



## NEWS RELEASE

January 19, 2018

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

**Releasing Authority:**  
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### Elgin 2017 Statistics Reflect a 1% Overall Decrease in Part I Crime

In 2017, Elgin experienced a 1% decrease in Part I crimes, a new 46-year low. The Part I crime rate encompasses a standardized federal measurement of serious crimes that are committed against people and property. To illustrate a comparison, in 1972 Elgin's population was approximately 55,000 people. During that year the city experienced 2,659 Part I crimes. In 2017, 46 years later with a population double that of 1972, the city experienced 1,804 Part I crimes a 32% decrease in comparison.

	1972	1989*	2017
<i>Part I Crimes Reported</i>	2,659	4,905	1,804

*\*Highest year on record*

#### Homicides:

Two homicides occurred in Elgin last year, matching the total number of homicides in 2016. Both cases were cleared by arrest and the arrestees knew their victims prior to committing the crime:

- Michael Giacomino, Carlos Lopez, and Ivette Rodriguez were arrested and charged with the murder of Bayron Cruz-Garcia who was stabbed on August 12, 2017, in the 1100 block of Jansen Farm Drive.
- Brian Peck was arrested and charged with the murder of his mother, Gail Peck, who was killed on October 27, 2017, in the 700 block of Littleton Trail.

#### Statistical Highlights:

When comparing year 2017 to 2016:

- Violent crime dropped slightly lower than 2016's year-end total by 4.6%. In over twenty years only two years reflected a lower violent crime count than what Elgin has experienced over the past three years.
- Shooting victims were down 27%, from 11 in 2016 to 8 in 2017.
- Elgin's residential and commercial burglaries were at an all-time low with a reduction of 12%.

- Shots-fired incidents decreased 56%, from 64 in 2016 to 28 in 2017.
- Vehicle burglaries experienced a 2% decrease.

In part, Chief Jeffrey Swoboda credits decreases in crime to the unique approaches officers use to confront criminal issues. The civil injunction lawsuit against known gang members was a creative use of civil codes to tackle chronic offenders. Conversely, in an effort to prevent future offenders, visits by officers to homes with children showing signs of an interest in the gang culture occurred. “All of our officers partnered with School Resource Officers and the Social Services Unit to assist with early intervention,” said Chief Swoboda. “Youth programs, such as Kids United, ROPE camps and activities, mentoring and numerous other engagement opportunities have positively impacted the overall quality of life in this community.” Several proactive approaches have attributed to a 43% reduction in serious gang crimes, inclusive of shooting incidents. Gang-related shootings decreased 73% last year.

Chief Swoboda also recognizes Elgin’s residents for their assistance with the decrease in burglaries, inclusive of residential, commercial, and motor vehicle break-ins. From the “*If you like it, lock it,*” campaign, to calling in suspicious activity, to utilizing security systems – all have made a difference in both investigations and prevention. “Being able to support a downward crime trend in a city this size is due to a cooperative effort,” stated Chief Swoboda. “This isn’t just the police department. This is people who live here taking ownership in their neighborhoods. It is also businesses and agencies partnering with us so that together we can make Elgin a better place. During the year we worked cooperatively with many churches, community groups, social service agencies, the library, and private businesses. Absent any one participant in this equation, the positive results would not likely be matched.”

Technology is also a large part of the department’s policing strategy, as exemplified by the adoption of both a drone and a body-worn camera program in 2017. Each of these initiatives were presented publicly prior to their adoptions to ensure they would be met with community support. “Fortunately, the Elgin City Council and our citizens understand the importance of staying with the technology trends, for the good of the community and for the safety of our officers,” said Chief Swoboda. “The department intends to keep exploring and utilizing technology that matches identified needs.”

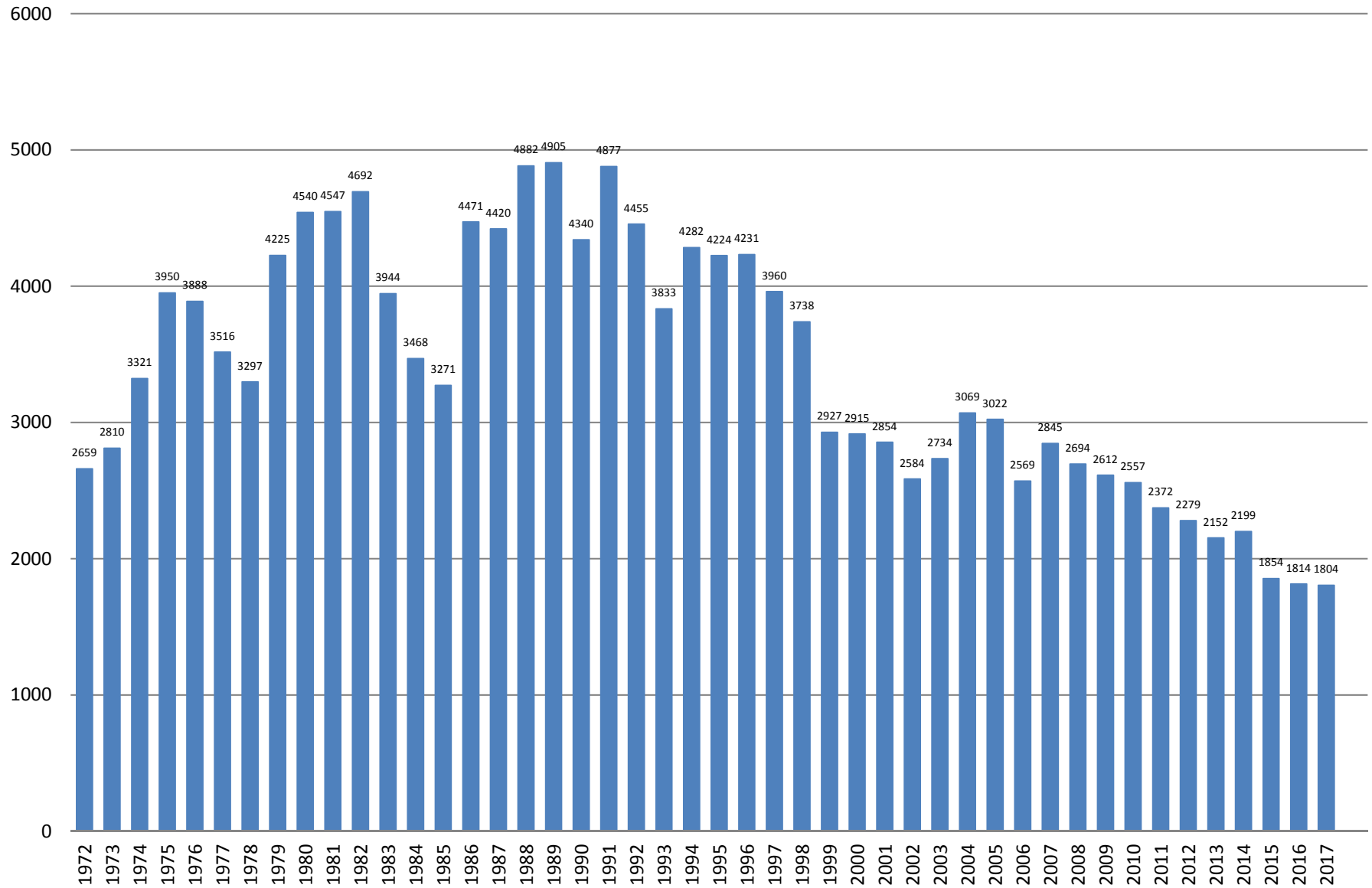
Chief Swoboda recognizes there is always more work to be done. “While overall crime is down another percentage point, there are still improvements we can make with the help of the Elgin community. Nearly 70% of stolen vehicles were the result of vehicles left running or situations in which the key was either lost or left ‘hidden’ inside the vehicle. Remember to bring keys with you, don’t leave a vehicle running, and secure an unoccupied vehicle. All of these can assist us with driving crime down further in 2018. Reducing opportunities for criminals to commit crimes is something we can all strive to be a part of. As we are seeing with our burglary reduction initiative, it works, but it can’t work without citizens being involved.”

In closure, Chief Swoboda stated, “What an amazing trend we have in Elgin. As we grow bigger and more diverse, we become safer. That is what working together as a community can accomplish”

## Elgin Part I Crime 2016 - 2017 Comparison

<b>Part I Crimes</b>	<b>Jan-Dec 2016 Crimes</b>	<b>Jan-Dec 2017 Crimes</b>	<b>% of Change</b>
Homicide	2	2	0
Forcible Rape/Criminal Sexual Assault	36	39	8
Robbery	63	55	-13
*Battery	89	77	-13
*Assault	49	55	12
Burglary	218	195	-11
Burglary to Motor Vehicle	311	306	-2
Theft	968	993	3
Motor Vehicle Theft	68	75	10
*Arson	10	7	-30
<b>Total Part I Crimes</b>	<b>1814</b>	<b>1804</b>	<b>-1</b>

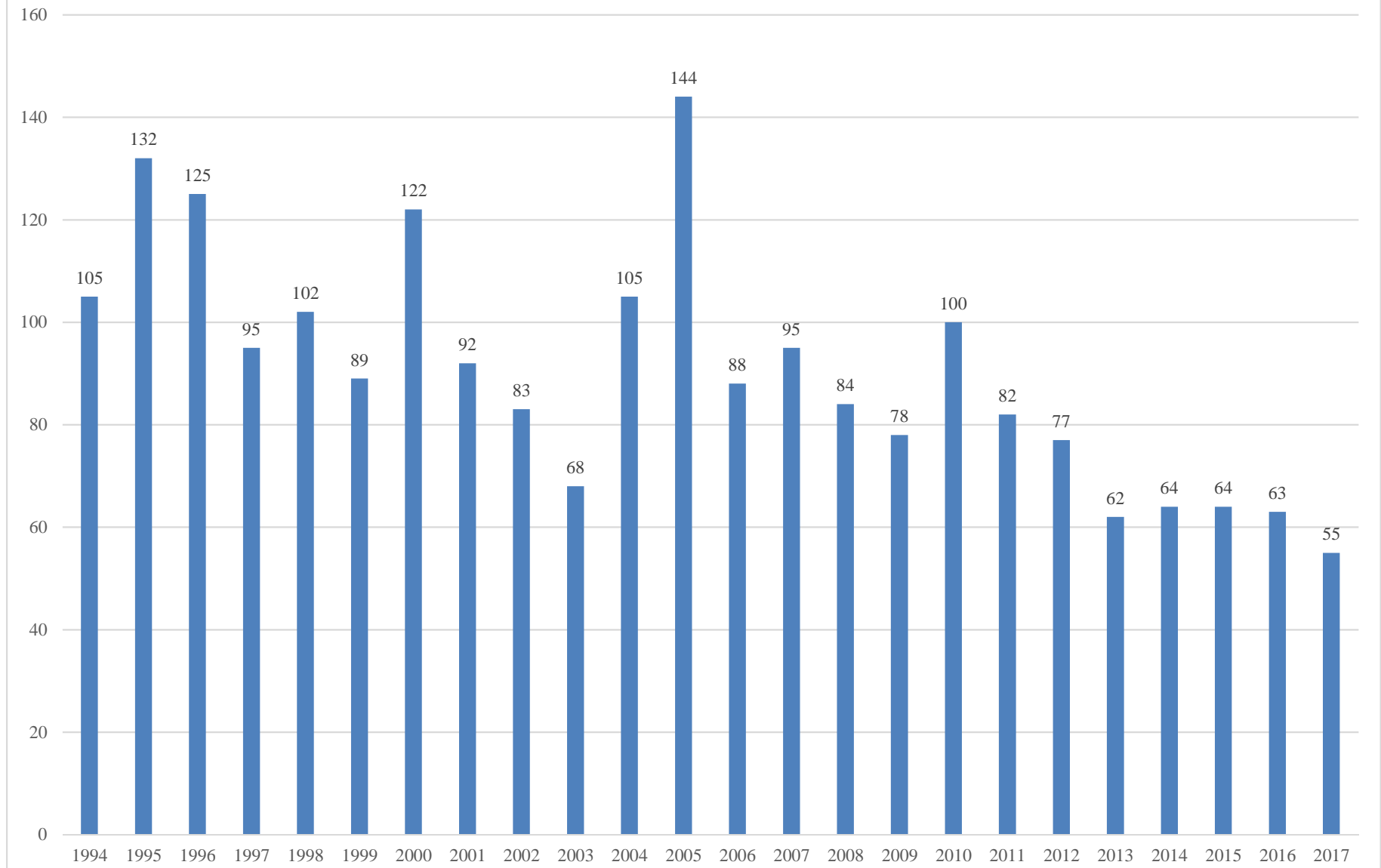
# Elgin 46 Year Low - Part I Crime 1972 - 2017



# Violent Crime 1994 - 2017



# Robbery 1994 - 2017



# Burglary and Burglary to Motor Vehicle 1991 - 2017

