



Good evening, Mr. Mayor and esteemed members of the City Commission.

Tonight, I am pleased to present an overview of your Police Department's year-end statistics and activities. This presentation will include information on calls for service, traffic enforcement, traffic crashes, our school zone automated speed enforcement initiative, and our QR Code Crime Prevention Program.

Together, these areas provide a snapshot of the work performed by your Police Department over the past year and some of the initiatives we have implemented to enhance public safety and better serve our community. With that, we will begin with calls for service.

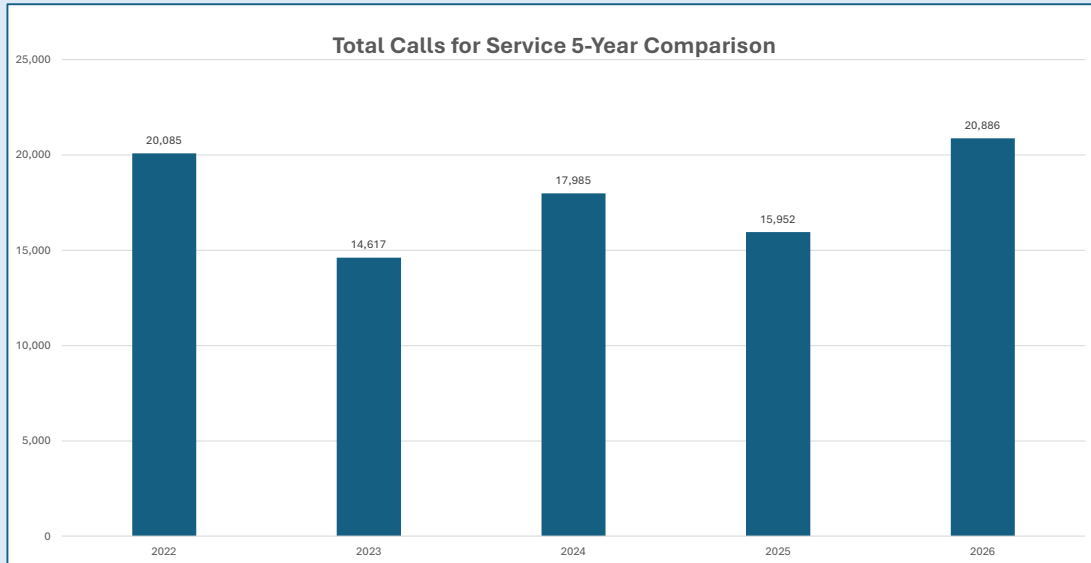
Calls for Service & Incident Comparisons



Monitoring calls for service bi-annually, provides us with an important measure of both community demand and departmental workload. By tracking this information over time, we can identify trends and seasonal patterns, anticipate periods of increased activity, and make informed decisions regarding staffing, deployment, and resource allocation.

These twice a year comparisons also allow us to identify changes or emerging trends that may require adjustments in our operational strategies. Ultimately, this information helps us plan proactively, use our resources efficiently, and ensure that we remain responsive to the public safety needs of our community.

Total Calls for Service 5-Year Comparison



Before reviewing these statistics, it is important to provide some context regarding the data for 2024 and 2025. In late 2024, the Hardee County Sheriff's Office transitioned to a new Computer-Aided Dispatch and Records Management System known as Soma, and the Wauchula Police Department transitioned to that system as well.

Unfortunately, the new system presented a number of challenges, including data-tracking limitations, computer-related issues, and other operational concerns that affected our ability to consistently capture and report certain statistical information.

In November 2025, the Sheriff's Office discontinued the use of Soma and returned to CIS for both CAD and records management. As a result, some of the statistical variations reflected in 2024 and 2025 should be viewed in the context of those system transitions and the limitations we experienced with Soma.

Now that we have returned to CIS, we have greater confidence in the accuracy and consistency of our reporting. With that context in mind, the 2026 numbers do not raise any particular concerns. Crime patterns have remained relatively consistent throughout Hardee County, and we have not identified any significant increases or unusual trends that would warrant particular concern at this time.

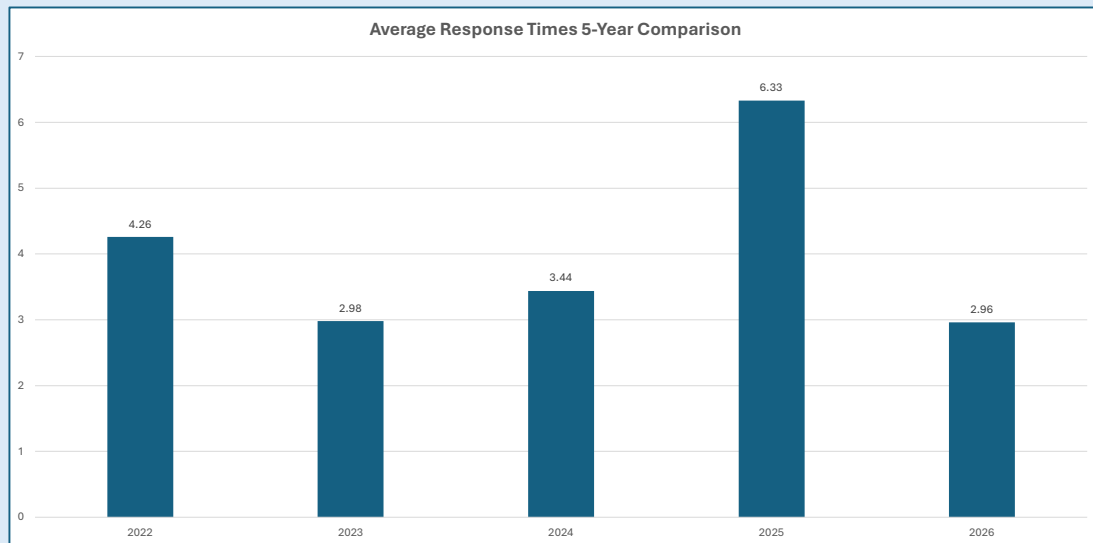
Response Time Comparisons



Monitoring our response times to calls for service is an important measure of both operational effectiveness and the level of service we provide to our community. By tracking response times over time, we can identify trends, recognize potential delays, and determine whether our staffing and deployment strategies are meeting the needs of the community.

This information also allows us to identify potential issues early and adjust, when necessary, rather than simply reacting after a problem develops. Ultimately, monitoring response times helps promote accountability, improve service delivery, and ensure that we continue to provide the timely and effective police response our community expects and deserves.

Average Response Times 5-Year Comparison



This is another example of the impact the transition between the Soma and CIS CAD and Records Management Systems had on our statistical reporting. When we look at the response-time data for the years other than 2025, our response times have remained reasonable and consistent.

Since returning to CIS, we also have greater confidence in how this information is being captured, tracked, and reported. Based on our current data and operational experience, our response times are well within what I consider reasonable for our community and do not present any concerns at this time.

Crime Reporting

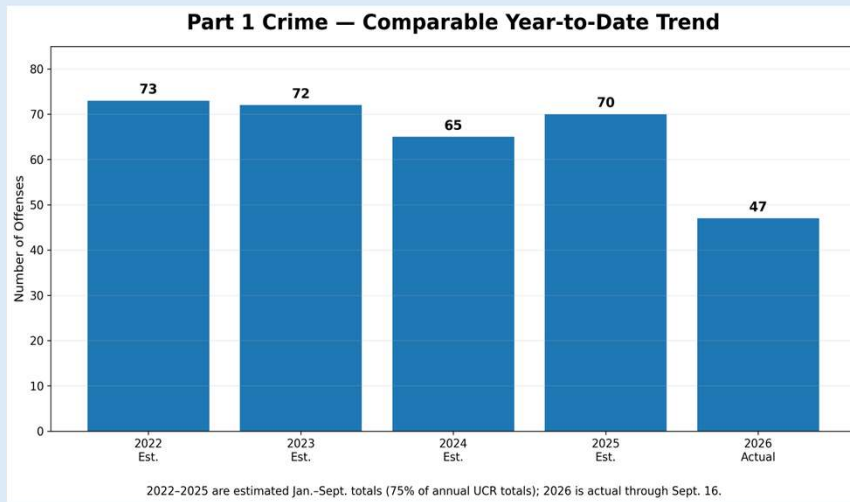


Monitoring crime data on a biannual basis provides us with both a long-term perspective and a timely view of what is occurring within our community. Annual comparisons allow us to identify broader crime trends and measure changes over time, while our six-month reporting periods help us recognize emerging issues more quickly.

Regularly reviewing this information allows us to evaluate our enforcement and crime-prevention strategies, identify areas that may require additional attention, and make adjustments before emerging concerns become larger problems. Ultimately, this ongoing analysis supports proactive decision-making, accountability, and our ability to remain responsive to the public safety needs of our community.

Part 1 Crime — Comparable Year-to-Date Trend

Estimated prior-year Jan.–Sept. pace vs. actual 2026 through Sept. 16



47

Actual Part 1 offenses
through Sept. 16, 2026

≈ 33% lower

than the estimated 2025 Jan.–Sept. pace
(≈70 offenses)

**Important: this is an estimate-based
comparison, not an actual prior-year YTD
UCR comparison.**

Method: Prior-year comparable figures estimated at 75% of each full calendar-year UCR total; 2026 is actual through Sept. 16.

Part I Crimes

- **Violent Crime**
 - Murder and Nonnegligent Manslaughter
 - Rape
 - Robbery
 - Aggravated Assault
- **Property Crime**
 - Burglary
 - Larceny-Theft
 - Motor Vehicle Theft
 - Arson

Through September 16, 2026, the Police Department has recorded 47 Part 1 offenses. Because prior-year data available for this presentation are complete calendar-year totals, we prorated those totals to provide an estimated nine-month comparison. On that basis, the current 2026 count is approximately one-third below the estimated 2025 pace. This is an estimate for context rather than

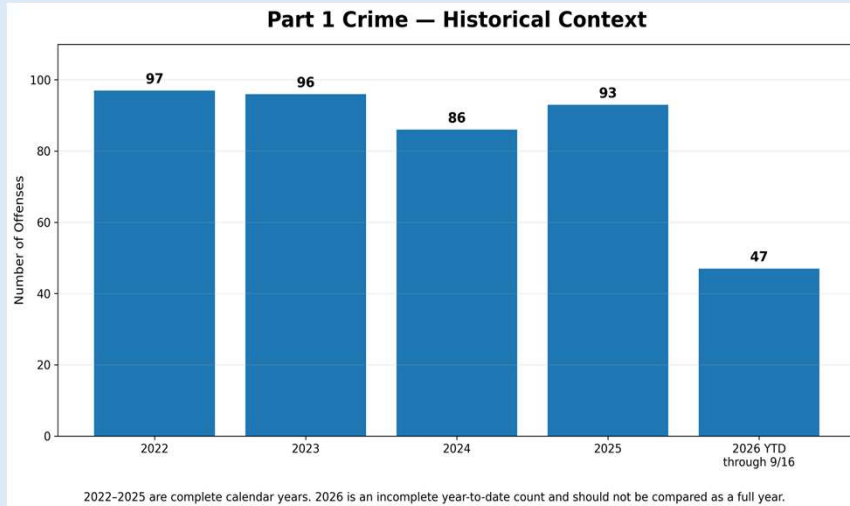
an official year-over-year UCR comparison, and we will report the final percentage after the calendar year closes.

COMPARABLE YEAR-TO-DATE TREND

- Through September 16, 2026, the Wauchula Police Department recorded 47 Part 1 offenses.
- Because our prior UCR figures are reported as complete calendar-year totals, we do not have actual January-through-September counts for the preceding years in this dataset.
- To provide context, the prior annual totals were prorated at 75 percent, representing an estimated nine-month pace.
- Those estimated comparable figures are approximately 73 offenses for 2022, 72 for 2023, 65 for 2024, and 70 for 2025.
- Compared with the estimated 2025 nine-month pace of approximately 70 offenses, the 47 actual offenses recorded through September 16, 2026, are approximately 32.6% lower.
- This should be described as an estimate-based comparison, not as an official year-over-year UCR reduction.
- The 2026 figure also stops on September 16 rather than September 30, making the time periods close but not identical.

Part 1 Crime — Historical Context

Completed calendar years shown alongside the current 2026 year-to-date count



Key distinction

2022–2025

Complete calendar years

2026

Actual through Sept. 16 only

The direction is encouraging,
but the final 2026 year-over-year percentage
should be calculated after the calendar
year closes.

2026 YTD is intentionally identified separately to avoid treating an incomplete year as a completed annual total.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

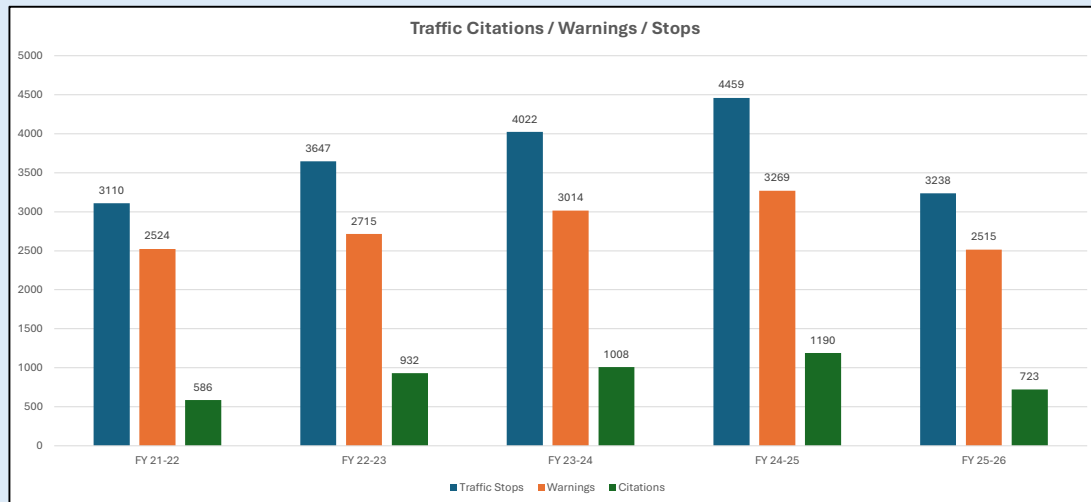
- The completed calendar-year totals were 97 offenses in 2022, 96 in 2023, 86 in 2024, and 93 in 2025.
- The 2026 figure of 47 is an actual year-to-date count through September 16 and is not a completed annual total.
- The current direction is encouraging, but we should not characterize the final annual percentage decrease until the 2026 calendar year is complete.
- At year-end, we can make a direct full-year 2025-to-2026 comparison using actual reported UCR totals.

Traffic Crashes & Traffic Enforcement



Monitoring traffic crashes and traffic enforcement is important because it helps police departments identify trends, evaluate the effectiveness of enforcement strategies, and make data-driven decisions to improve roadway safety.

Traffic Enforcement 5-Year Comparison

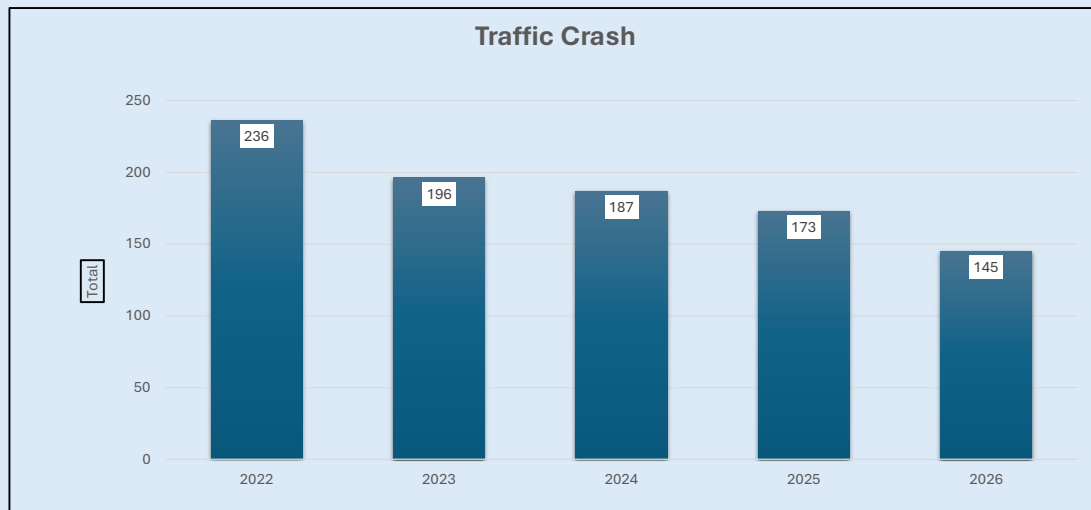


Traffic enforcement activity increased steadily from FY 2021–22 through FY 2024–25, with traffic stops rising from 3,110 to 4,459, warnings from 2,524 to 3,269, and citations from 586 to 1,190. In FY 2025–26, activity moderated, with 3,238 traffic stops, 2,515 warnings, and 723 citations.

Notably, warnings have consistently represented the majority of enforcement outcomes, demonstrating that officers frequently use traffic stops as an opportunity to educate motorists and encourage voluntary compliance rather than relying solely on citations.

Ultimately, the traffic stop itself helps accomplish our broader law enforcement objectives. The goal is not simply to issue citations; it is to calm traffic, reduce crashes, encourage compliance with traffic laws, and deter criminal activity. We all recognize what happens when motorists see flashing blue and red lights ahead, drivers instinctively slow down and become more attentive to their driving. That same visible police presence can also serve as a powerful crime deterrent. A would-be burglar or thief who sees an officer actively patrolling a neighborhood or business district may think twice before committing a crime. In that respect, every traffic stop provides not only an enforcement opportunity, but also a highly visible police presence that contributes to the overall safety of our community.

Traffic Crashes 5-Year Comparison



During FY 2025–26, Wauchula Police Officers handled 145 traffic crashes, a decrease from the previous year and all preceding years shown in this comparison. I believe several factors have contributed to this reduction, including our FDOT traffic enforcement grant, increased enforcement activity, the strategic use of decoy police vehicles, and greater community involvement, all of which have increased police visibility throughout the City.

As we saw on the previous slide, traffic enforcement should not be measured solely by the number of citations issued. During FY 2025–26, our officers conducted 3,238 traffic stops, resulting in 2,515 warnings and 723 citations. Whether a motorist receives a warning or a citation, the stop itself creates a visible enforcement presence, encourages compliance, and can influence driving behavior.

Research on traffic enforcement also suggests that simply comparing the number of citations issued with the number of crashes can be misleading, particularly because officers are often intentionally deployed to locations experiencing higher crash rates or traffic violations. The more meaningful consideration is whether enforcement is targeted, visible, and consistent. When those elements are combined, particularly when addressing behaviors such as speeding and impaired driving, traffic enforcement can contribute to improved roadway safety.

With 145 crashes during FY 2025–26, our lowest number in the period reviewed, these numbers give no cause for concern. Rather, they suggest that our combination of enforcement, visibility, education, and community engagement is having the desired effect: encouraging safer driving and reducing crashes.

School Zone Automated Speed Enforcement



Automated school zone speed enforcement provides a consistent enforcement presence in areas where some of our most vulnerable pedestrians, our children, are traveling to and from school. Unlike traditional traffic enforcement, which requires an officer to be physically present, automated enforcement allows us to address excessive speeding throughout the designated enforcement period and encourages drivers to slow down and comply with posted speed limits.

The primary objective of this program is not simply to issue violations; it is to change driver behavior. By increasing awareness and accountability, automated enforcement encourages motorists to reduce their speed as they approach and travel through our school zones. Ultimately, our goal is straightforward: to calm traffic, reduce the risk of crashes, and provide the safest possible environment for our children, crossing guards, parents, school personnel, and everyone traveling through our school zones.

School Zone Speed Cameras

- Florida Statutes § 316.1896 violations result in a civil penalty of \$100. Distribution of these funds is prescribed by statute.
 - **\$60 (Local Government Share):**
 - \$36.00 to City of Wauchula
 - \$24.00 to Blue Line Solutions
 - **\$20 (State General Revenue):**
 - **\$12 (School Crossing Guard Programs):**
 - **\$8 (Administrative Costs):**
- Civil infractions that do not result in points on a driver's license and are not criminal.
- The statutory framework ensures that funds are directed toward statewide needs and, importantly, toward enhancing school safety through crossing guard support.

Under Florida law, specifically Florida Statute § 316.1896, school zone speed detection system violations result in a civil penalty of \$100. The distribution of these funds is prescribed by statute and is not retained solely by the issuing jurisdiction.

The allocation is as follows:

\$60 (Local Government Share):

Retained by the city or county operating the speed detection system. These funds are intended to support public safety initiatives, including school zone safety improvements, traffic enforcement efforts, and related law enforcement activities. Wauchula currently keeps \$36.00 from each citation while Blue Line Solutions, the company who operates our camera system, per contract keeps \$24.00

\$20 (State General Revenue):

Transferred to the Florida Department of Revenue and deposited into the State's General Revenue Fund to support statewide governmental operations.

\$12 (School Crossing Guard Programs):

Dedicated specifically to the recruitment and retention of school crossing guards, reinforcing the statute's emphasis on student safety.

\$8 (Administrative Costs):

Allocated to cover expenses associated with administering the program, including notice processing, mailing, and system/vendor operations.

It is important to note that these violations are civil in nature. They do not result in points on a driver's license and are not considered criminal traffic offenses unless formally contested. While a portion of the revenue remains with the local jurisdiction, the statutory framework ensures that funds are also directed toward statewide needs and, importantly, toward enhancing school safety through crossing guard support.

Annual Activity for SY 25-26 8/12 through 5/28

8/12/2025 to 5/28/2026		Total Fines	Distributions		Unpaid Citations Lost Revenue
Citations Issued	504	N/A	City of Wauchula for 431 Citations Paid	\$15,516.00	\$2,376.00
Citations Paid	431	\$43,100.00	Blue Line Solutions for 431 Paid	\$10,344.00	\$1,584.00
Citations Unpaid	66	\$6,600.00	Lost Revenue Until Paid for 66 Unpaid	\$6,600.00	N/A
Citations Contested	1	N/A	State General Revenue for 431 Paid	\$8,620.00	\$1,320.00
Contested and Upheld	1	N/A	Crossing Guard Programs for 431 Paid	\$5,172.00	\$792.00
Dismissed	7	N/A	Administrative Costs for 431 Paid	\$3,448.00	\$528.00
Converted to UTC	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

504	Violators
431 of 504	Paid their citations
66 of 504	Remain Unpaid
1 of 504	Was contested
1 of 1	Contested & Upheld
7 of 504	Dismissed
0 of 504	Were converted to UTC

Our Wauchula Elementary School speed zone camera system has been deployed since August of 2025 - sadly , between August 12 and May 28, it identified 504 speeding violations in the Wauchula Elementary School Speed Zone.

504 Violators were Cited
 431 of 504 Paid their Citations
 66 of 504 Remain Unpaid
 1 of 504 Was Contested
 1 of 1 Contested was Upheld
 7 of 504 Were Dismissed
 0 of 504 Were converted to UTC

When citations go “*unpaid*” or otherwise ignored – the civil citation is converted to a Uniform Traffic Citation and transferred to the Traffic Court. If a civil citation is contested, Blue Line Solutions notifies the City, and the case is scheduled and heard by the special magistrate.

QR Business Check Crime Prevention Initiative



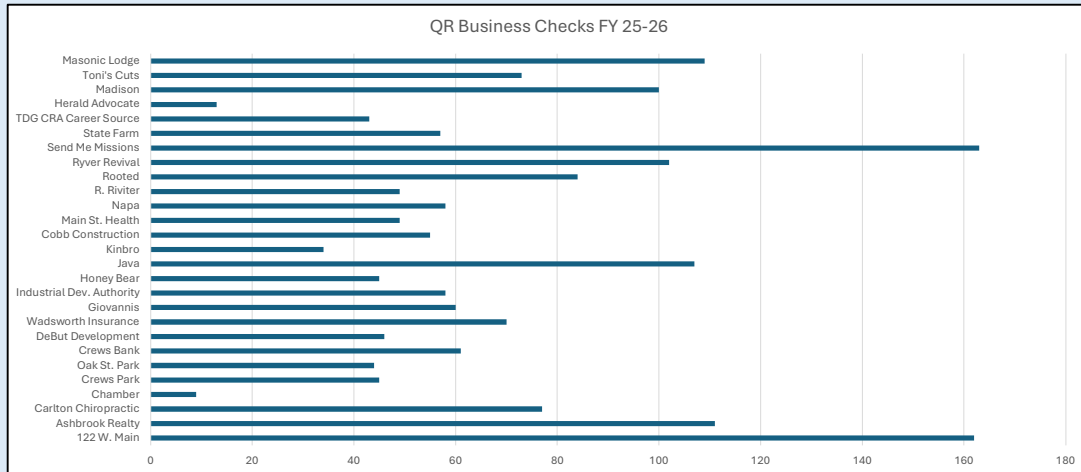
Crime prevention is an important part of our public safety mission because the best crime is the one that never occurs. By identifying opportunities to prevent criminal activity before it happens, we can reduce victimization, protect property, and improve the overall quality of life within our community.

Partnerships are an essential part of that effort. When law enforcement and our business community work together, we create another layer of protection and strengthen our collective ability to keep Wauchula safe.

With that philosophy in mind, in late 2025, your Wauchula Police Department introduced the QR Business Check Program, a proactive crime-prevention initiative designed specifically to help deter after-hours and weekend burglaries at local businesses. The program is completely free to every business owner and operator within the City of Wauchula.

I am pleased to report that we currently have 30 local businesses participating in the program, giving our officers additional opportunities to work directly with our business community while providing a visible law enforcement presence during the hours when these businesses are most vulnerable.

QR Scans for all Registered Properties FY 25-26 Quarter 2



I am extremely pleased with the success of our QR Business Check Program. In fact, the program has exceeded my expectations, both in the number of businesses choosing to participate and in the level of engagement we have seen from our patrol officers.

Since October 2025, our officers have completed 1,884 QR Business Check scans. It is important to understand what that number represents. Each scan means that an officer physically exited the patrol vehicle, checked the exterior and security of the participating business, and then scanned the business's unique QR code to document that the security check was completed.

That represents 1,884 occasions when one of our officers was physically present at a local business, actively checking its security and providing a visible law enforcement presence during vulnerable hours.

I am very pleased with what this program has accomplished thus far, and with the continued partnership of our local business community and the commitment of our officers, I fully expect the program to continue growing in the years ahead.



In closing, I am extremely proud of the work being done every day by the men and women of your Wauchula Police Department and of the service they provide to this community. We remain committed to being proactive, accountable, and responsive to the needs of those we serve, and we look forward to continuing our work to keep Wauchula a safe place to live, work, and raise a family.

Thank you, Mr. Mayor and members of the Commission. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.