



**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT**  
**MEETING DATE:** 5/21/2024  
**DEPARTMENT:** Management Services

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**SUBJECT:**

AGREEMENT WITH THE COUNTY OF ORANGE FOR LAW ENFORCEMENT SERVICES

**RECOMMENDED ACTION(S):**

Approve and authorize the Mayor to sign the Agreement with the County of Orange for Law Enforcement Services for Fiscal Year 2024-25.

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY:**

The City of Lake Forest contracts with the Orange County Sheriff's Department ("OCSD") for law enforcement services. The proposed cost for the attached Fiscal Year 2024-25 Law Enforcement Agreement ("OCSD Agreement") is \$21,360,473, which is \$1,073,900 or 5.29% more than the current fiscal year (Attachment 1). This year-over-year increase is primarily due to increased labor costs and the transition away from City-owned auxiliary vehicles (one commercial enforcement vehicle and two motorcycles) to County-owned auxiliary vehicles. The proposed OCSD Agreement includes a staffing plan that describes personnel and other resource allocations (Attachment 2).

Through proactive policing and partnership with the community, Lake Forest consistently has one of the lowest crime rates within Orange County. A historical record of "Part 1" crimes is described later in this report and in Attachment 3, which documents significant local crime trends across the region (Attachment 3).

Staff recommends the City Council approve the new one-year OCSD Agreement. The 2023-2025 Operating Budget includes sufficient funding to cover the costs of the recommended action.

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**BACKGROUND:**

When the City incorporated in 1991, the "contract city" service model was implemented for a variety of public services, including law enforcement. Consequently, the City has a long-standing contractual relationship with OCSD, which also provides law enforcement services to many other Orange County

cities. The contract service model has been an effective and efficient model for service delivery and crime mitigation.

The City's annual contract with OCSD includes salaries, benefits, and other associated overhead costs for the number of direct and shared positions required to support public safety and police operations within the City's boundaries. Cities that contract with OCSD capitalize on the economies of scale associated with the sharing of certain facilities, vehicles, training, personnel, specialized policing units (i.e., Directed Enforcement Team, Behavioral Health Bureau, Special Weapons and Tactics, Major Accident Reconstruction Team, Mounted Unit, Air Support, K-9 Unit, Bomb Squad, and the Gang Enforcement Team) and other costs. Each year, as part of the City's budget compilation process, staff reviews the proposed costs associated with these services and presents an annual contract with OCSD to the City Council for consideration.

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## **DISCUSSION:**

### Year in Review

The OCSD continues its partnership with the community to reduce and prevent crime in Lake Forest through various initiatives. Highlights from calendar year 2023 include:

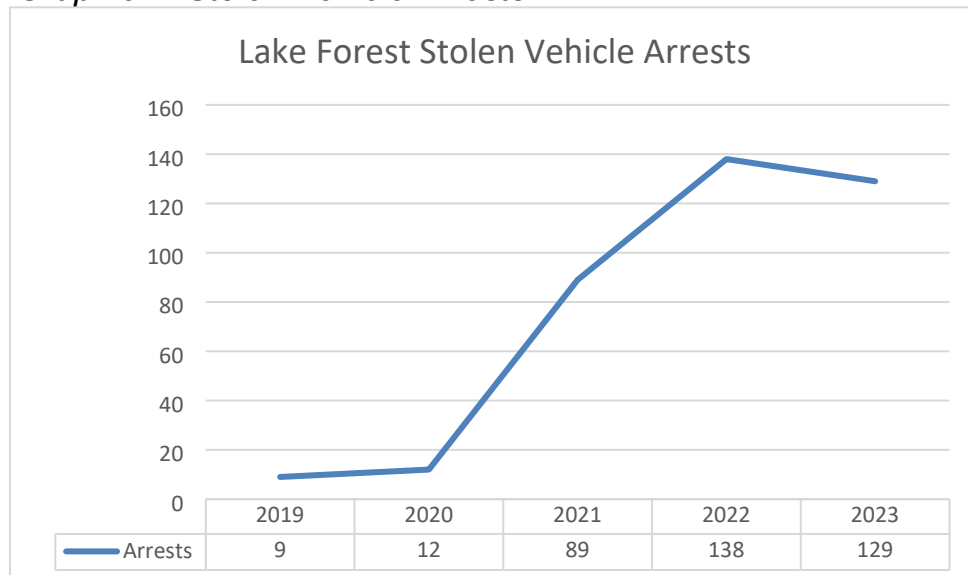
- 3,852 service hours donated by the Sheriff's Team of Active Retired Seniors ("STARS") and an increase in the number of STARS recruited to serve the City
- Deputy Rodney Elcock was awarded the prestigious Medal of Merit for his diligence in investigating a string of robberies that included more than 10 search warrants and an eventual suspect apprehension in Las Vegas, Nevada
- Deputy Jeremiah Stephens was honored with the Mothers Against Drink Driving ("MADD") Recognition Award for making 41 drinking-under-the-influence ("DUI") arrests throughout 2022
- Homeless Liaison Officer ("HLO") facilitated shelter provision for 20 individuals in partnership with other organizations as well as providing resources related to substance abuse, disability, mental health, medical issues, and veteran services
- Collaborated with City staff during implementation of "in-house" parking enforcement

- Continued to refine emergency response services in partnership with the Orange County Fire Authority
- Helped the City implement several Automated License Plate Reader (“ALPR”) camera locations throughout the city, completing the City’s “ALPR Geofence”
- Continued the Business Watch Program
- Met with several Homeowner Associations to discuss issues related to their neighborhood
- Maintained an average call for service response time of less than five minutes (4:47 min)

### Completion of ALPR Geofence

The City now has 52 fully functioning ALPR cameras covering all major thoroughfares in the community. The ALPR system provides quick, reliable information to law enforcement related to the physical descriptions and license plate numbers of vehicles suspected of being utilized in the commission of a crime. The ALPR system is particularly effective at alerting law enforcement as to the whereabouts of stolen vehicles. Since the initial buildout of the ALPR system in 2021, stolen vehicle arrests in Lake Forest have increased dramatically (see Graphic 1 below).

*Graphic 1: Stolen Vehicle Arrests*



### Traffic Enforcement Statistics

The recommended California State Office of Traffic Safety (“OTS”) Traffic Enforcement Index is between 25%-35%. This index is determined by dividing the number of hazardous violations by the number of fatal and injury collisions. In 2023, the City’s Traffic Enforcement Index was below that range at 12.25%. There was a decrease in the number of fatal traffic accidents from six to four from the prior year and the number of injury traffic accidents increased by 23.9%. A three-year comparison of traffic enforcement statistics is provided in Table 1 below.

*Table 1: Traffic Enforcement Statistics*

<b>Incident Type</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Hazardous Moving Citation	1,018	2,591	2,144
Non-Hazardous Citations	726	453	1,584
Fatal Traffic Accidents	4	6	4
Injury Traffic Accidents	150	138	171

### Calls for Service

Calls for service include calls that were generated from dispatch and by the patrol deputies’ self-initiated observations. In 2023, there was a 3% increase in the volume of calls for service and an increase in the average response time of 4%. Of these calls for services, those that are potential life-threatening incidents are identified as “Priority 1” calls. Table 2 below provides a three-year comparison of response times for all calls for service. More specific data on service calls and other demands is available in Attachment 3.

*Table 2: Calls for Service and Response Times*

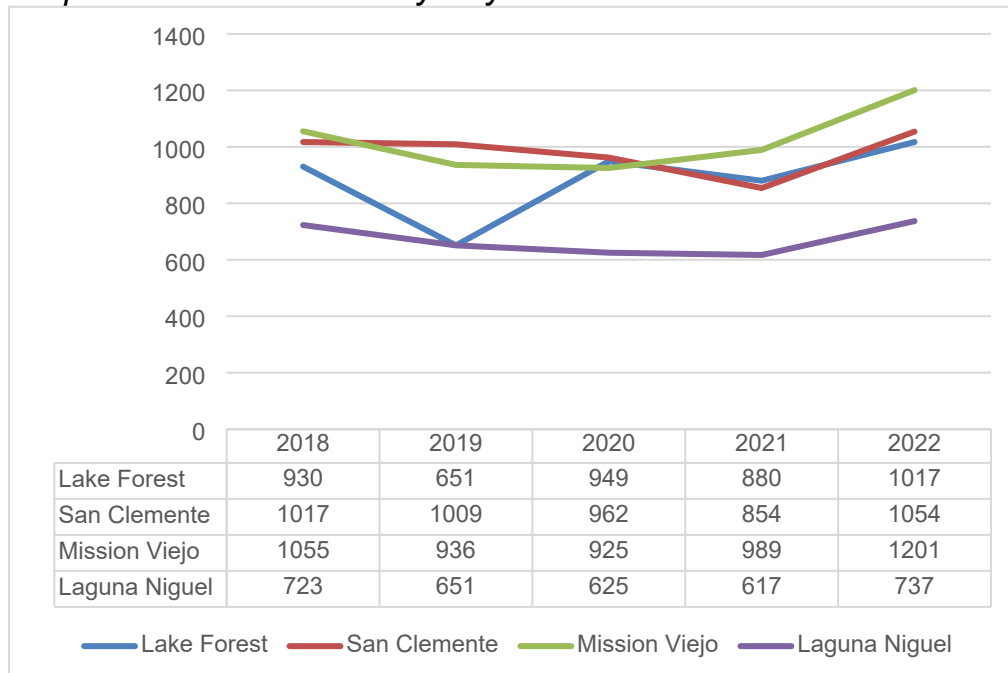
<b>Metric</b>	<b>2021</b>	<b>2022</b>	<b>2023</b>
Total Calls for Service	26,519	27,329	28,211
Priority One Calls	427	423	451
Response Times for Priority One Calls	4:45 min	4:28 min	4:47 min

### Reports of Crime and Crime Rates

The Uniform Crime Reporting (“UCR”) database, which includes the official record of Part 1 Crimes, is reported on a calendar year basis by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (“FBI”). Effective June 1, 2021, the OCSD began to report crime statistics via the National-Incident Based Reporting System (“NIBERS”). Often in the commission of criminal acts, suspects commit multiple crimes. Unlike UCR, NIBERS quantifies all crimes committed during a criminal incident, not just the most severe of the crimes committed. As a result, the new crime data published via the public portal of crime statistics is both more accurate

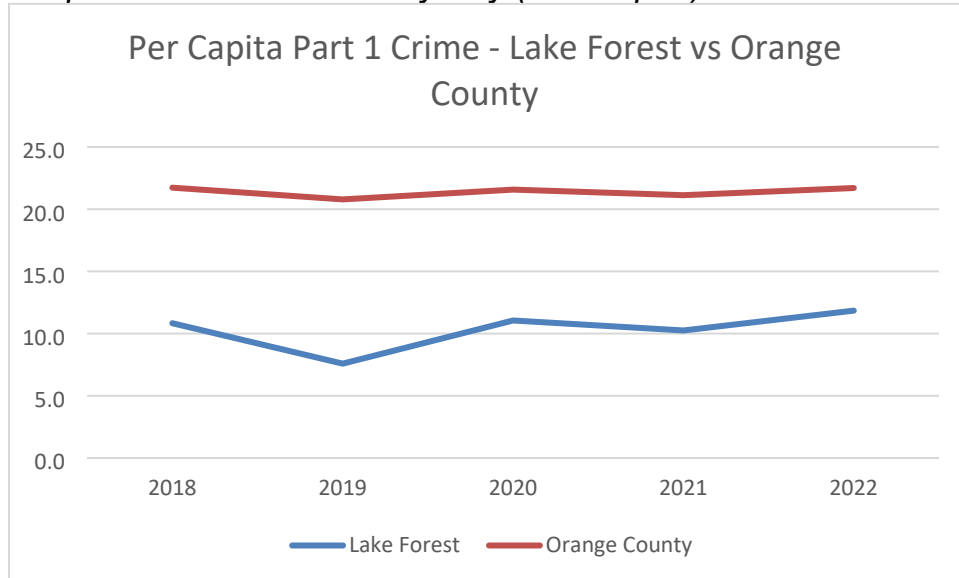
and quantifies a greater volume of crimes. Despite this technical change, Lake Forest remains one of the safest cities in all of Orange County in terms of Part 1 crime incidence. Part 1 crimes are considered the most serious offenses, and include homicide, rape, burglary, and auto theft. Graphic 2 below includes a table that describes the total volume of Part 1 crimes committed in Lake Forest since 2018. Graphic 2 also provides comparative trend lines that include the cities of San Clemente, Mission Viejo, and Laguna Niguel.

*Graphic 2: Part 1 Crimes by City 2018-2022*



On a per-capita basis (total volume of Part 1 crimes divided by 2020 Census population record), Lake Forest remains one of the safest cities in Orange County. Graphic 3 below illustrates Lake Forest's per-capita Part 1 crimes compared to Orange County overall. Table 3 below provides a five-year trend of Part 1 crimes across many cities in Orange County that contract with OCSD for law enforcement services. Both Graphic 3 and Table 3 below demonstrate that Lake Forest remains a safe community relative to other cities in the region. In most of the cities used for comparison with Lake Forest Part 1 crime statistics, cities showed an increase in Part 1 crime incidence beginning in 2021. Staff believe this increase can, at least, in part, be attributed to the OCSD's switch from the UCR to the NIBERS crime reporting system effective June 1, 2021, which accounts for all Part 1 crimes committed during a single crime incident.

**Graphic 3: Part 1 Crimes by City (Per Capita)**



**Table 3: Per Capita Part 1 Crimes by City 2018-2022**

City	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	5 Yr Avg
Orange County	21.7	20.8	21.6	21.1	21.7	21.4
San Clemente	15.8	15.7	15.0	13.3	16.4	15.2
Laguna Hills	14.7	14.0	15.3	16.2	15.3	15.1
San Juan Cap	12.4	10.3	10.4	11.9	16.0	12.2
Mission Viejo	11.3	10.0	9.9	10.6	12.8	10.9
Laguna Niguel	11.2	10.1	9.7	9.6	11.5	10.4
Lake Forest	10.8	7.6	11.1	10.2	11.8	10.3
Laguna Woods	6.9	7.6	9.6	6.2	5.5	7.1
Rancho SM	7.7	6.8	6.3	5.6	5.0	6.3

### Proposed Fiscal Year 2024-25 Agreement

On an annual basis, OCSD prepares an estimate of potential costs that initiates the development of annual contracts with various cities. This process is purposefully iterative. OCSD works closely with contract cities and presents subsequent estimates of potential costs based on its operations, desired service levels, and other general feedback from the community. As part of the process, contract city representatives and OCSD discuss ongoing needs relative to public safety and cost-sharing/saving measures that provide sufficient funding for the desired level of services.

This year, the estimate provided by OCSD is \$21,360,473, which is 5.29% or \$1,073,900 more than current fiscal year costs. This year-over-year increase is primarily due to increased labor costs and the transition away from City-owned auxiliary vehicles (one commercial enforcement vehicle and two motorcycles) to

County-owned auxiliary vehicles. Increased costs for base salaries and benefits make up 88% of the total cost increase. Staffing levels of sworn OCSD Deputies remain the same, while the total number of CSO's will be reduced from five to four in accordance with the City introducing an in-house parking enforcement program to augment OCSD's parking management efforts. The full staffing outlay is provided in Attachment 2.

Staff recommends the City Council approve the attached OCSD Agreement and authorize the Mayor to sign the document (Attachment 1). The 2023-2025 Operating Budget includes sufficient funding to cover the costs of the recommended action.

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### **FISCAL IMPACT:**

The total cost of the proposed OCSD Agreement for Fiscal Year 2024-25 is \$21,360,473. The 2023-2025 Operating Budget includes sufficient funding to cover the costs of the recommended action.

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### **ATTACHMENTS:**

1. Agreement for Law Enforcement Services with Orange County Sheriff's Department for Fiscal Year 2023-24
2. Orange County Sheriff's Department Fiscal Year 2024-25 Staffing Plan
3. Lake Forest Police Services 2023 Annual Report

Initiated By: Sean McGovern, Deputy City Manager  
Submitted By: Sean McGovern, Deputy City Manager  
Approved By: Debra Rose, City Manager