



City of Bellevue

Reducing Public Disorder Crimes

(Mandatory Minimum Sentences)

Trisna Tanus & Courtney Popp

March 11, 2025



Direction

Provide feedback and direction on whether to advance an ordinance imposing mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders of public disorder crimes

AGENDA



Council Goal and Direction



Key Issues and Findings



Mandatory Minimum Sentences



Request for Direction

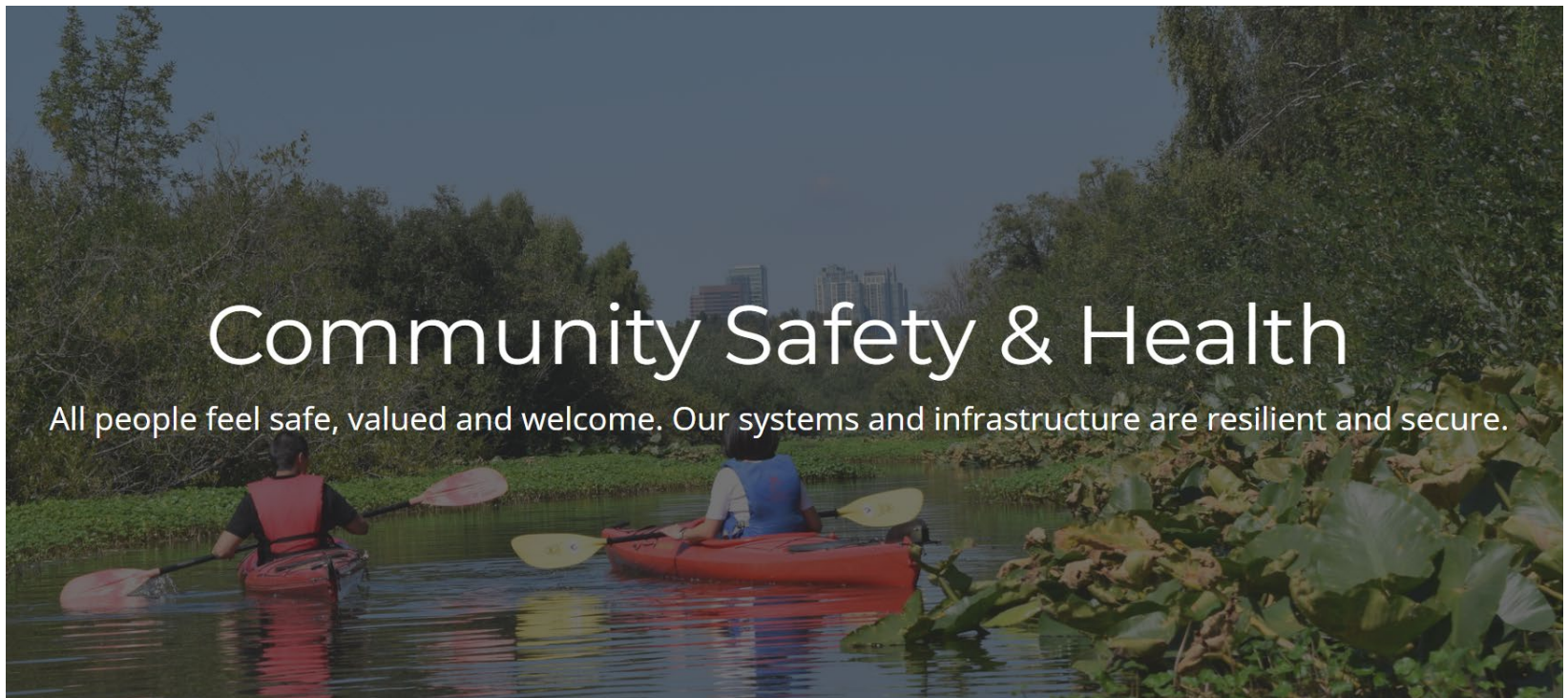
Council Meeting 10/29/2024

- Goal: Reduce public disorder crimes in Bellevue
- Direction:
 - Conduct the necessary research and analysis related to repeat offenses of public disorder crimes
 - Bring back options and recommendations, including if appropriate, ordinance imposing mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders of these crimes



Key Issues

- What are “public disorder crimes” for Bellevue?
- Who are committing these crimes?
- What enforcement tools are available?



Issue #1: Defining public disorder crimes in Bellevue

Public Disorder Crimes: Crimes resulting in financial loss and decreased public safety

Reported Crime	2022	2023	2024
Shoplifting (Theft 3rd degree)	1031	1242	1417
Theft from Motor Vehicles (Vehicle Prowling)	1184	1024	999
Theft of Motor Vehicles	494	713	520
Damage to Private Property (Malicious Mischief 3 rd)	403	413	405
Theft from Mail (Theft 3 rd degree)	328	381	354
Theft (All Other Theft 3 rd degree)	306	302	351

Issue #1: Defining public disorder crimes in Bellevue



- Five of the top six reported crimes in Bellevue are theft crimes
- Shoplifting and theft from motor vehicles are the two highest reported crimes—almost triple and double the next most reported crime
- Shoplifting makes up 67% of Theft 3rd degree crimes
- Shoplifting has increased from year to year

Issue #2: Identifying Offenders

- Prosecutors charge a high percentage of referred cases
- Offenders are held accountable 94 to 1 ratio

Prosecution Statistics	2022	2023	2024
Charges Filed After Referral	85%	84%	88%
Charges Resolved with a Favorable Outcome (e.g., guilty finding)	93%	94%	94%
Charges Resolved with an Unfavorable Outcome (e.g., not guilty or dismissal)	1%	2%	1%
Charges Resolved with Other Outcome (e.g., defendant found incompetent)	6%	4%	5%

Issue #2: Identifying Offenders

Bellevue Offenders with Prior Convictions in WA in the Last 2 Years of Theft 3rd Degree*

0 prior	1 prior	2+ prior
72%	20%	8%

- Extrapolating this recidivism rate for 2024 cases:
 - ~113 of the 1417 reported shoplifting committed by offenders with at least two prior Theft 3rd degree convictions in the state in the last 2 years
- Focus responsive tools on subset of more current reoffenders

Issue #3: Enforcement Tools

Prevention. Intervention. Enforcement.



The P.I.E. Philosophy

- Prevention and intervention stop or mitigate crimes from being committed
- Enforcement occurs after the crime has been committed; and relies on rehabilitation and deterrence—a carrot and stick approach

Issue #3: Enforcement Tools

Conviction and Jail Time:

- A stick approach—punishing people by putting them in jail
- Jail time commensurate with how egregious and harmful to society their crime is
- Jail costs: \$144-207 per person per day, plus fees for booking, medical, other services
- Indirect costs: While in custody, offenders are unable to work, care for their family, or meet other obligations



Photo of South Correctional Entity (SCORE) from scorejail.org

Issue #3: Enforcement Tools

Mandatory Minimum Sentences:

- Additional jail time to enhance deterrence
- Show the jurisdiction's strong stance against offenders
- Higher jail costs and indirect costs
- Unknown efficacy for public disorder crimes (no data available from Everett and Marysville)
- Limit prosecutorial and judicial discretion
- Other programs (e.g., treatment, community court) can remain alternate options



Issue #3: Enforcement Tools

Community Court:

- An incentive (carrot) approach—alternative problem-solving court
- Identify and address the underlying challenges of non-violent offenders that may contribute to further criminal activity—reduce recidivism
- Collaboration between the criminal justice system and other systems, including mental health, substance use disorder, human services, housing, employment and education
- Anticipated to open in Bellevue this summer



Mandatory Minimum Sentences

- A new tool for Bellevue
- Must be adopted by ordinance
- Potential to deter offenders and repeat offenders from committing public disorder crimes in Bellevue



Mandatory Minimum Sentences

Components of Potential Ordinance	
Public Disorder Crimes	Shoplifting (Theft 3rd degree) and theft from motor vehicles (Vehicle Prowling)
Repeat Offender	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An adult person• 18 years or older• 2 or more convictions of the same public disorder crime in WA in the past 2 years
Mandatory Minimum Sentence	30 days for repeat offenders
Exceptions	Participation and completion in Community Court, diversion or similar programs



Direction

Provide feedback and direction on whether to advance an ordinance imposing mandatory minimum sentences for repeat offenders of public disorder crimes