



Branson Police Department
2020 Annual Report



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Some images displayed are pre-COVID-19 photos.

City Leadership



Mayor
Edd Ackers



Ward I Alderman
Bob Simmons



Ward I Alderman
Bill Skains



Ward II Alderman
Larry Milton



Ward II Alderman
Jeff Seay



Ward III Alderman
Jamie Whiteis



Ward III Alderman
Julia King



City Administrator
Stan Dobbins



Assistant City Administrator
John Manning

Branson, a fourth class Missouri City, operates under the Council/Administrator form of government. The governing body consists of six Aldermen elected from three wards, and a Mayor elected at-large. The Mayor and Board of Aldermen serve two-year terms, and elections are held each April.

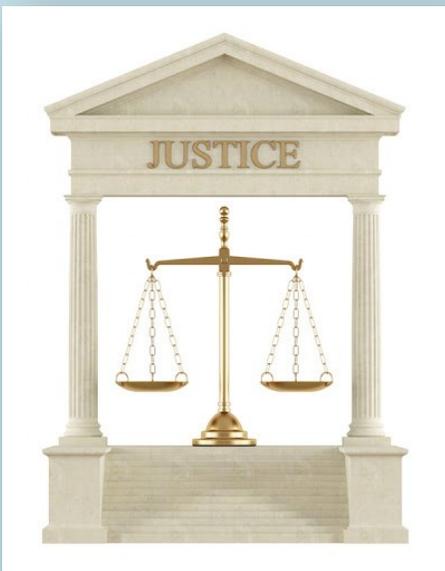
The City Administrator is hired by the Board of Aldermen to be the Chief Executive Officer of the City.

Chief's Message

On behalf of the men and women of the Branson Police Department, it is my honor to present our 2020 Annual Report. Our community is the reason we serve and we are committed to providing the best service available to all our citizens and visitors. We recognize the need for positive community relationships and intentionally work to engage our community and individual neighborhoods. Relationships make us who we are and provide critical guideposts we follow to reach our mission objectives.



*Jeff Matthews
Chief of Police*



Procedural Justice is the foundation of our community policing philosophy.

Procedural Justice is founded on four principles:

- ***Fairness*** in our processes
- ***Transparency*** in our actions
- Encouraging community ***Voice*** in how we police
- ***Impartiality*** in our decisions

Procedural Justice is our pathway to build community trust and sustain long-term relationships.

The Branson Police Department embraces community based/problem-oriented policing and we invest in community partnerships that enable us to work alongside our community to make Branson a better place to live, work, and play. Working with the community to identify neighborhood problems and develop sustainable solutions is integral to neighborhood safety and community livability. We are committed to our community and believe open dialogue and an engaged community are fundamental to our public safety mission. We welcome opportunities to partner with neighborhoods and community stakeholders to advance our City.





Demographics

The City of Branson (population 10,520; with millions of visitors annually and growing) is located in southwest Missouri, 35 miles south of Springfield within the heart of the Ozark Hills. Branson serves as the job, service, and shopping center for a two-county area with 80,000 year round residents.



Natural Beauty

Branson is surrounded by three prize winning lakes:

- ◆ Lake Taneycomo
- ◆ Table Rock Lake
- ◆ Bull Shoals Lake

Something for Everyone

The city has an incorporated boundary of over 21 square miles. It has become the focus of international attention as both a major development area and an entertainment and tourism destination. The reasons are numerous and range from the scenic natural beauty to the variety of live entertainment options and family oriented entertainment offerings.





Branson Police Department

Mission

Our reason for being is our community; so we hold ourselves to the highest standards in building and maintaining community trust and partnerships. We will always strive to enhance our community through a commitment to excellence, compassion and impartiality in all of our actions.

Vision

We want to serve our community and to be the area leader in providing superior law enforcement results. We will accomplish this through dedication to our values, the community and each other.

We will exemplify:

- SERVICE
- INTEGRITY
- ACCOUNTABILITY



Values

- **Integrity:** We will conduct ourselves with honor, always displaying honesty and striving to do the right thing.
- **Teamwork:** We are a family. We will always strive to work together, contribute and help each other as we pursue our individual, city and community goals.
- **Professionalism:** We vow to remain steadfast in our standards, utilize the best law enforcement techniques, and seek to continually improve ourselves and our services.
- **Service:** We serve all, from our community to our fellow city employees, and no service is beneath us. If we are unable to help, we will do all in our power to find someone who can.
- **Compassion:** We are dedicated to treating all fairly, equally and with respect, regardless of their circumstances, and seek opportunities to help improve their situations.
- **Accountability:** We will always be trustworthy, by holding ourselves to the highest standards in all of our duties, responsibilities and actions. We will own our mistakes and learn from them.
- **Commitment:** We commit to honoring our profession, providing excellent service to the community and always helping others by demonstrating each of these values.



2020 HIGHLIGHTS

2020 started with great anticipation: Command Staff established departments goals including:

- ◇ Sector Accountability
- ◇ Crime Reductions
- ◇ Focus on drugs and habitual repeat offenders
- ◇ Community Engagements
- ◇ Enhance Training

In March, the department launched COVID-19 protocols and operational adjustments.

- ◇ Limitations on citizen/police contacts
- ◇ Eliminated civilian ride-outs and restricted PD access
- ◇ Implemented surface cleaning processes and face coverings
- ◇ Identified/implemented significant budget reductions
- ◇ Introduced online reporting and online records requests
- ◇ Launched online staff and department accountability meetings
- ◇ Taney County Jail imposed prisoner intake restrictions

May 25, 2020 national media stories quickly focused on the police after George Floyd's death. The impacts to police departments were widespread:

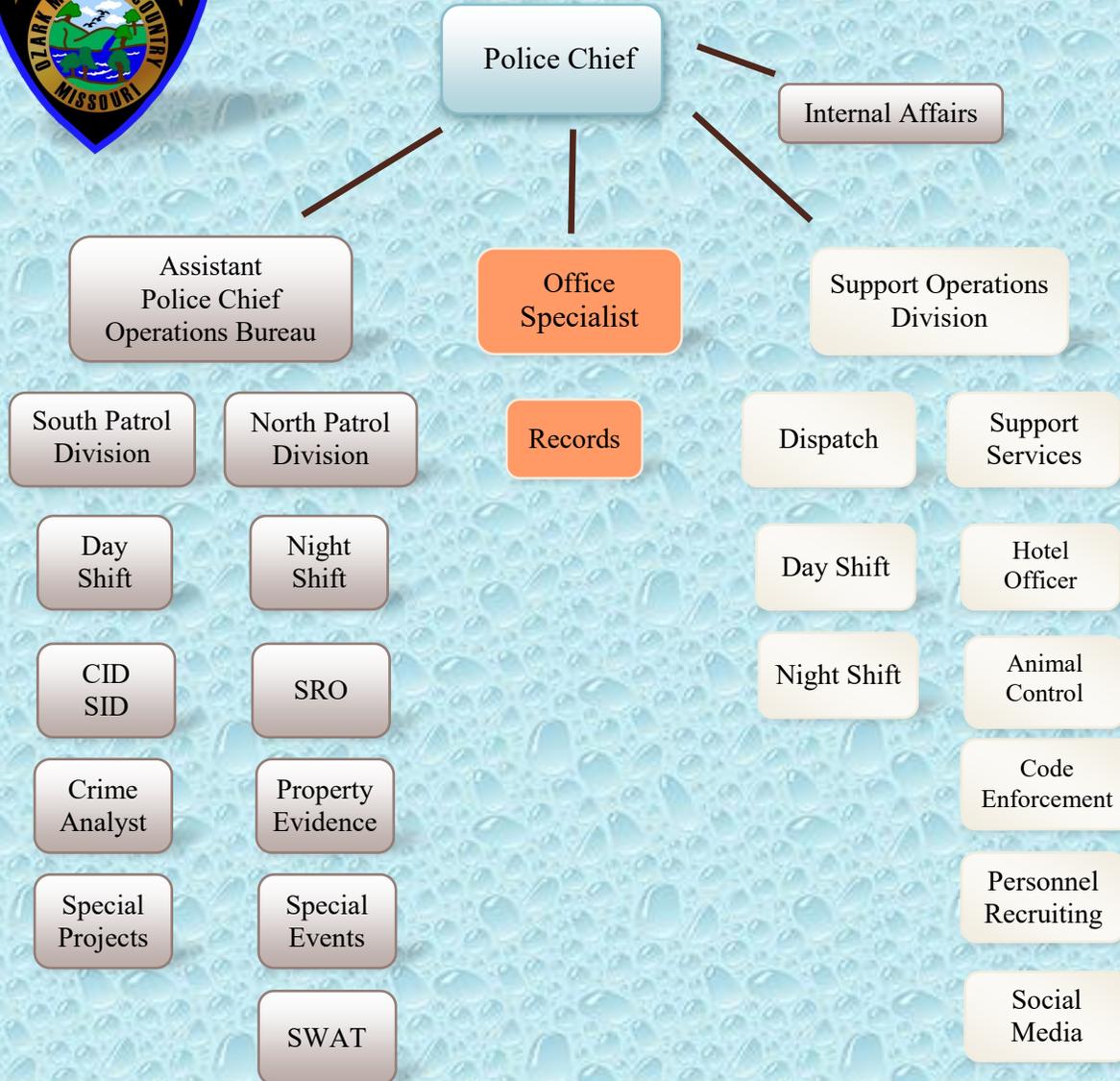
- ◇ Branson PD reviewed all use of force policies and discontinued the Lateral Vascular Neck Restraint unless deadly force is justified
- ◇ Civil unrest and demonstrations (multiple Branson demonstrations)
- ◇ Branson experienced several officer resignations
- ◇ Branson is experiencing recruiting/hiring challenges

Overall, 2020 was a good year; even with COVID-19.

- ◇ Property and Evidence personnel secured more destruction orders than incoming evidence/property (first time in BPD memory)
- ◇ The department closed 2020 with no significant on-duty incidents
- ◇ Graduated Class 3 Citizens Police Academy
- ◇ National Night Out / 16 neighborhood events
- ◇ Committed to invest in sergeant leadership training . All sergeants are attending the FBI LEEDA Trilogy Leadership courses
- ◇ Personnel maintained high activity and outlook despite COVID and staffing challenges
- ◇ Two employees received State-wide awards



*Dept. of Justice Office of Community
Oriented Police - December 2020
Photo of the Month*



January 2021, this organizational chart was implemented to strengthen divisional command and control priorities. The three department divisions are:

- ◆ Day Shift/South Patrol
- ◆ Night Shift/North Patrol
- ◆ Support Operations

The Operations Bureau is commanded by the Assistant Chief; Patrol is assigned to geographic sectors for one year assignments. BPD realizes multiple benefits from long-term assignments: officers foster neighborhood relationships and are able to solve neighborhood problems over time. Each Patrol Division has two patrol sectors lead by a sergeant. Patrol sergeants are responsible for all sector crime and neighborhood issues.

Support Operations provides critical patrol division support through several units: Dispatch Services, Animal Services, Code Enforcement, Hotel Enforcement, and Personnel and Recruiting.

Dispatch Activity



Calls for Service	2019	2020	% Change
Dispatch Calls	32930	32956	0.08%
Police Calls	21229	20621	-2.86%
Fire Calls	4982	4259	-14.48%

- ◆ 2020 Dispatch Calls had no significant change
- ◆ Police calls had a slight decrease
- ◆ Fire calls had a moderate decrease

Phone Calls	2019	2020
Total Incoming Calls	68520	63668
911 Calls	15637	15996
Admin Phone Line	52883	47672
911 Abandoned	964	1421
911 Transfer	4645	4408
Outgoing Calls	31987	32293
Total Calls	101471	97382

Total incoming calls decreased 4%; most reductions were recorded on our administrative line.

Branson Police continues to reinforce the “Dial 911” campaign for all public safety needs. The department no-longer publicizes a Non-Emergency number.

911 and the Administrative Number are the only published numbers.

January 2021, the department experienced a 4% increase in police calls for service over January 2020.

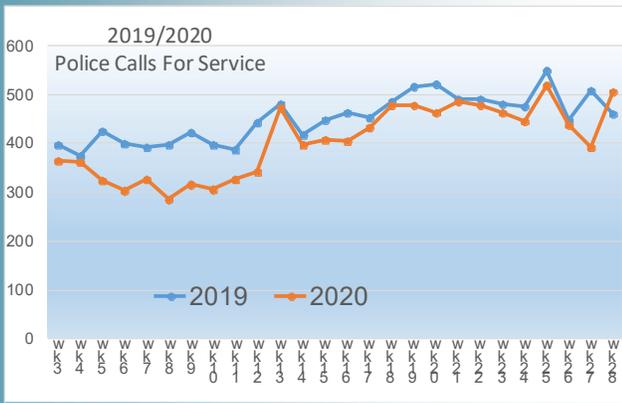


Chart compares 2019/2020 CFS from COVID-19 closures through week 30 when CFS exceeded 2019.



Police Calls For Service

Top 5 Police Calls for Service

⇒ Suspicious person/activity	2711
⇒ Traffic Stop	2205
⇒ Welfare Check	1356
⇒ Stealing	1173
⇒ Information	1117



2020 Call increases include:

- ⇒ Assaults
- ⇒ Commercial Burglaries
- ⇒ Disturbances
- ⇒ Domestic Assaults
- ⇒ Mental Illness contacts
- ⇒ Injury Crashes
- ⇒ Drug Overdoses



Other Call Types	2019	2020
911 hang-up	655	744
Assault	144	150
Burglary/Commercial	77	100
Burglary/Residential	62	45
Commercial Alarm	822	728
Death Investigation	38	34
Disturbance	649	720
Domestic Assault	200	213
Domestic Disturbance	355	356
Drug	314	326
DWI	48	50
Mental Illness	264	282
Motor Vehicle Crash	457	296
Motor Vehicle Crash / Unknown	33	20
Motor Vehicle Crash /Injury	88	125
Overdose	38	60
Panhandling	115	80
Residential Alarm	98	84
Robbery	16	9

Public Safety Answering Point (911 PSAP)

Taney Co and Branson are the only two Taney County Public Safety Answering Points (PSAP). Each PSAP receives 911 funds based on the number of PSAP terminated 911 calls.



Incoming 911 Calls

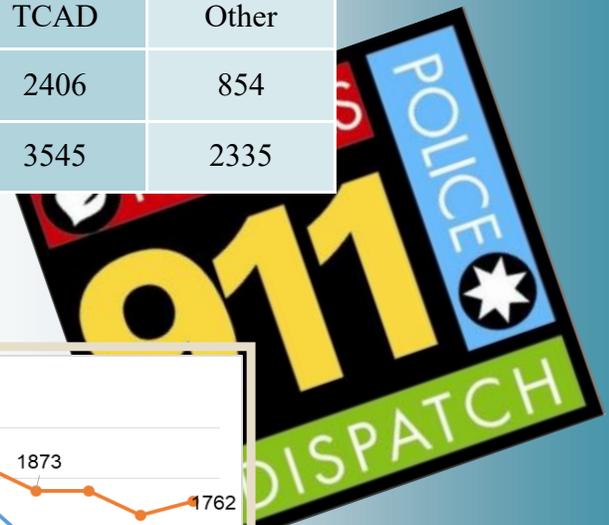
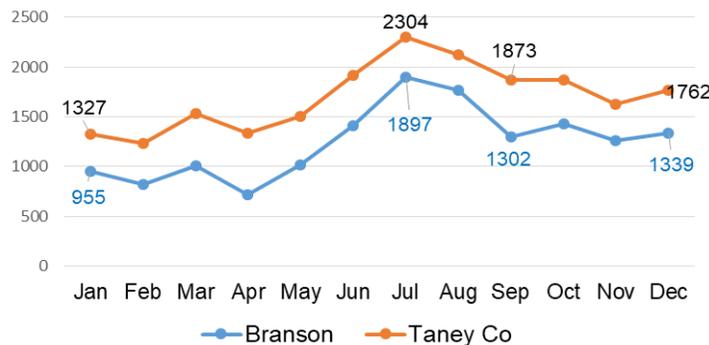


PSAP transferred incoming 911 calls

	Total 2020 911 Calls	Transfer to TCSO	Transfer to Branson PD	Transfer to TCAD	Transfer to Other
Branson PD	14933	798	N/A	2406	854
Taney Co	20402	N/A	2064	3545	2335

The department continues to encourage citizens to Dial 911 for all Public Safety responses, regardless of the nature of the citizen's need.

2020 PSAP 911 Calls



Crime Mapping Online Reporting

BPD offers citizens multiple access points to review police activity and report crimes.

The department provides online mapping software allowing citizens to review reported incidents. Mapping software lists police incidents reported to 911; the data is updated once daily.

Crime Mapping data may not match reported UCR data.

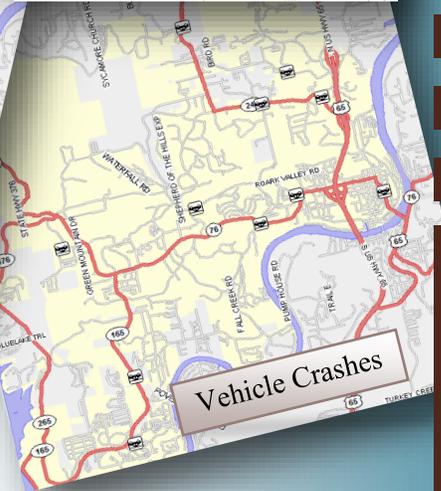
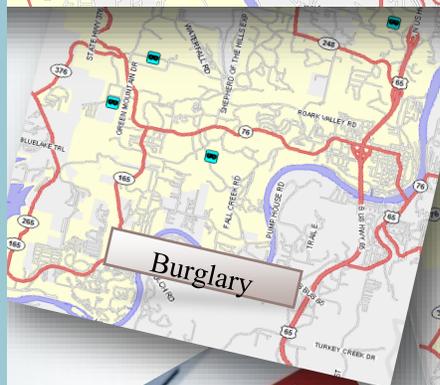
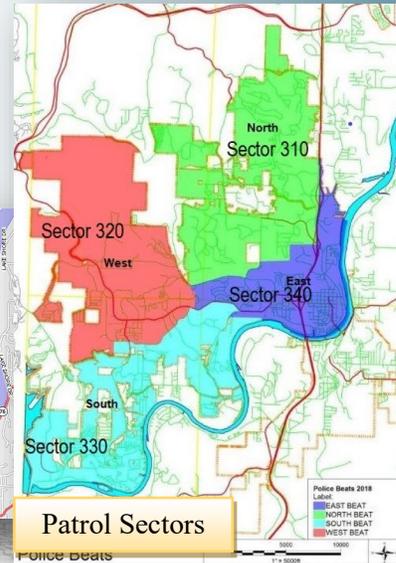
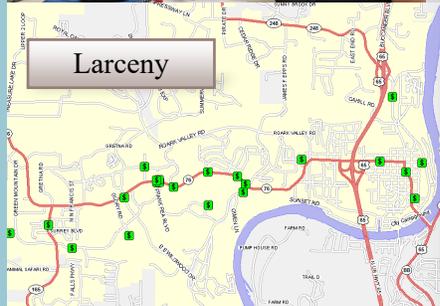


The department provides online crime reporting for many criminal offenses. Citizens may report the following offenses online:

- Civil Matters
- Juvenile Problems
- Forgery
- Lost Property
- Fraud
- Past Disturbances
- Credit Card Abuse
- Stealing
- Harassment
- Stealing from Vehicles
- Identify Theft
- Vandalism & Graffiti



Citizens access the Crime Mapper at:
<https://www.bransonmo.gov/216/Police>



In 2020, the department received 208 online reports:

- 86% Administratively Closed (insurance reporting)
- 8% referred to Detectives
- 5% referred to the City of Branson or Taney County Prosecuting Attorney for possible criminal charges

UCR

The department voluntarily participated in the FBI Uniform Crime Report (UCR) program through the Missouri Highway Patrol.

UCR is a standardized reporting system that records the single highest criminal offense in a crime incident.

January '21, the hierarchical UCR system was replaced with the National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS).

NIBRS records up to 10 criminal offenses linked to a single crime incident.

Moving forward, crime statistics will look much different. There is no way to compare UCR data to NIBRS data. The two record data differently.

As an example: a 2020 car theft, suspect assaults the car owner and threatens to assault a witness is recorded as one UCR Assault.

That same fact set produces three NIBRS incidents; two assaults and one larceny.

All offenses reported to BPD are included in the UCR Report, including several offenses reported in 2020 but occurring in prior years.

FBI Uniform Crime Report
<https://www.fbi.gov/services/cjis/ucr>

Uniform Crime Report Part I Offenses 32% reduction since 2017

	2017	2018	2019	2020
Total	1526	1313	1252	1032

Part I Offenses	2019	2020	% Change
Homicide	0	0	0%
Manslaughter	0	0	0%
Rape	9	16	+77.78%
Attempted Rape	1	0	-100%
Robbery	16	11	-31.25%
Aggravated Robbery	46	57	+23.91%
Burglary	118	114	-3.39%
Larceny	1002	763	-23.85%
Vehicle Theft	62	67	+8.06%
Arson	9	4	-55.56%
Totals	1263	1032	-18.03%
* Vehicle Burglary	209	212	+1.40%

* Vehicle Burglary included in Larceny totals



Part I Crime is down 18%; however violent crime is up 16%. There are no unidentified suspects in any 2020 reported violent crime cases. The majority of all violent crime was relational and involved known suspects.

Larceny (shoplifting) remains our primary crime driver, although illegal drugs continue to influence most crime.

Patrol accountability measures and proactive policing strategies are significantly influencing our crime picture. Our geographic policing philosophy assigns officers to sectors and requires a focused approach to crime reduction and police service needs.

Additional information suggests big box store COVID related door greeters may have helped decrease larceny offenses. In 2020, Walmart reported shopliftings decreased 31.43%.

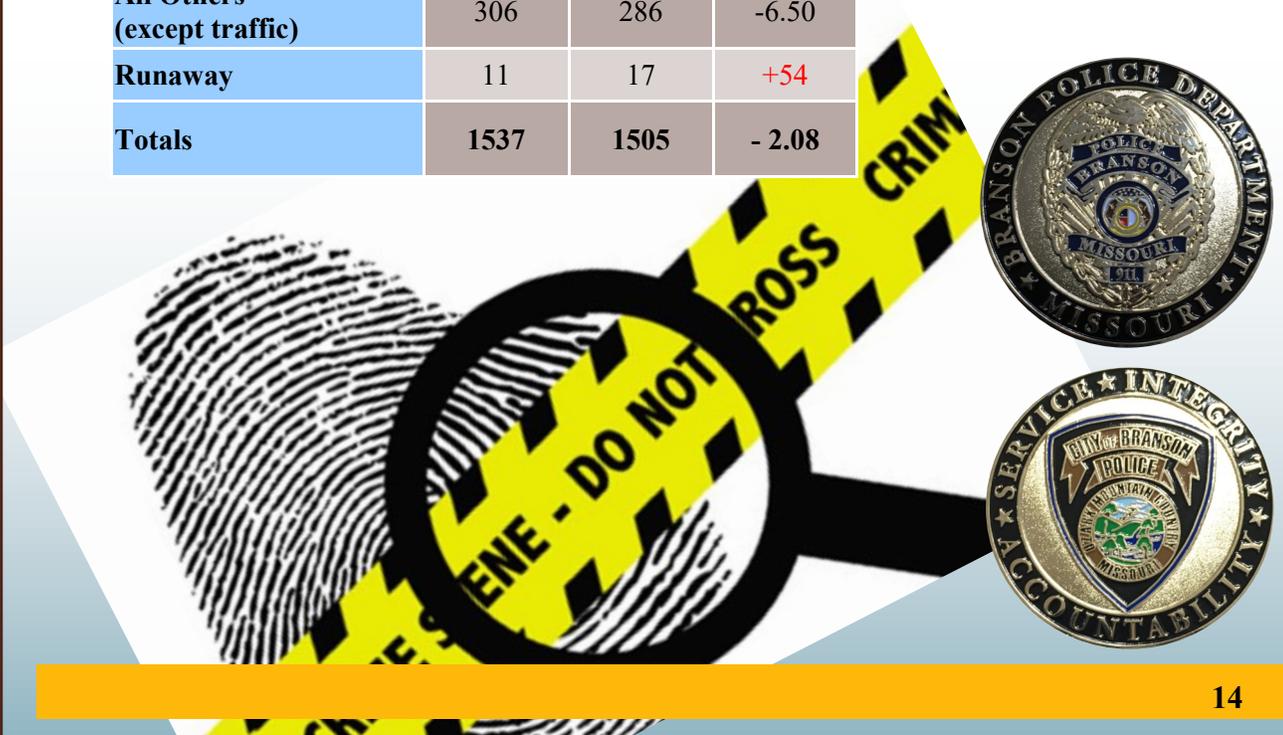
UCR Part II	2019	2020	% Change
Simple Assault	254	245	-0.035
Forgery	82	83	+0.012
Fraud	113	79	-0.3
Stolen Prop/Rec	30	17	-0.43
Vandalism	134	139	+0.037
Weapons	18	9	-0.5
Prostitution	4	0	-100
Sex Offenses	44	38	-0.13
Drugs	183	199	+8.75
Other Family Offenses	13	18	+0.38
DWI	52	49	-0.057
Liquor Laws	22	5	-77
Disorderly Conduct	271	318	+17
Vagrancy	0	3	
All Others (except traffic)	306	286	-6.50
Runaway	11	17	+54
Totals	1537	1505	- 2.08

Part II Offenses are categorized as lesser offenses than Part I Offenses and some called victimless crimes.

Part II offenses are often lesser included offenses of Part I offenses and therefore not recorded in Part II totals.

UCR is a hierarchal reporting system and only captures the highest ranking offense in a single crime event.

Again, January 2021, NIBRS replaced UCR so 2021 reporting cannot be compared to 2020 reporting. The criteria is completely different.



Criminal Investigations

The department continues to focus on illegal drug use and abuse. January 2020, the Narcotics Unit was reimaged in the 2020 department reorganization which continues to produce positive results. The department is part of the Combined Ozark Multi-Jurisdictional Eradication Team and supports regional drug task force needs. In 2020, several Branson narcotics investigations were adopted by Federal partners and led to multiple arrests and large drug seizures across multiple states.



2019/2020 Drug Seizure Comparisons

Narcotics Unit	2019	2020	% change
Drugs Seized (grams)	7733.59	314071.78	+3961.14%

The department experienced a 60% increase in drug overdoses and 40 % increased in drug overdose deaths. March 2, 2021, Chief Matthews hosted a community conversation with regional partners to strategize a coordinated regional response to the drug overdoses and overdose related deaths.

The department is evaluating drug overdose response protocols, investigative policies, and regional information sharing practices to ensure we maintain a forward leaning response posture.

2020 Drug Seizures (grams)

Methamphetamine	7792.19
Marijuana	226174.68
THC Items	79837.8
Heroin	9.72
Fentanyl	10.79
Cocaine	2.57
Scheduled RX	48.5
Other: Mushrooms	65
Other: LSD/Acid	0
Other: White Powder	130.53
Total	314071.78

Overdose Investigations	2019	2020	% Change	YTD (March 8)
Overdose Calls	38	60	+57.89%	20
Overdose Death	5	7	+40	1

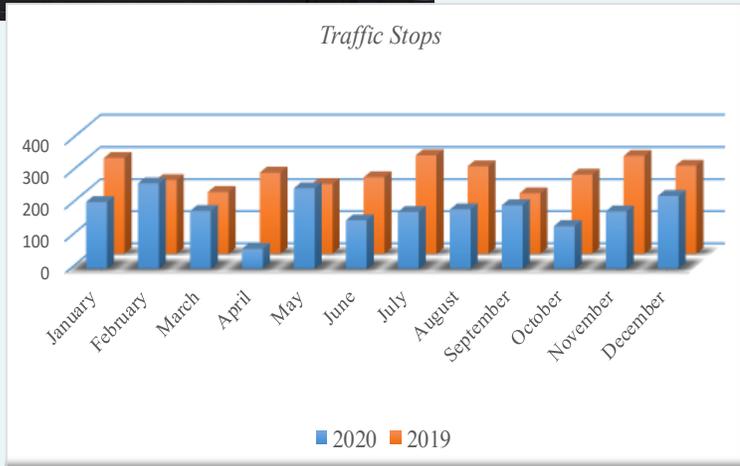
The General Investigation Unit investigates all major crimes including offenses against persons and significant property offenses. The Unit worked short staffed most of 2020 but continued to produce quality investigations and case filings. The Unit also has a civilian volunteer who maintains an aggressive schedule and provides critical support the Unit.

	Assigned Cases	Cleared by Arrest	Cleared by Exception	Unfounded	Suspended	Non-Criminal	Federal Referral
General Investigations	175	57	2	6	41	37	3
Persons Crimes	86	36	2	6	26	6	0
Property Crimes	46	20	0	0	16	1	2
Other Investigations	41	1	0	1	1	32	1



Traffic Enforcement

2020 started as a normal year. Officers initiated traffic enforcement as warranted; however, the PD restricted routine traffic enforcement in response to COVID-19 protocols.



Traffic Stops	
2019	3016
2020	2205

Total crashes and Injury crashes decreased about 30% and align with COVID-19 tourism reductions.



In 2019, the department changed the crash response policy and only dispatches police to injury crashes or crashes that require wreckers or roadway clean-up. This change significantly reduced police dispatched crash responses and also reduced completed Missouri Statewide Traffic Accident

Police Crash Calls For Service				
	2020	2019	2018	2017
Crash	751	1090	1244	1250
STARS Reports	369	503	751	796



Top Crash Locations:

Branson Hills Pkwy/Hwy 65	17
State Hwy 248/James F. Epps	10
Branson Landing/Roundabout	9
Gretna/Deer Valley	7
Main St/Lloyd	7
Fall Creek/River Valley	6

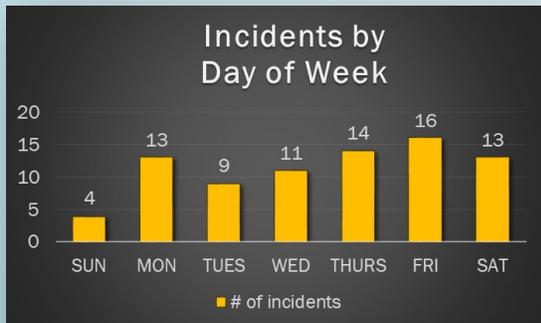
Panhandling

The Courts guarantee a person's First Amendment Rights to stand in public places with signs; infringing upon this rights is illegal.

	2019	2020
Calls for Service	115	80

To reduce occurrences of panhandling, BPD continues to work with local property owners to ensure owner's trespass orders are adhered to. The department has secured criminal trespass orders of enforcement from multiple property owners who desire to limit activities on their property.

In addition to enforcing trespass ordinance violations, officers enforce City Ordinance when they observe offenders solicit from the roadways. Soliciting from a traffic lane is a life safety issue and is prohibited by statute.



Code Enforcement

July 1st - December 31st

Assigned Cases	742
Initial Inspections	472
Re-inspections	258
I.P.M.C. & B.M.C. Violations	516
Lodging Inspections	136
Citations	294
Abated Cases	13

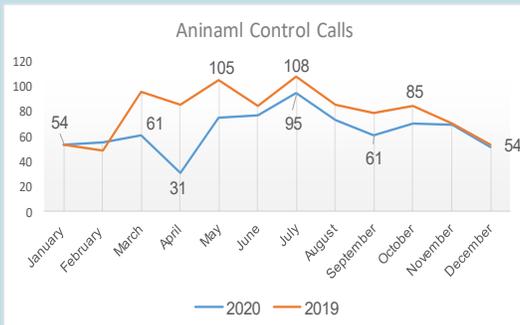
October 2019, Code transitioned to the department. Since then, Code has remained a proactive posture regarding inspections and abatement mitigation. In 2020, Code abated 13 residential properties (high grass/weeds, vacant property, etc.)

March 1, 2021 the City has 19 closed lodging establishments; closed per the owner's decision or closed pending final City inspections and business license.

Code Enforcement Case Descriptions

Nuisance	46
Electrical equipment	42
Interior structures	31
Electrical facilities	19
Nuisance (vehicles)	17
Weeds & vegetation	16
Pools, spas, and hot tubs	15
Water systems	14
Mechanical equipment	13
Ventilation	12
Rubbish	11
Rubbish and garbage	11
Pest elimination	20
Signs	9
Stairways, decks, and balconies	9
Fire safety	8
Maintenance (signs)	7
Accessory structures	7
All others	149
Total	456

Animal Control



	Total Calls	Dogs	Cats
2020	775	131	126
2019	958	169	227

Animal Control remained busy throughout 2020 even with reduced CFS. There were several notable animal rescues shared on our social media platforms which are always well received.



Dale, Ashley, and David care for triplet opossums





TRAINING

Online Training

Classroom In-service Training

In-person Conferences

Online Conferences

The majority of Department training is conducted online through contract vendors.

Missouri P.O.S.T. requires police officers to receive 24 training hours annually. Eight of those hours must be in-person training hours covering firearms and defensive tactics.

In 2020, we started to invest in our Sergeants and committed to graduating all sergeants from the FBI Law Enforcement Executive Development Association (LEEDA) Trilogy courses: Supervisor Leadership Institute, Command Leadership Institute, and Executive Leadership Institute.

Upon completion of the Sergeants, Lieutenants and some Professional Staff will attend the Trilogy courses.

Moving forward, we are committed to conducting more in-person trainings for all employees; in-person training increases the value and retention of the subject matter.

*Missouri P.O.S.T. training must be conducted by Licensed Missouri P.O.S.T. Academies, BPD personnel must travel to attend in-person P.O.S.T. approved trainings.

Training Hours

⇒ Department Training	3003
⇒ Sworn Training	2868
⇒ Sworn Online	1502
⇒ Dispatch Training	114
⇒ Professional Staff Code Enforcement Animal Control	21

Training investments remain a primary department focus. We are committed to providing all employees quality training.



Grant Awards



Annually, the department competes for grants to off-set budget needs and enhance our service capacity.

- ⇒ **Skaggs Foundation \$20,000**
First Responder Peer Support, initial and advanced training for 30 Peer Team Members in support of Taney & Stone County First Responders
- ⇒ **Missouri Department of Public Safety \$10,000**
crowd control fencing
- ⇒ **Regional Homeland Security Oversight \$5,000**
safety equipment
- ⇒ **Bullet Proof Vest Partnership \$5,963**
reimbursement for patrol ballistic vests
- ⇒ **Southwest Missouri Coalition for Roadway Safety \$5,000**
handheld speed measuring devices
- ⇒ **MODOT Traffic Enforcement**
\$9,000 for DWI enforcement
\$11,190 for Hazardous Motor Vehicle enforcement
\$4,500 for Youth Alcohol enforcement
- ⇒ **Missouri Police Chief's Association \$4,000**
Virtual Academy (online P.O.S.T. training)
- ⇒ **Benefit the Badge \$7,500**
less lethal launchers
- ⇒ **Chateau on the Lake \$1,000**
community engagement
- ⇒ **Tanger Outlets \$1,000**
community engagement



2020 Branson Demonstrations

National events influenced multiple local demonstrations and protests. Branson personnel supported by local and regional partners managed each protest professionally and without incident. Each event presented unique challenges; BPD initiated pre-event conversations with demonstration organizers and maintained open communications throughout all demonstration stages. There were no significant issues, no injuries, and no reported property damage at any event.



AWARD WINNERS



Officer
of the Year
Brendan Gamble



Supervisor
of the Year
Stan Kauffman



Professional Staff
of the Year
John Pate

Certificate of Merit

Joseph Edwards

Life Saving Award

Jacob Blanford
Taylor Davisson
Seth Jenkerson
Tyler Mills
Tanner Muckenthaler
Mitchell Null

Medal of Merit

Casey Fish
Cody Foster



Darold Donathan
2020 LAGERS Local
Government Hero
Award Winner



Ashley Hurst
2020 MO Animal Control
Association Paws for
Applause Winner

Community Engagement



Citizens Police Academy

October 2020, the department hosted our 3rd Citizens Police Academy (BCPA). The citizens academy is a 12-week program and provides Branson residents the opportunity to experience a behind the scenes view of the departments mission. Topics covered include:

- ⇒ Department Vision, Mission, and Values
- ⇒ Procedural Justice
- ⇒ Patrol Procedures
- ⇒ SWAT
- ⇒ K9
- ⇒ DWI Procedures
- ⇒ Crime Scene Search
- ⇒ and many others

In 2019, the BCPA formed the Branson Citizens Police Academy Alumni Association (BCPAAA) and January 22, 2021, the BCPAAA hosted the First Annual Police Department Awards Ceremony.



2021 and Beyond



Department Priorities

⇒ *Personnel/Recruiting/Hiring*

- ◆ Sworn personnel
- ◆ Diversify workforce

⇒ *Sector Accountability Policing Model*

- ◆ Continue to work to reduce/prevent crime
- ◆ Continue development/implementation of sector policing model
- ◆ Continue Neighborhood Investments
 - ◇ Partnerships
 - ◇ Community Watch Groups
 - ◇ Business Watch Groups
 - ◇ National Night Out
- ◆ Re-align patrol sectors

⇒ *Department Succession Planning*

⇒ *Employee Investments*

- ◆ Improve training opportunities for all employees
- ◆ Develop instructor trainers
- ◆ Complete Sergeant Leadership Investments (FBI LEEDA)
- ◆ Develop in-house training model
- ◆ Continued Training Focus on 21st Century Initiatives

⇒ *Policy/Procedures*

- ◆ Complete Standard Operating Procedural Manual
- ◆ Continue working toward department accreditation
- ◆ Complete annual policy review

