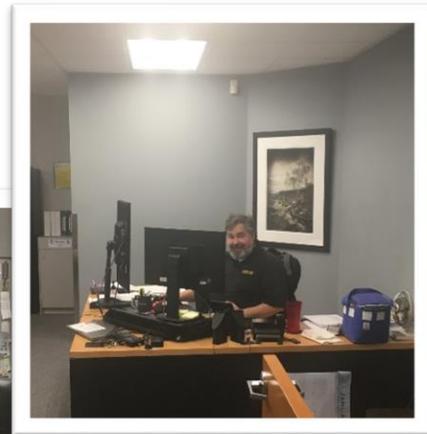
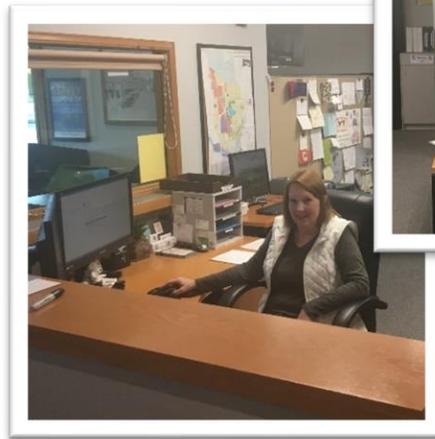
Stuart Gort

## Support Staff

LLET Heather Craig

LES Jon Stewart

Volunteer Bob Cathey



## STAFF CHANGES

2022 saw several position changes and transfers as deputies moved to other positions within the Sheriff's Office. Retention, hiring, and staffing was and remains a complex issue in law enforcement nationwide, but particularly in our region. The Sheriff's Office has also been hard hit, and for the first time in memory many contracts within the Sheriff's Office were forced to carry vacancies – Snohomish was no exception.

**Sergeants Brandon Charboneau** and **Alex Ross** came on board to fill our nightshift supervisor positions. Alex was past member of the Snohomish Police Department prior to contracting and specifically sought to return when he was promoted to sergeant.

The Administrative Sergeant, **Nathan Alanis**, was promoted to Lieutenant and returned to the Sheriff's Office, where he is now settled as the Contract Chief for the City of Sultan after a time as a Watch Commander. Congratulations to Nathan!

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**Sergeant Chris Veentjer** came out as the top candidate to replace Sgt. Alanis and is our new Admin Sergeant. We are very fortunate to retain Chris in Snohomish and he has been doing a fantastic job in his new role.

**Community Outreach Officer Rich Niebusch**

At the beginning of 2022, Deputy Niebusch was called back to service by the State Department and was on leave of absence through 2022. He officially retired in February 2023. Thank you, Rich, for your years of service!

**Deputies Jordan DeBoer and Rebecca Bonnell** joined the Snohomish PD in February. Dep. DeBoer has previously worked in the Sultan contract and Dep. Bonnell is a lateral hire from the Washington State Patrol. **Deputy John Smarr** joined us in March and has been a strong addition to our team

**We welcome in our newest Team Members and for those who have moved on to new adventures, their exemplary service to the City of Snohomish is deeply appreciated.**

## COMMUNITY CONNECTION

The Snohomish Police Department is very proud of our strong police/community partnership. This partnership is sustained and strengthened through our many community programs, events & outreach, such as:



## National Night Out

We had our first in-person National Night Out event in three years in 2022! It was a great event with good weather and plenty of activities, including the Kid's Copter and some awesome demonstrations by the firefighters. The Chief and officers attended other local neighborhood gatherings to discuss issues specific to them and enjoy time with those we serve.

## Shop With A Cop

Over the past several years the officers of the Snohomish Police Department have partnered with deputies from the Sheriff's Office, Fred Meyer at Snohomish Station, and the Boys and Girls Club to provide a Christmas shopping opportunity for kids in need.

Donations from the Deputy Sheriff's Association and local community members have given us the ability to take kids in need Christmas shopping at Fred Meyer, where they can buy gifts for themselves or for family members when they otherwise wouldn't have the money to do so. Each child is identified by the Boys and Girls Club and provided a \$100.00 gift card to use during the event – they can buy whatever they want.

The partnership with Fred Meyer is amazing and they generously donate coupon savings to the purchases, allowing the money to stretch even further.

2022's event was the first in two years where we were able to meet and shop with the kids in person. It is a very special and rewarding time with these children and a favorite community event for our officers. There is no shortage of volunteers for this one!



## New Additions and Operations



### **Bike Patrol**

Sgt. Chris Marino spearheaded a project to revitalize the Bike Patrol Unit in Snohomish. We refurbished some of our older bicycles, added modernized equipment, and began training officers to begin patrolling on bikes again, particularly in and around the Farmer’s Market.

Bikes offer a unique opportunity to remain mobile and responsive, while allowing for much more engagement with community members.



We also took delivery of two Electric Bikes, which are scheduled for deployment and use in 2023. Their speed and range will allow the Bike Unit officers to cover the city from the Historic District to Snohomish Station with ease and offer another tool to engage the public, seek out crime, and keep our community safe.



### **Unmanned Aerial Systems (UAS)**

The Snohomish County Sheriff's Office is a regional leader in the use of UAS, or drones, and our contract allows us to leverage those capabilities. The SCSO has placed two different drones at our PD for regional use and we have trained pilots on our staff. These systems greatly enhance our search capabilities for lost persons and suspects attempting to flee or hide and enhance the safety of our officers while in use.

The Snohomish Police Department also purchased our own DJI Avata drone, which is compact and designed for indoor use. This will be a game-changer in providing search capability inside structures (and even vehicles), significantly enhancing officer safety when searching confined spaces.

The Snohomish Police Department also purchased our own DJI Avata drone, which is

### **Utility Terrain Vehicle (UTV)**

We also purchased a Polaris Ranger UTV using government funds earmarked for public safety. This special purpose vehicle will provide an economical way for us to have mobility during special events, move equipment and supplies during public events or incident response, and patrol areas of the city that may not be easily



accessed by traditional patrol vehicles. Accessing denied areas during severe weather events to provide service or rescue was also a strong consideration for obtaining this kind of equipment. The Bike Unit can use it to move the bikes easily from one area of the city, and our nightshift can use it to more easily access and patrol city parks during the night, helping to reduce the vandalism that occurs all too often.

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Lastly, as Snohomish allows the use of UTV's on city streets, it is an excellent way for us to engage with that growing community and enforce safe-use practices on our city streets.

## **SIGNIFICANT EVENTS**

### **Organized Retail Theft Investigation**

Home Depot Organized Crime Unit approached us with this case. The suspect, who had been identified through his social media accounts and payment cards, had established a pattern of theft: enter Home Depot, pile items onto a large pushcart, utilize self-checkout to pay for a small percentage of the items, obtain a receipt, then leave the store with both the paid and unpaid items. On a later date he would take the previously purchased items and return them, receive his refund, then steal/purchase more items. He sold the stolen property through eBay and Offer Up. A search warrant was served on his residence in Marysville and an extensive amount of stolen property was recovered. Suspect was booked into jail on multiple felony theft counts.

### **Trafficking in Stolen Property Investigation**

A representative from an e-scooter rental company in Seattle notified Snohomish PD that a scooter battery was believed to be located at a house within the city. The company had been experiencing a significant amount of theft, and they had proactively installed GPS tiles on their batteries, leading the employee to this house. The homeowner consented to a search of his home and vehicle, and over 100 batteries were recovered. The homeowner had purchased the batteries second-hand, as material for his small business, from a suspect in Seattle who is known to Seattle PD as being part of a larger stolen property trafficking ring. Case info was submitted to the Seattle PD's major crimes unit.

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## STATISTICAL INFORMATION

### MOTOR VEHICLE CRASHES / CITATIONS

The following tables detail traffic enforcement and collision data.

<u>Citation Type</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Parking	48	52	62
Infraction – Traffic	450	477	274
Criminal – Traffic	0	0	0
Totals	499	533	337

<u>Vehicle Collision Type</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
No Injury	101	104	93
Possible Injury	25	27	22
Non-Incapacitating Injury	7	12	23
Incapacitating Injury	1	2	3
Unknown	19	54	25
Totals	153	199	166

### DUI Enforcement

<u>DUI</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Filed/Arrest	37	34	17
Referred to WSP	5	0	5
Total	42	34	22

DUI Enforcement is, and always will be, an area of priority!

2022 reflects a lower DUI total, but there has been a significant emphasis by our weekend Nights Crew, especially with the addition of a former WSP Trooper on that shift. I'm encouraged that even with increased effort, the total arrests in this area are down.

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## CRIME IN SNOHOMISH

### **Non-Violent Crimes**

<u>Crime Type</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Residential Burglary	16	15	20
Commercial Burglary	19	16	26
Vehicle Theft	31	37	34
Vehicle Prowl	64	75	51
Theft (All Types)	230	188	146

Vehicle prowls declined by about 30% in 2022. I attribute this to an emphasis by Night Shift patrolling with a focus on deterrence and reduction of this crime type, as well as the law changes on the resale of catalytic converters – I was optimistic that this new law enhancement would help, and it appears that it has reduced this problematic crime.

### **Violent Crimes**

<u>Robbery</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Robbery 1 (Armed)	6	5	4
Robbery 2 (Unarmed)	6	0	1

This category saw a slight jump beginning in 2020, even though the actual number is still very low and has remained consistent since. There is little that can be done proactively to prevent this crime type, except to continue to provide a visible presence in the city.

It should be pointed out that “Armed” Robbery includes the use or threatened use of any kind of weapon, or a significant assault during the taking of property from the person of another, not just firearms.

<u>Assaults</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Felony Assault 1, 2, 3	7	7	2
Felony Assault 1,2,3 DV	5	4	3
Misdemeanor Assault 4	10	26	16
Misdemeanor Assault 4 DV	39	36	26

Assault totals for the City of Snohomish remain generally consistent or show a declining trend. There is little that police can do as a preventative, except to continue with education and outreach whenever possible.

## Crisis Calls

<u>Crisis Calls</u>	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>
Assist Social Worker*	N/A	4	7
Behavior Health Crisis	60	63	112
Suicidal**	34	27	26

\*New call type created in 2021

\*\* Completed Suicide calls are generally changed to a Death Investigation – this set attempts to capture only the crisis response calls.

2022 saw an almost 100% increase in response to BHC calls. Several factors are involved, but is primarily because of increased public awareness, increased attention on the topic, and additional resources becoming available.

It is impossible to fully account for these types of contacts because they may be dispatched or coded as another call type (such as a trespassing or nuisance call) and change during the contact into an outreach call. That may or may not be changed to a Behavioral Health Contact depending on the outcome. It is probable that those contacts are under-reported.

There are currently no good methods for separating the above data out and turning it into useful information that can show the number of contacts, versus the number of

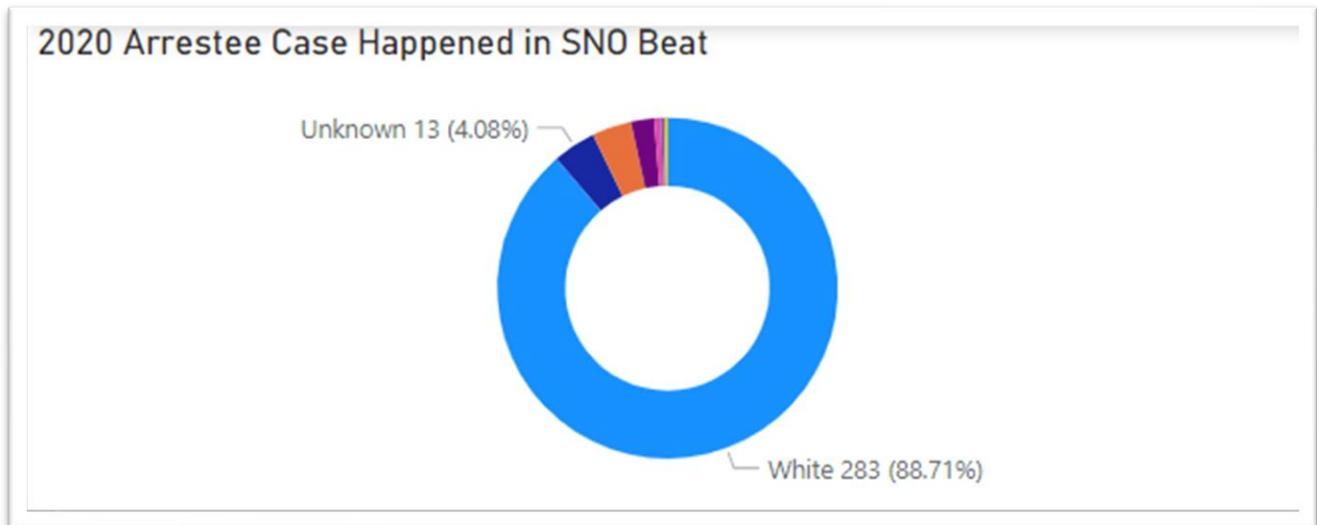
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referrals to services, versus positive outcomes. Once a person goes into any kind of program or treatment facility, HIPAA laws and other privacy rules generally preclude us from knowing the outcomes and successes. We continue to work with partners in the Behavioral Health field to seek solutions, and we continue to offer referrals and service to those who are contacted and in need of this kind of assistance.

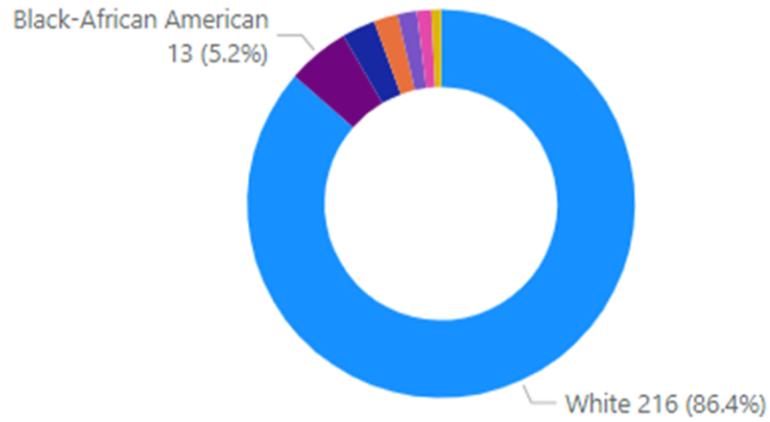
## ANNUAL ARREST DEMOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS

Data capture on demographics is a tool available to us through analytical software used by the Sheriff’s Office Crime Analysts based on police reports and how those arrested identified themselves by race.

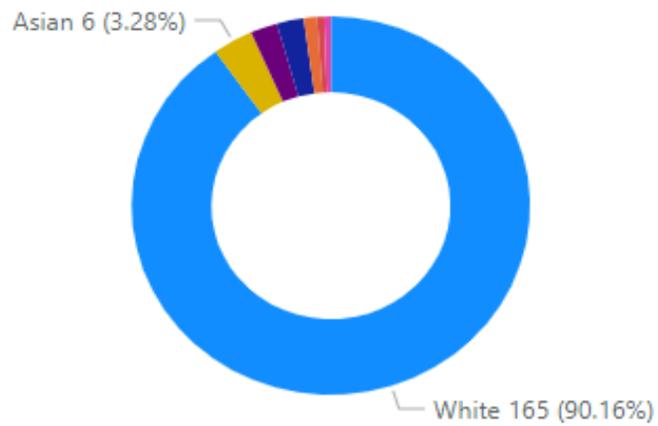
The graphics below are included as a representation of arrests by the Snohomish PD and how they relate to our populations of color. The arrest percentages by identified race are closely in line with the actual population demographics of Snohomish County and/or the City of Snohomish (datausa.io), demonstrating equity in the application of arrest as an enforcement option.



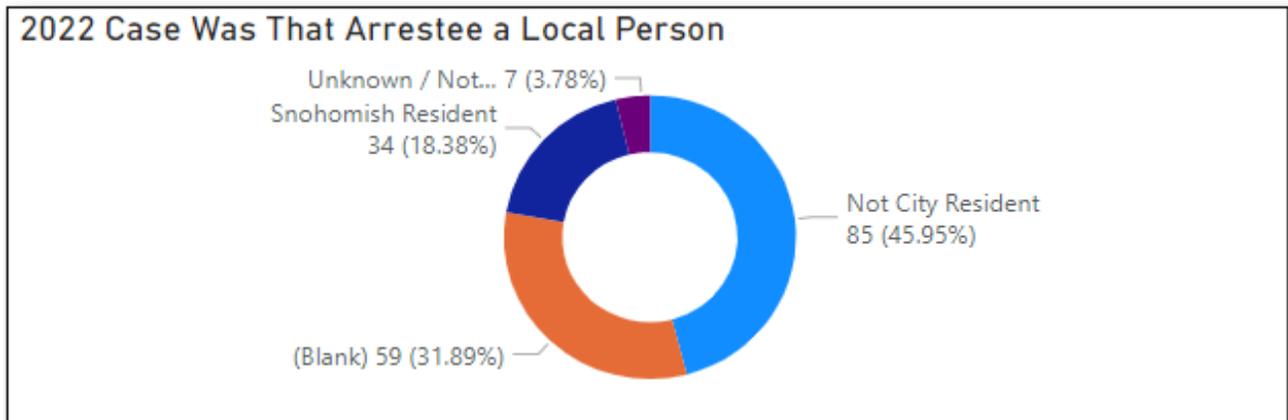
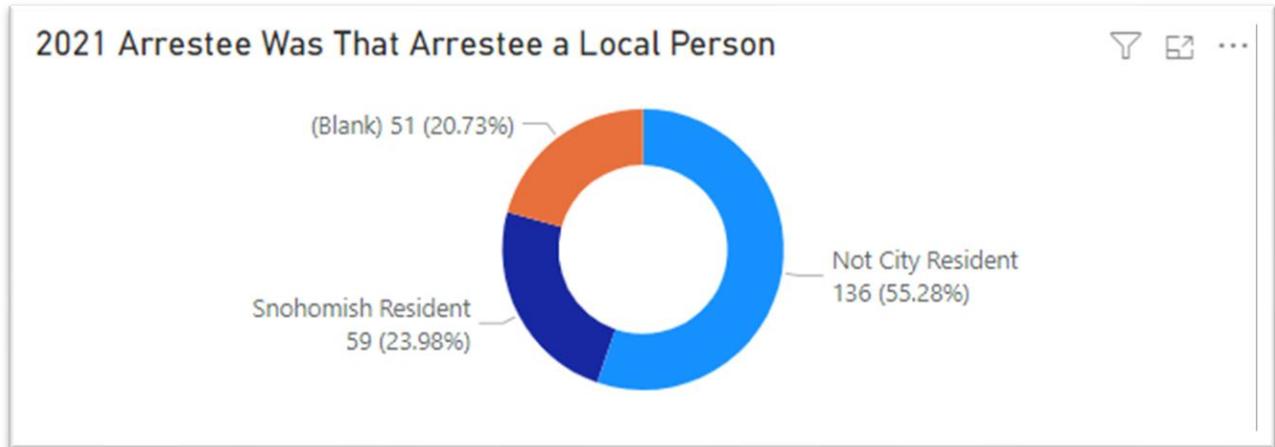
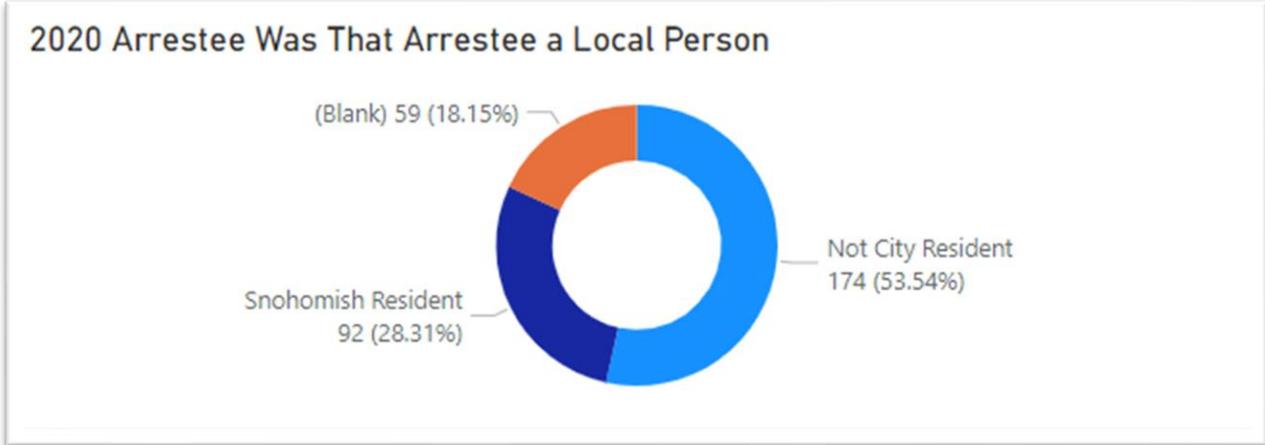
### 2021 Arrestee Case Happened in SNO Beat



### 2022 Case Happened in SNO Beat, Arrestee Subject Data



Another way to analyze this data is to compare those arrested with those who list a city address versus those who list an address outside of this city. This shows that consistently, over half of the arrests made in Snohomish are from non-city residents.



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## **Moving Forward**

### **Events/Issues/Forecasting**

Event Planning has become a strong process and I am very encouraged that the streamlining and consistency implemented by the Director of Community Engagement and Strategic Initiatives will give us, and the event sponsors, a clear map on navigating the challenging needs of making our events, safe, enjoyable, and minimally impactful.

We will be working with the event planners to provide the appropriate amount of security and traffic control tailored for each event to ensure a safe and enjoyable environment for each of them.

We have been extremely fortunate over the past couple of years to have avoided severe weather or flooding events in the city, but we are prepared for these events and have response plans developed if needed. The UTV addition was considered, in part, as a tool for use in reaching areas that cannot be accessed by standard patrol vehicles during these conditions.

## **CONNECT WITH THE SNOHOMISH PD**

**JOIN OUR TEAM!** Make a difference in our community and join one of the best law enforcement agencies in Washington.

**<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/238/Careers---Join-Our-Team>**

**Connect with us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/SnohomishPD/>**

**Visit our website: <https://www.snohomishwa.gov/186/Police-Department>**

**Follow us on Twitter: [twitter.com/@SnohomishPD](https://twitter.com/@SnohomishPD)**

**Register your valuables and belongings for free.** In case of theft, you will have important details for police: **[www.reportit.leadsonline.com](http://www.reportit.leadsonline.com)**