

**DATA ANALYSIS OF POLICING AND HUMAN RELATIONS IN
LOS ANGELES COUNTY SUBURBAN POLICE
DEPARTMENTS**

**An Analysis of Suburban Policing Activity in Glendale, Pasadena,
and South Pasadena**

Prepared for the Los Angeles County Commission on Human Relations

February 2024

Seva Rodnyansky

Jorgen Harris

Acknowledgements: We graciously acknowledge our community partners Michelle Rojas-Soto of the Coalition for an Anti-Racist Glendale and Ella Hushagen and Helen Tran of CareFirst South Pasadena for getting us interested and involved in the important work on suburban policing, for insightful and productive conversations, and for helping facilitate data access. We also thank CICOP for productive discussions around policing in Pasadena.

Introduction

This report presents descriptive information on the policing practices of three suburban police departments in Northeast Los Angeles County: the Glendale Police Department (GPD), South Pasadena Police Department (SPPD), and Pasadena Police Department (PPD). Using data obtained from these departments through public records requests¹, this report aims to provide a common basis of objective information on the current practices of suburban police departments in Los Angeles County. In this report, we provide a unified picture of policing across these three police departments, making comparison when appropriate to publicly available data from the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD).² The report serves as a supplement to prior work in partnership with community organizations providing detailed examinations of the Glendale³ and South Pasadena⁴ police departments. The data referenced in this report have been made available to the public, absent personally identifiable information on arrestees. The full data are available to researchers on request.

Suburban police departments are an important but understudied part of the policing landscape in the United States. Suburban departments account for a large and growing share of arrests⁵ and police shootings⁶, but share far less data and face far less public scrutiny than do large, urban police departments, both due to personnel constraints and due to lower levels of oversight. While large jurisdictions such as Los Angeles or San Francisco provide years of arrest data on open data platforms, suburban jurisdictions rarely provide more than the required state or federal monthly agency aggregate data. This lack of high-quality data prevents the public, media, watchdog groups and police departments themselves from sharing a common factual understanding of what suburban police departments do. Producing a greater factual basis for suburban policing thus has the potential to improve the quality of dialogue around policing, identify constructive avenues for reform, and increase compliance with new state and federal policies.

Glendale, South Pasadena, and Pasadena are inner-ring suburbs located in the Northeast of Los Angeles County. While all three suburbs are racially, ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse, the Black and Hispanic population shares of these suburbs are smaller than those of the City of Los Angeles—modestly so in Pasadena and substantially so in Glendale. Likewise, all three

¹ Data from the Glendale Police Department was obtained by the Coalition for an Antiracist Glendale, which is a subsidiary of YWCA Glendale & Pasadena. Data from the South Pasadena Police Department was obtained by CareFirst South Pasadena. Data from Pasadena was obtained by the authors.

² <https://data.lacity.org/Public-Safety/Arrest-Data-from-2010-to-2019/yru6-6re4>

³ “Glendale Arrests: Prevalence, Racial Disparities, and Implications: ANALYSIS OF ARRESTS FROM 2011 TO 2019 IN GLENDALE, CA” https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hW3qSDOPKV5MArKzxXN27wDFpe1jZ_zg/view?usp=sharing

⁴ “Dispatch and Arrest Trends in South Pasadena: Analysis of Arrests and Dispatches from 2012 to 2021 in South Pasadena, CA” https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TvW2gZEhSz695WQzIRx_7vDe5q1WjCqI/view

⁵ Bodah, Fleck, and Wunschel (2021). Arrest Trends: Suburban Police Are Driving the Use of Arrests. The Vera Institute of Justice. <https://www.vera.org/downloads/publications/suburban-police-are-driving-the-use-of-arrests.pdf>

⁶ Sinyangwe, Samuel. (June 1, 2020). “Police Are Killing Fewer People In Big Cities, But More In Suburban And Rural America”. <https://fivethirtyeight.com/features/police-are-killing-fewer-people-in-big-cities-but-more-in-suburban-and-rural-america/>

suburban cities have median household and per-capita income higher than that of the City of Los Angeles—modestly so in Glendale and substantially so in South Pasadena. While Pasadena and Glendale are not small cities, with populations of 134,000 and 189,000 respectively, all three cities are dwarfed by the City of Los Angeles’ 4 million residents. Because these small cities border the City of Los Angeles, their policing practices are potentially shaped by different incentives and constraints than those facing the Los Angeles Police Department or the Los Angeles County Sheriff. These cities may face incentives to encourage low-level offenders to move out of the city—a goal that is less feasible for the City of Los Angeles. At the same time, they are less able to support specialized units, detailed crime analytics, and other policing tools available to large cities.

This report examines policing practices in these cities in a few ways. The bulk of this report focuses on arrests, rather than other facets of police activity, because we have data on arrests for all three police departments and for LAPD. In Glendale and Pasadena, we also have bookings data which includes arrestee city of residence, bail awarded, and jail time awarded, while in South Pasadena we have data on police dispatches. These additional data series inform our geographic analysis and our bail and jail time analysis for the cities where it is available; unfortunately, this additional data is not available online from LAPD. The state of California’s police data collection through the Racial and Identity Profiling Act (RIPA)⁷ requires data collection on police stops; however, the police department we focus on were not yet required to comply for the years we examine (broadly 2010-2020), hence we do not include an analysis of stops.

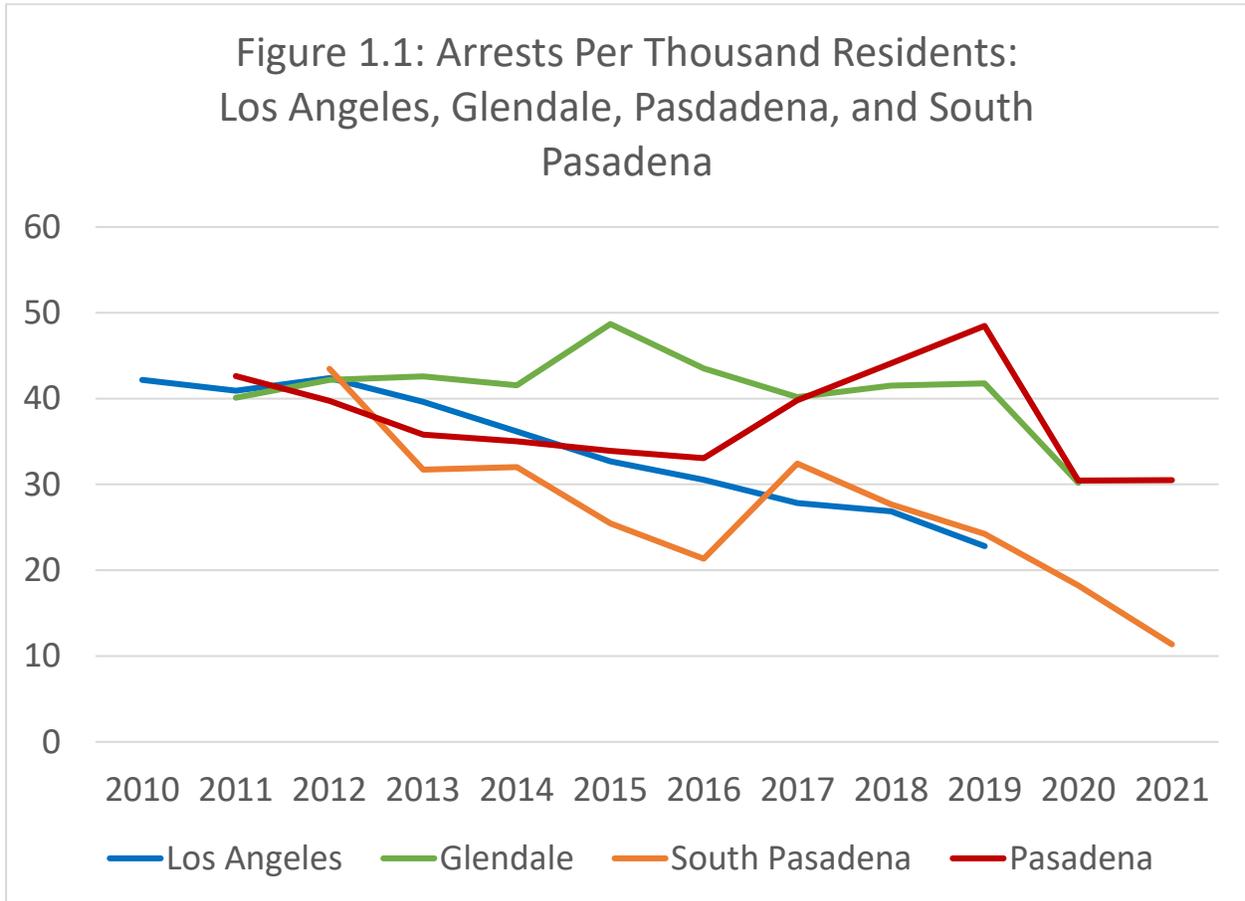
The report is laid out as follows. First, we present an overview of arrest trends in each city over the past ten years. In Section 2, we examine the demographics of individuals facing arrest, and compare them to the demographics of the cities themselves and explore how these vary among arrested residents versus non-residents. Section 3 examines changes in the level and disposition of arrests in each city and examines the effect of Proposition 47 in producing changes in the rate of arrest for drug and property offenses. Section 4 examines the geography of arrest within each city. Section 5 examines the use of cash bail in Glendale and Pasadena and jail time awarded in Pasadena. Section 6 suggests further avenues for data transparency and analysis.

Trends in Arrest

As a baseline for the entire report, figure 1.1 reports the number of arrests made by each police department per 10,000 residents in each year. As shown in Figure 1.1, all three suburban police departments had an arrest rate per 10,000 of between 40 and 42 in 2011 and 2012—matching the arrest rate in the City of Los Angeles. However, between 2011 and 2019, arrest rates diverged considerably. In Los Angeles and South Pasadena, arrests per 10,000 fell by close to 50%, reaching 22 per 10,000 citizens in Los Angeles and 24 per 10,000 citizens in South Pasadena. Over the same time period, arrests per 10,000 citizens was unchanged in Glendale and increased in Pasadena to 48 per 10,000 citizens. As a result, Glendale and Pasadena have conducted nearly twice as many arrests per resident in recent years than has the city of Los Angeles. While arrests

⁷ <https://oag.ca.gov/ab953/board>

per resident fell in Glendale and Pasadena in 2020 and 2021 with the Covid-19 pandemic, they remained well above the arrest rates in Los Angeles and South Pasadena.



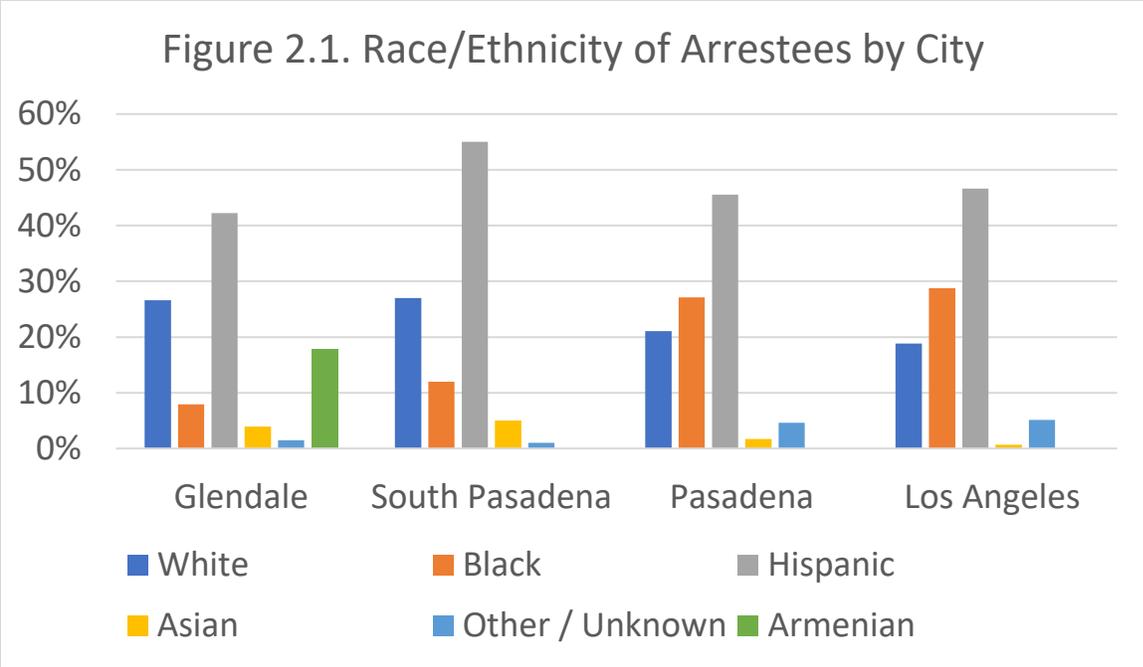
SECTION 2: DEMOGRAPHICS OF ARRESTEES

Key Takeaways

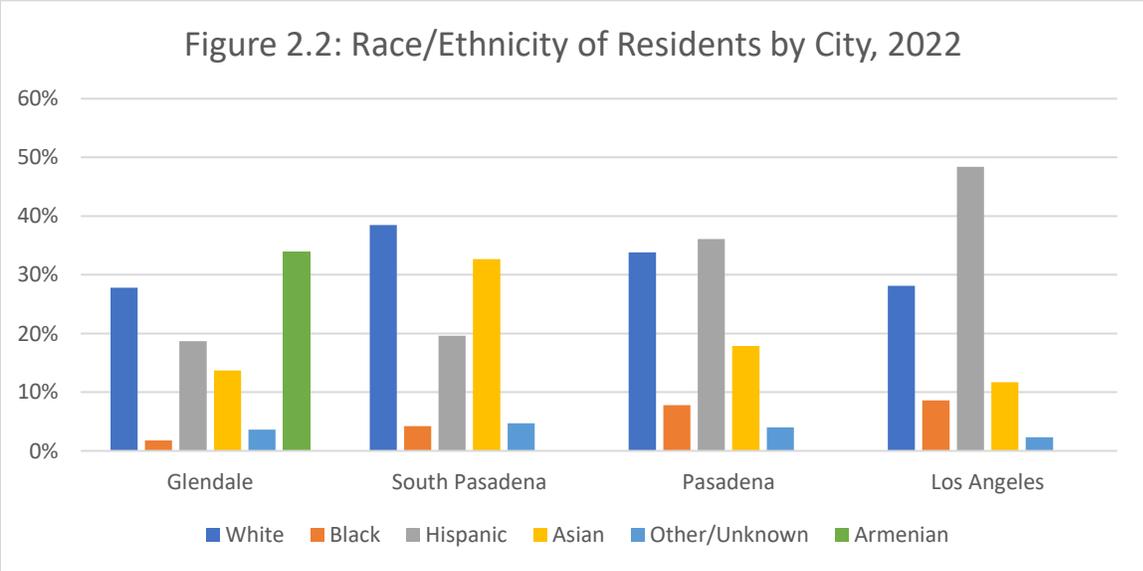
- Black and Hispanic arrestees are overrepresented relative to the population in all four cities.
- The rate of overrepresentation for Black and Hispanic arrestees has changed very modestly over the past 10 years.
- Women make up between 20 to 25% of arrestees in all four cities, with modest variation by race. The share of Asian arrestees who are women is somewhat higher than for other races, ranging from 27% in Glendale to 41% in Los Angeles.
- About half of arrestees in Glendale and Pasadena are city residents. Black and Hispanic arrestees are overrepresented among city residents in both cities.

This section documents demographic trends among arrestees for the three suburban police departments covered by this project (Glendale, South Pasadena, Pasadena), with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) included as a comparison. We document the demographic profile of arrestees in terms of race/ethnicity, age, and sex, and examine the relationship between demographic characteristics and the category of offenses.

Race: Figure 2.1 reports the share of arrestees in each city who are White, Black, Hispanic, Asian, or another ethnicity. Because Glendale has a large Armenian population, we examine arrests of Armenians separately in Glendale. As shown in Figure 2.1, the plurality of arrestees made in all four cities were Hispanic. Hispanic arrestees account for 42% of arrestees in Glendale, 45% in Pasadena, 55% in South Pasadena, and 47% of arrests in Los Angeles. Black arrestees constitute the second-largest racial category in Los Angeles and Pasadena, and the third-largest racial category in Glendale and South Pasadena. Black arrestees accounted for 8% of arrests in Glendale, 12% of arrests in South Pasadena, 27% of arrests in Pasadena, and 29% of arrests in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, White arrestees account for 20-30% of arrestees in each city. In Glendale, 27% of arrestees are White and do not have an Armenian surname, while an additional 18% of arrestees had an Armenian surname (the large majority of whom were identified by the police department as White). White arrestees, including White-identifying Armenians, made up 27% of arrests in South Pasadena, 21% of arrests in Pasadena, and 19% of arrests in Los Angeles. Asian arrestees made up a small share of arrests in all four cities, from 5% of arrests in South Pasadena to less than 1% of arrests in Los Angeles.



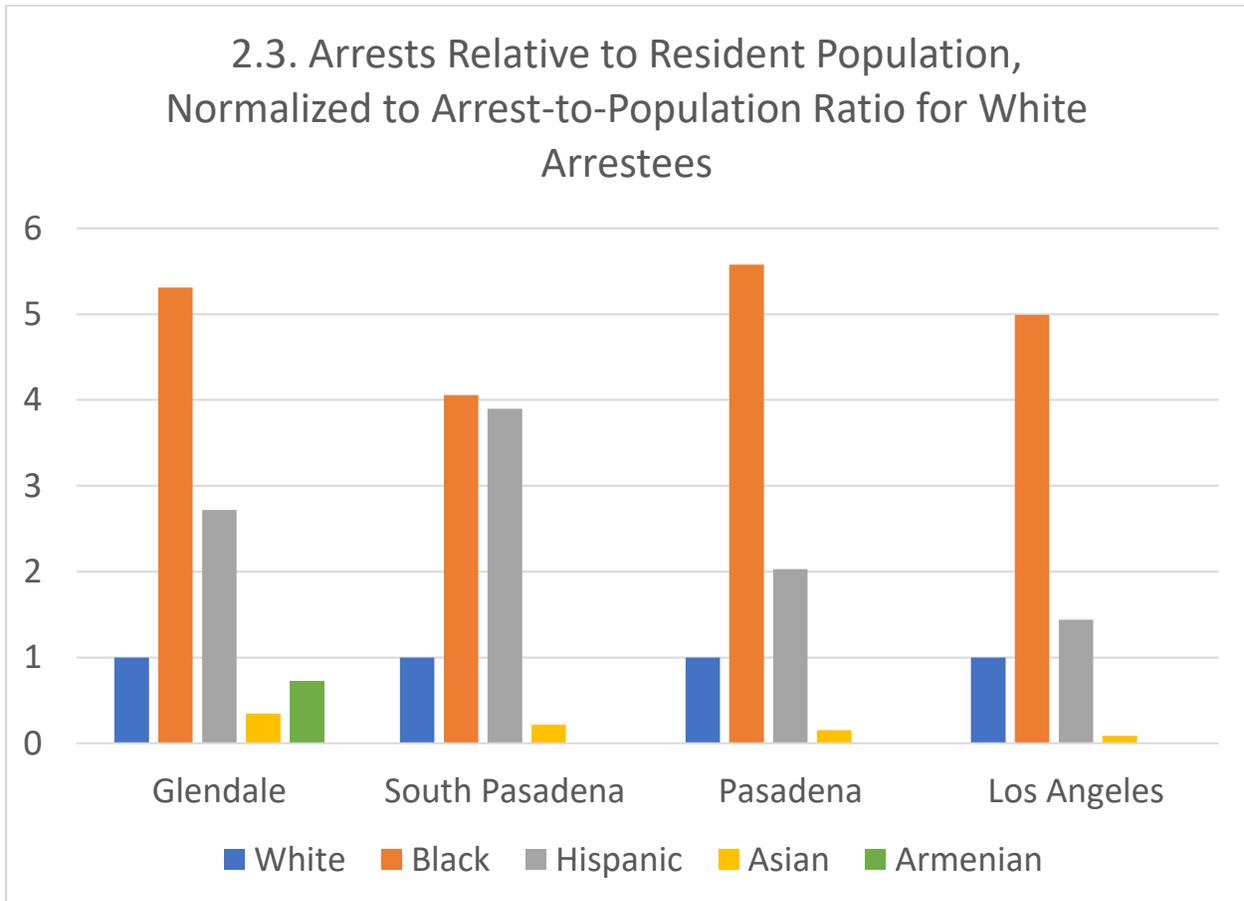
For comparison, Figure 2.2 presents the share of residents of each city who identify with each of the racial categories provided above for 2022 using U.S. Census Bureau’s Quick Facts⁸. For consistency with the arrest data, we separately identify Armenians in Glendale, but not in the other cities.



These numbers indicate that Black and Hispanic arrestees are substantially overrepresented relative to the resident population for all three suburban areas. Only 2% of Glendale residents, 4% of South Pasadena residents, and 8% of Pasadena residents are Black. Thus, as shown in

⁸ <https://www.census.gov/quickfacts/fact/table/US/PST045222>

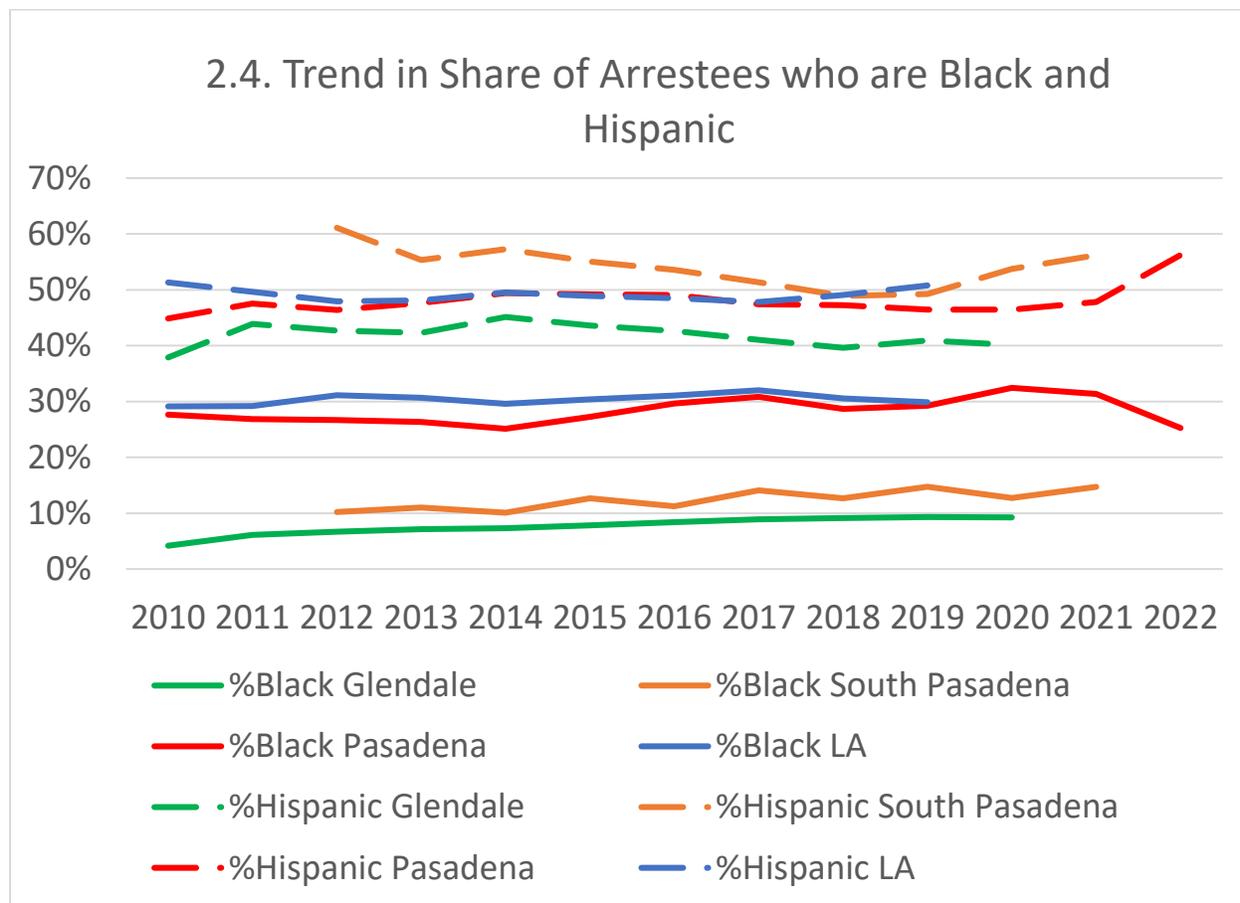
Figure 2.3⁹, the ratio of arrestees to residents is more than four times higher for Black arrestees than for White arrestees in all three suburban cities. Likewise, 19% of Glendale residents, 20% of South Pasadena residents, and 36% of Pasadena residents are Hispanic. Thus, the ratio of Hispanic arrestees to Hispanic residents is more than twice as high for Hispanic arrestees than for White arrestees in all three cities. These disparities can be driven by several sources, including differences in the rate of unlawful behavior among residents of different racial and ethnic groups, offenses committed by non-residents, and racial disparities in rates of contact with police and/or treatment by police. As we discuss in Section 3, available evidence suggests that arrests of nonresidents accounts for a minority of this racial disparity in arrests.



We find that the racial composition of arrestees has remained stable in all four cities of interest over the past 10 years. Figure 2.4 shows the share of arrestees who were Black and Hispanic in each city, for each year in which data are available. The solid lines show the share of Black arrestees. This share has remained constant in Los Angeles and Pasadena but increased slightly over the past decade in Glendale and South Pasadena. The dashed lines show the share of arrestees who are Hispanic. This share has remained constant in Los Angeles, Pasadena, and Glendale, but decreased in South Pasadena from 2012 to 2018 before increasing in 2020 and

⁹ The formula for each column is: (share of group’s arrest in a city / share of group’s population in that city) / (share of white arrests in that city / share of white population in that city).

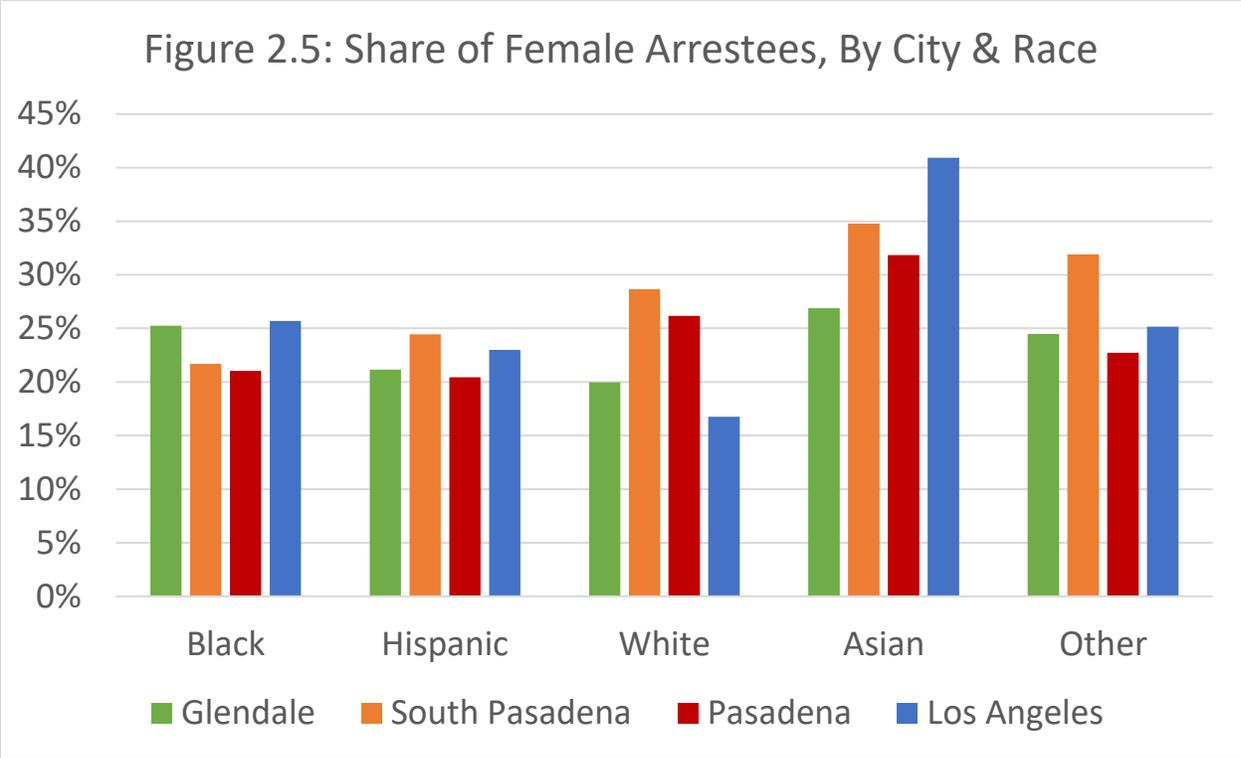
2021. As we discuss in the report: “Dispatch and Arrest Trends in South Pasadena¹⁰,” the downward trend in the share of Hispanic arrestees is driven by reductions in the number of traffic arrests made in South Pasadena.



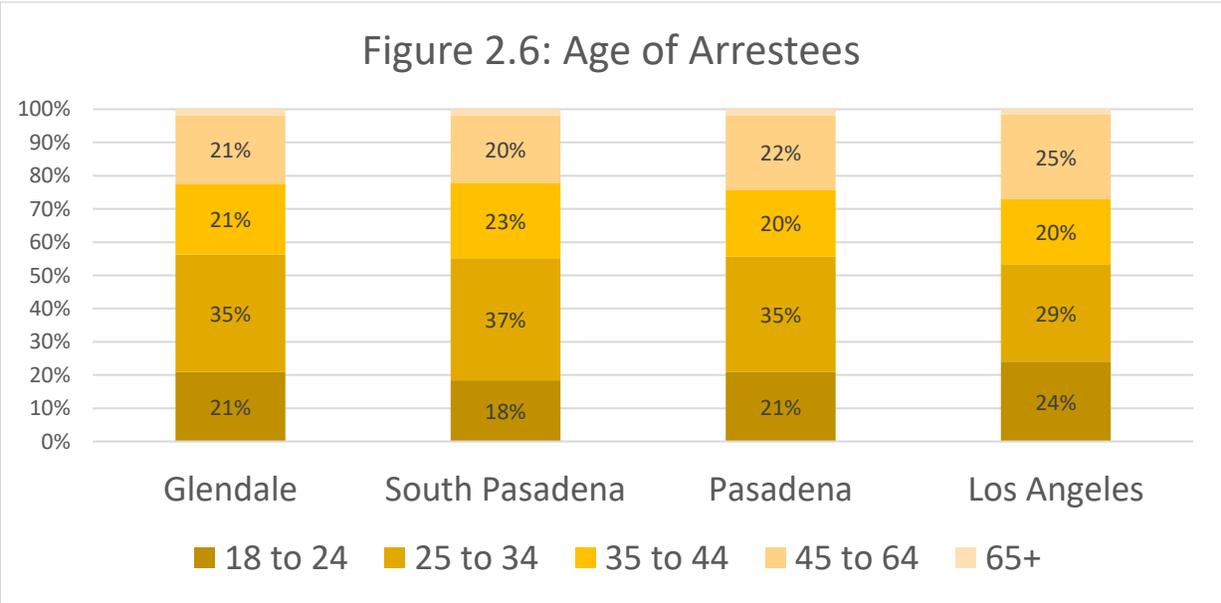
Sex. We next examine the gender composition of arrestees in each city of interest. Nationally, about one quarter of arrestees are female.¹¹ Locally, the female share of arrestees is slightly lower than the national average at 21% for Los Angeles, 21% for Glendale, 22% for Pasadena, and on par with the national average in South Pasadena (26%). While there is relatively little variation in female arrestees by race (Figure 2.5), the share of Asian women arrested is higher in each city than for other races / ethnicities. In Los Angeles, 40% of Asians arrested are female – well above the national average. That said, both shares and counts of Asian arrestees are very low (see Figure 2.1).

¹⁰ “Dispatch and Arrest Trends in South Pasadena: Analysis of Arrests and Dispatches from 2012 to 2021 in South Pasadena, CA” https://drive.google.com/file/d/1TvW2gZEhSz695WQzIRx_7vDe5q1WjCqI/view

¹¹ <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/tables/table-42/table-42.xls>



Age. We next examine the age distribution of arrestees in each city. There is little variation between our 4 cities under study (Figure 2.6). The age distributions generally accord with national statistics on arrests by age from the FBI. One slight outlier is Los Angeles’ share of 45+ year old arrestees, which at 25% is about 5 percentage points higher than the national average.¹²



¹² See FBI’s Crime in the United States 2019, Table 38 <https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2019/crime-in-the-u.s.-2019/topic-pages/tables/table-38>

Charge Category and Race. We categorize each arrest into one of seven charge codes: Drug offenses, Traffic offenses, Violent offenses, Municipal Code violations, all other offenses, and unknown charges¹³. Charge codes tend to be very specific, so such aggregation is necessary to compare across years, cities, and demographic categories.

Tables in Figure 2.7 below provide the share of arrestees in each charge category belonging to each race / ethnic group. The percentages reported are the number of arrests made of people in each racial group under each charge category, divided by the number of total arrests in the charge category. We compare this percentage to the share of all arrests across all charge categories of members of each ethnic group. We highlight cells that are much higher or much lower than other charges—green cells highlight much higher shares, orange cells highlight much lower cells.

While the relationship between charges and race is distinct in each city, a few patterns are worth note. In Glendale and South Pasadena, the Black share of property crime arrests is substantially higher than the Black share of overall arrests, at 13% in Glendale and 22% in South Pasadena. However, the Black share of property crime is only slightly higher than the Black share of overall crime in Pasadena, and is no higher than the Black share of overall crime in Los Angeles. Similarly, the Hispanic share of traffic arrests is higher than the Hispanic share of overall arrests in all four cities, with the difference largest in South Pasadena and Glendale, and smallest in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, while Hispanics and Blacks are overrepresented relative to their population for all charge codes in all three suburban police departments, their representation is lower among arrests for *drug crimes*. The Black share of drug crime arrests is well below the Black share of overall arrests in all three suburban police departments, while it is close to the Black share of overall arrests in Los Angeles. The Hispanic share of drug arrests is lower than the Hispanic share of overall arrests in Glendale, but is comparable to the Hispanic share of overall arrests in other cities.

Meanwhile, the White share of *municipal code* violations is higher than the White share of overall arrests in all cities, with substantial differences in Los Angeles and South Pasadena and more modest differences in Glendale and Pasadena. Likewise, the Asian share of *municipal code violations* is higher than the overall Asian share of arrests in South Pasadena.

¹³ Charges are listed as “unknown” if the codes are used infrequently.

Figure 2.7: Race Proportion by Category by City

GLENDALE:

Race Proportions by Category	% White	% Black	% Hispanic	% Asian	% Other	All Races
Unknown	47%	9%	38%	4%	1%	100%
All Other	44%	8%	45%	2%	1%	100%
Drug Crime	53%	5%	36%	5%	1%	100%
Municipal Code	47%	8%	40%	4%	1%	100%
Property Crime	42%	13%	39%	5%	1%	100%
Traffic Violations	32%	7%	56%	3%	3%	100%
Violent Crime	47%	9%	38%	5%	2%	100%
All Charges	44%	8%	43%	4%	1%	100%

SOUTH PASADENA:

Race Proportions by Category	% White	% Black	% Hispanic	% Asian	% Other	All Races
Unknown	21%	10%	45%	4%	20%	100%
All Other	30%	14%	50%	5%	1%	100%
Drug Crime	31%	8%	53%	7%	1%	100%
Municipal Code	52%	13%	22%	11%	2%	100%
Property Crime	30%	22%	45%	3%	0%	100%
Traffic Violations	18%	8%	69%	5%	1%	100%
Violent Crime	40%	13%	36%	9%	2%	100%
All Charges	27%	12%	54%	5%	1%	100%

PASADENA:

Race Proportions by Category	% White	% Black	% Hispanic	% Asian	% Other	All Races
Unknown	20%	30%	43%	2%	5%	100%
All Other	28%	24%	43%	2%	4%	100%
Drug Crime	22%	20%	50%	2%	6%	100%
Municipal Code	25%	32%	37%	2%	4%	100%
Property Crime	20%	34%	40%	1%	5%	100%
Traffic Violations	10%	30%	56%	1%	3%	100%
Violent Crime	17%	34%	43%	2%	4%	100%
All Charges	21%	27%	46%	2%	5%	100%

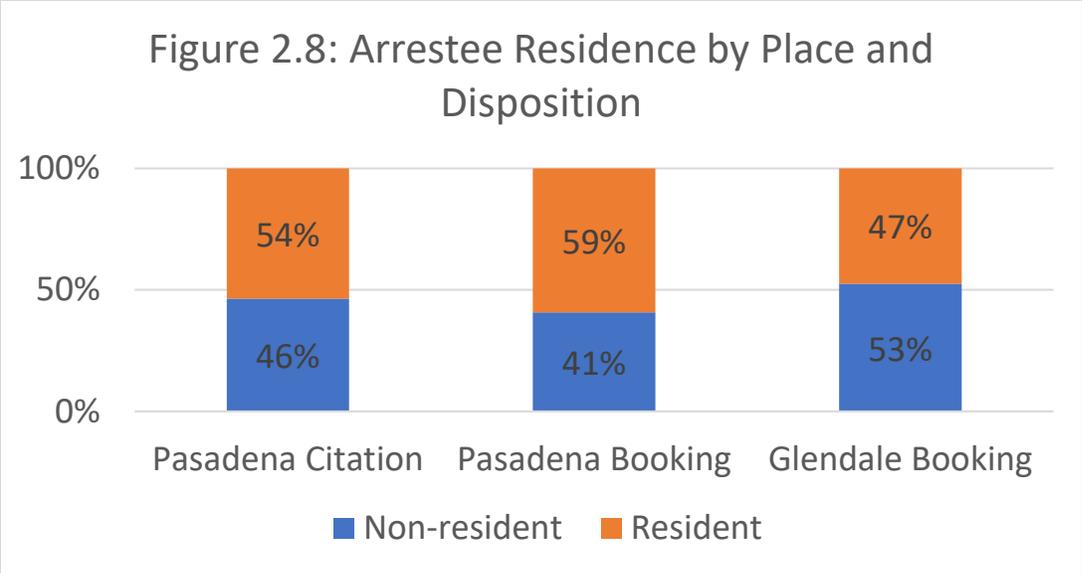
LOS ANGELES:

Race Proportions by Category	% White	% Black	% Hispanic	% Asian	% Other	All Races
Unknown	21%	25%	45%	2%	7%	100%
All Other	21%	29%	46%	1%	3%	100%
Drug Crime	20%	28%	46%	0%	6%	100%
Municipal Code	33%	21%	37%	1%	7%	100%
Property Crime	18%	30%	46%	0%	5%	100%
Traffic Violations	11%	27%	56%	1%	6%	100%
Violent Crime	14%	30%	50%	0%	6%	100%
All Charges	19%	29%	47%	1%	5%	100%

City of Residence. Suburban police departments at times make the claim that they serve as a bulwark against criminal elements coming in and committing crimes in their suburb. Moreover, this policing of non-residents has been used as one explanation for demographic disparities in arrests by race, sex, or age. We use data from Pasadena and Glendale’s arrest records to describe differences in arrests between residents and non-residents; unfortunately, we do not have data on these distinctions for South Pasadena.

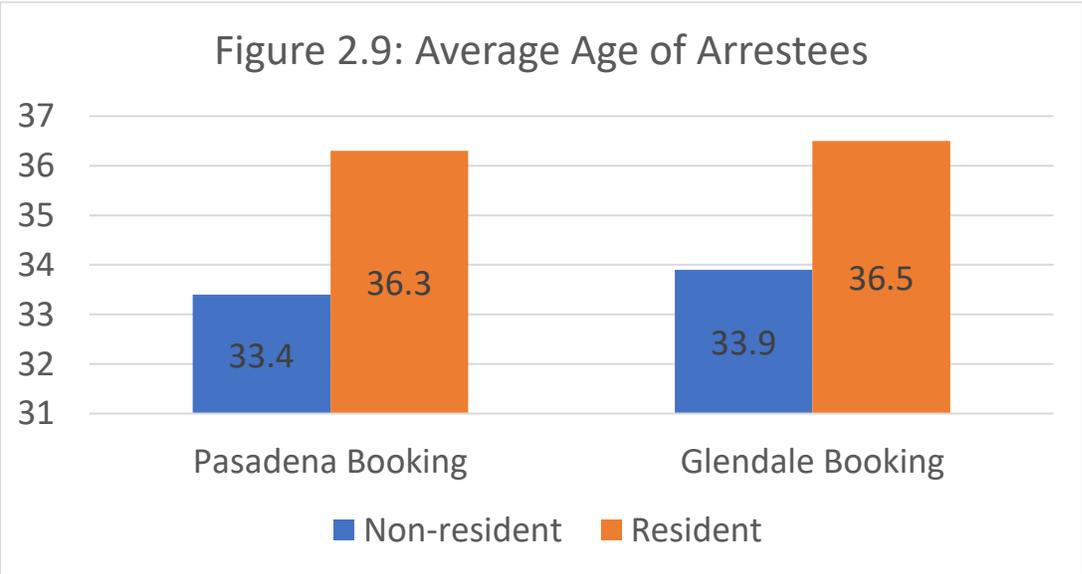
The Pasadena data contains a field populated by PPD that distinguishes whether a resident or a non-resident is arrested, for both those who are booked and for those who receive a citation. The Glendale data for arrestees who are booked contains a field for address and city of residence, from which we identified whether the arrestee was a Glendale resident.

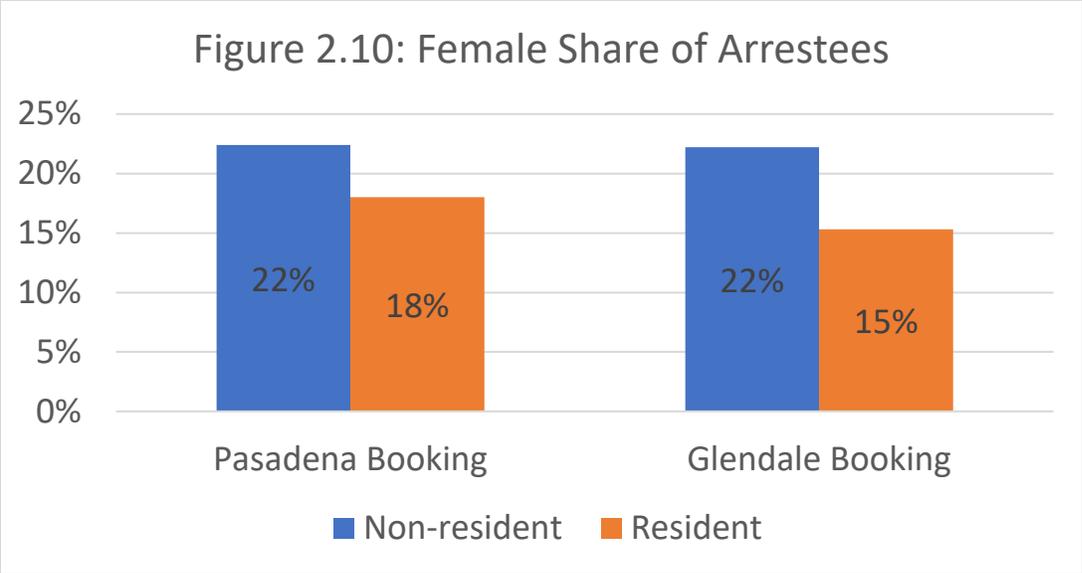
As shown in Figure 2.8, in Pasadena, over half of arrests were of residents, with a higher proportion for those who were booked rather than cited. In Glendale, slightly fewer than half of booked arrestees were non-residents. In Glendale, we have information about in which city arrestees reside: the bulk of non-resident arrestees come from either Central Los Angeles or the San Fernando Valley. The next most common were from the Verdugos / Crescenta Valley, the San Gabriel Valley, the surrounding large inner ring suburbs (Burbank, Pasadena), and from outside of the region entirely. This suggests, in some ways, a proximity effect: all these areas either share a border with Glendale or are a short distance away.



Age by City of Residence. In both cities in the analysis, arrested and booked resident tend to be older on average, with a mean difference of about 3 years (Figure 2.9). This perhaps reflects the relatively higher income and socioeconomic status of these cities relative to some of the surrounding areas, but since we have no indication of arrestee income in the data, this is merely conjecture.

Sex by City of Residence. Similarly, both cities have a higher share of females among booked residents versus non-residents (Figure 2.10). This could be due to the distribution of charge categories among the booked population (see below).

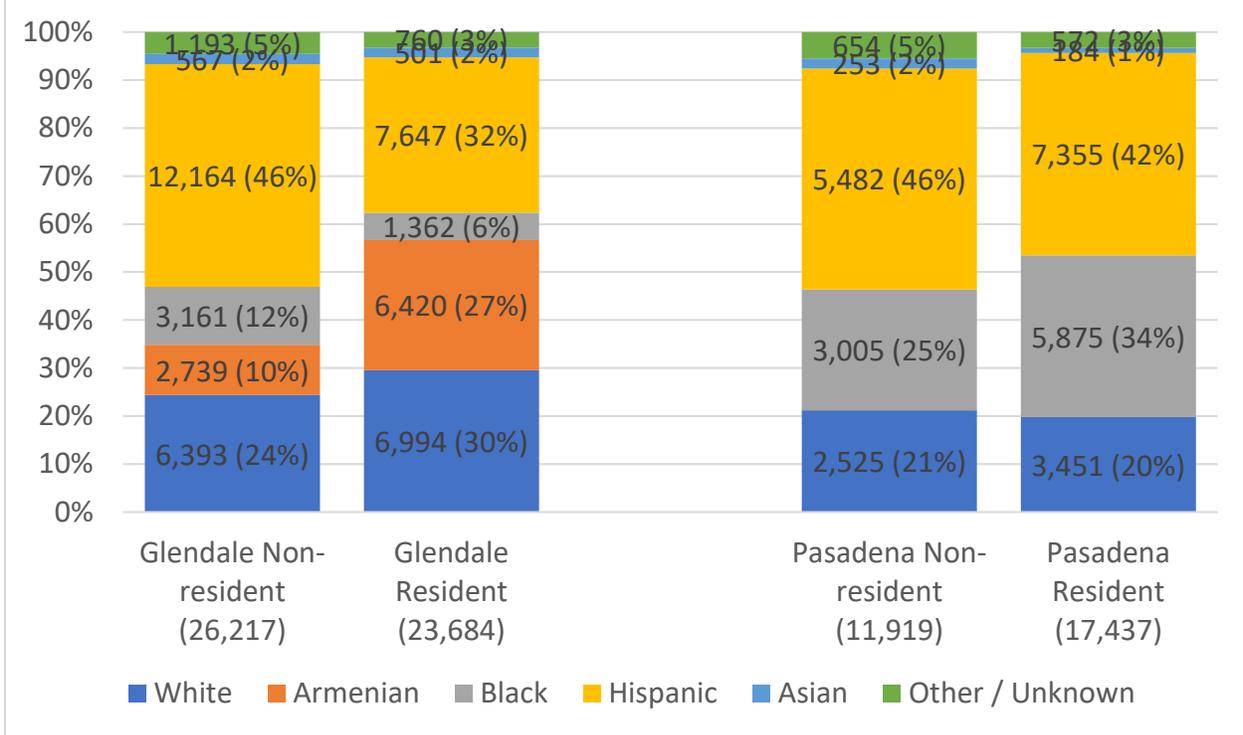




Race by City of Residence. Figure 2.11 provides a comparison of the racial breakdown by city of residents for booked arrestees in Pasadena and Glendale. In Glendale, the share of Black non-resident booked arrestees is double those of residents, and the Hispanic share is nearly 50% higher for non-residents as well. In contrast, share of Armenians among residents is 2.7 times higher than non-residents, and the share of Whites is slightly higher too. We conjecture two possible explanations here. First, the Armenian and White population share is relatively higher in Glendale than in the top areas from which non-resident arrestees come, and so the higher resident booked share in these categories are a function of the underlying population. So too with Blacks, whose underlying population share is very low in Glendale but slightly higher in the surrounding areas. This explanation fails to explain the variance among Hispanics, since Glendale has a plurality Hispanic population, on par with some of its surrounding areas. A potential second explanation is that GPD arrests and/or books rather than cites a higher share of non-resident visible minorities (Black, Hispanic).

In Pasadena, the racial variance between residents and non-residents is much slighter than in Glendale. Pasadena has a sizeable underlying Hispanic and Black population, and its booked arrests approximately mirror those population sizes.

Figure 2.11. City of Residence by Race for Booked Arrestees



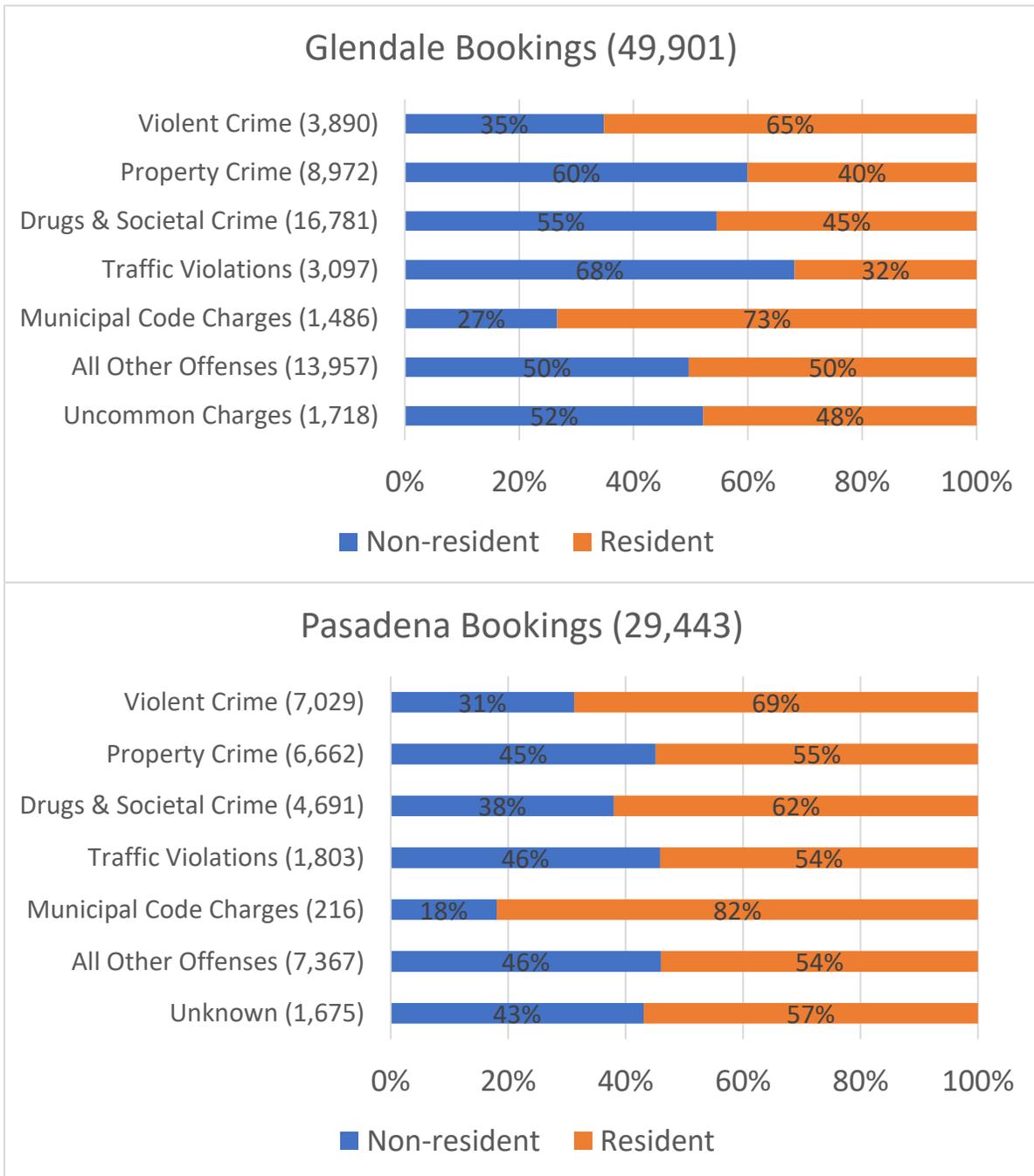
Charge Category. Figures 2.12 shows the charge category split by residence city for both locales. Two charge categories show convergent trends: booked arrestees for *violent crimes* are likely to be residents by a factor of 2 to 1, and for *municipal code violations* by over 3 to 1. *Violent crimes*, most of which are domestic violence, assault, battery, and sexual crimes, involve a degree of proximity, which makes the same city residence salient. *Municipal code violations* tend to be very low-level offenses often relating to local commercial, residential, or recreational property, which again makes same city residence salient.

The three other major charge categories show divergent patterns between the cities. In Glendale, non-residents are more likely to be arrested and booked for *property crimes*, *drug and societal crimes*, and *traffic violations*, while in Pasadena, residents are more likely to be booked for these types of charges. While more data would be needed to understand these nuances, it is possible that these reflect different policing strategies. One third of all booked arrests in Glendale are in the *drug and societal Crimes* category, while they only constitute one sixth of Pasadena’s booked arrests. It is possible that Glendale police either seek out drug charges for which to arrest or are more likely to book rather than cite these arrests than their Pasadena counterparts, leading them to book more non-residents. One could make the same claim for property crimes, though they make up a larger share of Pasadena’s booked arrests than in Glendale. The share of traffic violations is similar, but possible the relative proximity of Glendale to key highways and commuting routes, connecting Los Angeles, the San Fernando Valley, and the San Gabriel Valley leads GPD to book a higher share of non-residents. While Pasadena is also located near

major highways, its relative geographic position is less central than Glendale and this potentially explains the lower share of non-residents booked for traffic violations.

Race and Charge Category. Are these trends driven by differences in charge categories by race? We tabulate the breakdowns of booked arrests by race by charge category by city of residence and see whether there are meaningful differences. For Glendale, the major differences are that resident rather than non-resident Armenians are more likely to be booked for drug charges (2.5x the rate), while the opposite is true for Hispanics (0.5x the rate). For Pasadena, resident Blacks and Hispanics are more likely to be booked for violent crimes than non-residents by 1.7 and 1.5 times, respectively. Conversely, Hispanics residents are 0.6 less likely to be booked for property crimes than non-resident Hispanics.

Figure 2.12: Charge Category by City of Residence by City



SECTION 3: ARREST DISPOSITION AND STATUS

Key Takeaways

- Arrests for felony offenses have fallen in all cities since 2011.
- The divergence in arrest rate between Pasadena and Glendale, on the one hand, and Los Angeles and South Pasadena, on the other hand, is driven by lower-severity arrests, mostly citation-level offenses for misdemeanor violations.
- Divergence in arrests is particularly notable for drug crimes re-classified by Prop. 47. Arrests for these crimes has increased in all three suburban police departments while decreasing considerably in Los Angeles.

In this section, we examine two indications of the severity of offenses: an arrest’s *disposition*—whether the arrestee was charged with a felony or a misdemeanor, and the arrest’s *status*—whether the arrestee was released with a citation or booked. These distinctions reflect several decisions. State legislators determine the penalty for each offense, including whether the offense is a misdemeanor, a felony, or a “wobbler”—an offense that can be charged as a misdemeanor or a felony at the discretion of the prosecutor. Prosecutors provide guidance to police officers on when to make arrests and under what charges, as well as whether to charge “wobblers” as misdemeanors or felonies. Arresting officers decide what charges to file and, in many cases, whether to *book* the arrestee—i.e., take the arrestee to jail—or to *cite* the arrestee—i.e., ask them to sign a citation with a promise to appear in court. Finally, arrestees themselves can decide whether to accept a citation or to demand to be taken before a judge.

Because all four of the cities considered in this report are located in Los Angeles County, state law and prosecutorial guidance are likely to be consistent.¹⁴ As a result, differences in the disposition and status of arrests are likely to reflect differences in the decisions and priorities of police departments, as well as differences in the level and type of criminal behavior in each city.

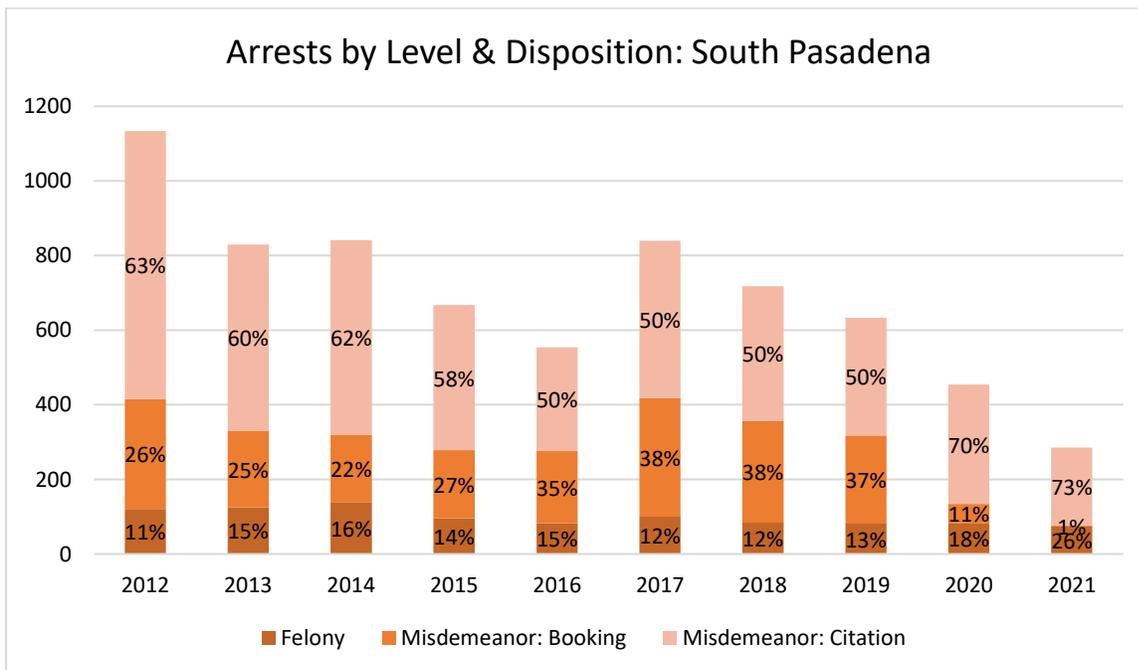
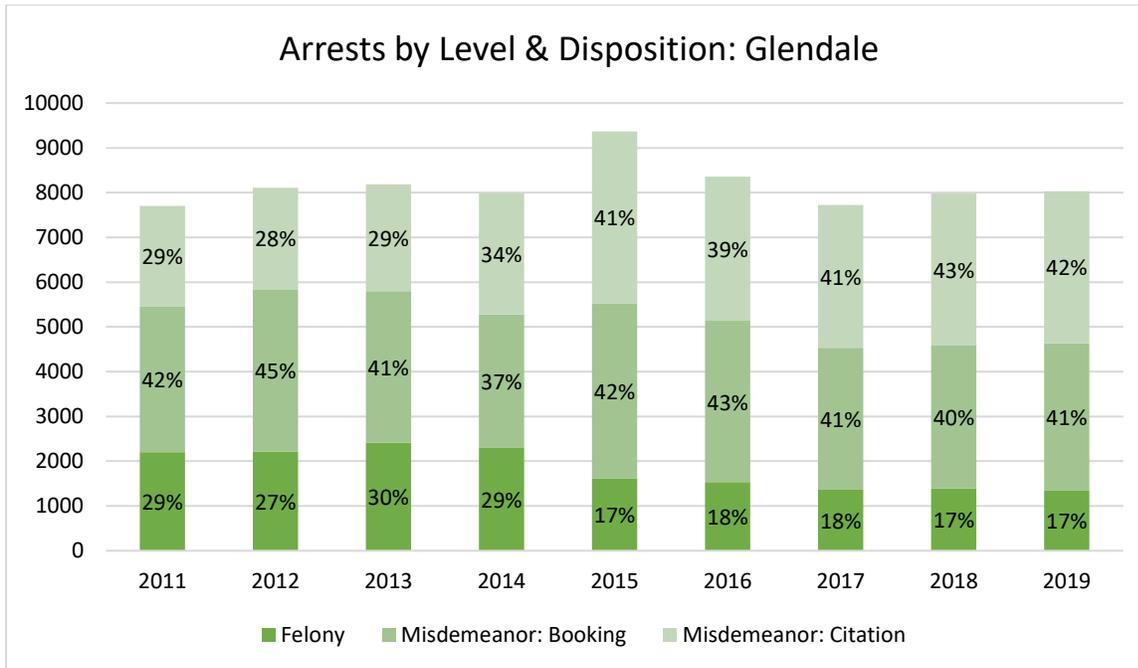
Because all felony charges automatically result in a booking, the level and disposition of an arrest produce three categories of arrest, with felonies being the most severe, misdemeanor bookings being of intermediate severity, and misdemeanor citations being the least severe. In Figure 3.1, we show how the composition of arrests across these three categories has changed in Glendale, South Pasadena, and Los Angeles. Because data for Pasadena does not indicate whether arrests were made as felonies or as misdemeanors, we look only at whether arrests resulted in a booking or a citation.

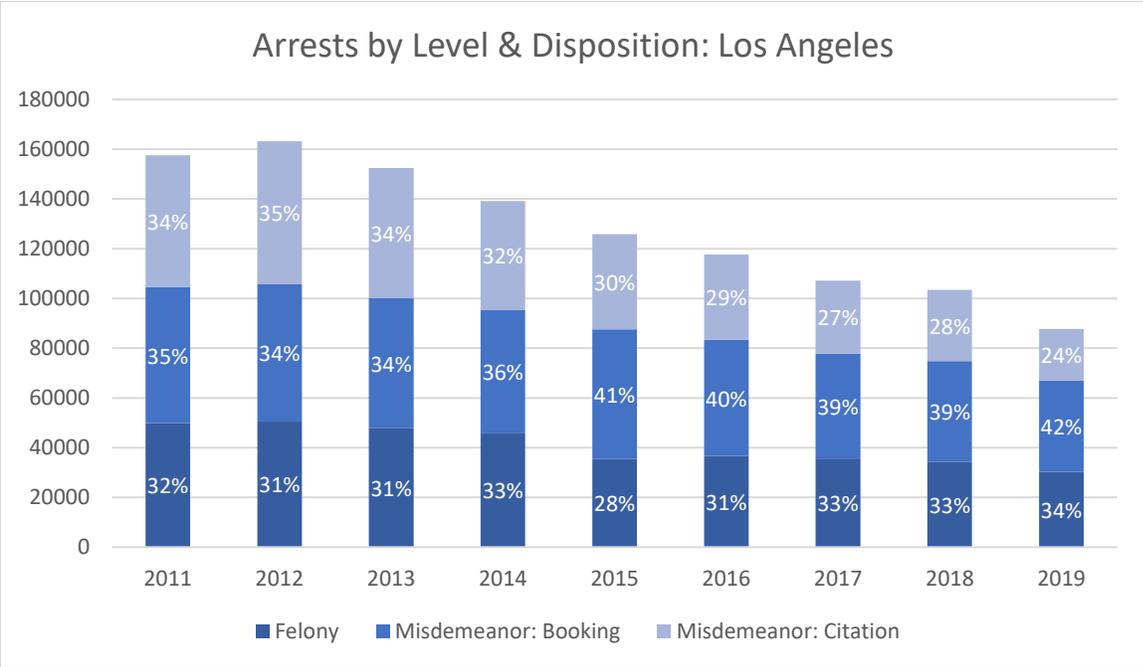
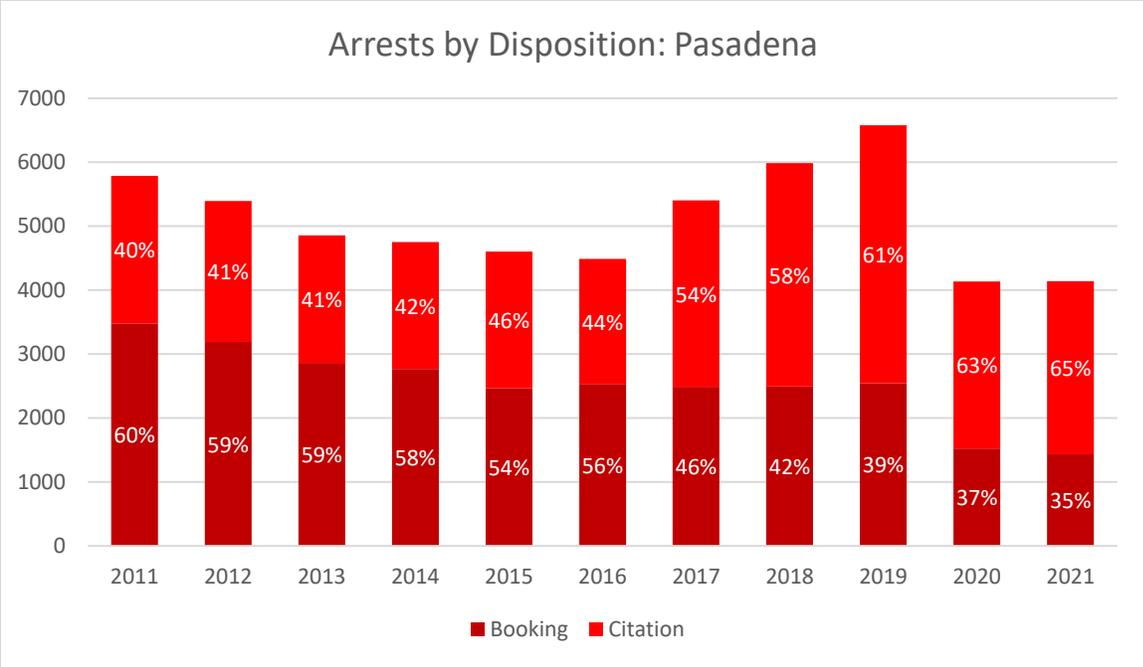
This analysis suggests that much of the divergence in arrest rates between Pasadena and Glendale, on the one hand, and South Pasadena and Los Angeles, on the other, is driven by lower-severity arrests. From 2012-2019, the number of felony arrests declined by 40% in

¹⁴ In all four cities, felony charges are prosecuted by the Los Angeles County District Attorney’s office. However, misdemeanor offenses in the city of Los Angeles are prosecuted by the City Attorney’s office.

Glendale, 33% in South Pasadena, and 33% in Los Angeles. Meanwhile, the number of misdemeanor offenses issued a citation increased by 50% in Glendale while falling by 57% in South Pasadena and by 33% in Los Angeles. Similarly, in Pasadena, booked offenses fell by 73%, but were more than fully offset by cited offenses which grew by 75%.

Figure 3.1: Arrest by Level and Disposition





Because arrests for low-level offenses are most likely to be made at the discretion of police officers, this pattern of low-level arrests is consistent with Pasadena and Glendale Police Departments redirecting resources toward lower-level arrests in response to reductions in felony conduct. In contrast, the evidence is consistent with South Pasadena and Los Angeles Police Departments reducing their use of arrests, particularly for low-level offenses.

One potential driver of this difference may be differences in these cities' responses to state policy aimed at reducing incarceration. Since 2011, California state policy has aimed to reduce

the number of people incarcerated in state prisons. Of particular importance is Proposition 47¹⁵, which reclassified several non-violent property and drug offenses from felonies to misdemeanors in order to reduce incarceration.

Because this change to state law did not eliminate criminal sanctions for any drug or property offenses, it did not change the range of activities for which police are entitled to make an arrest. However, because the California Penal Code only allows a misdemeanor arrest to be made without a warrant when the offense was committed in the police officer's presence¹⁶, Prop. 47 increased the cost of making arrests for affected drug and property crimes. At the same time, by reducing prosecutorial resources devoted to these offenses, as well as reducing prison sentences, Prop. 47 reduced the potential benefit of making these arrests.

We examine the effect of Proposition 47 on drug and property crimes in our four cities of interest. In each city, we examine the number of arrests made per year for two years prior to the adoption of Prop. 47 (2012 and 2013) and for three years after adoption (2017-2019)¹⁷. We look at arrests for each reclassified penal code, as well as for overall drug and property arrests.

We examine three drug codes: Sections 11350, 11357(a), and 11377 of the Health and Safety codes. These sections address possession of controlled substances, concentrated marijuana, and methamphetamine, respectively. Prop. 47 reclassified all three of these offenses from felony or wobbler crimes to strict misdemeanors, and set a maximum sentence of one-year imprisonment.

As shown in Figure 3.2, we find that, following the passage of Prop 47, arrests under these three codes increased in Glendale by 65%, in South Pasadena by 42%, and in Pasadena by 20%. In all three cities, this increase was driven by increases in arrests for methamphetamine possession, which counterbalanced reductions in the already-small number of marijuana arrests. In contrast, arrests under reclassified drug codes fell by 65% in Los Angeles, with declines in arrests made under all three reclassified charges. These changes are reflected in overall arrest rates for drug-related offenses: drug-related arrests more than tripled in Glendale and South Pasadena, and more than doubled in Pasadena. In contrast, drug arrests remained unchanged in Los Angeles (see Figure 3.4 for an illustration).

This difference plays a substantial role in accounting for the maintenance of high arrest rates in Glendale and Pasadena. In Glendale, increases in arrests under reclassified drug charges amount to 400 arrests per year—about 5% of total arrests. Meanwhile, overall drug arrests made up a majority of arrests by the Glendale Police between 2017 and 2019. While increased drug arrests were less dramatic in Pasadena, these arrests still made up over ¼ of all arrests between 2017 to 2019. In contrast, reductions in arrests under reclassified prop-47 drug offenses accounted for a 10% reduction in overall arrests in Los Angeles. While arrests under prop-47 reclassified drug offenses increased in South Pasadena, they made up a small enough share of overall arrests to not overwhelm the otherwise downward trend in arrests.

¹⁵ [Proposition 47 Official Title and Summary | Official Voter Information Guide | California Secretary of State](#)

¹⁶ https://leginfo.legislature.ca.gov/faces/codes_displaySection.xhtml?sectionNum=836&lawCode=PEN

¹⁷ We exclude the years immediately following implementation of Prop 47 in order to examine the effects after police departments had enough time to adjust their policing strategies.

We also examine arrests under five reclassified property offenses: sections 459.5, 473, 476, 490, and 496 of the California criminal code. These statutes address shoplifting, forgery, insufficient funds, petty theft, and receiving stolen property, respectively. Prop. 47 created shoplifting as a new misdemeanor offense, constituting the theft of less than \$950 from a commercial business establishment during normal business hours. Similarly, Prop. 47 created a new misdemeanor sub-classification of “petty theft” to section 490 of the criminal code, applying to theft of less than \$950 worth of goods or services. Prop. 47 re-classified forgery, insufficient funds, and receiving stolen property as misdemeanor offenses in most cases, rather than as wobbler offenses.

In contrast to our findings for drug offenses, we find a high degree of consistency across cities in arrest trends for reclassified property offenses (Figure 3.3). In all four cities, new arrests for shoplifting after Prop 47 went into effect more than outweighed reductions in other Prop. 47 offenses. In addition, all four cities saw an increase in arrests for property crime during this period (see Figure 3.5 for an illustration). The increase in arrests was smallest in Los Angeles, with a 15% increase in property arrests, Glendale, South Pasadena, and Pasadena saw arrests increase by 45%, 73%, and 40% respectively. We hypothesize that all four cities have increased arrests for property crimes because these crimes are visible to voters and thus a high priority for enforcement. In particular, the rise of retail theft throughout California—particularly of highly-visible shoplifting—may have led to more arrests for shoplifting and related offenses throughout the region.

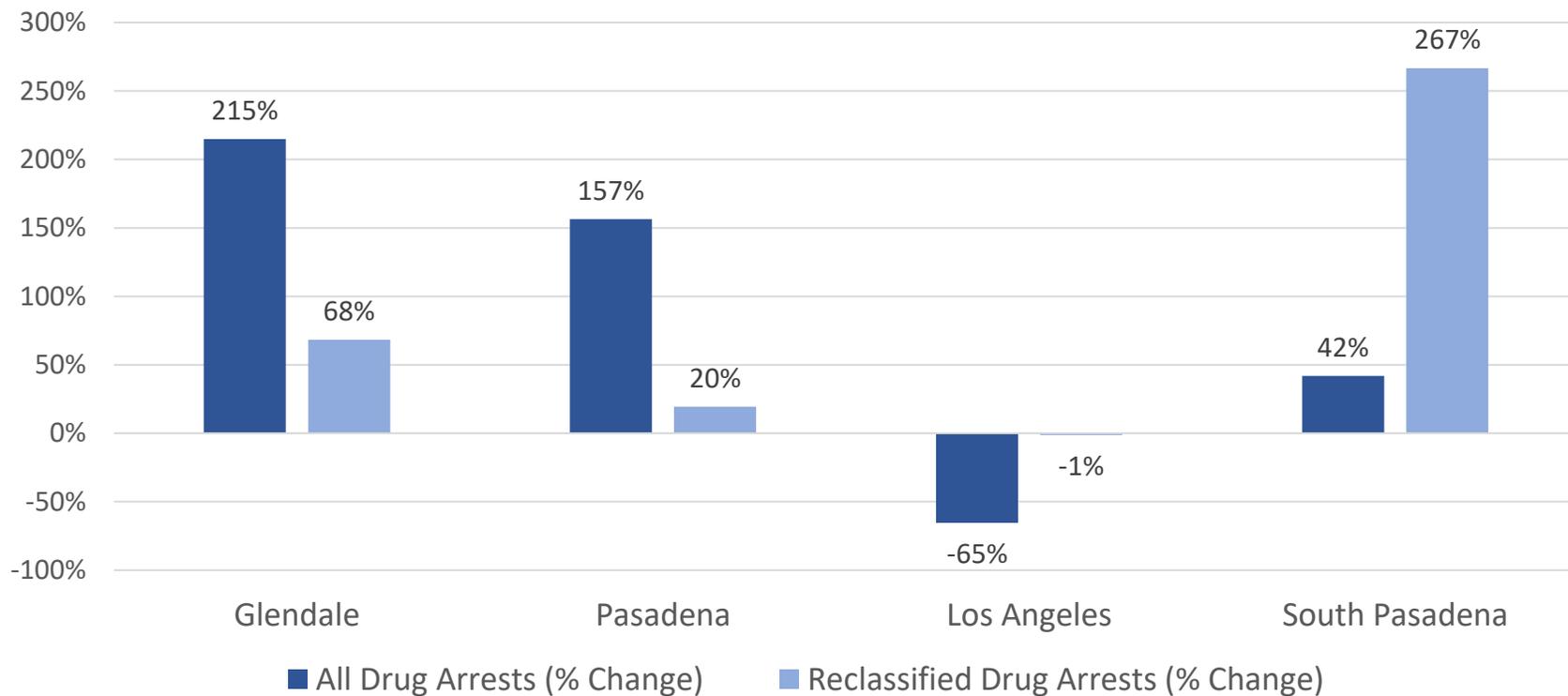
Figure 3.2: Comparison of Drug-Related Charge Codes before and After Prop. 47 Passage

	Glendale			South Pasadena			Pasadena			Los Angeles		
	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	%Change Arrests
11350: Possession of a Controlled Substance	243 (100%)	381 (0%)	57%	3 (100%)	3 (0%)	11%	104 (99%)	68 (36%)	-35%	5924 (100%)	1374 (5%)	-77%
11357(a): Marijuana Possession	53 (28%)	9 (0%)	-83%	3.5 (0%)	0 n/a	-100%	21 (74%)	4.6667 (36%)	-78%	1801 (21%)	110 (1%)	-94%
11377: Possession of Methamphetamine	347 (96%)	692 (0%)	99%	9 (100%)	18.667 (0%)	107%	213 (89%)	331 (42%)	56%	6356 (95%)	3397 (3%)	-47%
Total Reclassified Drug Crimes	643 (92%)	1082 (0%)	68%	16 (77%)	22 (0%)	42%	338 (91%)	403 (41%)	20%	14080 (88%)	4880 (3%)	-65%
Any Drug Offense	1263 (69%)	3977 (53%)	215%	32 (47%)	117.33 (54%)	267%	582.5 (78%)	1494.3 (57%)	157%	29644 (65%)	29252 (60%)	-1%

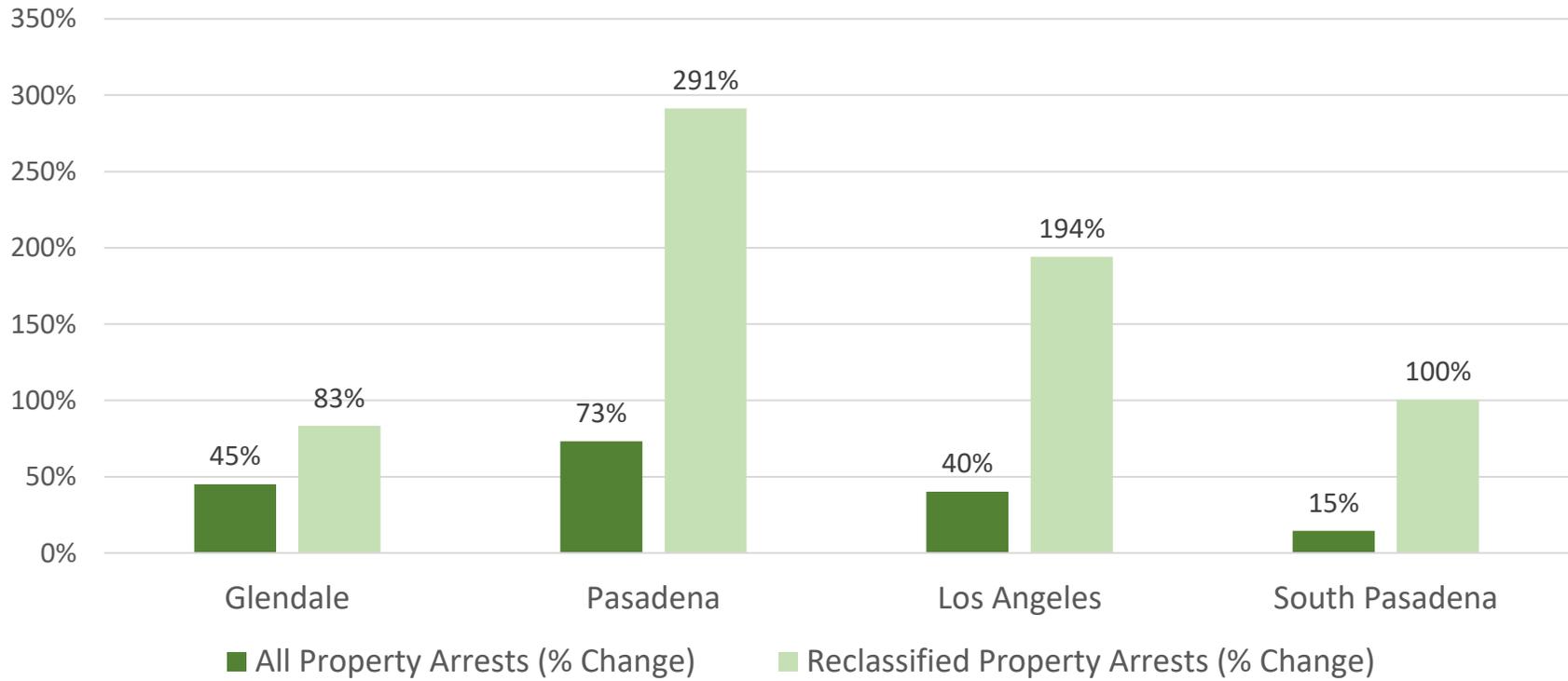
Figure 3.3: Comparison of Theft-Related Charge Codes before and After Prop. 47 Passage

	Glendale			South Pasadena			Pasadena			Los Angeles		
	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests (% Felony)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests (% Felony)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Booked)	2017-2019 Arrests (% Booked)	%Change Arrests	2012-2013 Arrests Per Year (% Felony)	2017-2019 Arrests (% Felony)	%Change Arrests
459.5: Shoplifting	0 n/a	112 (1%)	n/a	0 n/a	43 (7%)	n/a	0 n/a	150 (25%)	n/a	0 n/a	2268 (%)	n/a
473: Forgery	0 n/a	0 n/a	n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	n/a	0 n/a	0 n/a	n/a	1 (%)	8 (87%)	1433%
476: Insufficient Funds	7 (86%)	7 (70%)	-5%	0 n/a	1 (100%)	n/a	6 (92%)	2 (107%)	-61%	77 (65%)	23 (64%)	-70%
490: Petty Theft	6 (%)	12 (3%)	112%	0 n/a	0 n/a	n/a	4 (38%)	32 (125%)	700%	703 (%)	580 (%)	-17%
496: Receiving Stolen Property	111 (95%)	96 (31%)	-13%	12 (91%)	1 (200%)	-91%	62 (83%)	26 (84%)	-57%	866 (93%)	418 (69%)	-52%
Total Reclassified Property Crimes	124 (91%)	226 (16%)	83%	12 (91%)	45 (13%)	291%	72 (81%)	210 (48%)	194%	1645 (52%)	3296 (10%)	100%
Any Property Offenses	3283 (54%)	4765 (24%)	45%	150 (81%)	260 (%)	73%	1868 (80%)	2620 (1%)	40%	45593 (56%)	52220 (%)	15%

**Figure 3.4 Percent change in arrests:
All Drug Offenses and Reclassified Drug Offenses**



**Figure 3.5 Percent change in arrests:
All Property offenses and Reclassified Property Offenses**



SECTION 4: GEOGRAPHY OF ARREST

Key Takeaways

- Policy activity centered on the largest commercial and office areas of Pasadena (Old Town), Glendale (Americana / Galleria in Downtown Glendale), and South Pasadena (Fair Oaks and Mission streets).
- This suggests that suburban police departments focus their attention on the highest traffic areas and on protection of property and the economy
- The geography of arrests / bookings by race and charge category tends to follow this dominant pattern.
- However, local demographics also matter: areas with higher shares of Black, Armenian, or Asian populations, for example, saw slightly higher concentration of arrests / bookings of those populations.

Is there a geographic pattern to suburban activity within the police department's city of jurisdiction? Are certain types of people, charge categories, or neighborhoods more or less likely to see a higher share of arrests? While answering this question may not get at the underlying question of where crime is higher, it does allow a window into police departments' spatial focus.

We analyzed three sets of geographic data from the cities in this analysis: all arrests in Pasadena, booked arrests in Glendale, and dispatch calls in South Pasadena. In each case, we cleaned address data¹⁸, geocoded¹⁹ addresses to obtain geographic coordinates (latitude and longitude), and carried out various spatial analyses using geographic information systems (GIS). About 80-85% of cases were geocoded for each police department; the remaining addresses were either unknown or not readily matchable to coordinates. For the mapping analyses, we aggregated the policing activity across all years. The policing data was overlaid on top of census geography (blocks or block groups) as a measure of neighborhoods or over property parcels (for the land use analysis). While each dataset provided slightly different figures, we used the mapping analyses to tease out several larger findings.

Density of commercial activity was the most important determinant of where police activity occurred across all three cities and regardless of charge type; population density was the second most important. In Pasadena, this manifested in high arrest counts in Old Town Pasadena (south

¹⁸ We used OpenRefine text cleaning software and manual cleaning to prepare addresses for geocoding.

¹⁹ Geocoding is the procedure of taking a written address or intersection and converting it into a location that can be plotted on a map in geographic coordinates using latitude and longitude. For Glendale and South Pasadena, we geocoded using Los Angeles County's Address Management System locator as a reference. For Pasadena, we used the US Census geocoder.

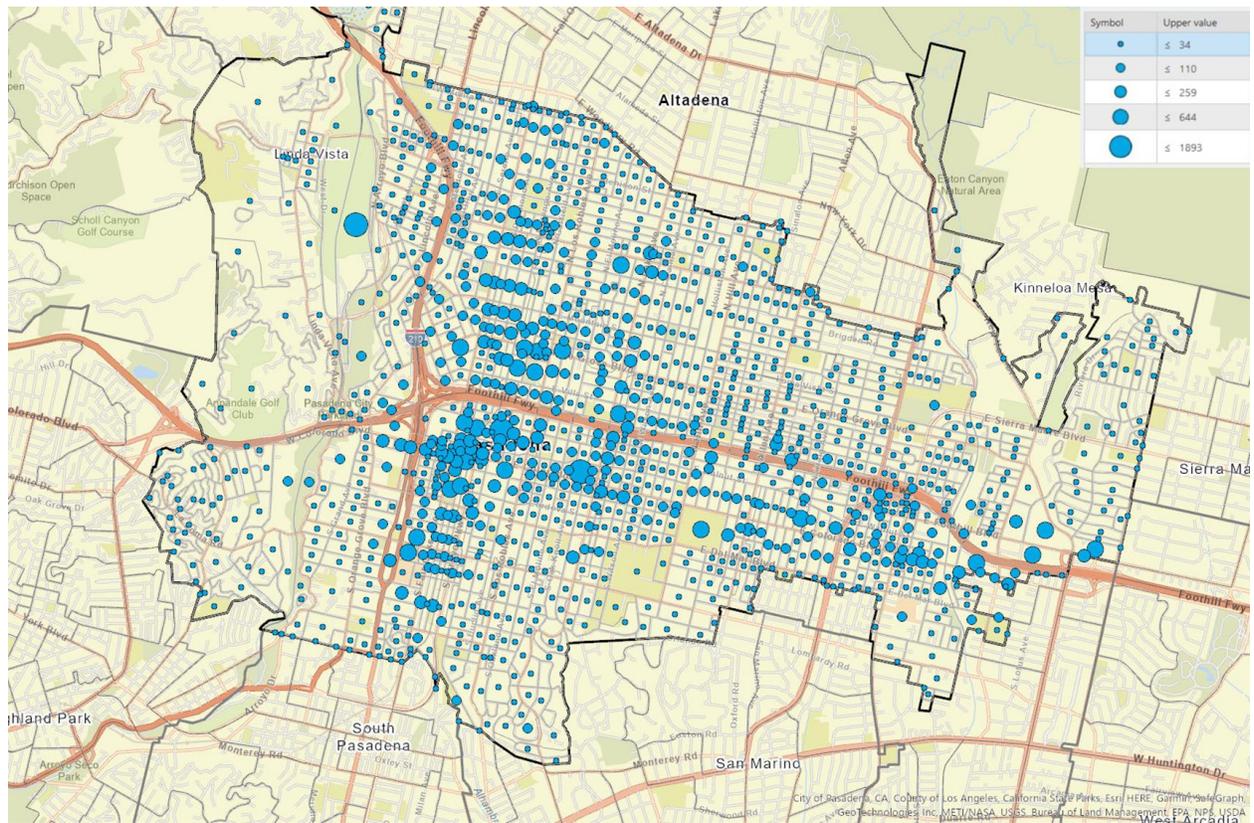
of I-210 and east of I-710), as well as on major thoroughfares north of I-210 (near the bulk of Pasadena's affordable housing units) and around the Hastings Ranch shopping area (Figure 5.1). In Glendale, this was seen in the highest count of arrests near the Americana and Galleria malls, and along Colorado and Brand Boulevards (see red polygons in Figure 5.2). In South Pasadena, the highest nuisance dispatch counts were along Fair Oaks Ave and Mission Street (Figure 5.6). The South Pasadena data additionally contained place descriptors for most dispatches. These showed that grocery stores, banks, and public buildings were the three top types of places for nuisance dispatch requests in that order. These findings suggest that police departments are protecting the economy and commercial property and thoroughfares, which may or may not correlate with areas of high crime occurrence.

Arrest location did not differ very much by race in aggregate (see Figure 5.2 for Pasadena, and Figure 5.3 for Glendale). We ran an optimized hot spot analysis²⁰ in Pasadena, to identify clusters of arrests by race. Blacks, who make up 27% of Pasadena arrests, had very similar hot spots to those of all arrests as did Hispanics (red areas of Figure 5.2 for Pasadena): those surrounding Old Town and just north of I-210. Pasadena Whites also had a hot spot in Old Town, but added a hot spot in Hastings Ranch, and cold spots in Northwest Pasadena (an area with a high black population share) and along East Washington Boulevard, a heavily Armenian area. In Glendale, all racial groups had the highest number of arrests in Downtown Glendale near the two big malls (Figure 5.3). Asians had higher arrest counts along Verdugo Road and Colorado Boulevard (in areas with higher Asian population share). Armenians had higher arrest counts near Adams Hill and throughout most of Central Glendale – all areas with high Armenian population shares. We additionally analyzed female arrestee clusters in Pasadena (Figure 5.2). They followed the general pattern in Old Town, but did not extend the hot spot north of I-210.

We also examined patterns by charge code category (Figures 5.4 and 5.5). In Pasadena, violent, traffic, and drug arrests largely had hot spots in the same area as all arrests. Property arrests clustered in Old Town, a regional shopping and employment destination. In Glendale, property and traffic bookings were focused around Downtown Glendale and the main commercial areas. Drug and violent bookings had a broader geography in central and south Glendale, but the higher count was still near the two major malls and Downtown Glendale.

²⁰ <https://pro.arcgis.com/en/pro-app/latest/tool-reference/spatial-statistics/optimized-hot-spot-analysis.htm>

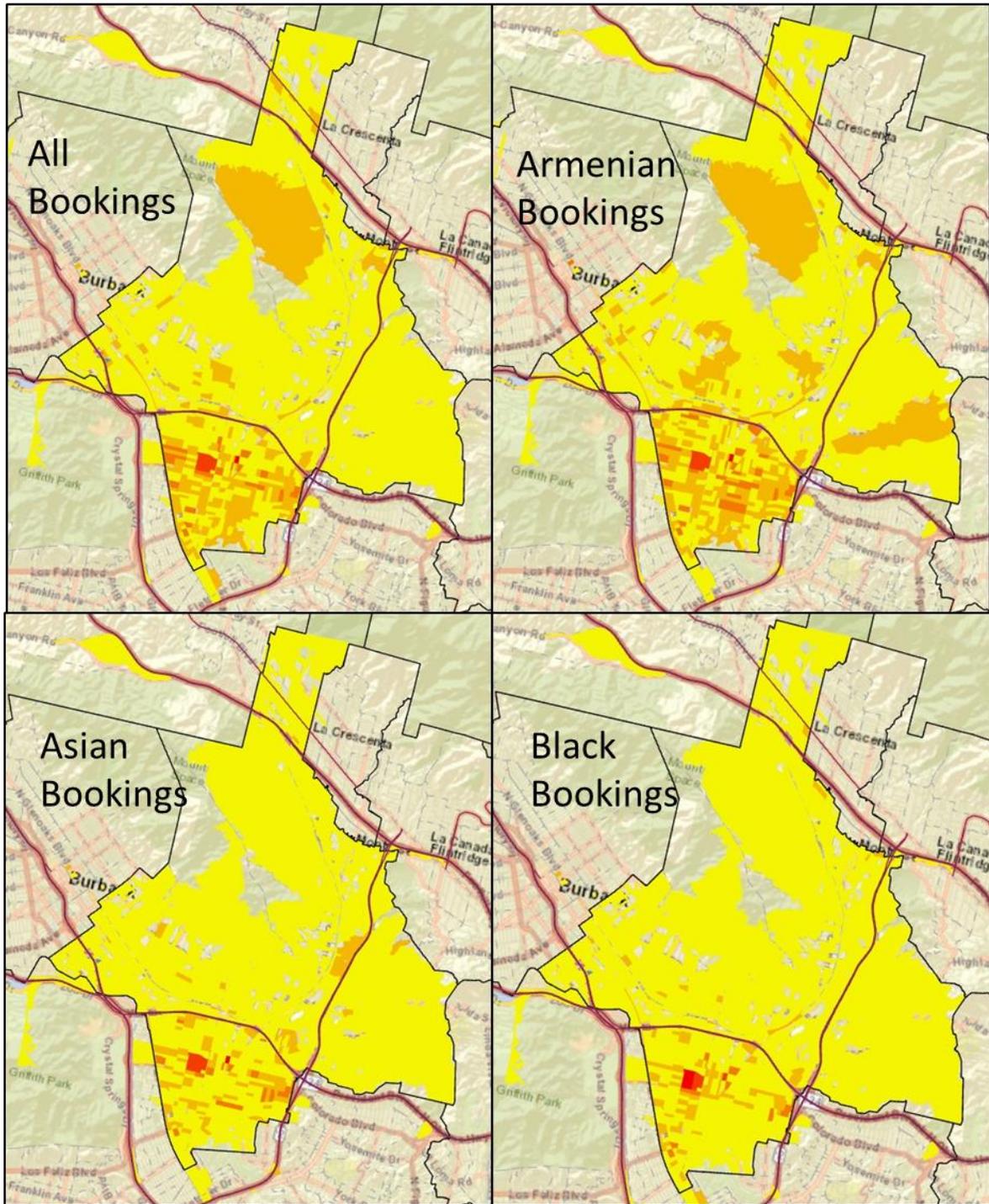
Figure 4.1. Pasadena Arrest Count by Census Block



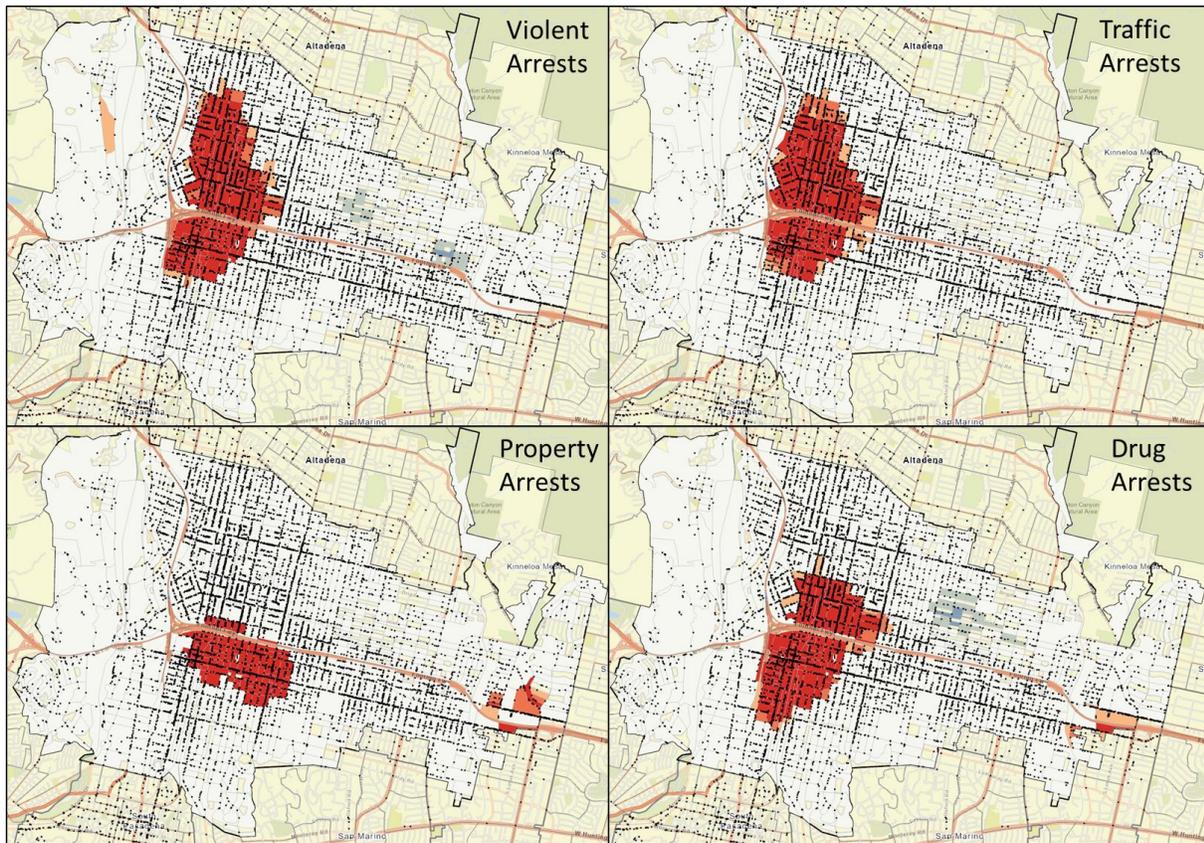
4.2 Pasadena Arrests Hot Spot Analysis by Race and Sex



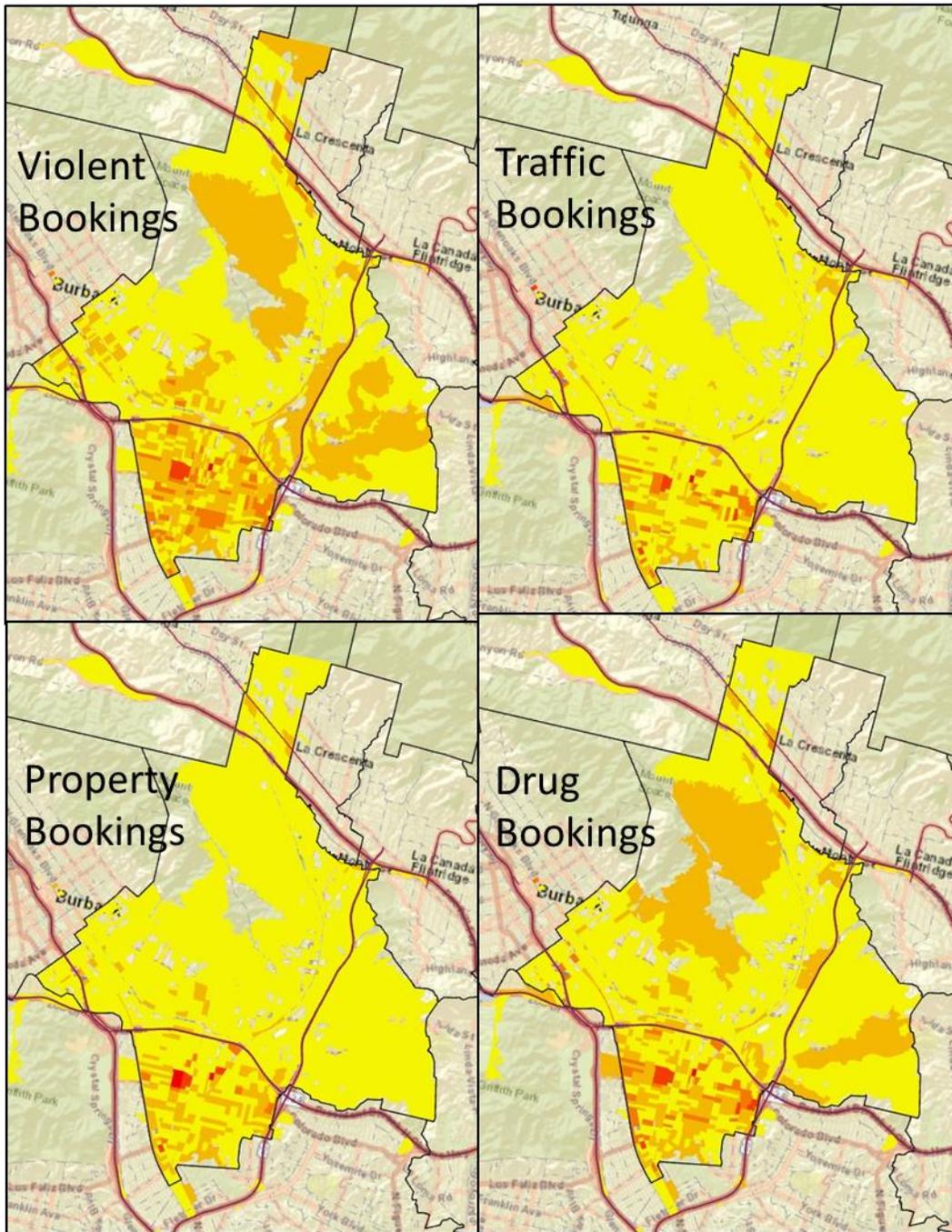
4.3 Glendale Bookings by Block by Race / Ethnicity



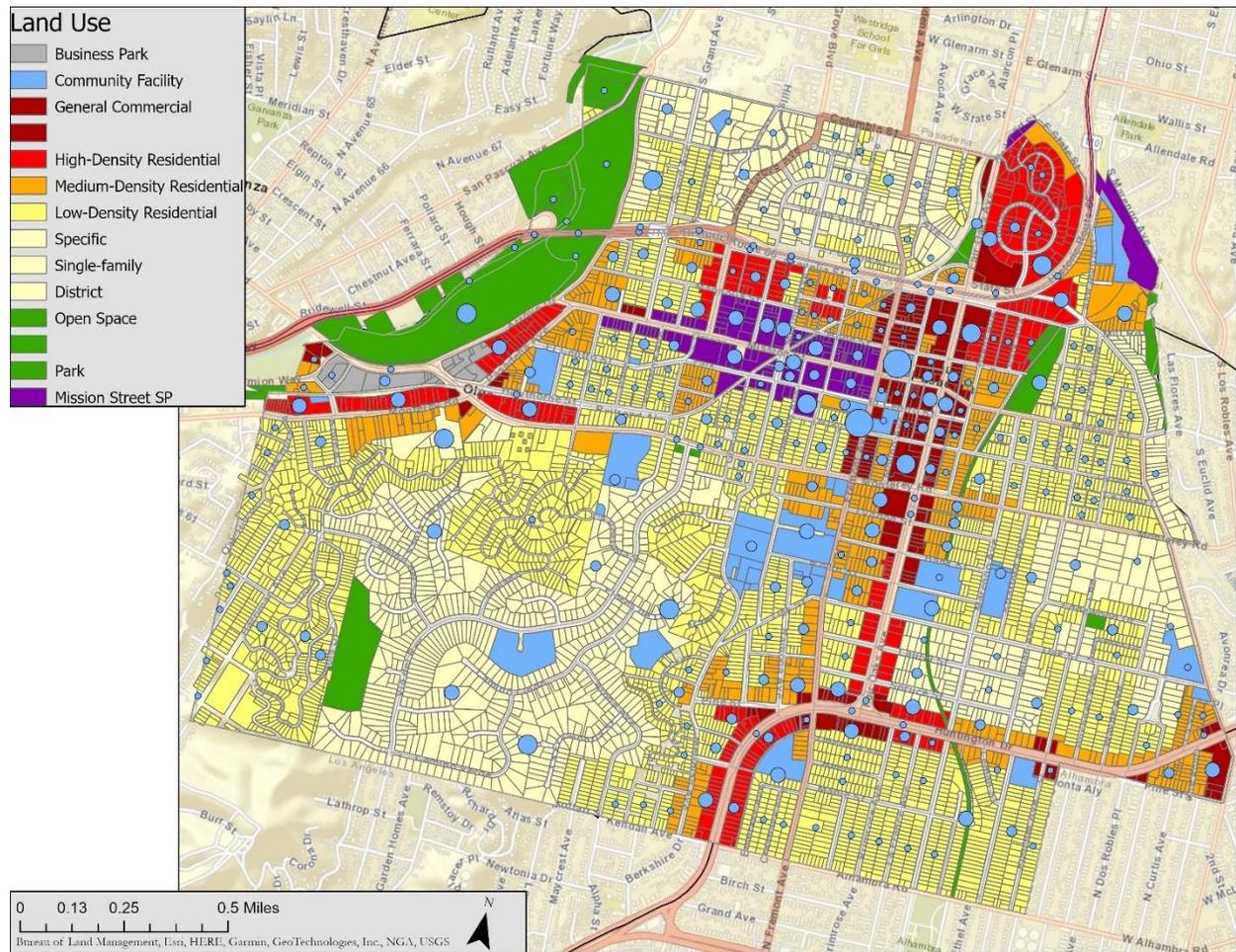
4.4 Pasadena Arrests Hot Spot Analysis by Charge Category



4.5 Glendale Bookings by Block Charge Category



4.6 South Pasadena Count of Nuisance-related Dispatches overlaid on Land Use Codes



SECTION 5: CASH BAIL AND TIME INCARCERATED

Key Takeaways

- More than $\frac{3}{4}$ of arrestees in Glendale and Pasadena were issued cash bail between 2011 and 2021. Even among those issued a citation, more than 70% were issued cash bail.
- Bail amounts were highest for violent offenses and lowest for drug offenses and municipal code violations.
- Black arrestees were issued substantially higher bail amounts in both cities than were arrestees of other races. Black arrestees were also more likely to receive an above-median bail award compared to others charged with the same offense.
- Receiving bail, and receiving high bail, increases the likelihood that arrestees spend a day or more in jail. Stays in jail of longer than a week were uncommon.
- Bail is more strongly associated with stays in jail for Black and Hispanic arrestees than with White and Asian arrestees. There is no racial disparity in the likelihood of spending time in jail among those who do not receive bail, but substantial disparity among those who do.

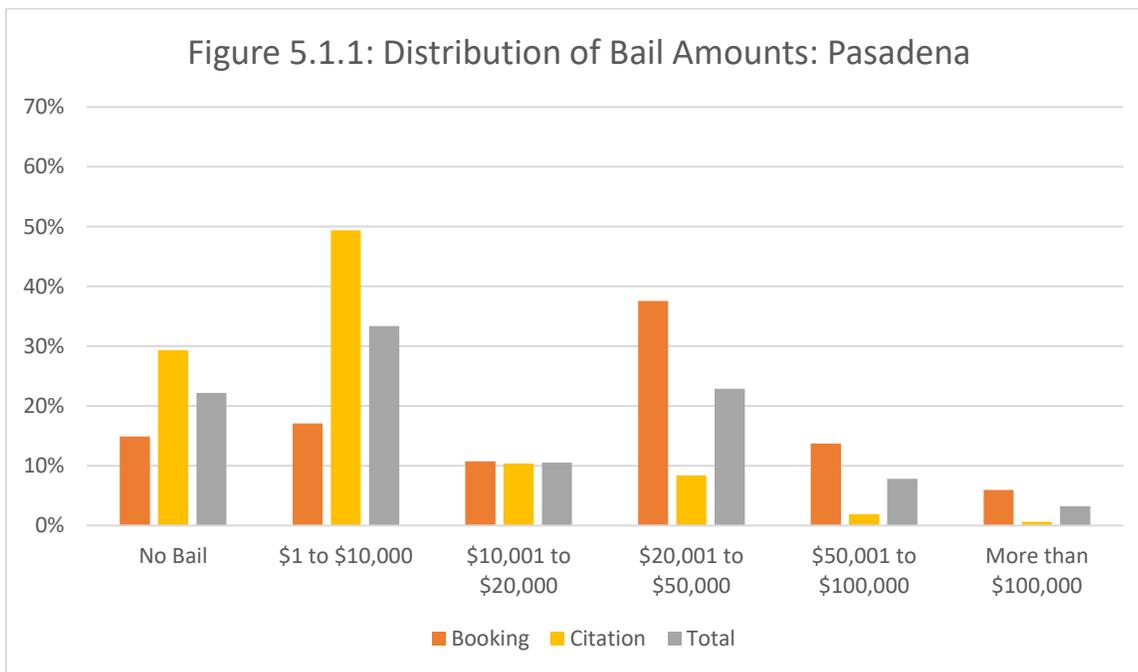
In this section, we examine the use of cash bail in Pasadena and Glendale--the two cities for which we have information. Cash bail is set at the discretion of the trial judge who hears a case, and at the request of the case's prosecutor. As a result, the involvement of local police departments in the determination of bail is limited to which arrests are made, under what charges, and with what available evidence. In addition, the use of cash bail has changed considerably in the time since the data included in this report were collected: In October 2023, the Los Angeles Superior court discontinued the use of cash bail for "non-serious felonies and misdemeanors," other than in exceptional circumstances.²¹ Thus, the information included in this section should be understood as providing evidence on how cash bail was used by the Los Angeles County District Attorney's office and the Los Angeles County criminal courts prior to recent bail reform.

Because the data available from Pasadena and Glendale differ from each other, we examine these cities separately. Data from Pasadena include bail set for all offenses, including misdemeanor offenses that resulted in a citation. The data also include the length of each arrestee's stay in jail following arrest. However, Pasadena arrest records do not include information on the level of arrest. In contrast, data from Glendale include only individuals who were booked following

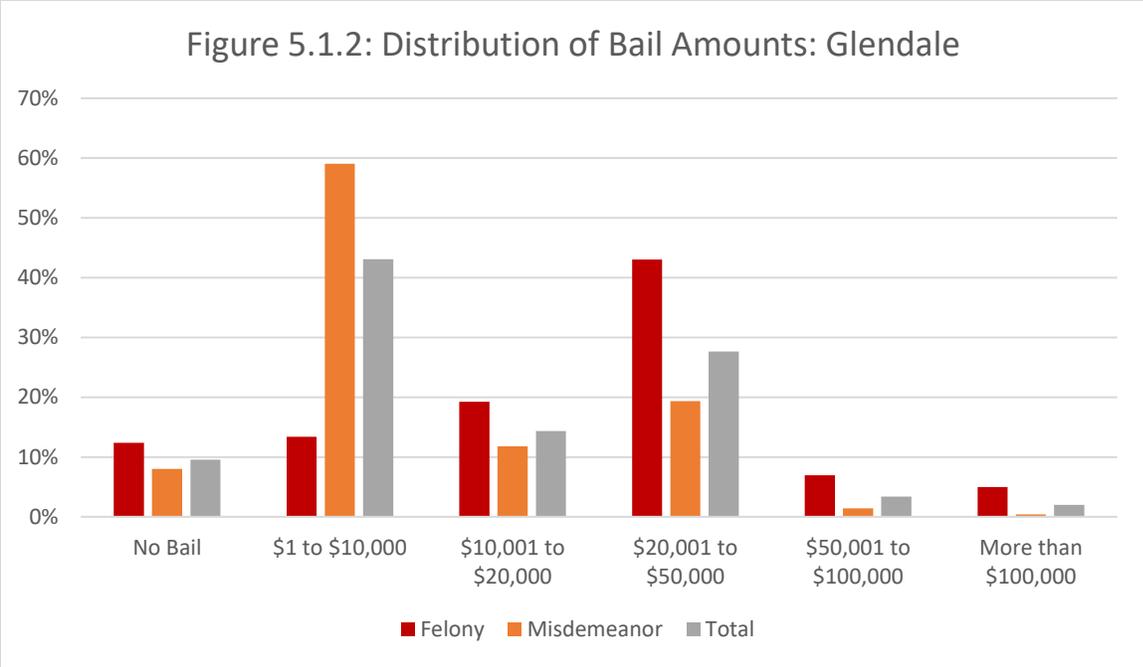
²¹ <https://www.lacourt.org/newsmedia/uploads/14202371814442523NRSAFEANDJUSTPRE-ARRAIGNMENTPROTOCOLS.pdf>

arrest, and do not include information on the length of arrestees' stay in jail. However, Glendale data do include the level of arrests.

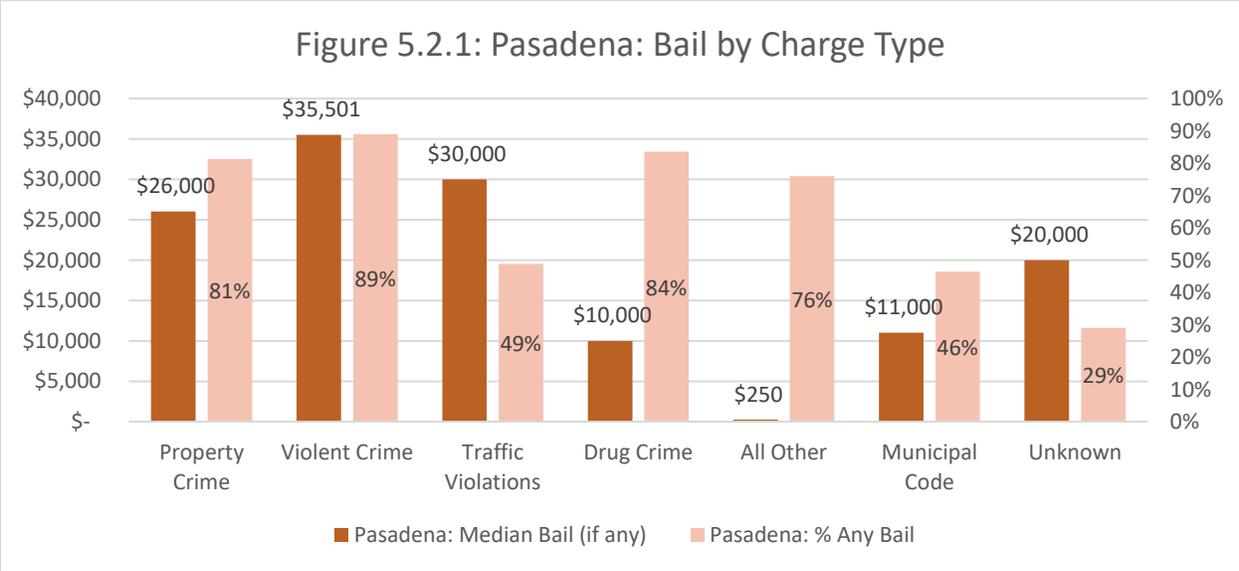
Figure 5.1 shows the distribution of cash bail amounts in each city by the level and disposition of arrest. In Pasadena, 22% of all arrests are awarded no bail—a combination which includes individuals released on their own recognizance and individuals who are held in pre-trial detention without the possibility of paying bail. Those given citations are considerably more likely to be awarded no bail than those who are booked, at 29% vs 15%. The most common bail amounts are amounts below \$10,000, which account for 33% of all arrests and 49% of all citation arrests, and amounts between \$20,000 and \$50,000, which account for 23% of all arrests and 38% of booking arrests. Bail amounts of more than \$100,000 were rare, accounting for only 3% of all arrests.



We see a similar pattern in Glendale, though because we only observe bail amounts for arrests resulting in a booking, we see fewer cases in which no bail was given. No bail was given in 10% of all booking arrests, 12% of felony arrests, and 8% of misdemeanor arrests—likely representing a larger share of felony cases in which offenders were held in pre-trial detention without the possibility of bail. As in Pasadena, the most common bail amount was less than \$10,000, accounting for 43% of all booking arrests 59% of misdemeanors and only 13% of felonies. Next most common were bail amounts of between \$20,000 and \$50,000, which accounted for 28% of all booking arrests, 19% of misdemeanor offenses and 43% of all felony offenses. As in Pasadena, bail amounts of more than \$100,000 were unusual, constituting only 2% of all booking arrests, 0% of misdemeanor arrests, and 5% of felony arrests.

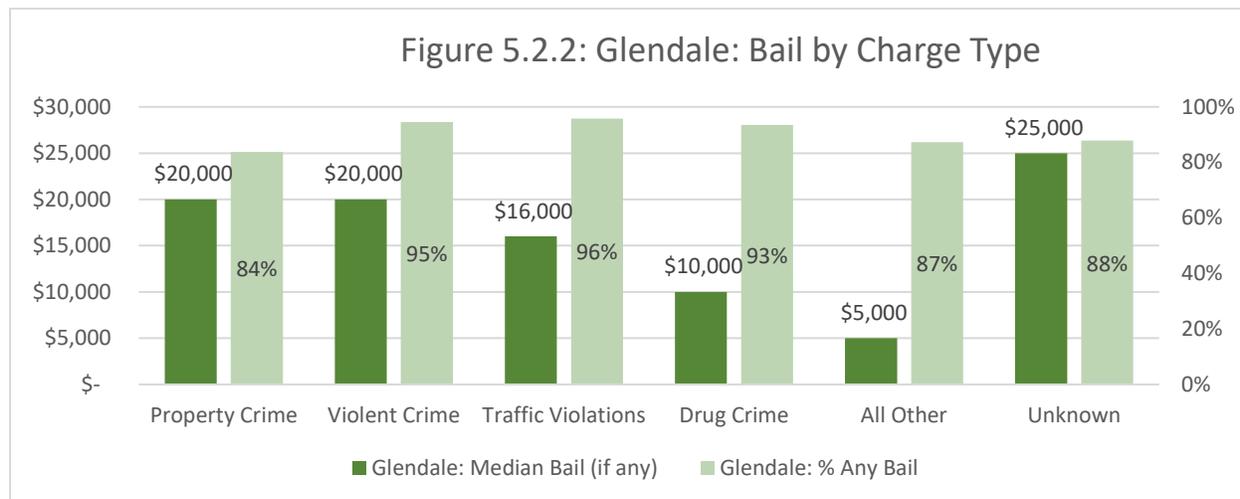


We find that bail amounts also vary somewhat by category of offense. Figure 5.2 shows the percentage of arrestees receiving any cash bail and the median cash bail amount, among those receiving any bail, by charge category. In Pasadena, we find that more than 80% of those charged with a property crime, violent crime, or drug crime received bail, while only half of those charged with a traffic offense or municipal code violation received bail. Median bail amounts were highest for violent crimes, at \$35,500, followed by traffic violations at \$30,000 and property crime at \$26,000. Median bail amounts for drug crimes (\$10,000), municipal code violations (\$11,000) and other/miscellaneous crimes (\$250) were considerably lower.

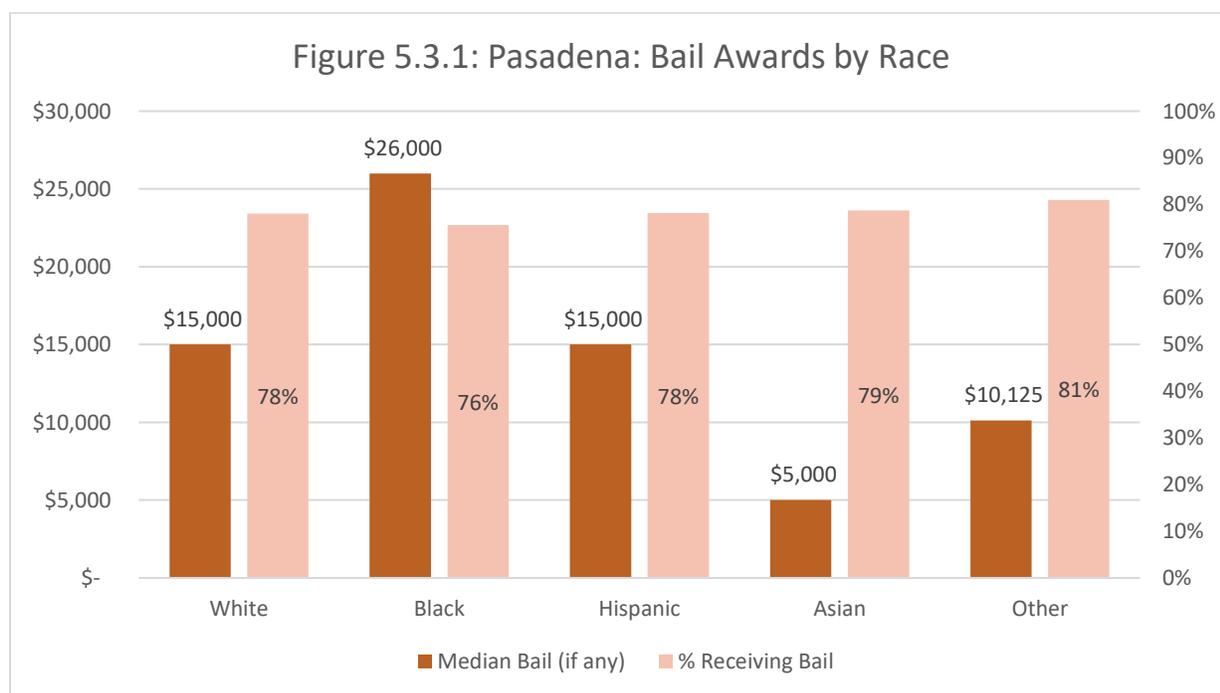


In Glendale, we see considerably less variation by charge category in the percentage of arrests in which bail was issued and in the amount of bail issued. Note, however, that much of this

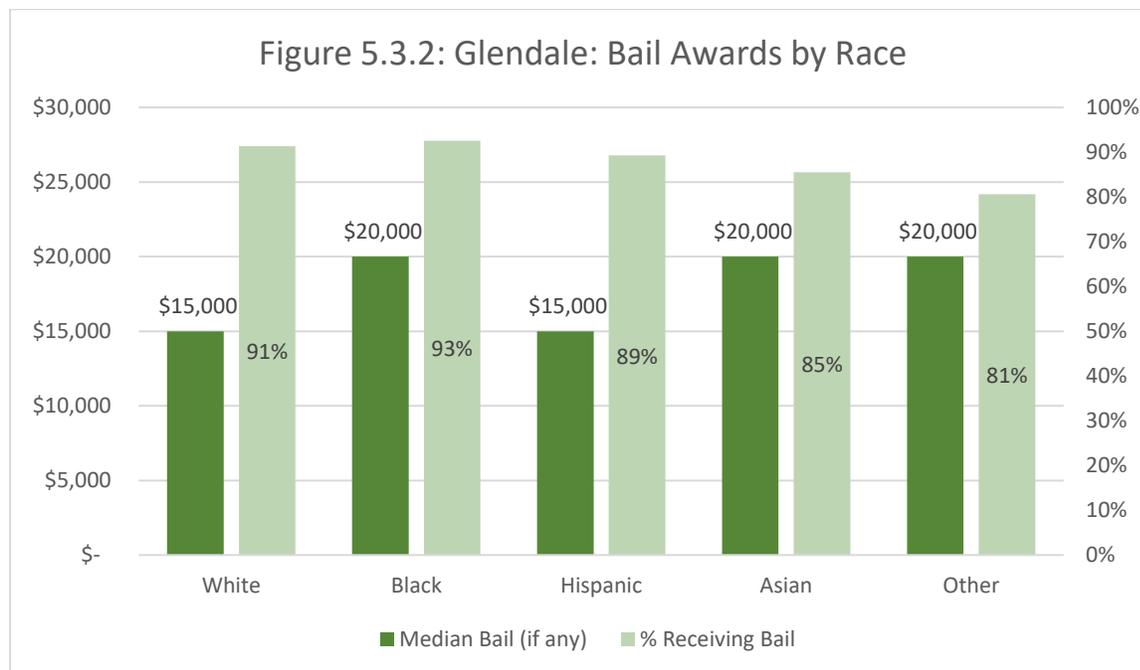
difference is due to the fact that Glendale data does not include citation arrests. In Glendale, more than 80% of arrestees were issued bail among all charge categories. Median bail amounts were somewhat higher among property offenses, violent offenses, and unknown/uncategorized offenses (at \$20,000, \$20,000 and \$25,000 respectively) than for drug crimes and other/miscellaneous offenses (at \$10,000 and \$5,000 respectively).



Next, we examine differences in bail awards by race. Figure 5.3 shows the percentage of arrestees receiving any cash bail and the median cash bail amount by arrestee race. While we do not see large differences in the likelihood of receiving bail by race, we do see substantial differences in the amount of bail awarded. In Pasadena, Black arrestees who receive bail are awarded a median bail amount of \$26,000—considerably higher than the \$15,000 median for White and Hispanic arrestees or the \$5,000 median for Asian arrestees.

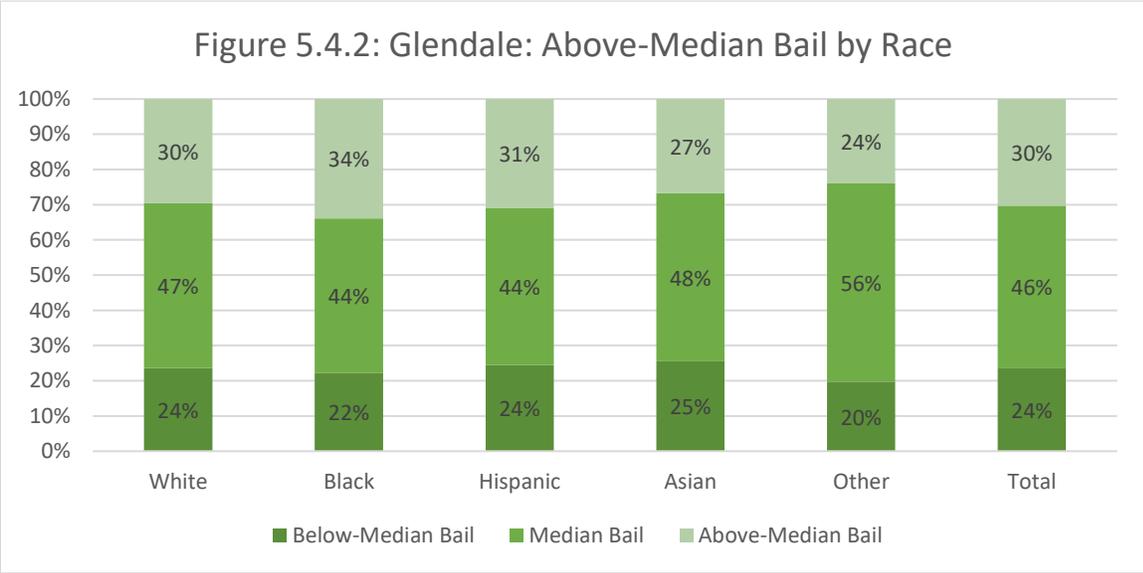
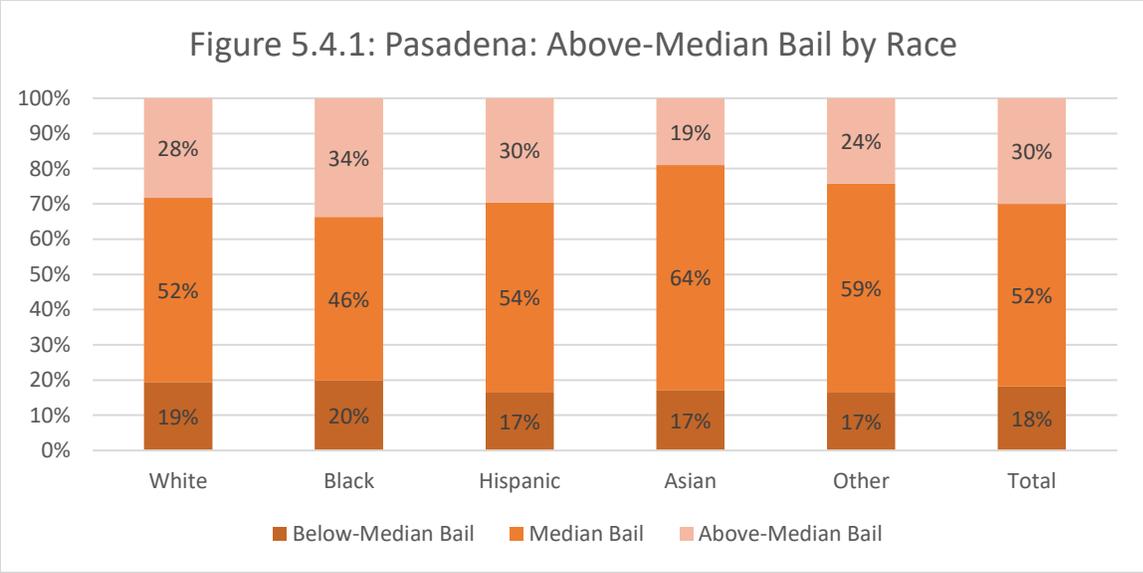


Similarly, Black arrestees in Glendale are awarded a median bail amount of \$20,000, higher than the \$15,000 median for White and Hispanic arrestees. In contrast to Pasadena, we find that Asian arrestees are awarded a \$20,000 median bail in Glendale—higher than the median for White and Hispanic arrestees.



These differences in bail awards could reflect differences in the decisions of judges and prosecutors or differences in the severity of charges brought against arrestees of each race. We account for differences in the distribution of offense severity by race by calculating the median bail amount awarded to arrestees with each charge and examining whether each arrestee received a bail amount that exceeded the median, was less than the median bail amount, or was exactly the median bail amount. A large share of arrestees receives the median bail amount for each offense because judges often grant bail according to a fixed bail schedule, which attaches a bail amount to each charge. Figure 5.4 shows the share of arrestees by race in each of these categories.

We find that Black arrestees are more likely to receive above-median bail amounts than are arrestees of other races in both Pasadena and Glendale, with 34% of Black arrestees receiving above-median bail amounts, compared to 30% of all arrestees. Asian arrestees are less likely than others to receive above-median bail amounts in both cities, with 19% of Asian Pasadena arrestees and 27% of Asian Glendale arrestees receiving above-median bail amounts. These differences in bail awards by race could reflect differences in the characteristics of arrestees by race in the number and severity of prior offenses or other characteristics seen by judges and prosecutors, or could reflect implicit or explicit racial bias in the setting of bail.



Lastly, we examine the relationship between cash bail and time in detention following arrest. Because this information is only available in Pasadena, we examine this relationship only in Pasadena. Figure 5.5 compares the length of stay in jail for those who did and did not receive cash bail. We find that those who received cash bail were more likely to stay in jail for a day or longer, with 83% of those who did not receive bail and 67% of those who did staying in jail for less than a day. Most of those who remained in jail for a day or longer were in jail for less than a week, with 18% of arrestees in jail for one day and 11% in jail for between 2 to 7 days. Less than ½ of 1% of arrestees in Pasadena remained in jail for over a week following arrest.

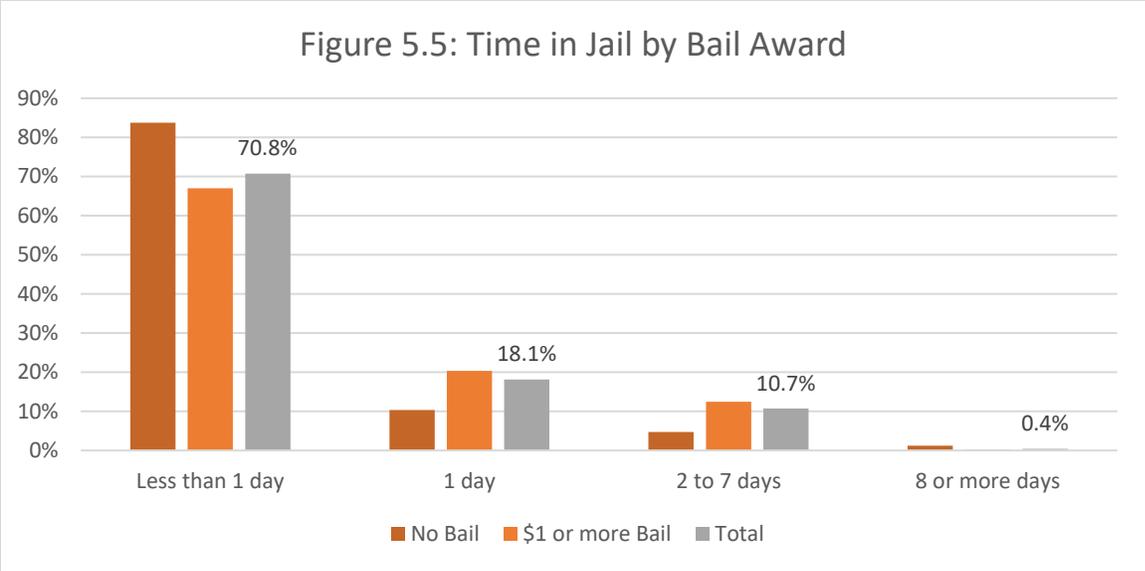
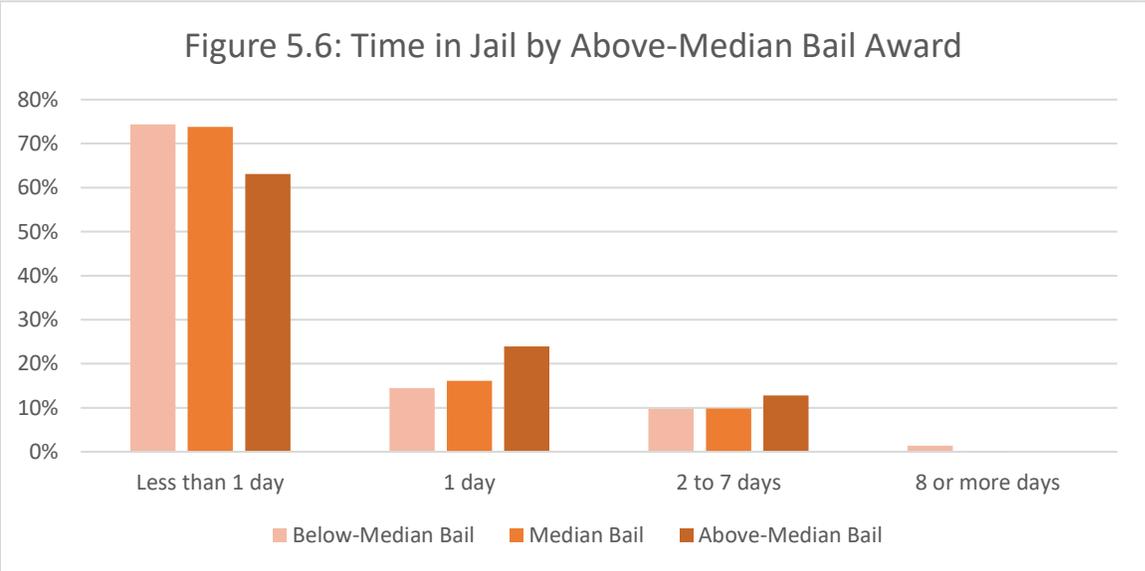
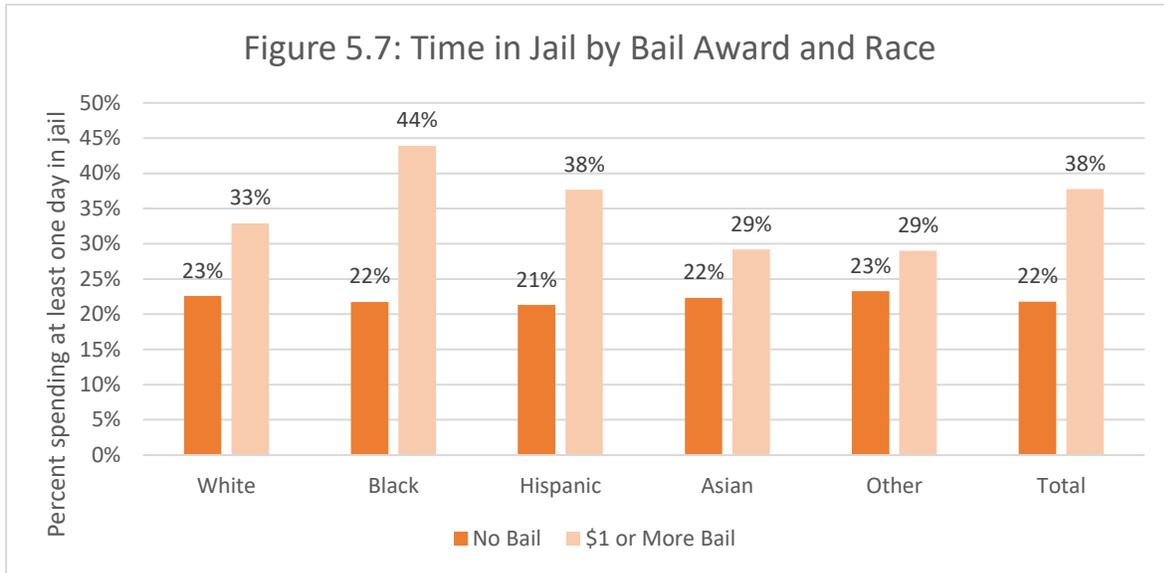


Figure 5.6 compares the length of stay in jail for those who received below-median, median, and above-median bail amounts for their charge. Similarly, we find that receiving an above-median bail amount increased the likelihood that an arrestee would spend at least a day in jail. While 74% of those with a median or below-median bail amount spent less than a day in jail, only 63% of those with an above-median bail amount spent less than a day in jail. Likewise, 13% of those with an above-median bail amount spent from 2 to 7 days in jail, compared to 10% of those with a median or below-median bail amount. Because individuals awarded bail are able to leave jail immediately by paying bail, these findings suggest that difficulty obtaining bail is a meaningful barrier to avoiding incarceration for a significant minority of arrestees.

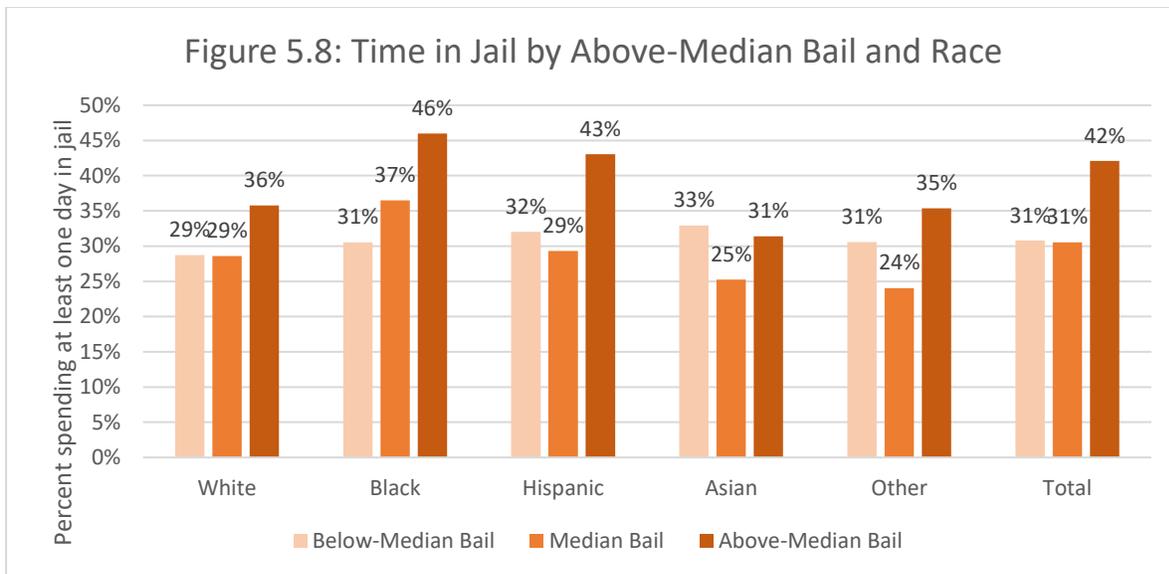


We find that the relationship between bail amount and time in jail is largest for Black and Hispanic arrestees. Figure 5.7 shows the percentage of arrestees who spend at least one day in jail by race/ethnicity and whether any bail was set. Among arrestees for whom bail was not set,

22% spend at least a day in jail. This percentage varies little by race, with 23% of White arrestees and 21% of Hispanic arrestees without bail spending at least a day in jail. In contrast, the percentage of arrestees who spend at least a day in jail varies considerably by race for those with bail set. Only 29% of Asian and 33% of White arrestees with some bail set spent at least a day in jail, compared to 44% of Black and 38% of Hispanic Arrestees.



We find a similar pattern when examining those whose bail amounts were above-median, below-median, and at the median relative to others arrested under the same charge. Overall, 31% of those with below-median bail amounts spent at least a night in jail, with almost no variation by race. Among those with a median bail amount set, 31% spent a night in jail, with Black arrestees most likely to spend a night in jail at 37% and Asian and Other arrestees least likely, at 25% and 24% respectively. Meanwhile, 42% of those with above-median bail amounts spent a night in jail. Among those with above-median bail amounts, 46% of Black arrestees, 43% of Hispanic arrestees, 36% of White arrestees, and 31% of Asian arrestees spent at least one night in jail.



These findings suggest that the setting of cash bail may have a disparate racial impact, both because bail is set somewhat higher for Black arrestees than for other arrestees facing similar charges, and because high bail amounts are more likely to lead to incarceration for Black and Hispanic arrestees than for White and Asian arrestees.

SECTION 6: CONCLUDING REMARKS

In this report, we have analyzed records on individual arrests from three suburban police departments and the Los Angeles Police department. This work has shed light on several questions that could not have been examined without arrest-level data. For instance, we have been able to identify charge categories with greater and smaller racial disparities, to determine the geography of arrests within cities, to note differences in arrests for offenses that have been de-emphasized by state policy, and to determine differences in bail set and jail time required by race.

More specifically, we have found large disparities in arrests by race, with Black and Hispanic arrest rates much higher than those for Whites and Asians. We have also found that overall arrest trends in the 2010s diverged between LAPD and South Pasadena having decreased arrests but Pasadena and Glendale having increased arrests. We have uncovered that these diverging trends are largely driven by misdemeanor offense arrests, including drug offenses reclassified by California’s Prop. 47. We have identified that arrests cluster spatially, especially around major commercial centers in all three cities examined, but that arrests for violent crimes cluster in areas with higher Black and Hispanic population shares. We also document that cash bail disparately impacts Black and Hispanic arrestees and that they are also more likely to be awarded jail time for similar offenses.

Because our data have been made publicly available, we hope that community stakeholders and police departments will be able to build on our analysis and improve our shared understanding of police practices.

The data used in this report were obtained by filing freedom of information act requests to obtain information already collected and stored by police departments. Because these data already exist, releasing to the public imposes little additional cost on taxpayers. These are legally shareable data that exist in some form for every police department in Los Angeles County.

It can and should be possible to build an understanding of police practices using granular data for all 46 police and sheriff agencies in Los Angeles County. This can be achieved both by proactive data dissemination on the part of police departments and by efforts of community organizations and researchers to request and analyze police records. To facilitate this process, we provide a few lessons and recommendations for this work.

Recommendations for Police Departments:

Police departments can support public understanding of policing by regularly releasing arrest-level or incident-level data to the public, after removing identifying information that could violate the privacy of those facing arrest. In cases where police departments do not wish to make administrative data publicly available, they can design systems to promptly and accurately respond to public records requests and store data in a way that allows retrieval in response to these requests. While organization and storage of data can be challenging, particularly for small police departments, efficient organization and storage can reduce the costs of complying with freedom of information act requests. Rapid developments in technology have made these tasks easier. Taxpayer and resident expectations for transparency have also risen, making data availability and responsiveness key tenets for policing in 2024 and beyond.

As an example, the Pasadena Police Department tasked a police administrator with responding to public records requests. Because the administrator is familiar with the police records system, she was able to provide us with excel files containing all requested data within two weeks of receiving our initial public records request. In contrast, the South Pasadena Police Department did not have staff available who were able to pull data from their administrative databases. As a result, they responded to Care First South Pasadena's request for arrest records by printing the arrest records, scanning the printed files, and sending pdfs of the scanned files to Care First South Pasadena. In addition to being less useful for researchers and community groups, this process required substantial resources on the part of the South Pasadena Police Department.

Recommendations for Researchers and Community Groups:

Our experience also contains helpful lessons for community groups and researchers who hope to receive policing data through freedom of information acts. Most importantly, it is helpful to learn as much as possible about what data exist prior to making requests. Requests are easiest to fulfill when specific—non-specific requests often require clarification—because agencies have 10 days to respond to each clarification, repeated clarifications can substantially delay the receipt of data. In addition, requestors who do not know what information are available cannot confirm that they have received all of the information that they are entitled to. We provide a sample freedom of information request (FOIA) form that represents our initial request for data from the Pasadena Police Department.

We have found that the most effective strategy for familiarizing yourself with available data is to carefully examine information released by police departments. For instance, we were able to obtain information on bookings from the Glendale Police Department by pointing to regular press releases on the Glendale PD's website listing people booked in the previous week. Prior to that request, Glendale PD had informed us that the information contained in the booking file was not available. Likewise, summary information provided by police departments can provide information on available arrest-level data. The arrest data released by the South Pasadena Police Department did not include any information on whether arrestees were Hispanic. We were informed that this information was not collected. However, reports released by the South Pasadena Police Department included statistics on the Hispanic origin of arrestees. Unfortunately, we never received a response to our requests for an explanation of this data.

APPENDIX: FOIA SAMPLE

To Whom It May Concern:

Pursuant to the California Public Records Act, We hereby request the following records:

Data on incidents/crimes reported from 9/1/2010 through 7/20/2022. We are researchers seeking to collect and analyze information on policing by suburban police departments in Southern California.

Specifically, we would like data on all arrests by the Pasadena Police Department, as well as all documented incidents that fall under FBI UCR Part I and Part II [<https://ucr.fbi.gov/crime-in-the-u.s/2011/crime-in-the-u.s.-2011/offense-definitions>] but did not result in arrest.

We ask that you provide us with machine-readable arrest logs for each year from 2010-2022. We would prefer to receive excel or csv files, but can also accept machine-readable pdf files. Please provide the full text of these arrest logs, including as many of the listed fields that are available in each year:

- Local No
- Name
- Home Address
- Sex
- Race
- Date of Birth
- Occupation
- Arrest Date/Time
- Book Date/Time
- Charge
- Arrest Location
- City
- Release Date/Time
- Jail Location
- Bail Amount

In addition, we ask that you provide us with records produced to comply with UCR reporting requirements. In particular, we ask that you include as many of the following fields as possible (based on the FBI UCR data elements shown at [<https://www.fbi.gov/file-repository/ucr/ucr-2019-1-nibrs-technical-specification.pdf/view>]):

- Incident Number (UCR Data Element 2)
- Incident Date & Time/Hour (UCR Data Element 3)

UCR Offense Code (UCR Data Element 6)
Offense Attempted/Completed (UCR Data Element 7)
Offender Suspected of Using (UCR Data Element 8)
Bias Motivation (UCR Data Element 8A)
Location Type (UCR Data Element 9)
Type Weapon/Force Involved (UCR Data Element 13)
Type Property Loss/Etc. (UCR Data Element 14)
Suspected Drug Type (UCR Data Element 20)
Type of Victim (UCR Data Element 25)
Type of Officer Activity/Circumstance (UCR Data Element 25A)
Officer Assignment Type (UCR Data Element 25B)
Officer- ORI Other Jurisdiction (UCR Data Element 25C)
Age of Victim (UCR Data Element 26)
Sex of Victim (UCR Data Element 27)
Race of Victim (UCR Data Element 28)
Ethnicity of Victim (UCR Data Element 29)
Resident Status of Victim (UCR Data Element 30)
Aggravated Assault/Homicide Circumstances (UCR Data Element 31)
Type Injury (UCR Data Element 33)
Age of Offender (UCR Data Element 37)
Sex of Offender (UCR Data Element 38)
Race of Offender (UCR Data Element 39)
Ethnicity of Offender (UCR Data Element 39A)
Arrest Date (UCR Data Element 42)
Type of Arrest (UCR Data Element 43)
UCR Arrest Offense Code (UCR Data Element 43)
Age of Arrestee (UCR Data Element 47)
Sex of Arrestee (UCR Data Element 48)
Race of Arrestee (UCR Data Element 49)
Ethnicity of Arrestee (UCR Data Element 50)
Resident Status of Arrestee (UCR Data Element 51)
Disposition of Arrestee Under 18 (UCR Data Element 52)

and

street level location data for each incident, such as a geocoded location, street address, census block and/or census block group.

We are requesting this data in a machine-readable format such as Excel spreadsheets or .csv files.

The requested documents will be made available to the general public, and this request is not being made for commercial purposes.

In the event that there are fees, I would be grateful if you would inform me of the total charges in advance of fulfilling my request. I would prefer the request filled electronically, by e-mail attachment if available or CD-ROM if not.

Thank you in advance for your anticipated cooperation in this matter. I look forward to receiving your response to this request within 10 calendar days, as the statute requires.

Sincerely,

[NAME HERE]