

# POTTSTOWN CITIZENS FOR Enlightened LEADERSHIP

## Crime levels off after years of decline

Despite a slight uptick last year, crime in Pottstown continues to be lower than it's been in recent decades.

In fact, serious crimes are just half of what they were in 1997, the year crime peaked in Pottstown, and close to the lowest overall crime rate since 1973.

But people believe what they want to believe, and the perception of Pottstown as dangerous hangs around the suburbs, despite the reality.

A Pew Research report in 2016 found that Americans typically opine that crime is up every year regardless of what official statistics show.

As one who's lived in downtown Pottstown for 50 years, I've never been apprehensive about my neighborhood, nor have I had reason to be.

Pottstown's four murders in 2021, like those in recent years, were the result of domestic disputes or drug dealing or people doing other things they shouldn't.

The most shocking murder, that I can recall, dates back to 1988 when a gas station attendant at High and Bailey streets was stabbed to death during a robbery.

Today, especially with cameras everywhere, Pottstown Police are better than ever at apprehending criminals, and the county excels at prosecutions. It helps that Montgomery County District Attorney Kevin Steele has assigned three full-time assistants to Pottstown, who work full-time out of borough hall.

Unfortunately, visitors may see unkempt buildings and trash in the streets and conclude that Pottstown is dangerous. It's not.



Commentary by  
Tom Hylton

	2021	2020	2019	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014
Murder/Manslaughter	4	2	5	2	1	0	1	2
Forcible Rape	23	16	30	35	21	22	22	22
Robbery	52	26	27	36	59	48	49	66
Assault	268	342	288	397	401	341	375	328
Burglary	74	59	108	113	110	122	118	179
Larceny-Theft	537	497	557	606	661	753	917	899
Motor Vehicle Theft	92	49	40	34	46	55	57	63
Arson	10	1	5	2	5	4	4	16
Part I Crimes - Total	1060	992	1060	1225	1304	1345	1543	1575

	2013	2012	2011	2010	2009	2008	2007	2006
Murder/Manslaughter	2	1	0	0	0	2	3	2
Forcible Rape	37	20	22	25	10	16	20	18
Robbery	63	61	62	78	64	81	83	74
Assault	294	341	350	477	426	426	434	386
Burglary	219	158	125	165	165	181	192	232
Larceny-Theft	960	768	697	785	773	973	917	912
Motor Vehicle Theft	42	36	39	56	73	90	84	88
Arson	7	13	12	10	10	17	22	26
Part I Crimes - Total	1624	1398	1307	1596	1310	1636	1755	1737

	2005	2004	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998
Murder/Manslaughter	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	0
Forcible Rape	23	25	27	11	19	7	7	10
Robbery	48	62	58	68	57	56	46	47
Assault	381	400	405	384	339	359	471	499
Burglary	124	154	175	183	145	136	194	233
Larceny-Theft	915	1004	853	879	759	675	779	838
Motor Vehicle Theft	104	94	94	93	82	86	83	62
Arson	16	10	15	14	11	4	17	26
Part I Crimes - Total	1613	1750	1643	1633	1414	1324	1598	1715

**As the charts show, crime has decreased over the last 24 years.**