

Austin Police Department

Annual Crime and Traffic Report: 2016 Final Report



Prepared by the Austin Police Department
Interim Chief of Police, Brian Manley
Research and Planning Unit
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Background

Each year, the Austin Police Department reports crime statistics to the Texas Department of Public Safety (DPS), who in turn, reports them to the FBI through its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program. After state and federal review, these become our “official” statistics and are used to track year-to-year performance and trends, as well as comparing our crime statistics to other US cities of similar size.

This report contains Austin’s final crime statistics reported to DPS; it updates our preliminary report produced in July 2017.

Overview

This document contains UCR crime data for 2016 (January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2016). For comparison, we have included data from other large US cities with populations between 500,000 and 1,500,000. See Page 3 for a list of comparison cities.

We have also included selected traffic statistics on fatal crashes and comparable data for other jurisdictions.

The report is organized by crime category (violent or property) and by type of crime within each category (e.g., murder and robbery within violent crime).

Notable Findings

This year’s crime statistics include the following noteworthy findings:

- Austin’s **violent crime rate** of 408 per 100,000 residents was about half the rate of other large US cities. (Page 4)
- Austin’s **property crime rate** of 3,509 per 100,000 residents was 13% lower than the rate of other large US cities and represents a 20-year low. (Page 11)
- Austin’s rate of **reported rapes** was 30% higher than the rate of other large US cities. (Page 7)
- Austin’s **robbery rate** increased 11% from 2015 but remains less than half the rate of other large US cities. (Page 8)
- The department’s **violent and property crime clearance rates** all meet or exceed those of other large US cities. (Page 16)
- **Traffic fatalities** decreased 23%, from 102 in 2015 to 79 in 2016; and **fatal crashes** decreased 17%. Austin’s fatality rate and impaired fatality rate are both lower than those of Texas and the US. (Pages 17-20)

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Overall Crime Statistics

The FBI identifies seven “Part I Index Crimes,” based on their seriousness and frequency of occurrence. Each crime is defined – including how incidents are counted – and grouped into two categories:

Violent crimes

Murder (number of victims)
 Rape (number of victims)
 Robbery (number of offenses)
 Aggravated Assault (number of victims)

Property crimes

Burglary (number of premises entered)
 Theft (number of offenses)
 Auto Theft (number of vehicles)

These categories and crime definitions are used for reporting city-level crime statistics to DPS and the FBI under its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program.

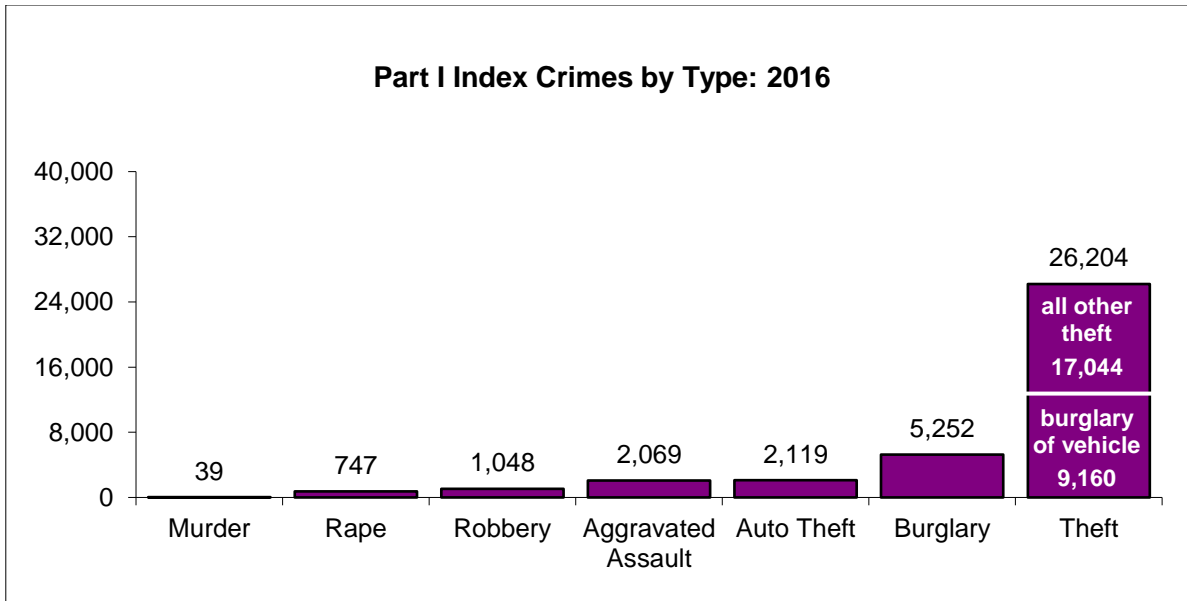
Incidents and Rates

In this report, crime is reported in terms of counts (e.g., incidents) as well as rate per 100,000 residents. Rates allow comparisons to previous years and with other cities.

Part I Index Crimes	Offenses			Rate per 100,000		
	2015	2016	% chg	2015	2016	% chg
Murder	23	39	70%	2.5	4.1	66%
Rape*	487	747	53%	52	78	50%
Robbery	929	1,048	13%	99	110	11%
Aggravated Assault	2,058	2,069	1%	219	216	-1%
Total Violent Crime	3,497	3,903	12%	373	408	9%
Burglary	5,000	5,252	5%	533	549	3%
Theft	28,068	26,204	-7%	2,990	2,738	-8%
Auto Theft	2,331	2,119	-9%	248	221	-11%
Total Property Crime	35,399	33,575	-5%	3,771	3,509	-7%
Total Index Crime	38,896	37,478	-4%	4,143	3,917	-5%

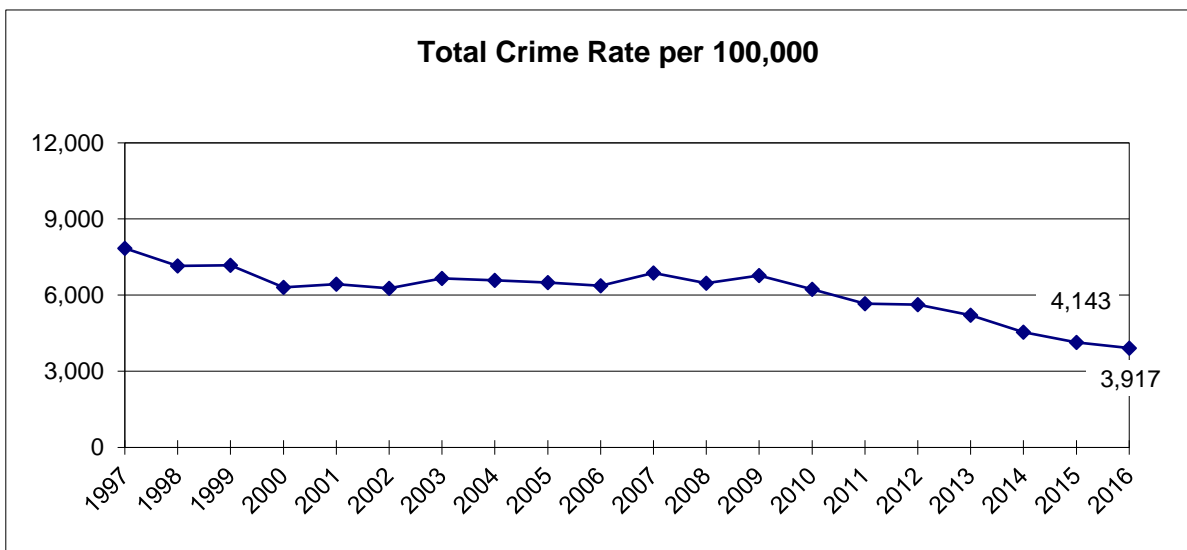
* During 2014 and 2015, Austin’s rape count was underreported. In 2014, the FBI broadened its rape definition to add sodomy and sexual assault with an object, but APD added only sodomy. Imprecise case coding prevented accurate counts at the time, but since then, we have fixed case coding problems and corrected 2015 cases to produce a more accurate 2015 rape count: 730. Using that count, 2016 rape offenses increased 2% (747 in 2016, 730 in 2015) and the rate of reported rapes was flat (78 both years).

Note: 2016 offense counts and rates accurately reflect Austin crime and match those published in the Texas DPS Crime in Texas report. However, they don’t match those published in the FBI Crime in the US report due to issues DPS encountered when uploading updated Austin crime data to the FBI. DPS is in the process of uploading updated APD data to the FBI to be ingested in the FBI’s UCR master file. While not published, the FBI’s UCR master file supports statistical inquiries made after publication of Crime in the US and will be available through the FBI’s Crime Data Explorer: <https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov>.



Trends

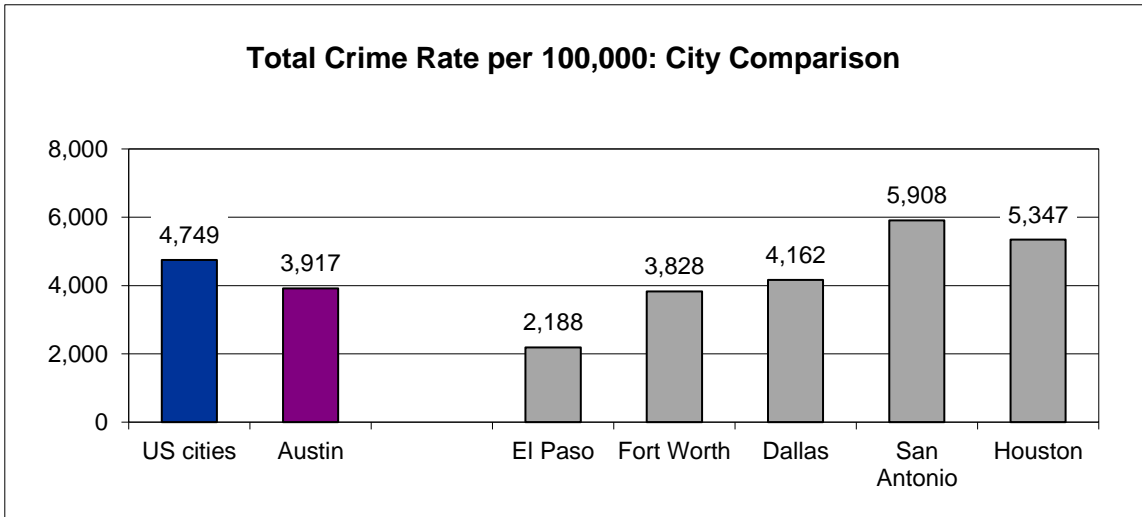
In 2016, the number of all Part I Index crimes for Austin was 37,478. This was a 4% decrease in incidents as compared with 2015 (38,896). The crime rate per 100,000 residents was 3,917 in 2016 – a 5% decrease from the 2015 rate of 4,143 and a 20-year low (1997 to 2016).



Compared to Other Cities

This chart shows how Austin compares to large US cities (population 500,000 to 1,500,000). According to FBI UCR, Austin's 2016 population was 956,911. For regional comparison, large Texas cities are identified; Houston is the only Texas city *not* included in US cities average because its population exceeds the range.

Austin's rate of 3,917 offenses per 100,000 was 18% lower than the average rate of 4,749 for all large US cities.



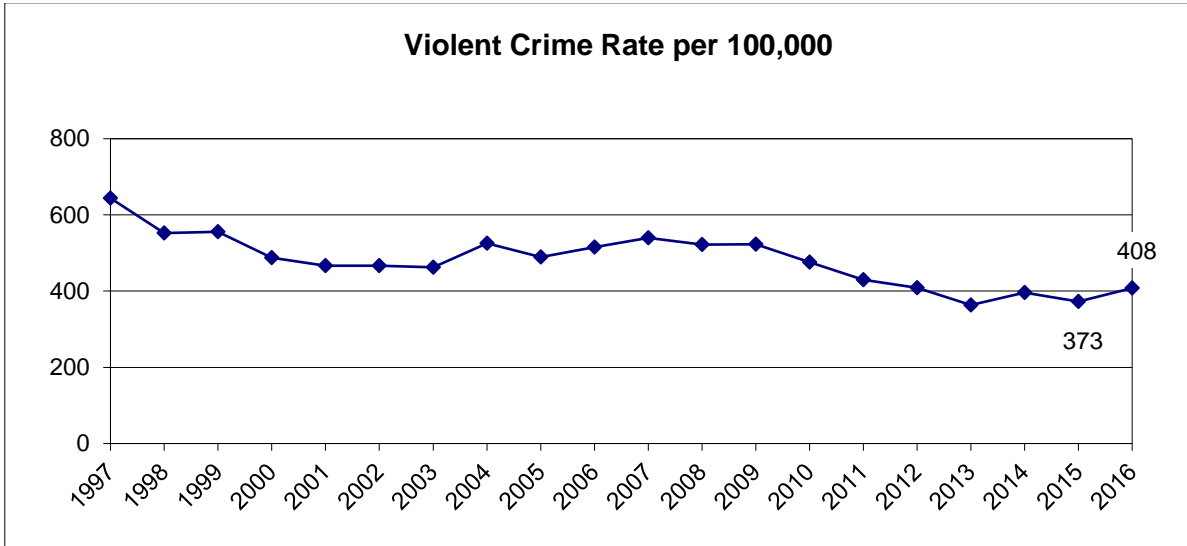
The following cities are included in the "US cities" category above, and elsewhere throughout this report:

- Albuquerque*
- Baltimore
- Boston
- Charlotte*
- Columbus
- Dallas
- Denver
- Detroit
- El Paso
- Fort Worth
- Fresno
- Honolulu
- Indianapolis
- Jacksonville
- Louisville
- Memphis
- Milwaukee
- Nashville
- Oklahoma City
- Portland
- San Antonio
- San Diego
- San Francisco
- San Jose
- Seattle
- Tucson
- Washington DC

* *Austin adopted the FBI's broadened rape definition in 2014 but these two cities continued to use the old definition in 2016. Because their results are not comparable to Austin's, they are excluded from rape, violent, and total crime comparisons in this report.*

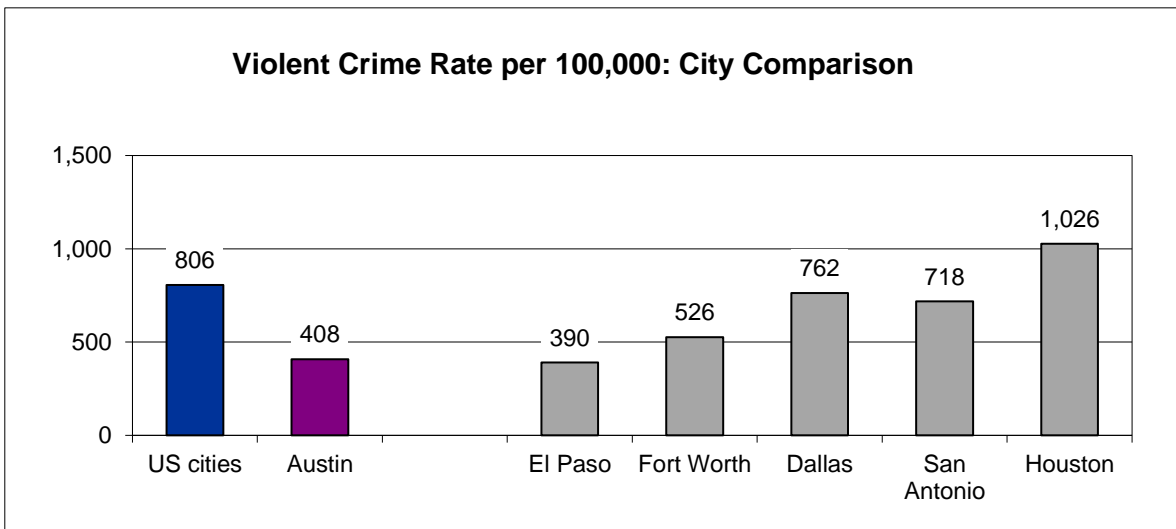
Violent Crime

In 2016, the number of violent crimes was 3,903, a 12% increase in incidents from 2015 (3,497). The rate of violent crime per 100,000 residents was 408 in 2016, up 9% from 373 in 2015.



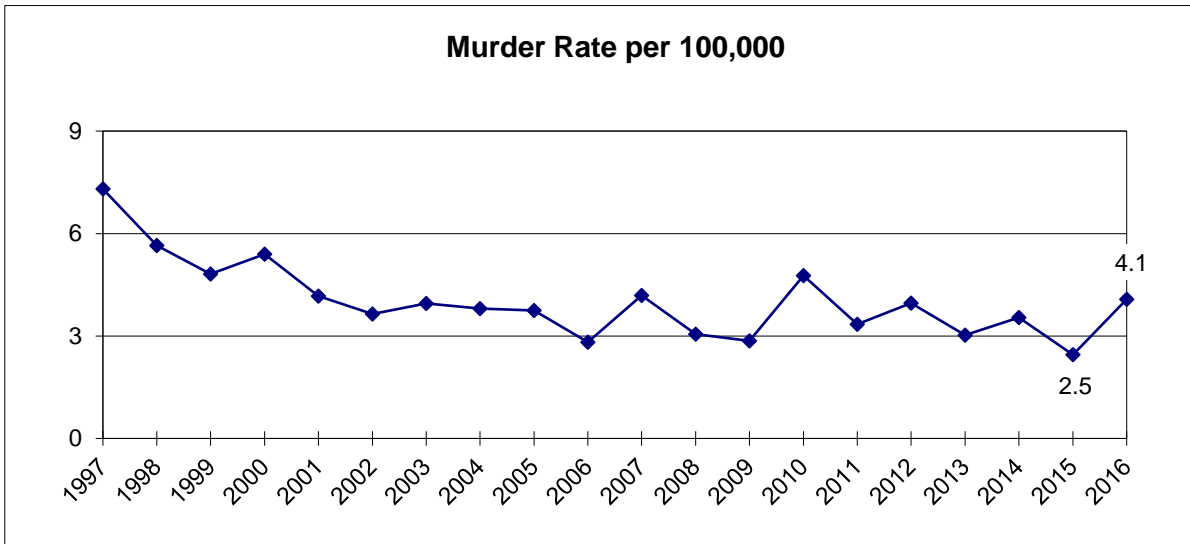
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 408 violent crimes per 100,000 was 49% lower than the average rate of 806 for all large US cities.

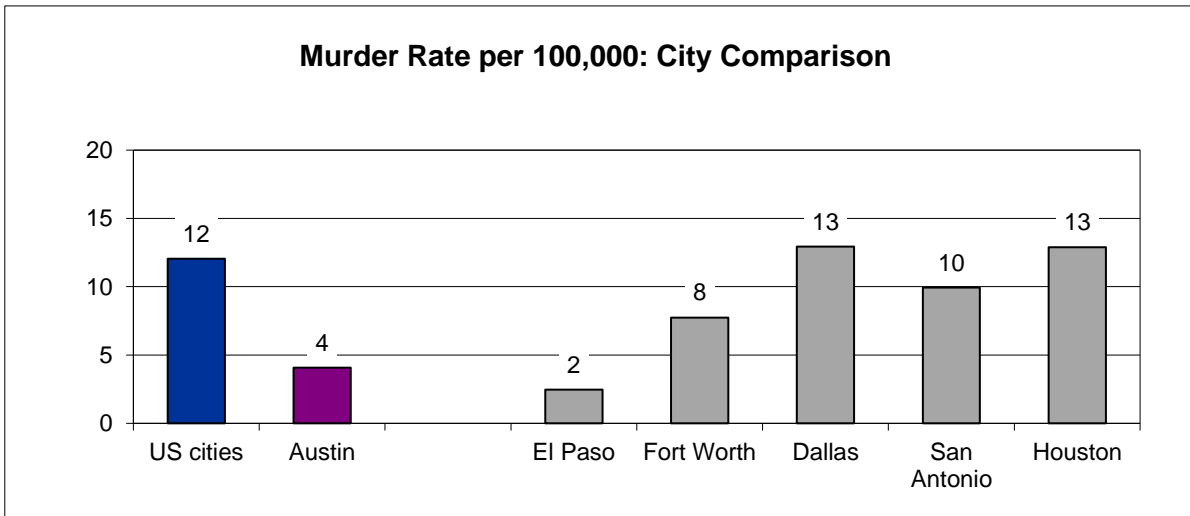


Murder

During 2016 there were 39 murder victims, up from 23 in 2015. Over the previous 10 years (2006 to 2015), the number of murder victims ranged from 20 to 38. The murder rate was 4.1 per 100,000 residents, up from the rate of 2.5 in 2015.

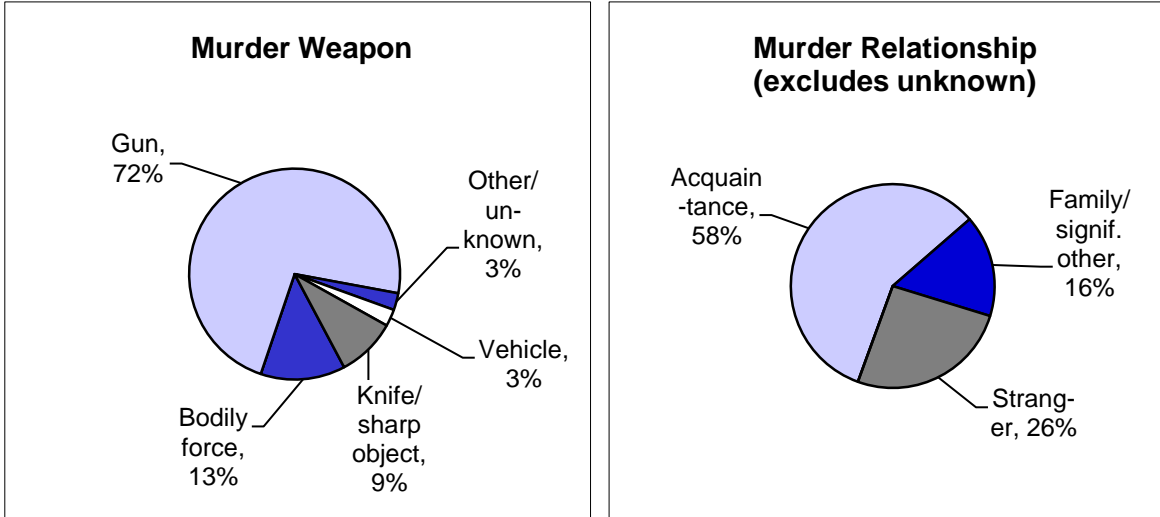


Austin's murder rate was 66% lower than the average of US cities our size.



In 2016, guns were the most frequent weapon used in murders (72%), followed by bodily force (13%).

The victim knew the offender in 74% of incidents, down from 95% in 2015.

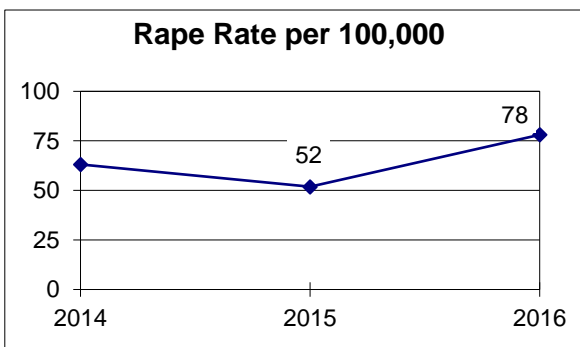


Rape

There were 747 reported victims of rape in 2016. The rate was 78 per 100,000 residents.

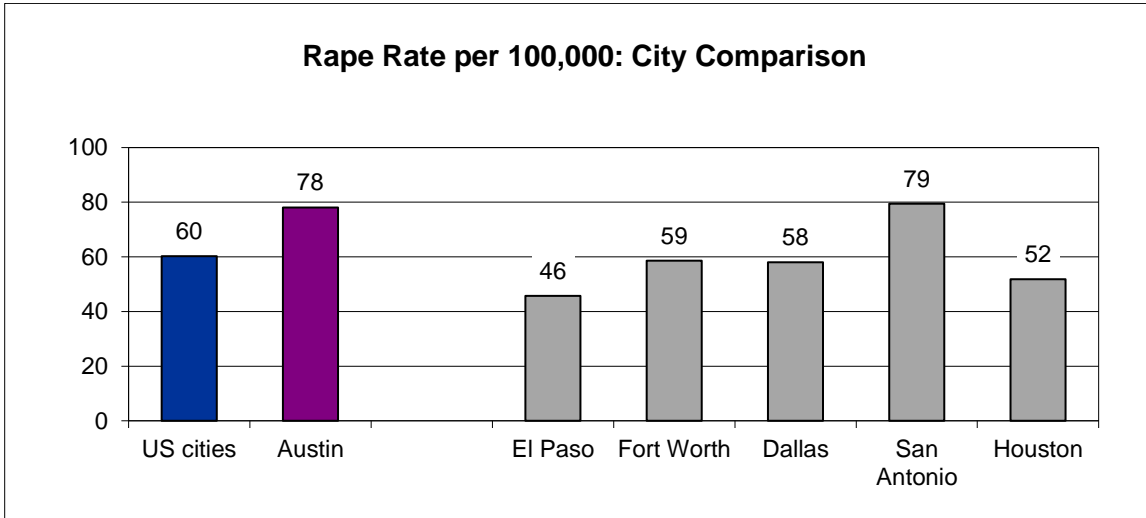
In 2014, Austin began using the FBI's modified rape definition that includes sexual assaults not previously included in rape counts, thereby increasing counts and rates. Counts are comparable for 2014 and future years, which are shown below.

In 2014 and 2015, APD excluded one rape offense type (sexual assault with an object) in our reporting. In 2016, we included this offense. When 2015 counts are adjusted to include this missing offense, 2016 rape incidents are up 2% as compared with 2015, and the rate (78) is unchanged from 2015 to 2016.

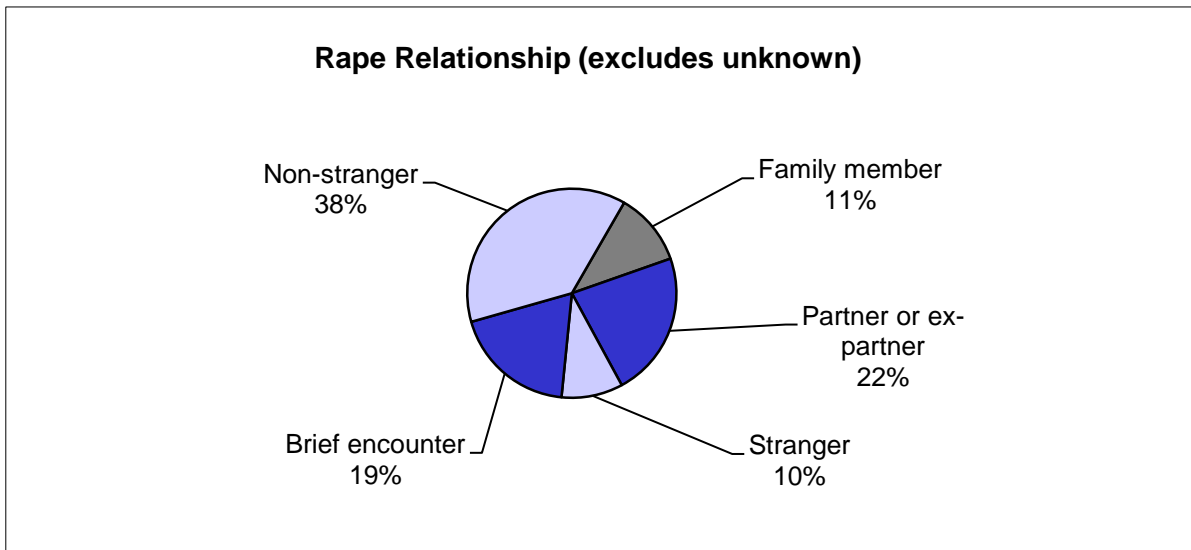


Reported rapes		2015	2016	% chg
offenses	as reported	487	747	53%
	corrected	730	747	2%
rate	as reported	52	78	50%
	corrected	78	78	0%

Austin's rate of reported rapes was 30% higher than the average of US cities of the same size.

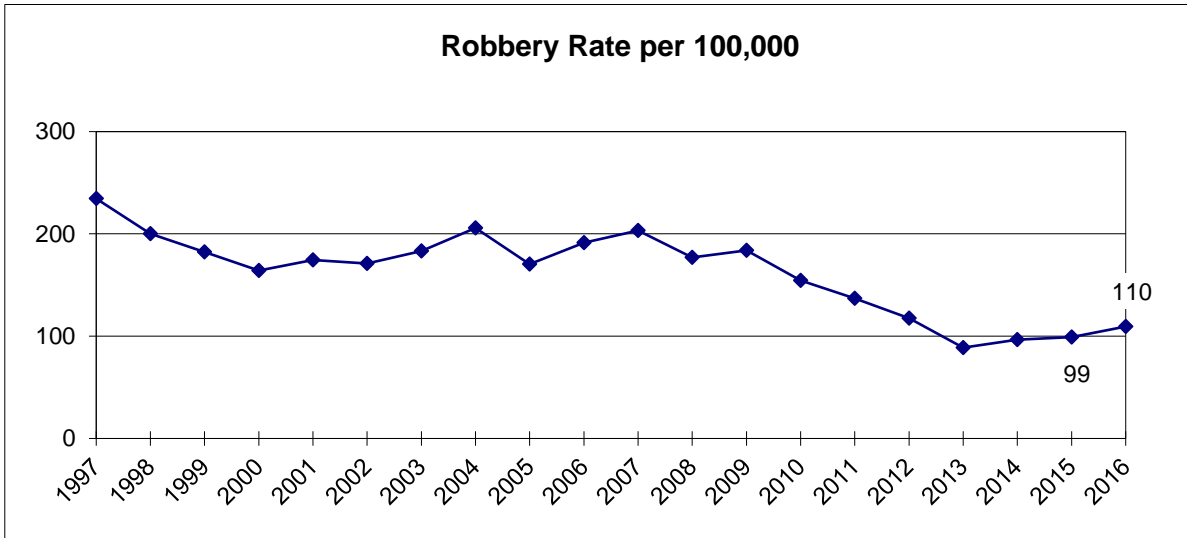


The victim knew the offender in 90% of incidents, down slightly from 92% in 2015.

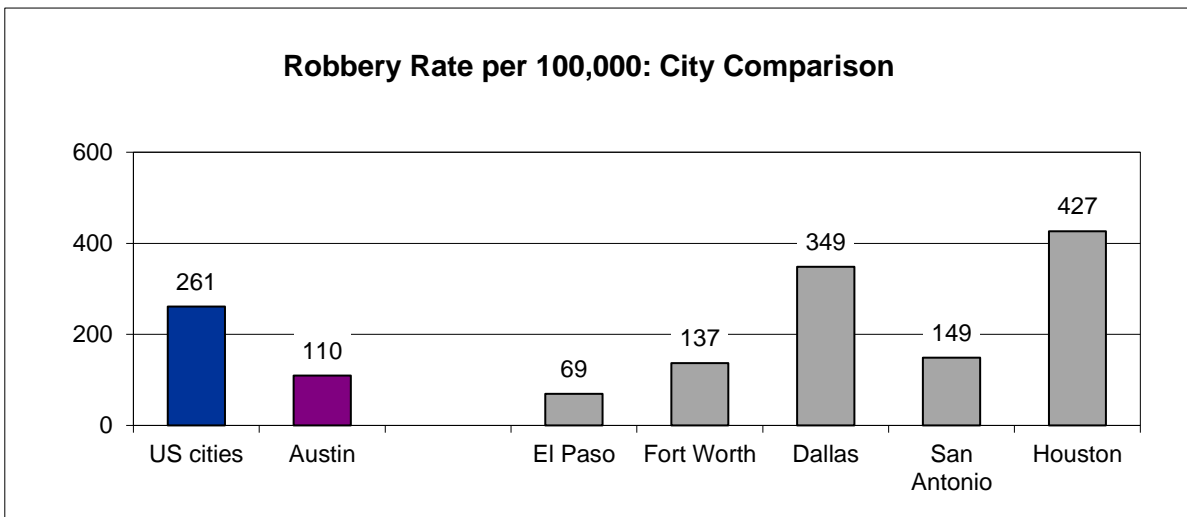


Robbery

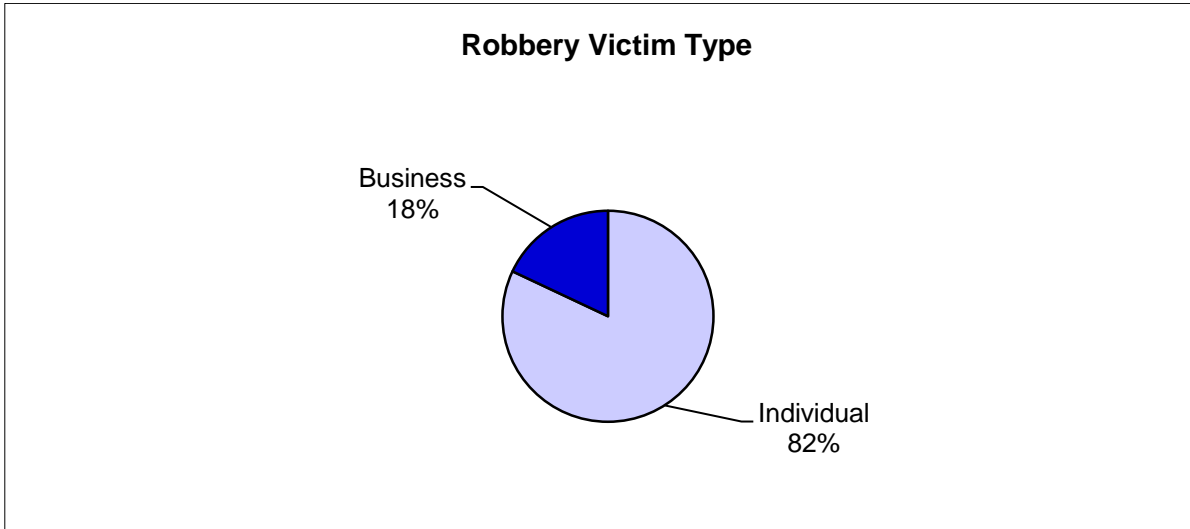
There were 1,048 robberies reported in 2016, up from 929 in 2015. The rate was 110 robberies per 100,000 residents, which was an 11% increase from the previous year's rate of 99.



Austin's rate of reported robberies was 58% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.

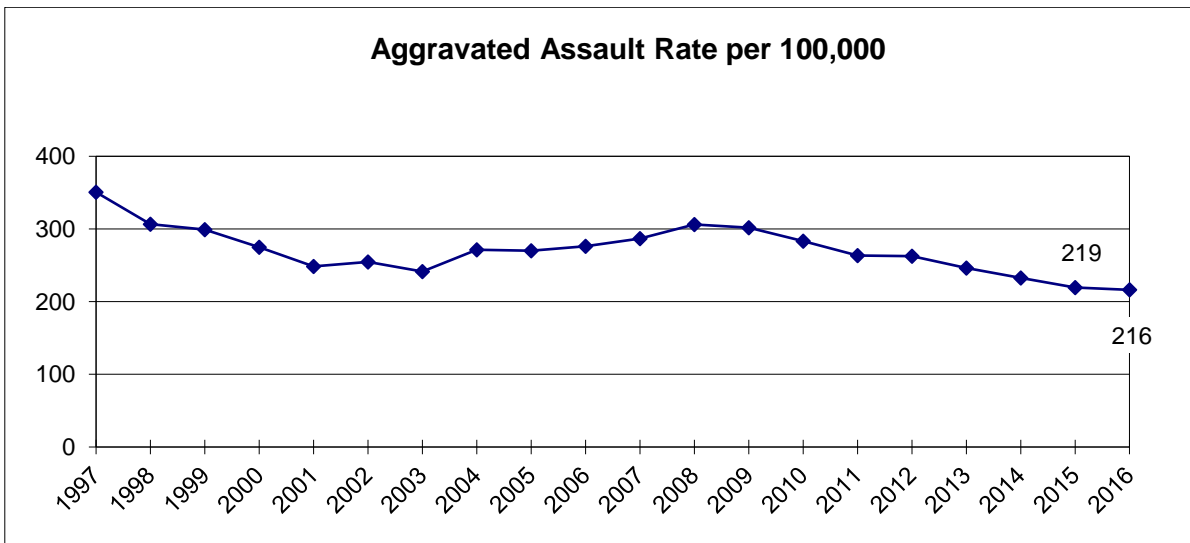


In 2016, 82% of robberies were committed against individuals, as compared with 18% that occurred at businesses. These proportions were unchanged since 2015.

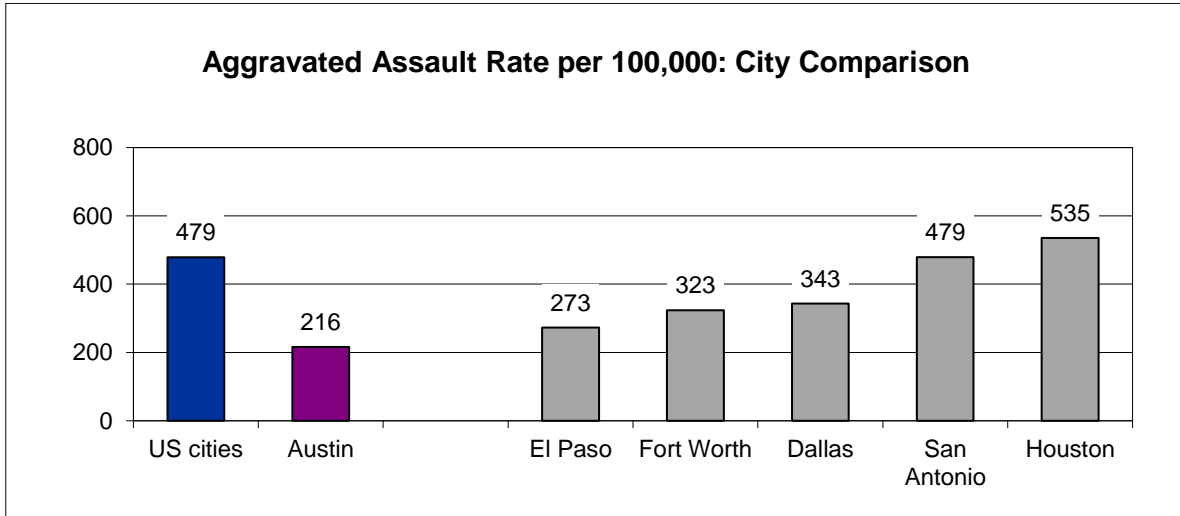


Aggravated Assault

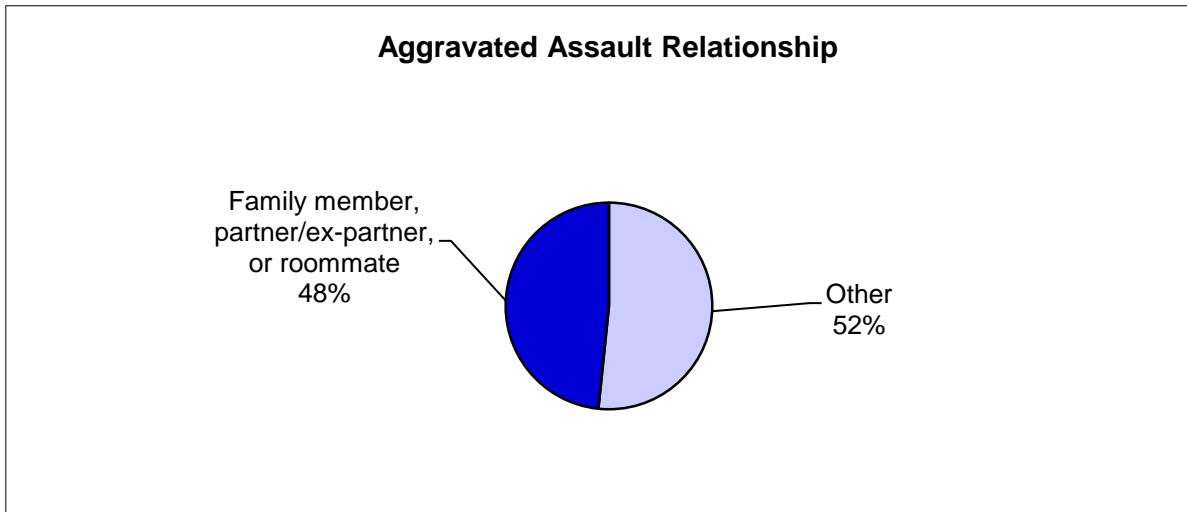
There were 2,069 reported victims of aggravated assault in 2016, up from 2,058 in 2015. The rate was 216 victims per 100,000 residents, down 1% from the prior year's rate of 219 and represents a 20-year low (1997 to 2016).



Austin's rate of aggravated assault victims was 55% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.

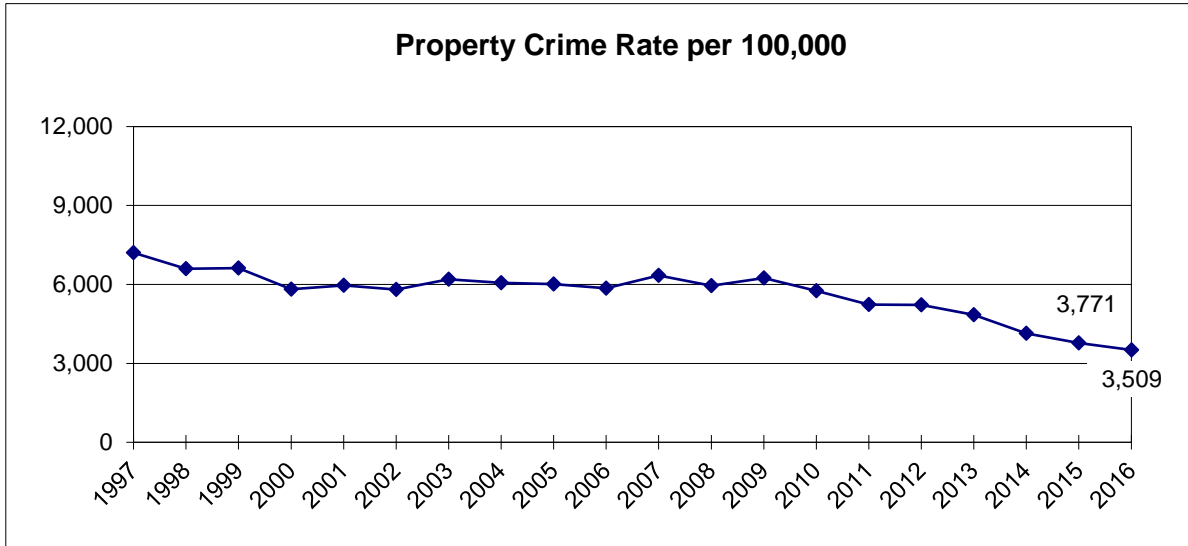


Fewer than half (48%) of aggravated assaults were committed by a family member, partner or ex-partner, or roommate of the victim. This was down from 55% in 2015.



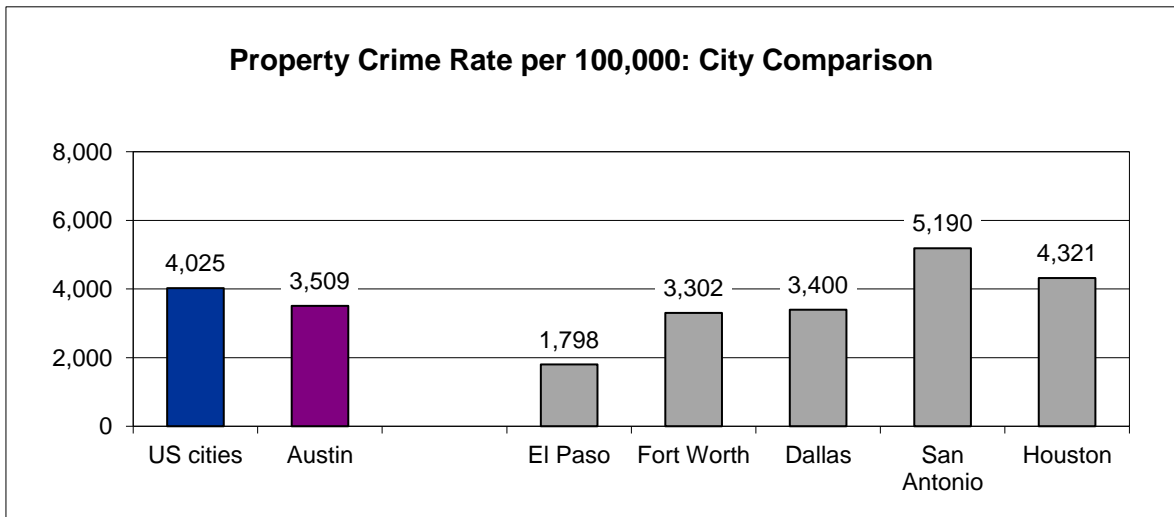
Property Crime

In 2016, the number of property crimes in Austin was 33,575, down from 35,399 in 2015. The rate of property crime per 100,000 residents was 3,509 in 2016, which was down 7% from the prior year's rate of 3,771 and represents a 20-year low (1997 to 2016).



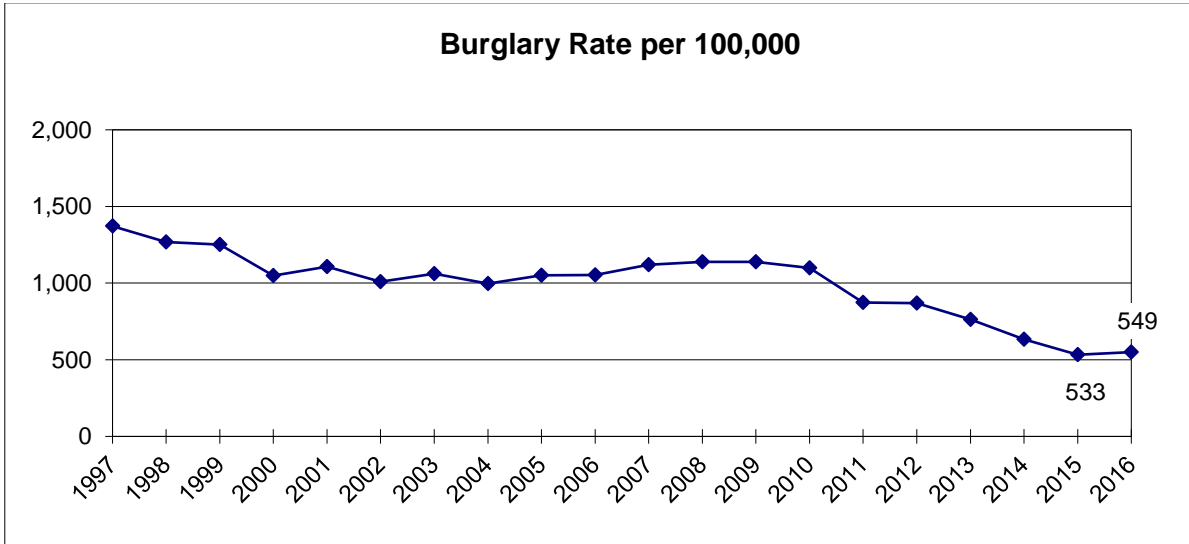
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 3,509 property crimes per 100,000 in 2016 was 13% lower than the average rate of 4,025 per 100,000 for large US cities.

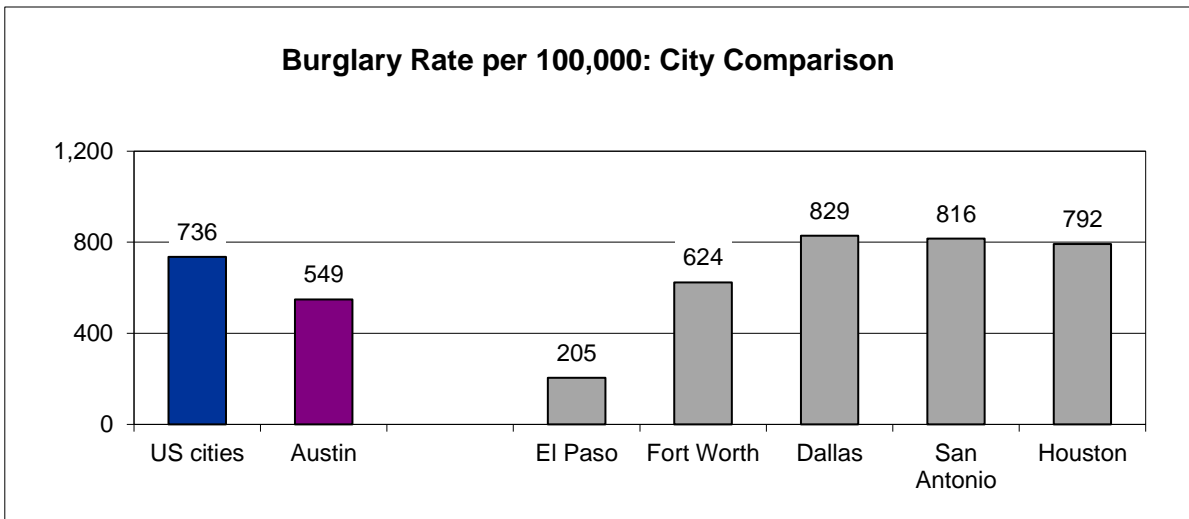


Burglary

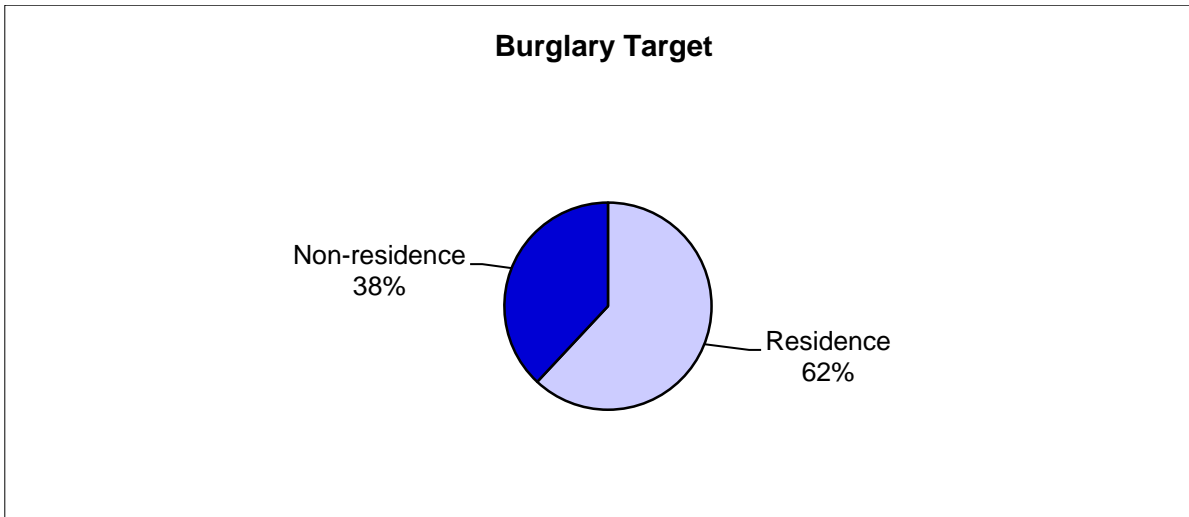
There were 5,252 reported burglaries in 2016, up from 5,000 in 2015. The rate was 549 burglaries per 100,000 residents, which was up 3% from the prior year's rate of 533.



Austin's burglary rate in 2016 was 25% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.

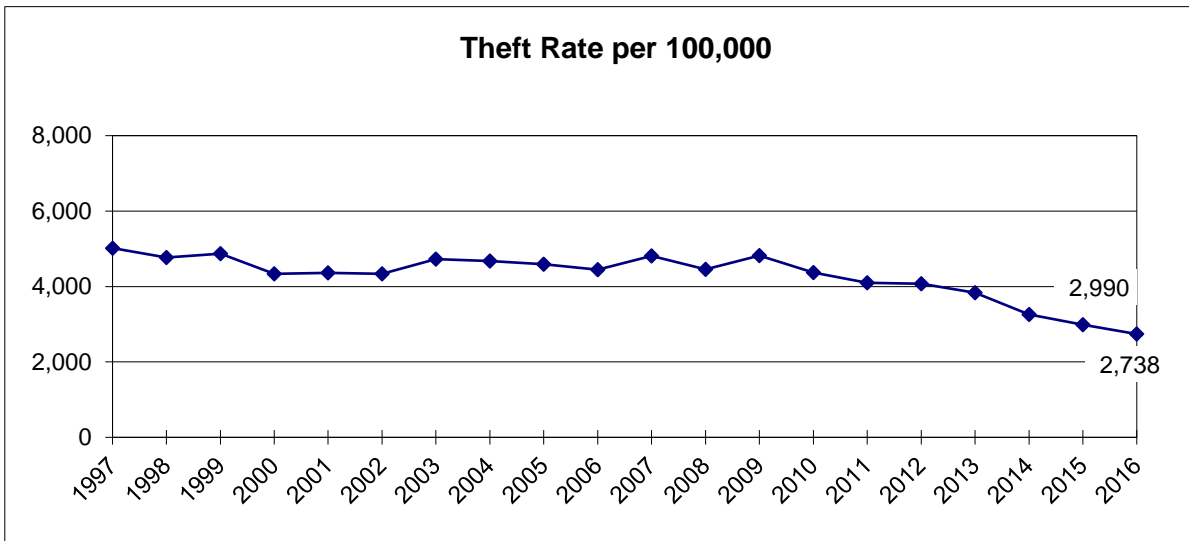


In 2016, 62% of burglaries involved residences and 38% involved other targets (businesses, offices, restaurants, etc.). During 2015, 66% of burglaries involved residences and 34% involved other targets.

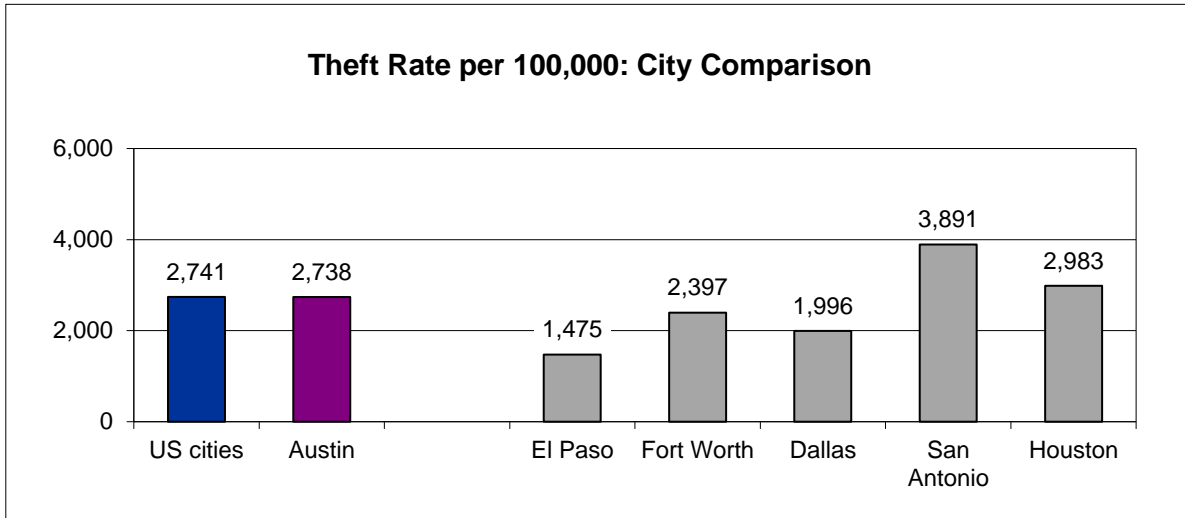


Theft

There were 26,204 reported thefts in 2016, down from 28,068 in 2015. The rate was 2,738 thefts per 100,000 residents, which was down 8% from the rate of 2,990 in 2015 and represents a 20-year low (1997 to 2016).



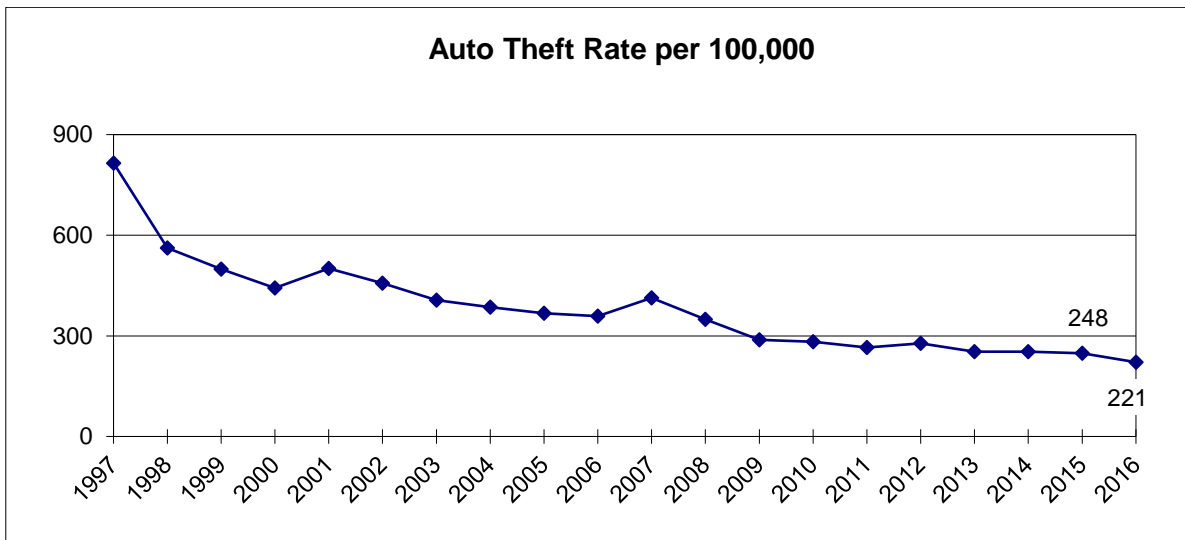
Austin's rate of thefts in 2016 was slightly lower than the average of US cities of the same size.



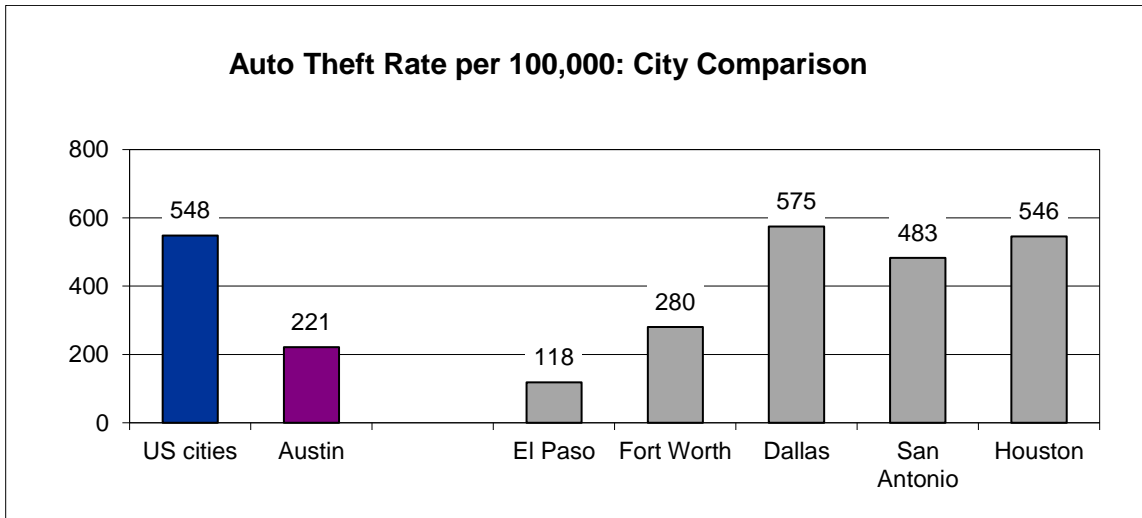
Of all thefts reported in 2016, 35% were burglary of vehicle, or BOV offenses. This was down slightly from 36% in 2015.

Auto Theft

There were 2,119 reported auto thefts in 2016, down from 2,331 in 2015. The rate was 221 auto thefts per 100,000 residents, which was an 11% decrease from the rate of 248 in 2015 and represents a 20-year low (1997 to 2016).

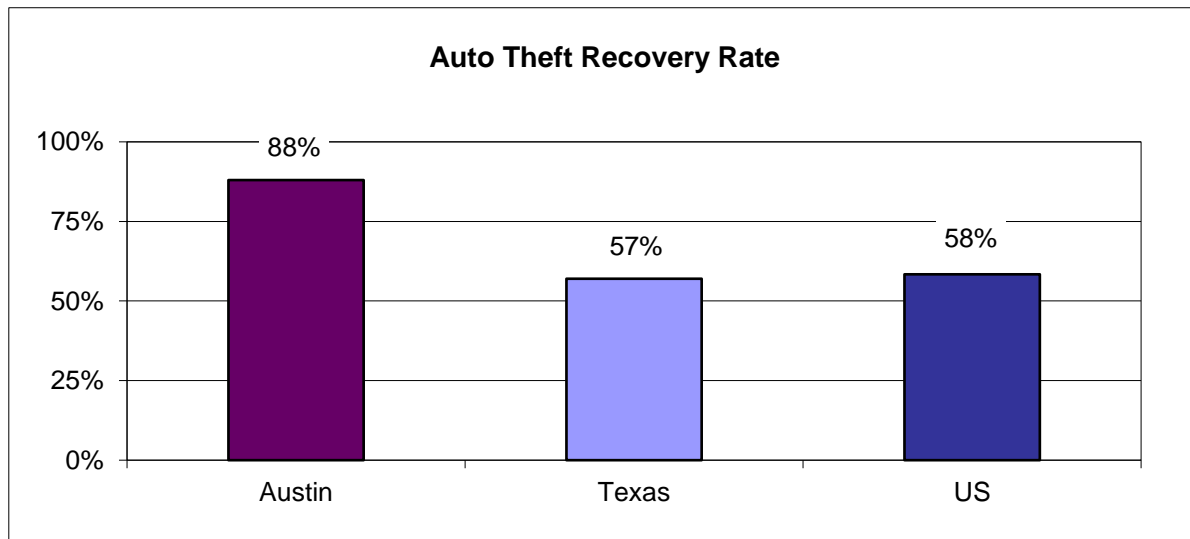


Austin's auto theft rate in 2016 was 60% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.



The most frequently stolen vehicles were Honda Accord and Civic sedans, and trucks made by Ford, Chevrolet, and GMC. Together, they represent 35% of all stolen vehicles where the make and model were known.

Of all vehicles stolen in 2016, 88% were successfully recovered, up from 77% in 2015. Austin's recovery rate is higher than those of both Texas and the US (includes all US cities).



Solving Crime

Crimes can be cleared in two ways: by arrest and by exception. A crime is cleared exceptionally when a circumstance prevents an arrest. Examples include when the offender dies, the victim refuses to cooperate with the prosecution, or the offender is being prosecuted in another jurisdiction and cannot be extradited.

Part I Index Crimes	% of Crimes Cleared by Arrest or Exception		
	Austin		US Cities (pop 500,000 - 1,500,000)
	2015	2016	2016
Murder	87%	79%	51%
Rape	53%	51%	36%
Robbery	31%	35%	23%
Aggravated Assault	60%	48%	40%
Total Violent Crime	51%	46%	34%
Burglary	12%	12%	8%
Theft	13%	12%	12%
Auto Theft	20%	23%	8%
Total Property Crime	13%	13%	11%

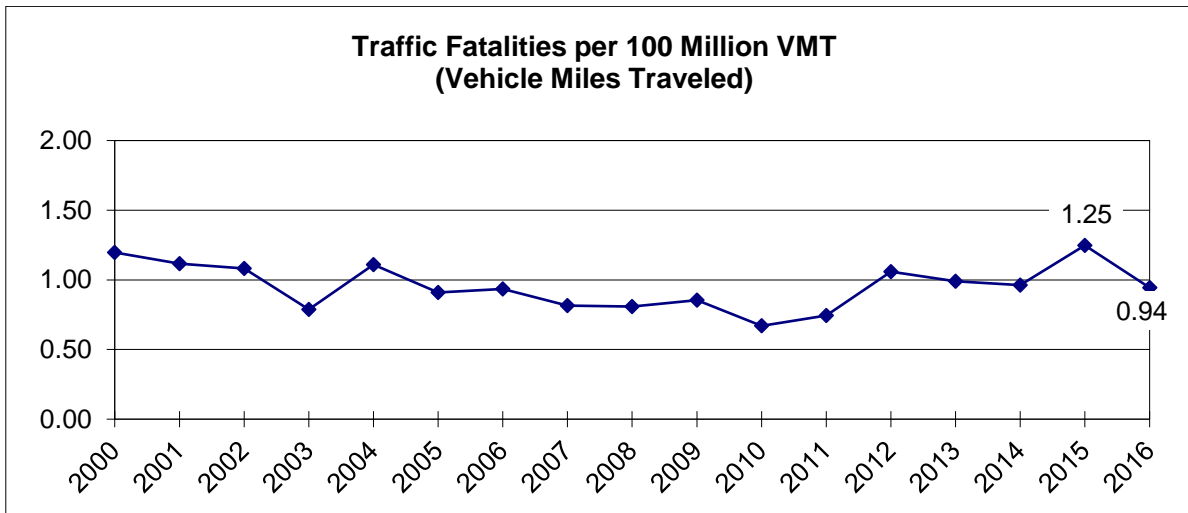
During 2016, Austin police solved, or cleared, 46% of the reported violent crimes, down from 51% in 2015. Austin outperformed other cities on clearing all violent crime types: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Solving property crimes is generally more difficult because many property crimes are discovered after the crime has occurred, with no known suspects or witnesses. During 2016, Austin solved 13% of property crimes, unchanged from 2015. Austin equaled or outperformed other cities on clearing all property crime types: burglary, theft, and auto thefts.

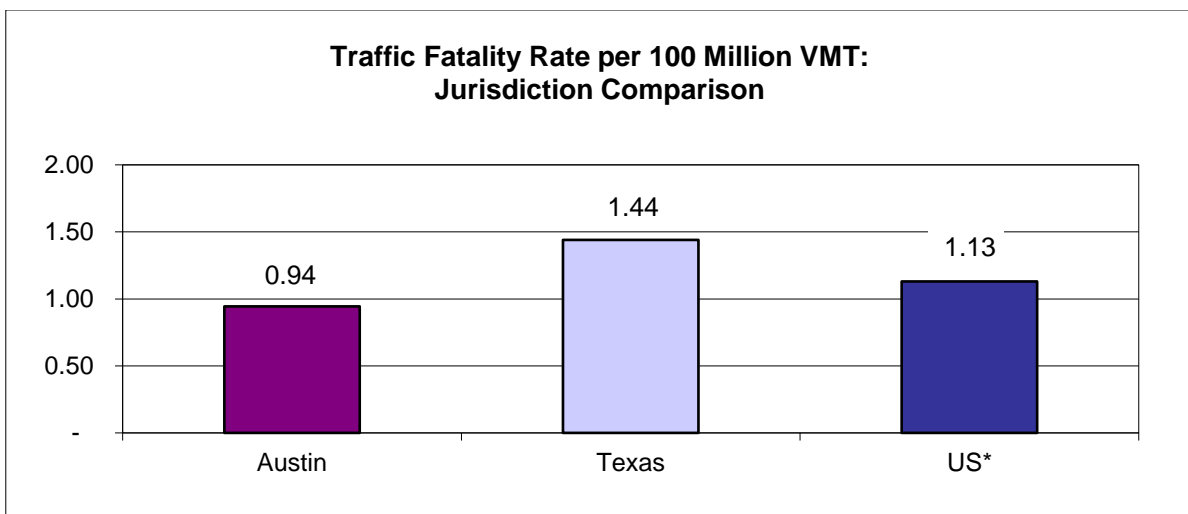
Traffic Fatalities

During 2016 there were 77 fatal crashes that resulted in 79 deaths, as compared with 93 fatal crashes that resulted in 102 deaths in 2015.

The 2016 traffic fatality rate was .94 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as compared with the rate of 1.25 in 2015.

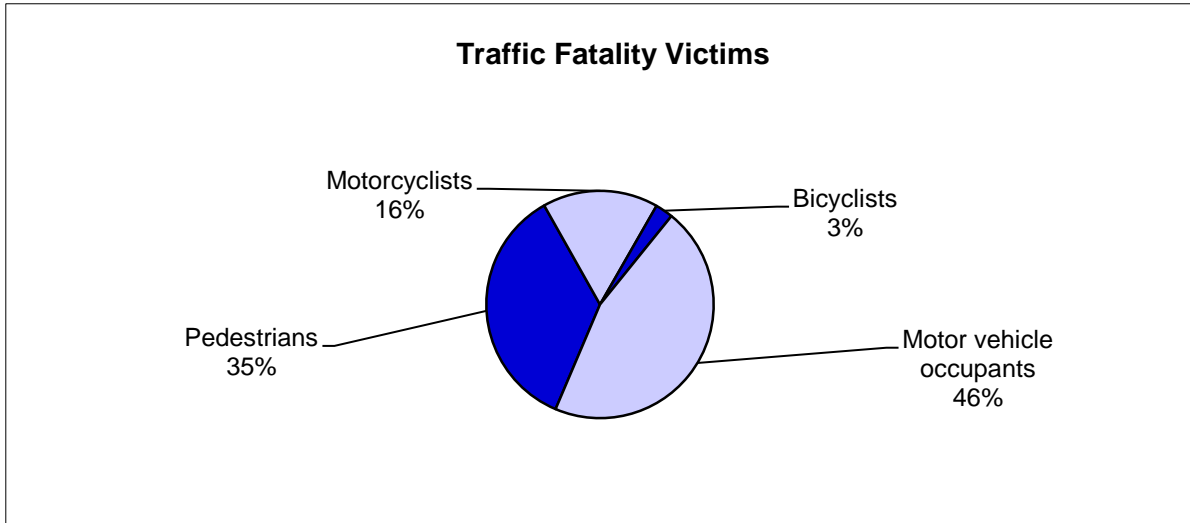


Austin's rate of .94 fatalities per 100 million VMT was lower than the rates for both Texas (1.44) and the US (includes all cities, 1.13).

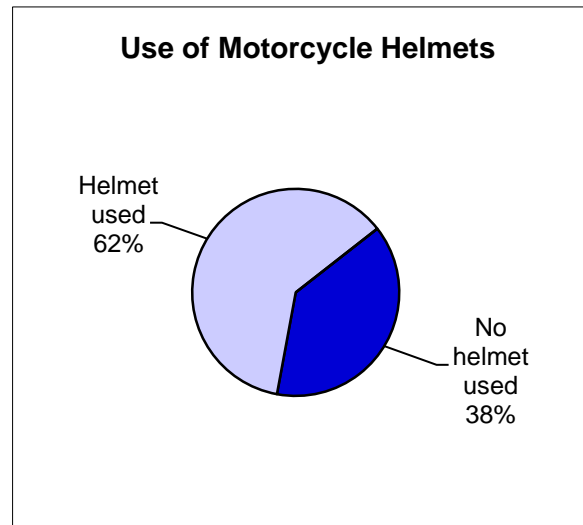
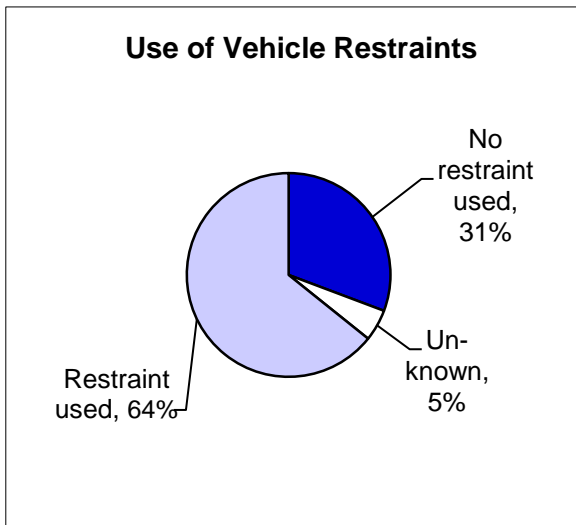


* 2015 US statistics are the most current data available from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

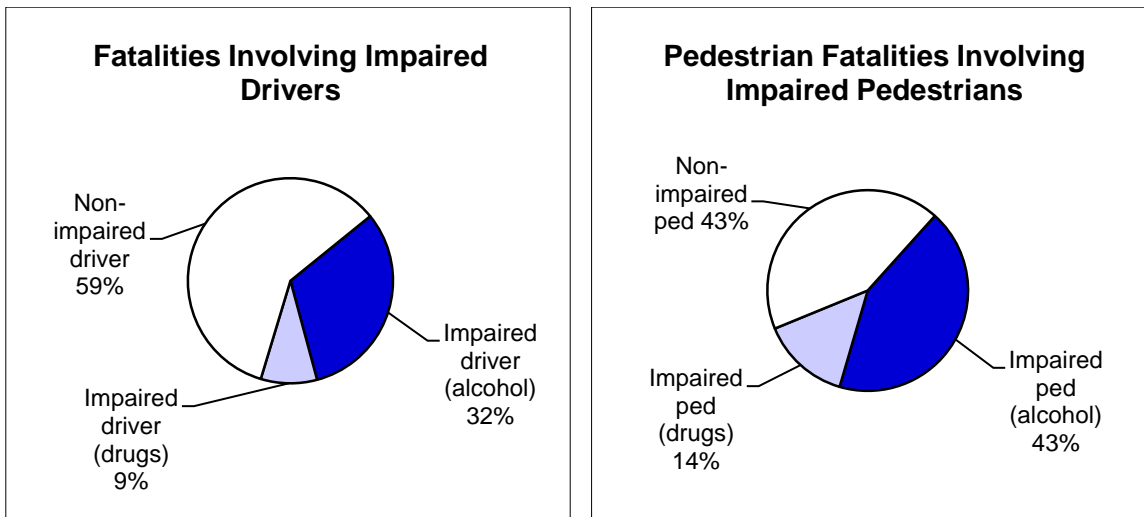
In 2016 most traffic fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants (36, or 46%), followed by pedestrians (28, or 35%), motorcyclists (13, or 16%) and bicyclists (two, or 3%). Similarly, in 2015, most traffic fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants (55, or 54%), followed by pedestrians (30, or 29%), followed by motorcyclists (15, or 15%) and bicyclists (two, or 2%).



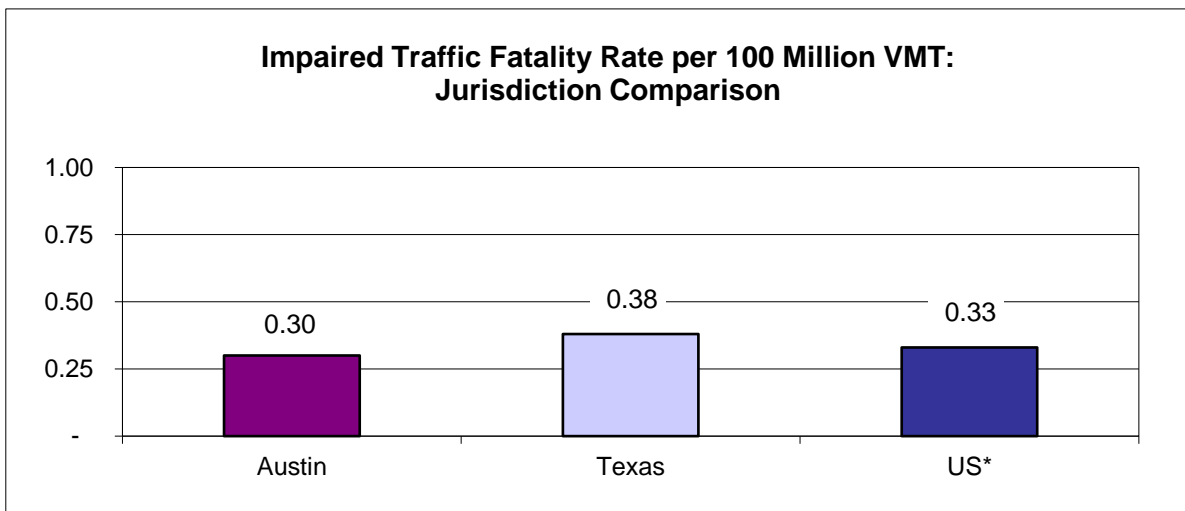
Of all motor vehicle fatalities in 2016, 11 (or 31%) victims were not using restraints, as compared with 18 (or 33%) victims in 2015. Of all motorcycle fatalities, five (or 38%) victims were not wearing helmets, as compared with four (or 27%) in 2015.



Of all fatalities in 2016, 25 (or 32%) involved an alcohol-impaired driver, as compared with 38 (or 37%) in 2015. Of all pedestrian fatalities in 2016, 12 (or 43%) involved an alcohol-impaired pedestrian, as compared with 11 (or 37%) in 2015.



Austin's rate of traffic fatalities involving driver alcohol impairment is .30 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT). That rate is lower than the rates for both Texas (.38) and all US cities (.33).



* 2015 US statistics are the most current data available from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

In 2016, 23 (or 30%) fatal crashes involved speed, as compared with 32 (or 34%) in 2015. And in 2016, 32 (or 42%) fatal crashes occurred on freeways (IH-35, Mo-Pac, US Hwy 183, and State Hwy 71/290 West), as compared with 35 (or 38%) in 2015.

