

Austin Police Department

Annual Crime and Traffic Report: 2014 Final Report



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November 16, 2015

Background

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

This report contains Austin’s final crime statistics reported to the FBI; it updates our preliminary report produced in April 2015.

Overview

This document contains UCR crime data for the calendar year 2014 (January 1, 2014 through December 31, 2014). For comparison, we have included data from other large US cities; among them, Charlotte, Detroit, El Paso, Milwaukee, and San Francisco (see Page 3 for a complete list). We have also included selected traffic statistics on fatal collisions and comparable data for other jurisdictions.

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

Notable Findings

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

- Austin’s **violent crime rate** of 396 per 100,000 residents increased 9% as compared with 2013. This increase is due primarily to the FBI’s modified rape definition that now includes sexual assaults. Austin’s violent crime rate is 59% lower than other large US cities. (Page 4)
- Austin’s **property crime rate** of 4,142 per 100,000 residents is a 20-year low and is 6% lower than other large US cities. (Page 11)
- The **robbery rate** of 97 per 100,000 reflects a 9% increase as compared with 2013; Austin’s robbery rate is 68% lower than other large US cities. (Page 8)
- The **burglary rate** of 634 per 100,000 residents and **theft rate** of 3,255 per 100,000 both represent 20-year lows. (Pages 12-13)
- The property crime case **clearance rate improved** from 13% in 2013 to 15% in 2014; Austin outperforms other large US cities on both violent and property crime clearance rates. (Page 16)
- **Traffic fatalities** declined 16%, from 75 in 2013 to 63 in 2014; and **fatal collisions** dropped 22%, from 72 in 2013 to 56 in 2014. **Impairment continues to be a significant factor**: nearly half (49%) of 2014 fatalities involved an impaired driver, up from 39% in 2013. (Pages 17, 19)

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Overall Crime Statistics

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

Violent crimes

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

Property crimes

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

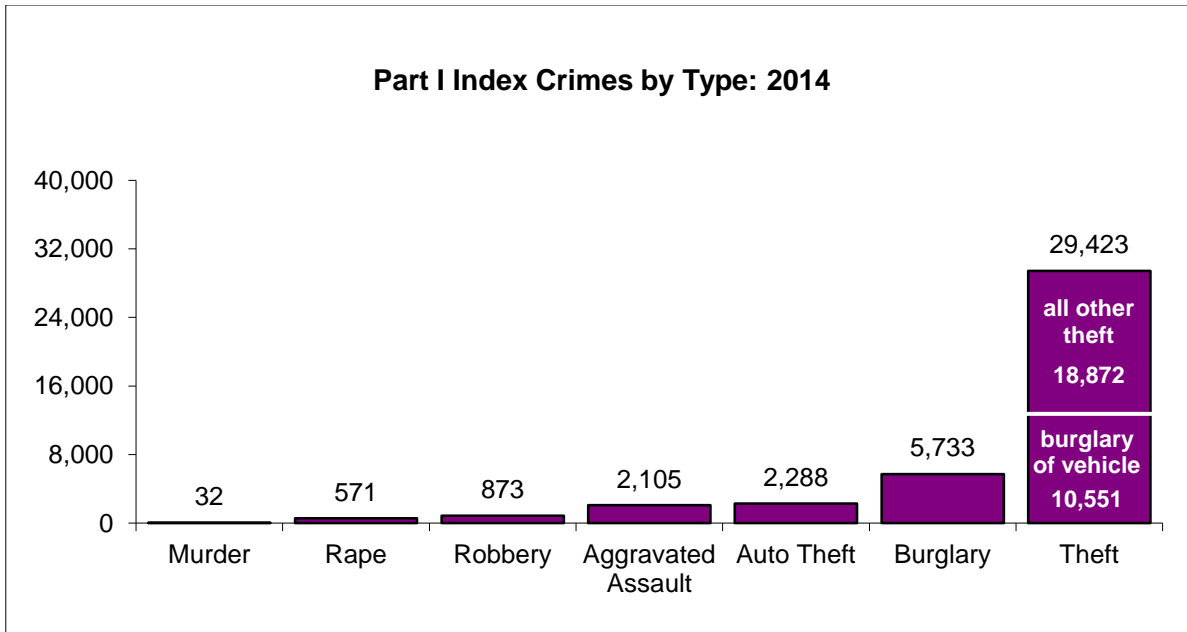
These categories and crime definitions are used for reporting city-level crime statistics to the FBI under its Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) program.

Incidents and Rates

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

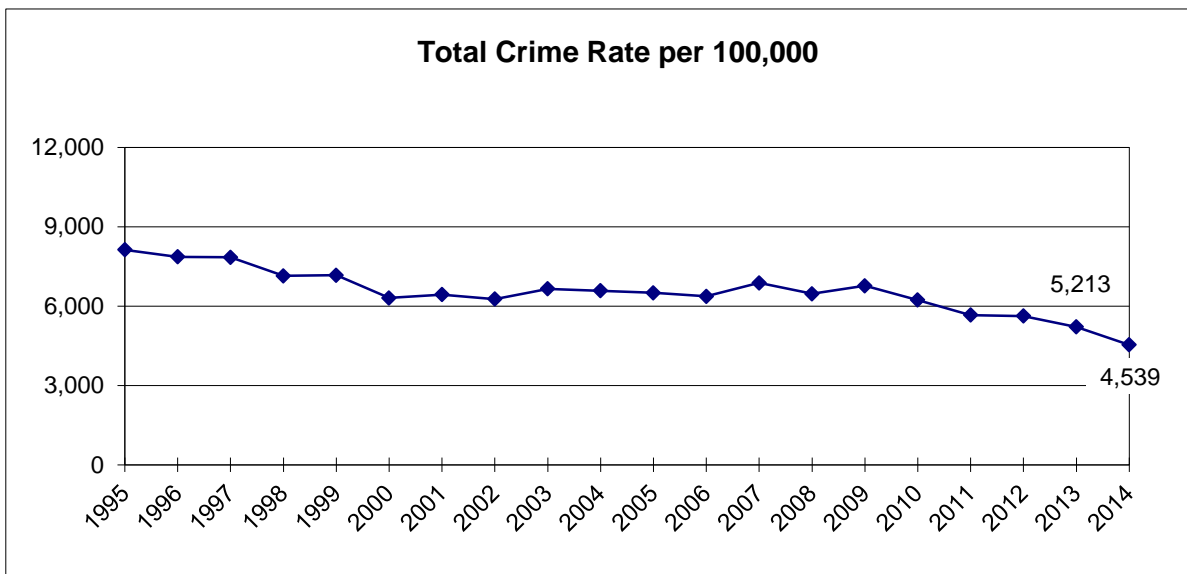
Part I Index Crimes	Offenses			Rate per 100,000		
	2013	2014	% chg	2013	2014	% chg
Murder	26	32	23%	3.0	3.5	17%
Rape*	217	571	163%	25	63	150%
Robbery	763	873	14%	89	97	9%
Aggravated Assault	2,117	2,105	-1%	246	233	-5%
Total Violent Crime*	3,123	3,581	15%	363	396	9%
Burglary	6,550	5,733	-12%	762	634	-17%
Theft	32,948	29,423	-11%	3,835	3,255	-15%
Auto Theft	2,169	2,288	5%	252	253	0%
Total Property Crime	41,667	37,444	-10%	4,850	4,142	-15%
Total Index Crime*	44,790	41,025	-8%	5,213	4,539	-13%

* In 2014, Austin reported using the FBI's broadened rape definition that includes more offenses. As a result, 2014 offenses and rates are not comparable to 2013 for rape, violent crime, and total crime.



Trends

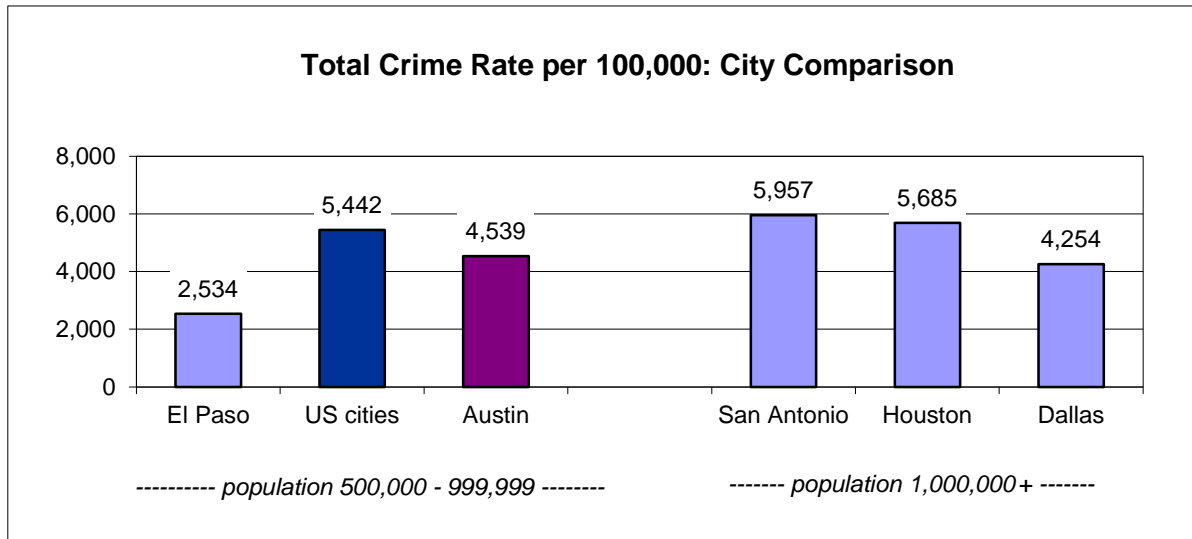
In 2014, the number of all Part I Index crimes for Austin was 41,025. This was an 8% decrease in incidents as compared with 2013 (44,790). The crime rate per 100,000 residents was 4,539 in 2014 – a 13% decrease from the 2013 rate of 5,213 and a 20-year low (1995 to 2014).



Compared to Other Cities

This chart shows how Austin compares to large US cities (those with population between 500,000 and 999,999; Austin's population was 903,924 in 2014, according to FBI UCR reporting). For regional comparison, Texas cities are also identified.

Austin's rate of 4,539 offenses per 100,000 was 17% lower than the average rate of 5,442 for all large US cities.



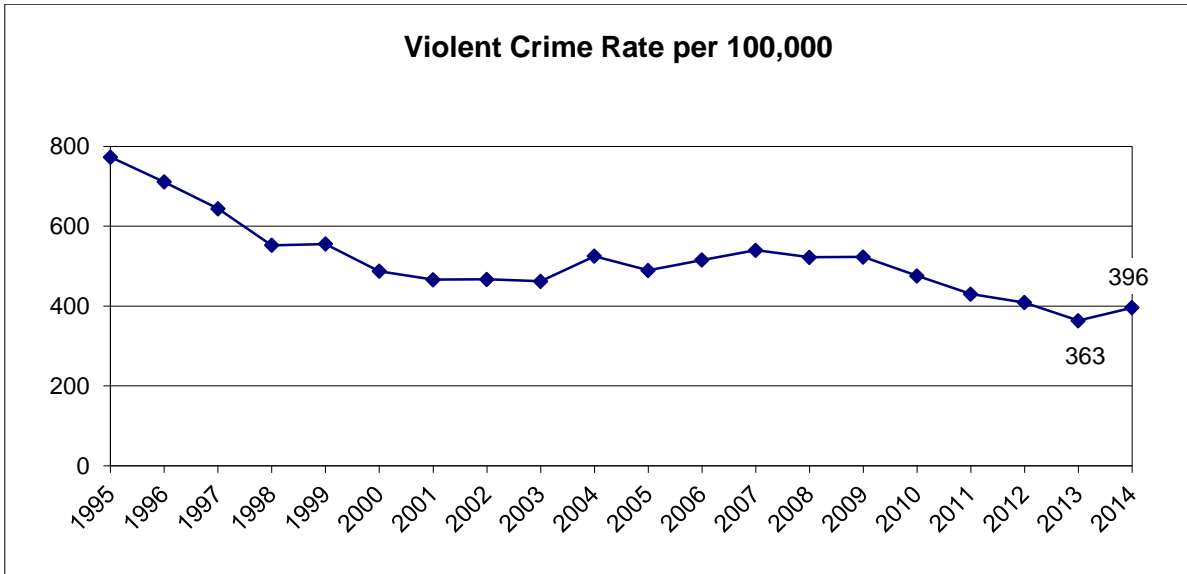
The following cities are included in the “US cities” category above, and elsewhere throughout this report*:

- Albuquerque*
- Baltimore*
- Boston*
- Charlotte*
- Columbus
- Denver
- Detroit
- El Paso
- Fresno*
- Indianapolis
- Jacksonville
- Louisville
- Memphis
- Milwaukee
- Nashville
- Oklahoma City
- Portland*
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Washington DC

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

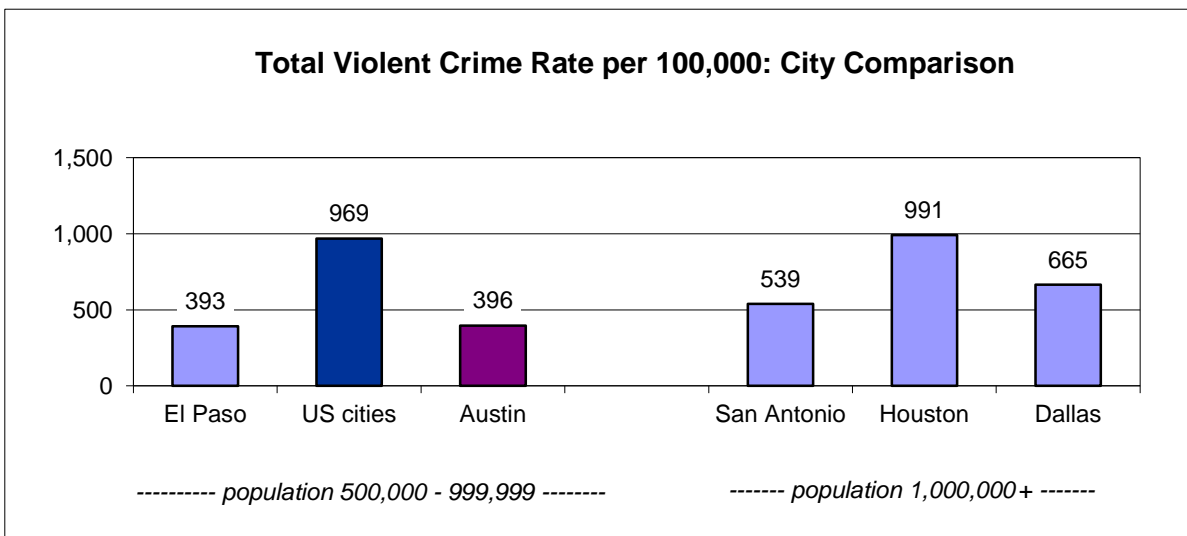
Violent Crime

In 2014, the number of violent crimes was 3,581, a 15% increase in incidents from 2013 (3,123). The rate of violent crime per 100,000 residents was 396 in 2014, up 9% from 363 in 2013. This increase was driven primarily by the FBI's broadened rape definition starting in 2014 (Page 6). For context, if the new rape definition is applied to 2013 counts, a rough calculation shows that violent crime incidents would be down .1%.



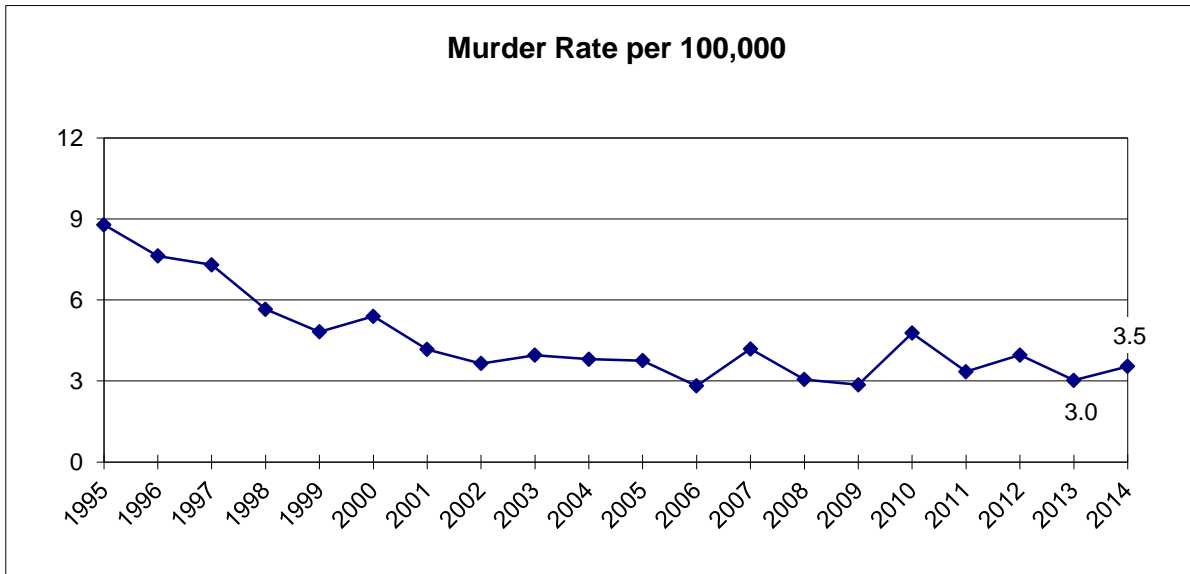
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 396 violent crimes per 100,000 was 59% lower than the average rate of 969 for all large US cities.

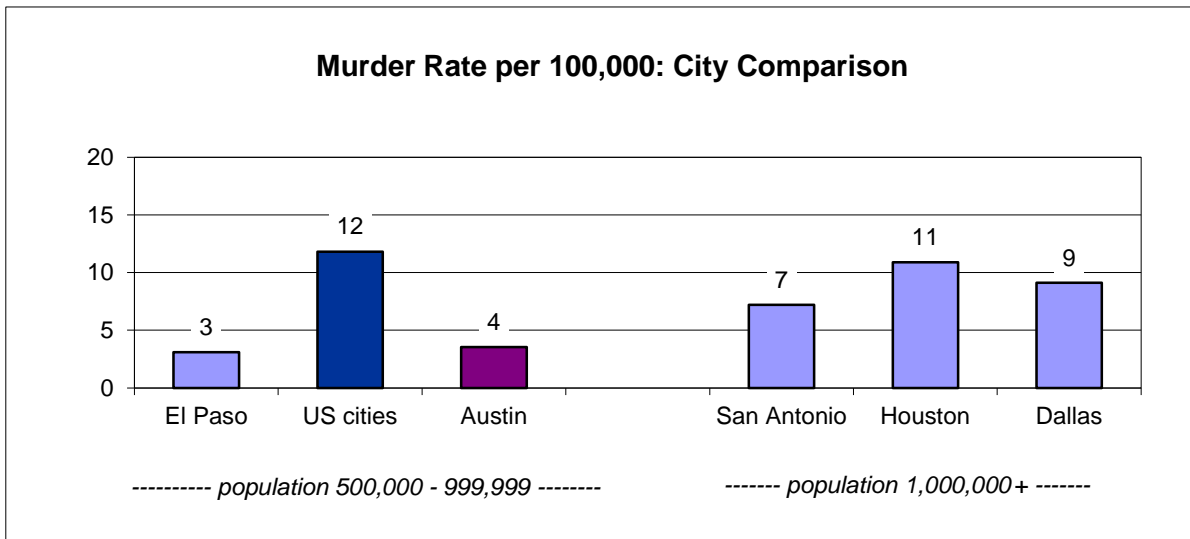


Murder

During 2014 there were 32 murder victims, up from 26 in 2013. Over the previous 10 years (2004 to 2013), the number of murder victims ranged from 20 to 38. The murder rate was 3.5 per 100,000 residents, up from the rate of 3.0 in 2013.

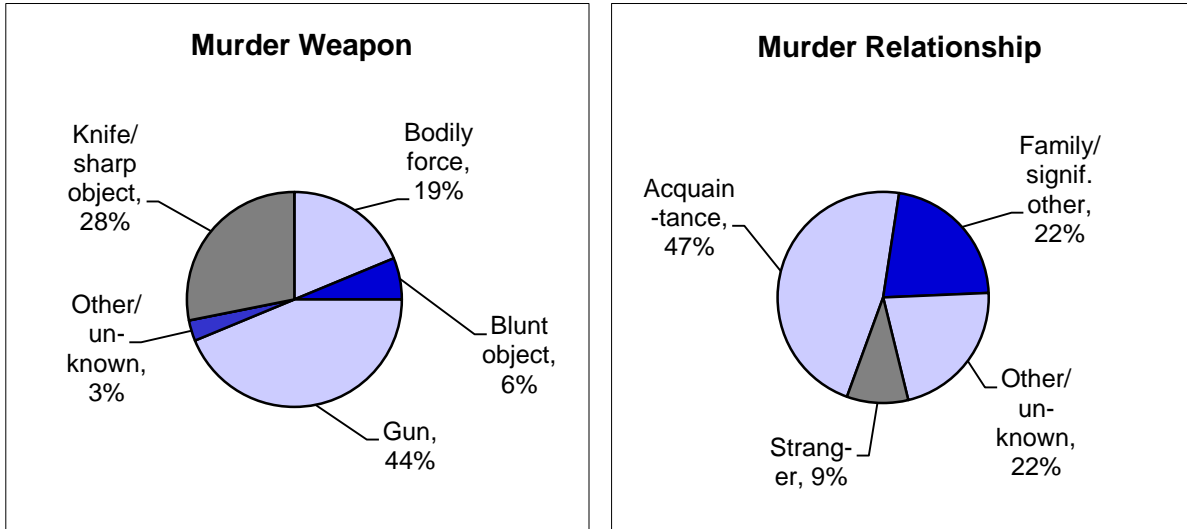


Austin's murder rate was 70% lower than the average of US cities our size.



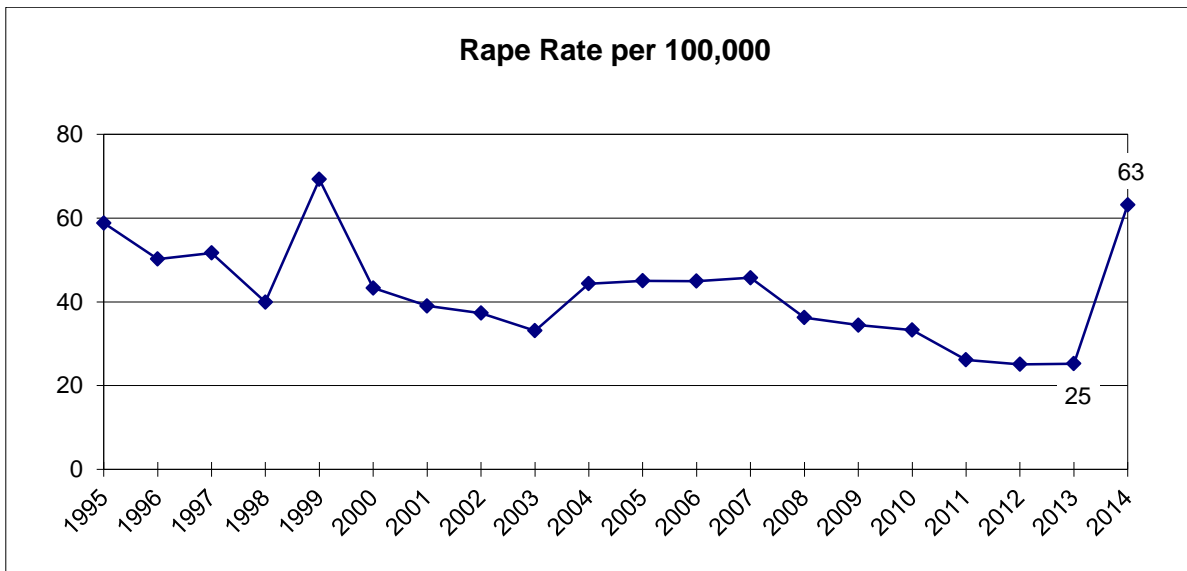
In 2014, guns were the most frequent weapon used in murders (44%), followed by knives or other sharp objects (28%).

The relationship (connection) between the victim and suspect was established in 78% of the cases. Of these, the victim knew the offender as an acquaintance, family member, significant other, or roommate in 88% of murders, up from 74% in 2013.

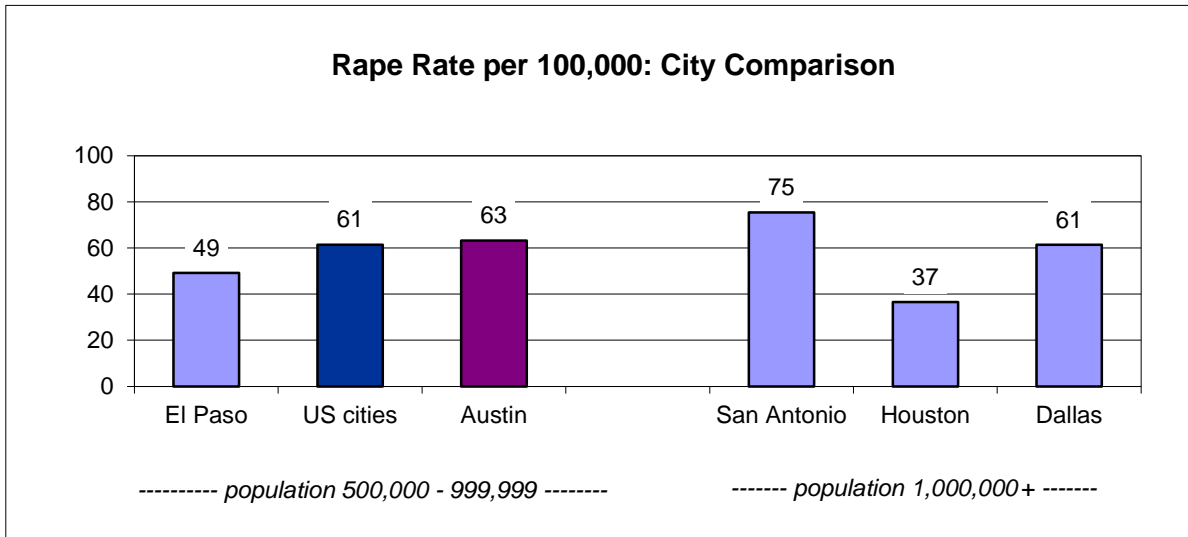


Rape

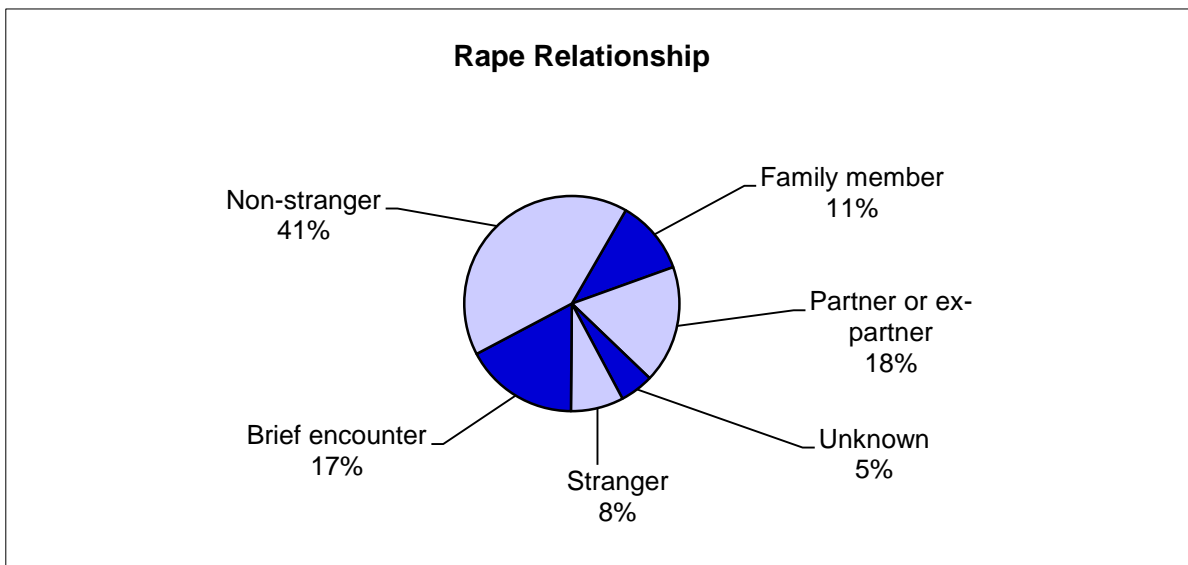
There were 571 reported victims of rape in 2014, up from 217 in 2013. The rate was 63 per 100,000 residents, up 150% from 25 in 2013. This increase is driven by the FBI's modified rape definition in 2014. Sexual assaults that previously did not meet the criteria for rape are now included, yielding higher rape counts/rates. For context, if the new definition is applied to 2013 counts, rape incidents would be down about 9%.



Austin's rate of reported rapes was 3% higher than the average of US cities of the same size.

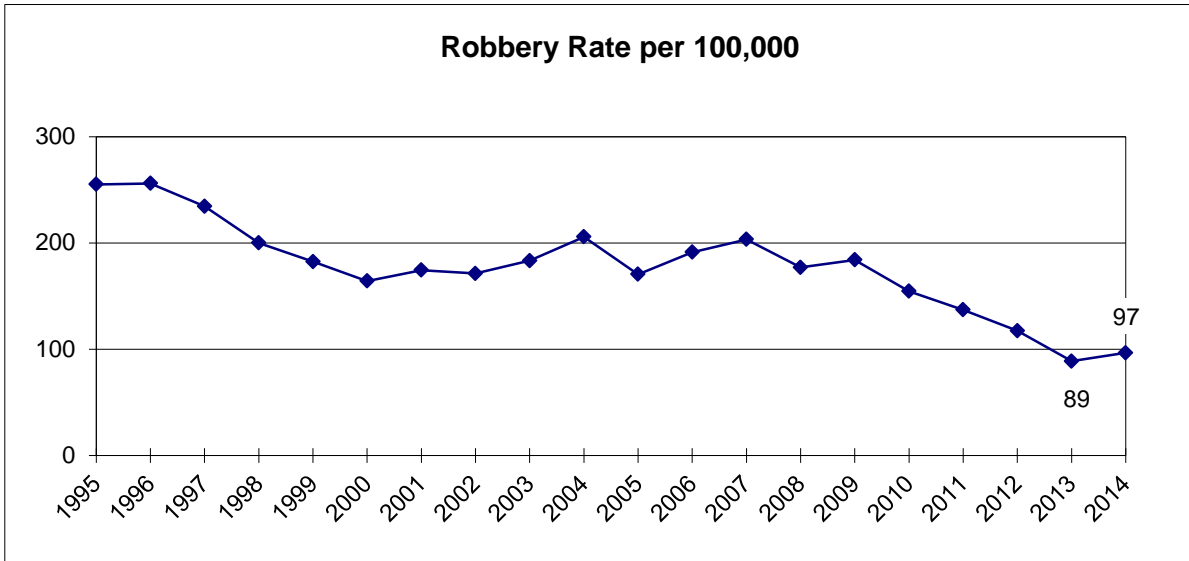


The relationship (connection) between the victim and suspect was established in 95% of the cases. Of these, the victim knew the suspect as a family member, partner or ex-partner, from a brief encounter, or otherwise as a non-stranger in 92% of the incidents. This was down from 97% in 2013.

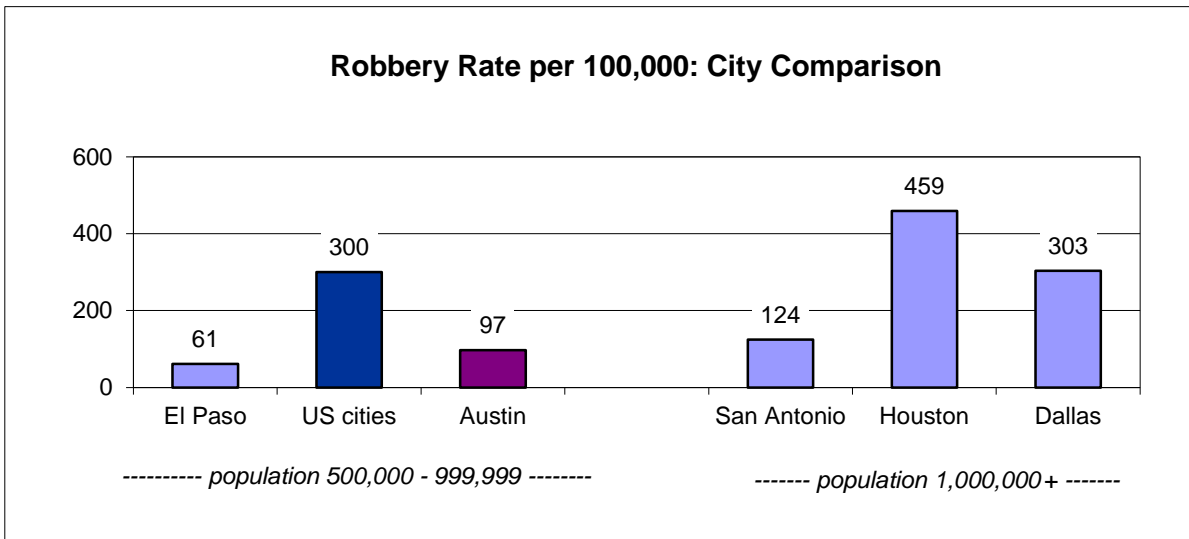


Robbery

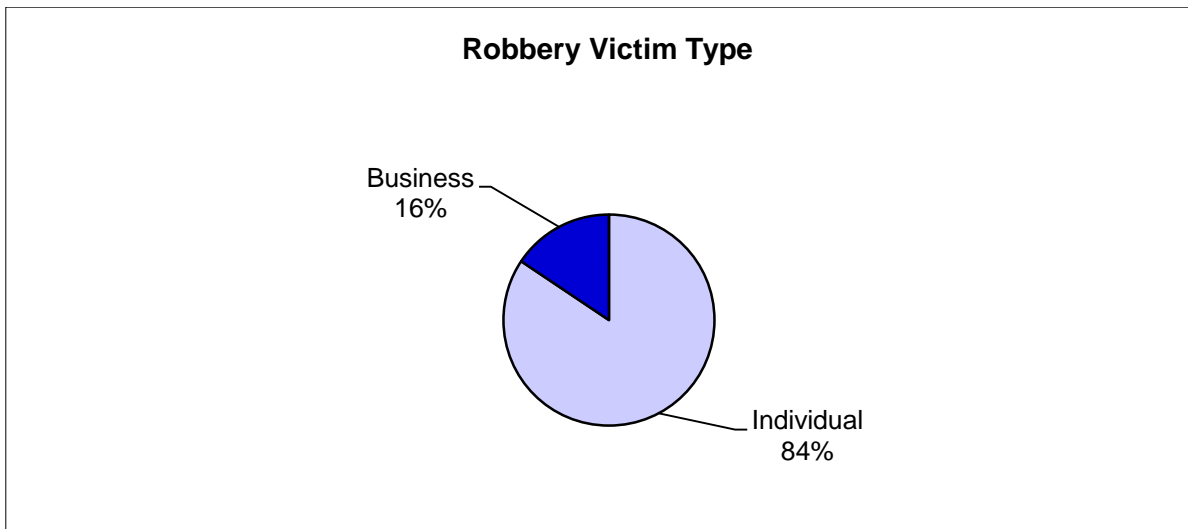
There were 873 robberies reported in 2014, up from 763 in 2013. The rate was 97 robberies per 100,000 residents, which was a 9% increase from the previous year's rate of 89.



Austin's rate of reported robberies was 68% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.

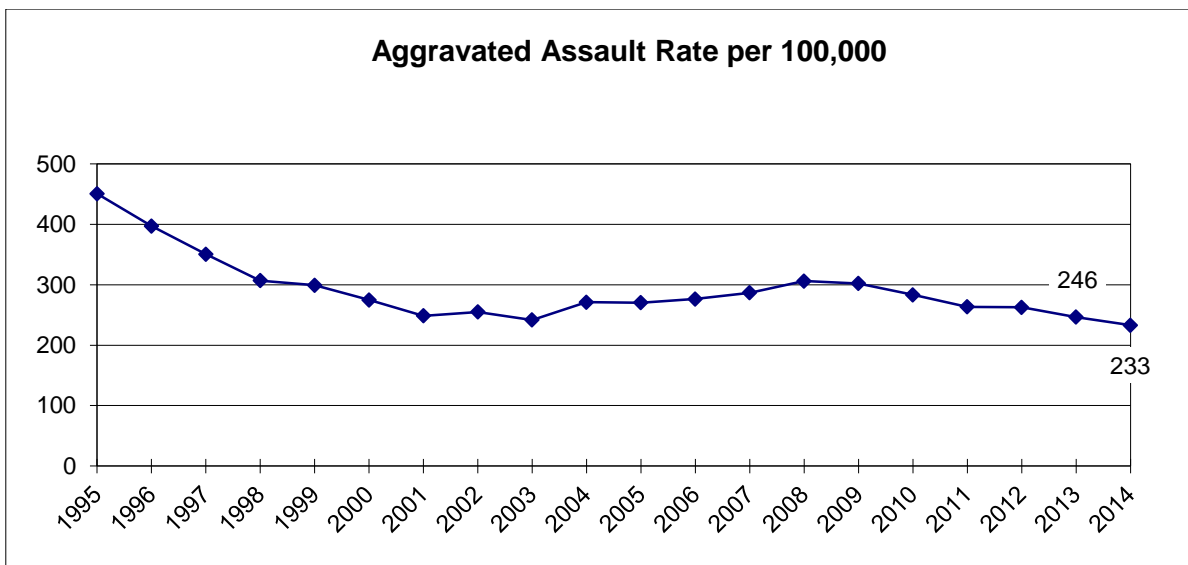


Eighty-four percent of robberies were committed against individuals, as compared with 16% that occurred at businesses. During 2013, 79% of robberies were against individuals and 21% occurred at businesses.

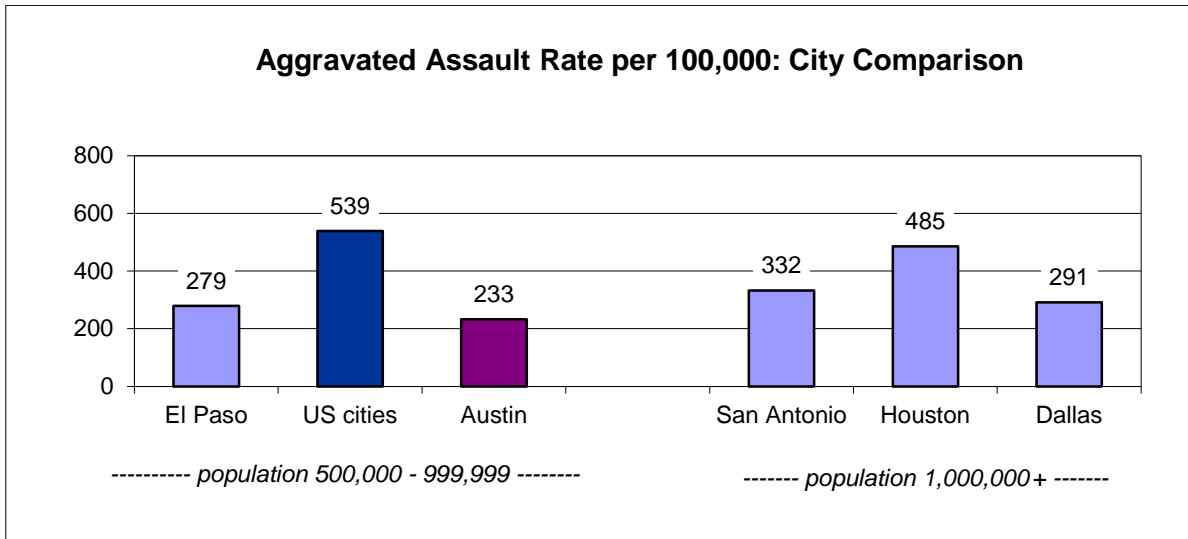


Aggravated Assault

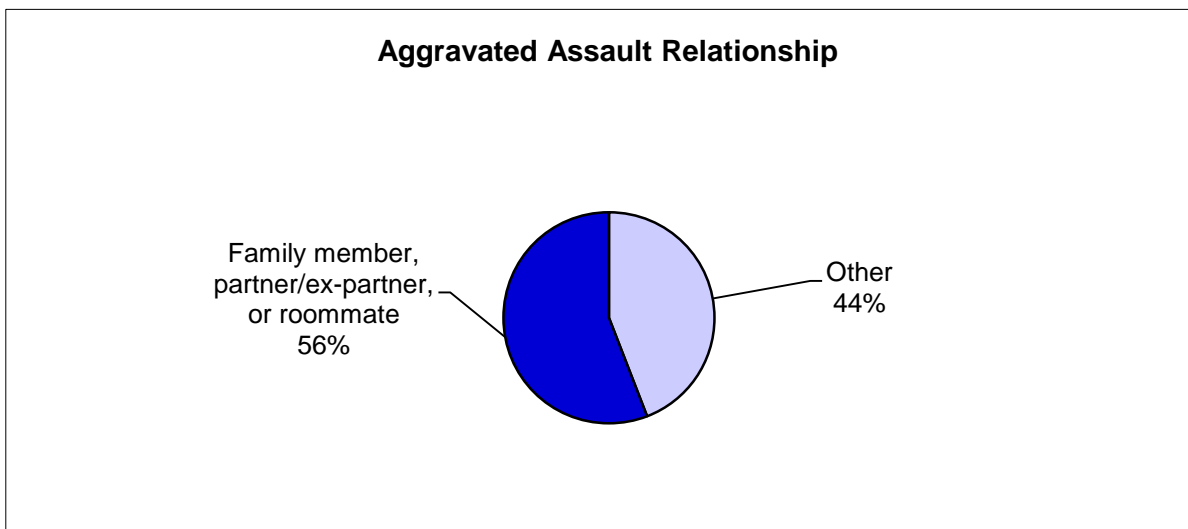
There were 2,105 reported victims of aggravated assault in 2014, down from 2,117 in 2013. The rate was 233 victims per 100,000 residents, down 5% from the prior year's rate of 246 and represents a 20-year low (1995 to 2014).



Austin's rate of aggravated assault victims was 57% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.



More than half (56%) of aggravated assaults were committed by a family member, partner or ex-partner, or roommate of the victim. This was up from 55% in 2013.



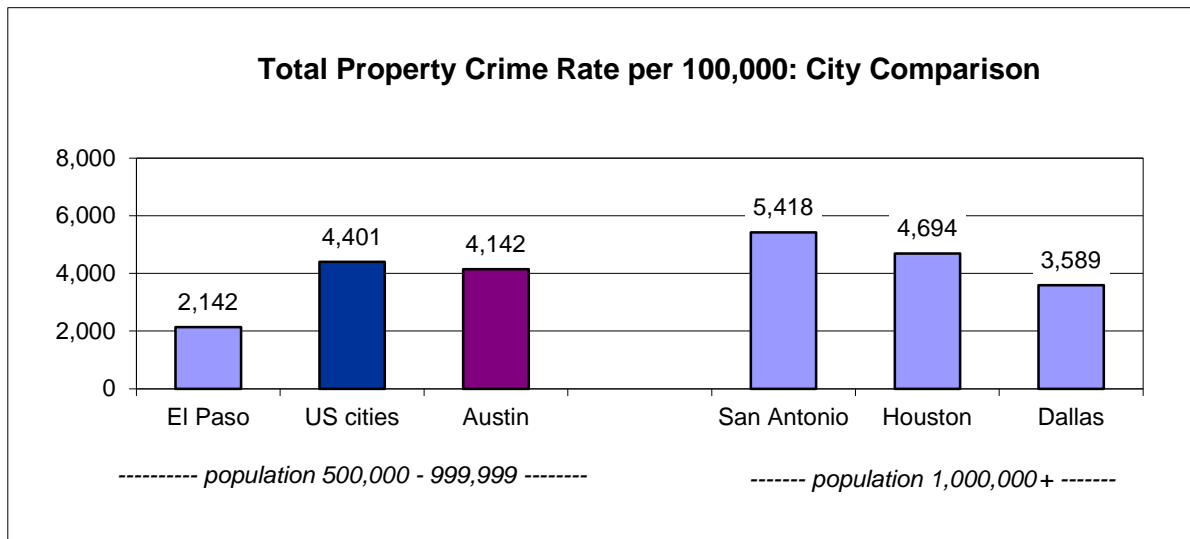
Property Crime

In 2014, the number of property crimes in Austin was 37,444, down from 41,667 in 2013. The rate of property crime per 100,000 residents was 4,142 in 2014, which was down 15% from the prior year's rate of 4,850 and represents a 20-year low (1995 to 2014).



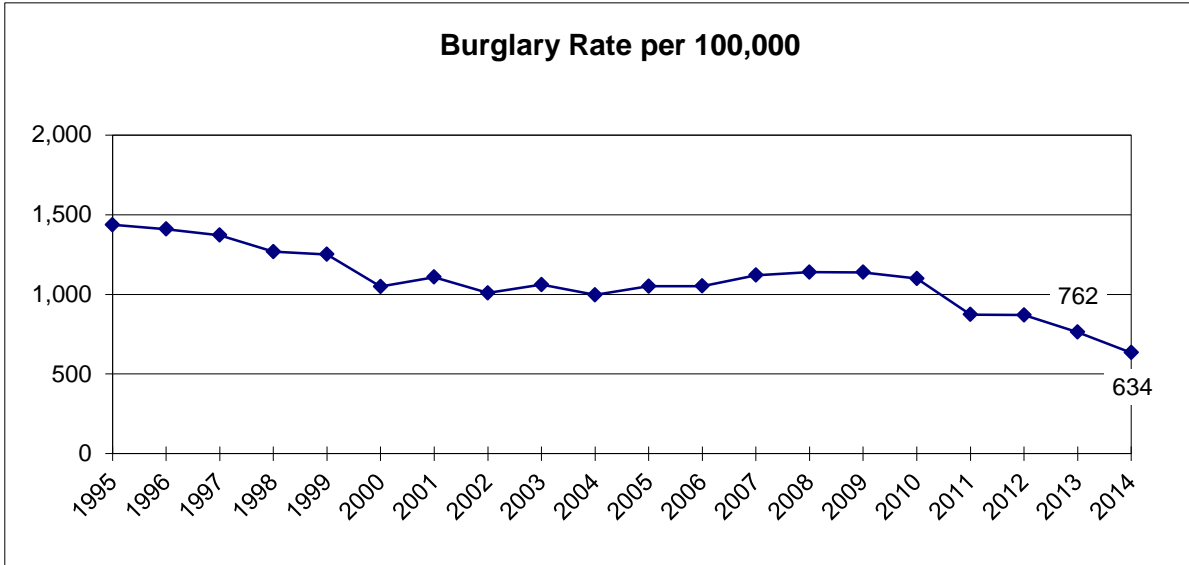
Compared to Other Cities

Austin's rate of 4,142 property crimes per 100,000 in 2014 was 6% lower than the average rate of 4,401 per 100,000 for large US cities.

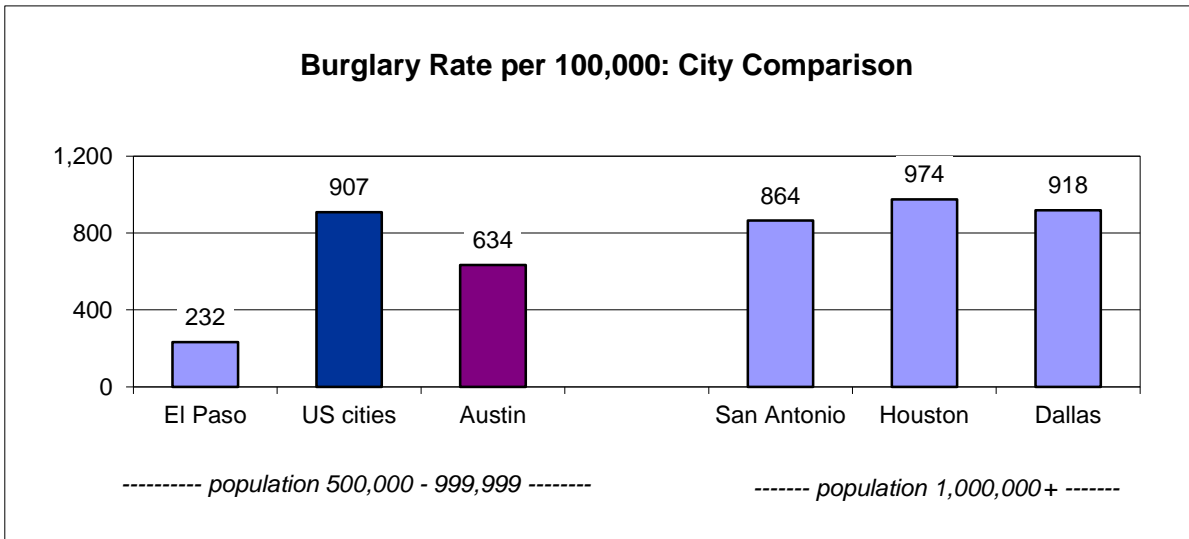


Burglary

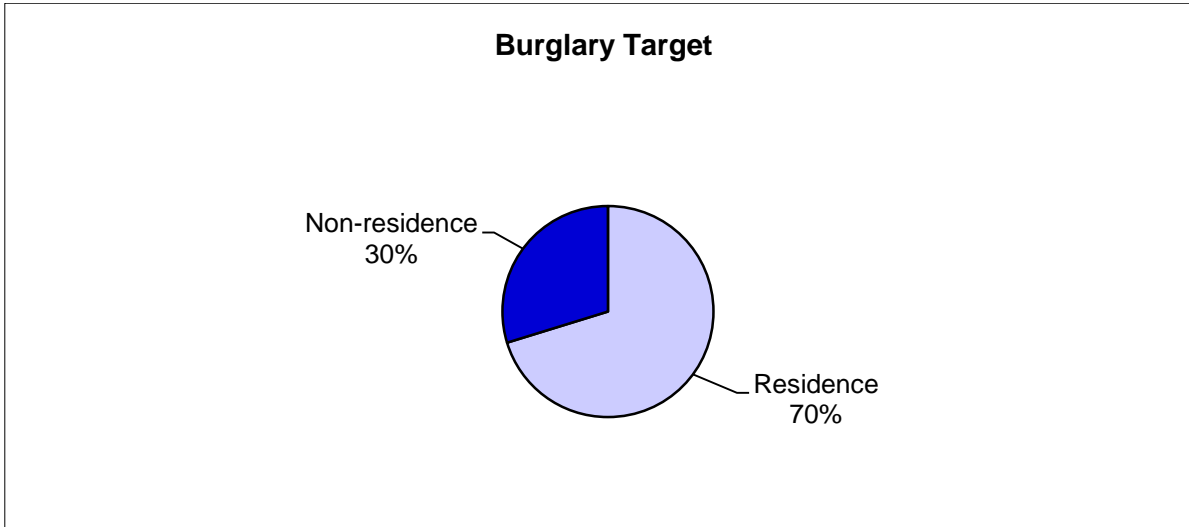
There were 5,733 reported burglaries in 2014, down from 6,550 in 2013. The rate was 634 burglaries per 100,000 residents, which was down 17% from the prior year's rate of 762 and represents a 20-year low (1995 to 2014).



Austin's burglary rate in 2014 was 30% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.

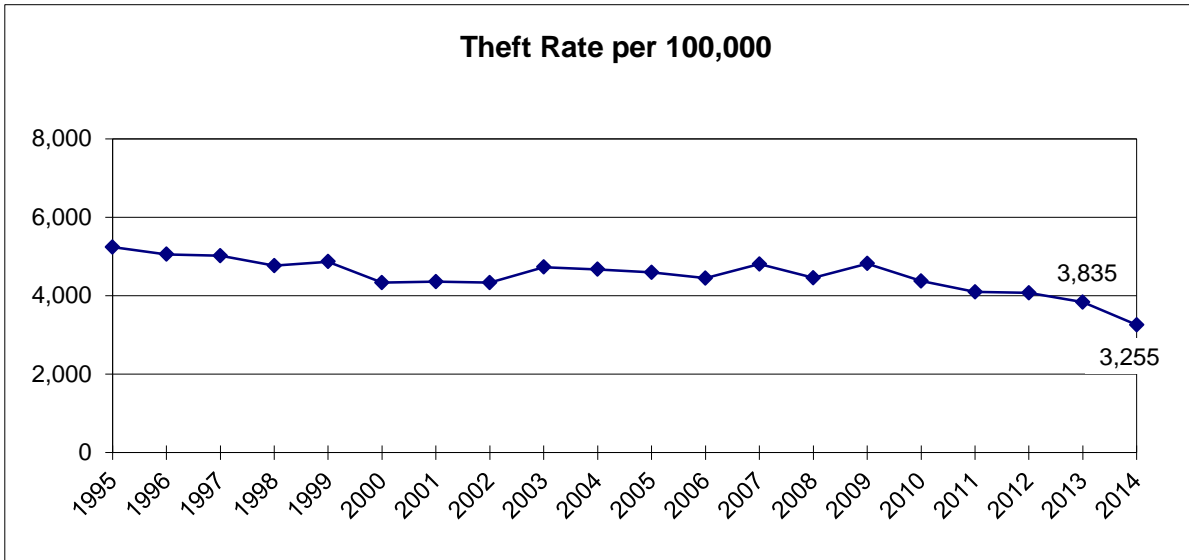


Seventy percent of burglaries involved residences and 30% involved other targets (businesses, offices, restaurants, etc.). During 2013, 72% of burglaries involved residences and 28% involved other targets.

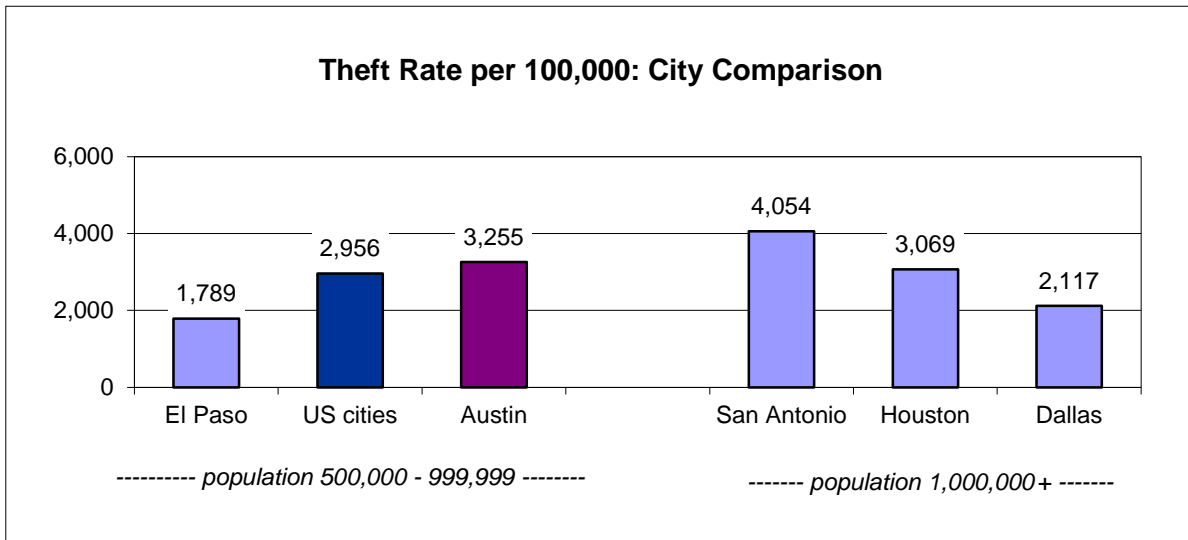


Theft

There were 29,423 reported thefts in 2014, down from 32,948 in 2013. The rate was 3,255 thefts per 100,000 residents, which was down 15% from the rate of 3,835 in 2013 and represents a 20-year low (1995 to 2014).



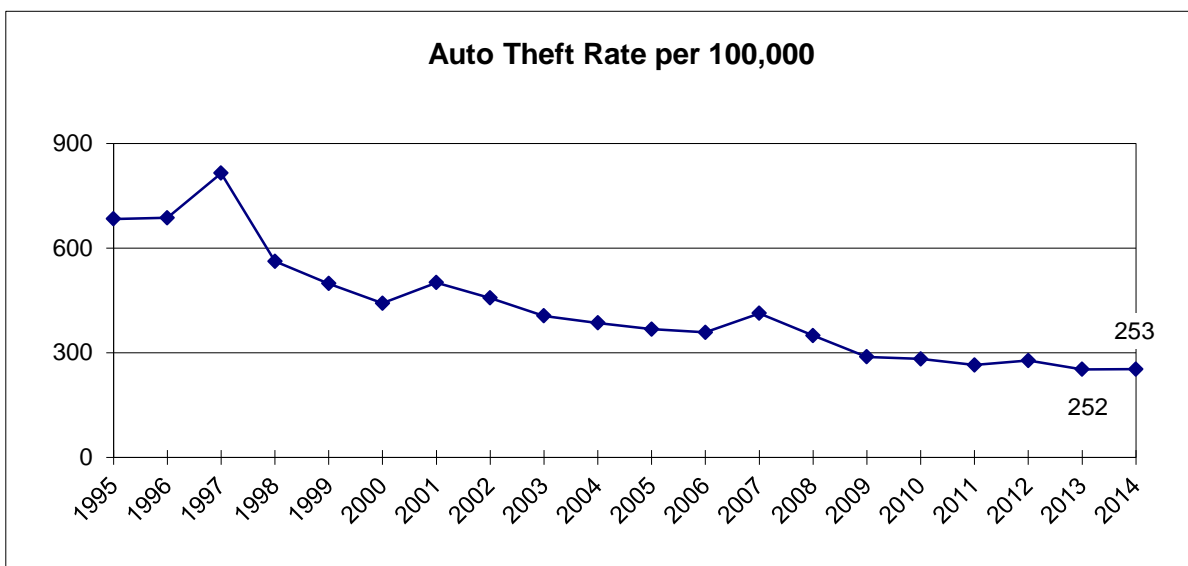
Austin's rate of thefts in 2014 was 10% higher than the average of US cities of the same size.



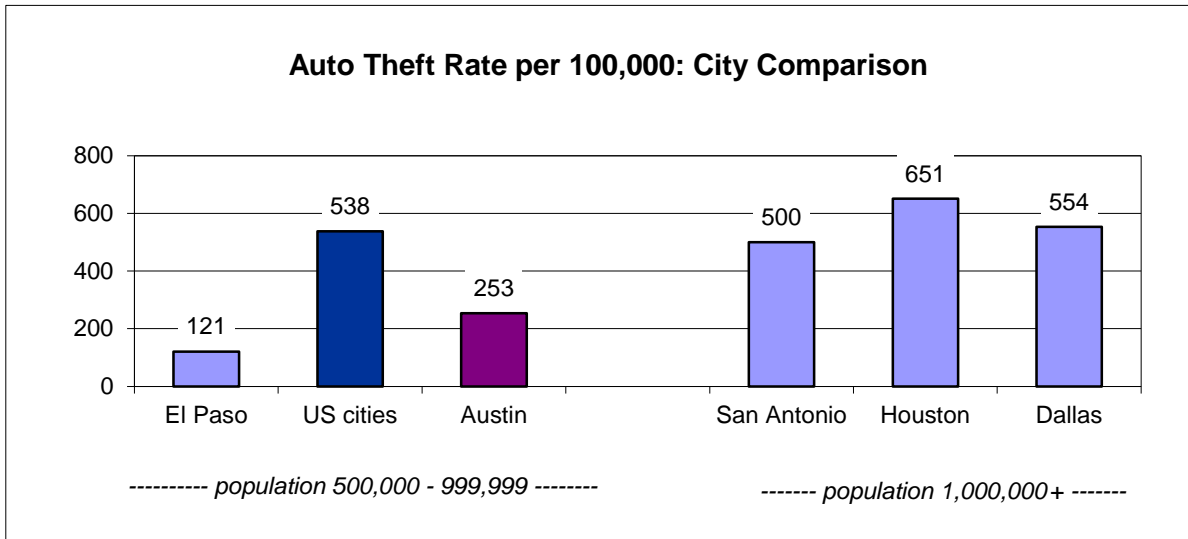
Of all thefts reported in 2014, 36% were burglary of vehicle, or BOV offenses. This was down from 2013, when 39% of thefts were BOV offenses.

Auto Theft

There were 2,288 reported auto thefts in 2014, up from 2,169 in 2013. The rate was 253 auto thefts per 100,000 residents, which was stable from the prior year.

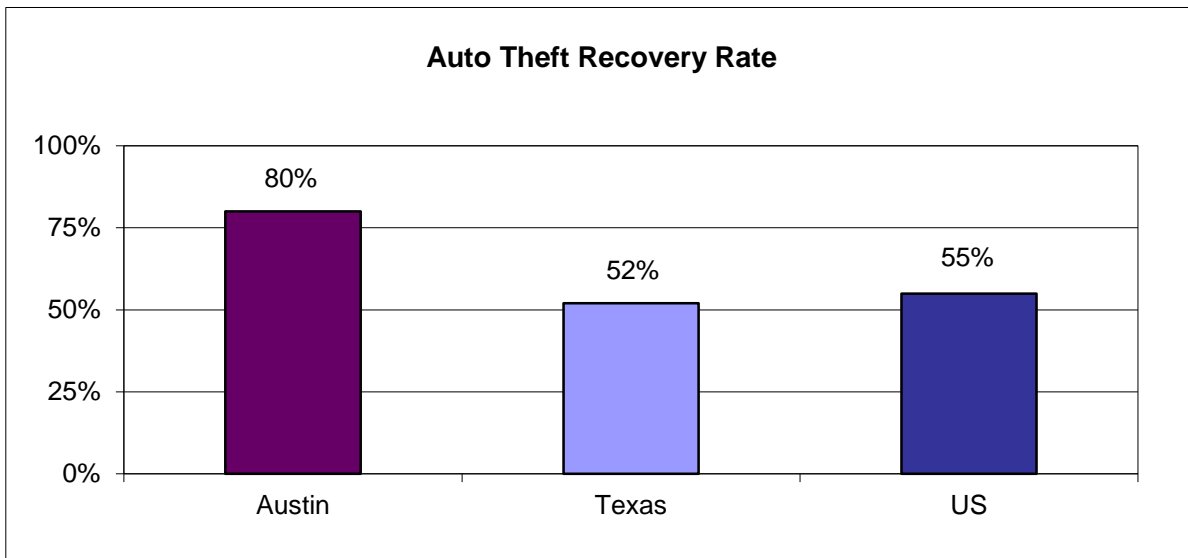


Austin's auto theft rate in 2014 was 53% lower than the average of US cities of the same size.



The most frequently stolen vehicles were Honda Accord sedans and trucks made by Ford, Chevrolet, and GMC. Together, they represent 33% of all stolen vehicles where the make and model were known.

In terms of recovery, of all vehicles stolen in 2014, 80% were successfully recovered; this recovery rate is unchanged from 2013. Austin's recovery rate is higher than those of both Texas and the US (includes all US cities).



Solving Crime

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

Part I Index Crimes	% of Crimes Cleared by Arrest or Exception	
	Austin	US Cities (pop 500,000 - 999,999)
Murder	66%	56%
Rape	54%	37%
Robbery	31%	23%
Aggravated Assault	61%	43%
Total Violent Crime	53%	36%
Burglary	11%	9%
Theft	15%	15%
Auto Theft	16%	8%
Total Property Crime	15%	13%

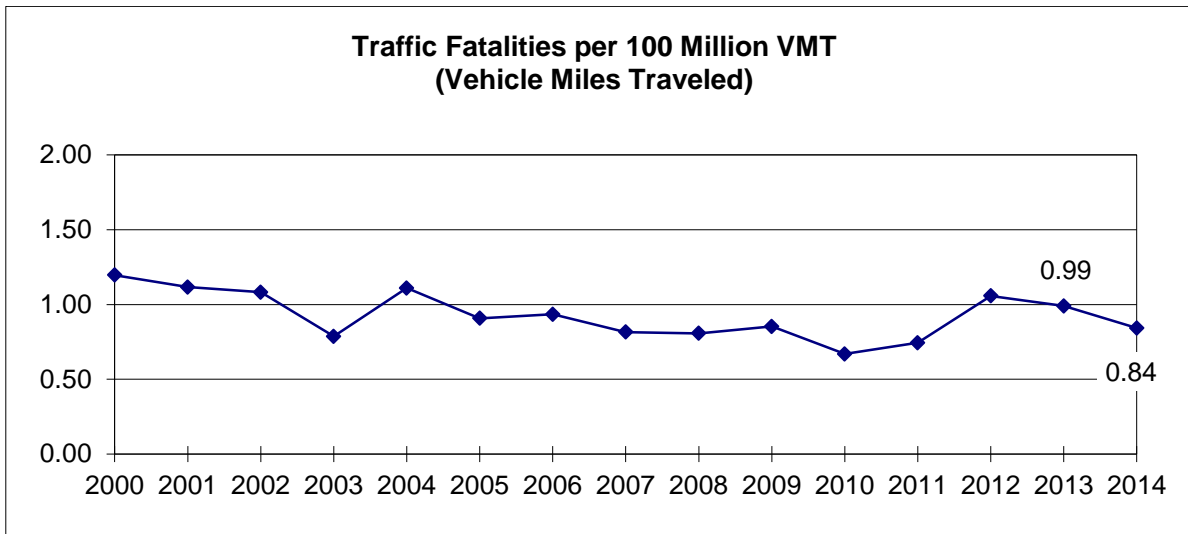
During 2014, Austin police solved, or cleared, 53% of the reported **violent crimes**, down from 57% in 2013. This compared with 36% for all large US cities (those with 500,000 to 999,999 residents). Austin outperformed other cities on clearing all violent crime types: murder, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault.

Solving **property crimes** is generally more difficult because many property crimes are discovered after the crime has occurred, with no known suspects or witnesses. During 2014, Austin solved 15% of property crimes, up from 13% in 2013. Austin outperformed other cities in clearing burglaries and auto thefts, and performed comparably to other cities in clearing thefts.

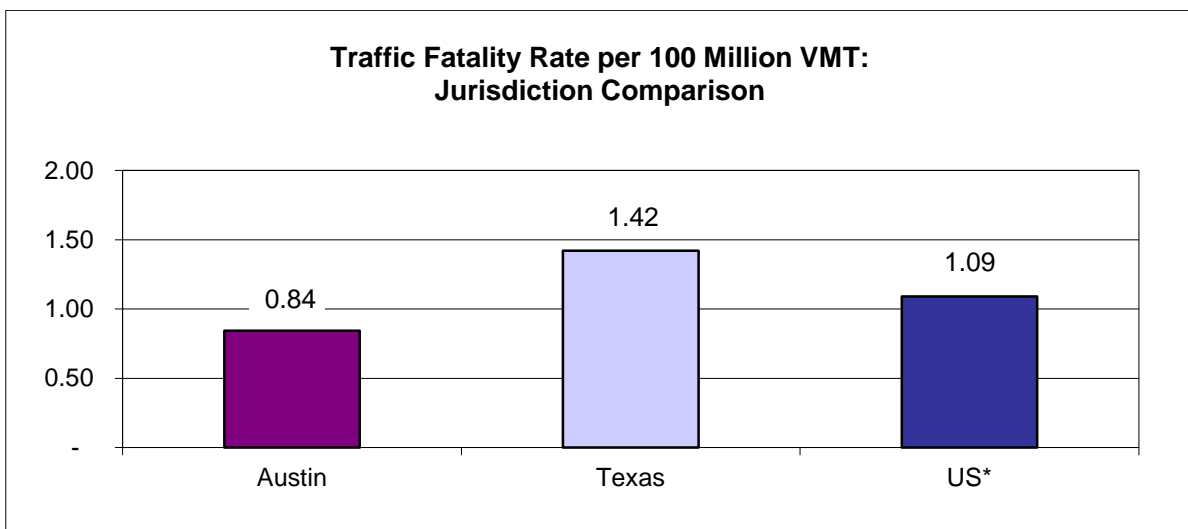
Traffic Fatalities

During 2014 there were 56 fatal collisions that resulted in 63 deaths, as compared with 72 fatal collisions that resulted in 75 deaths in 2013.

The 2014 traffic fatality rate was .84 fatalities per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT), as compared with the rate of .99 in 2013.

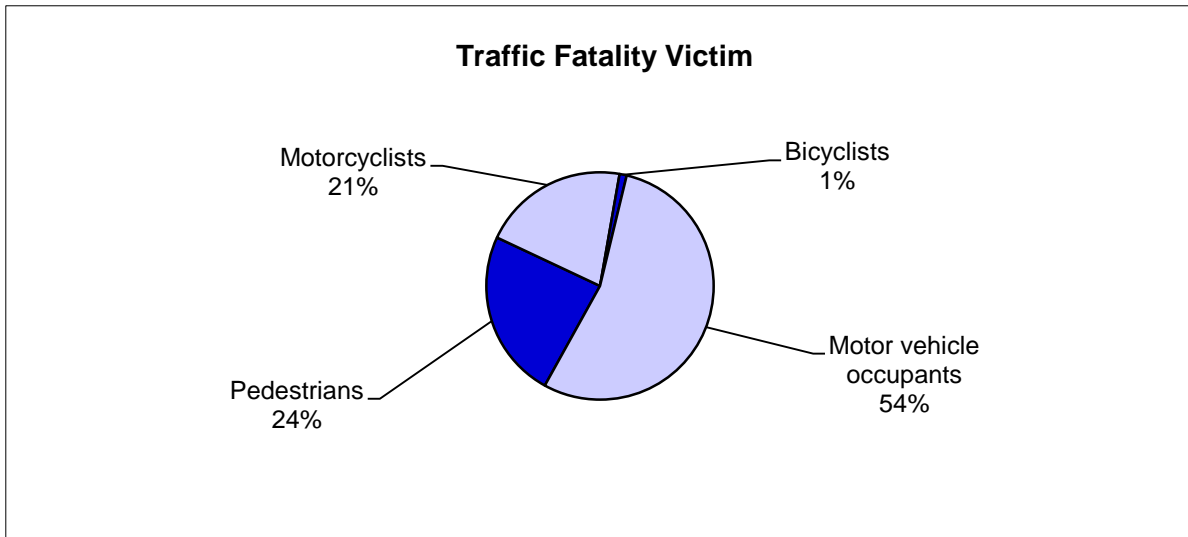


Austin's rate of .84 fatalities per 100 million VMT was lower than the rates for both Texas (1.42) and the US (includes all US cities, 1.09).

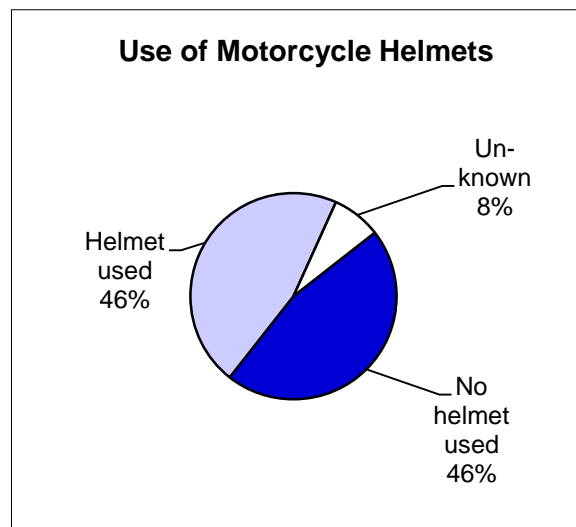
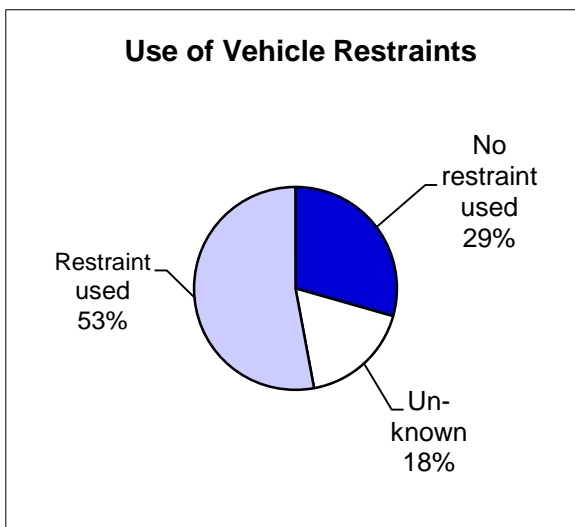


* 2013 US statistics are the most current data available from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

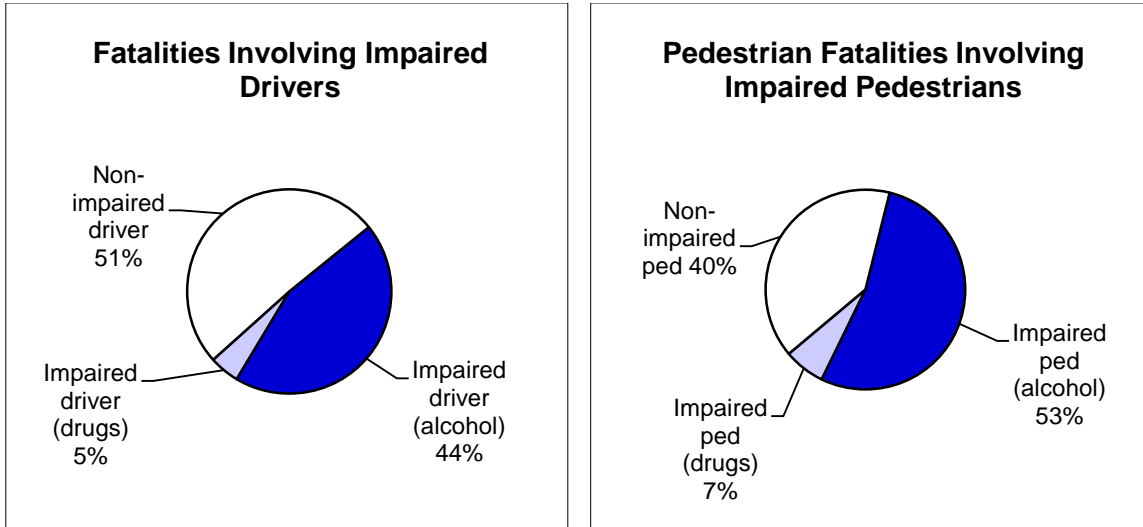
In 2014, most traffic fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants (34, or 54%), followed by pedestrians (15, or 24%), motorcyclists (13, or 21%) and bicyclists (one, or 1%). Similarly, in 2013, most traffic fatalities involved motor vehicle occupants (41, or 55%), followed by pedestrians (22, or 29%), followed by motorcyclists (11, or 15%) and bicyclists (one, or 1%).



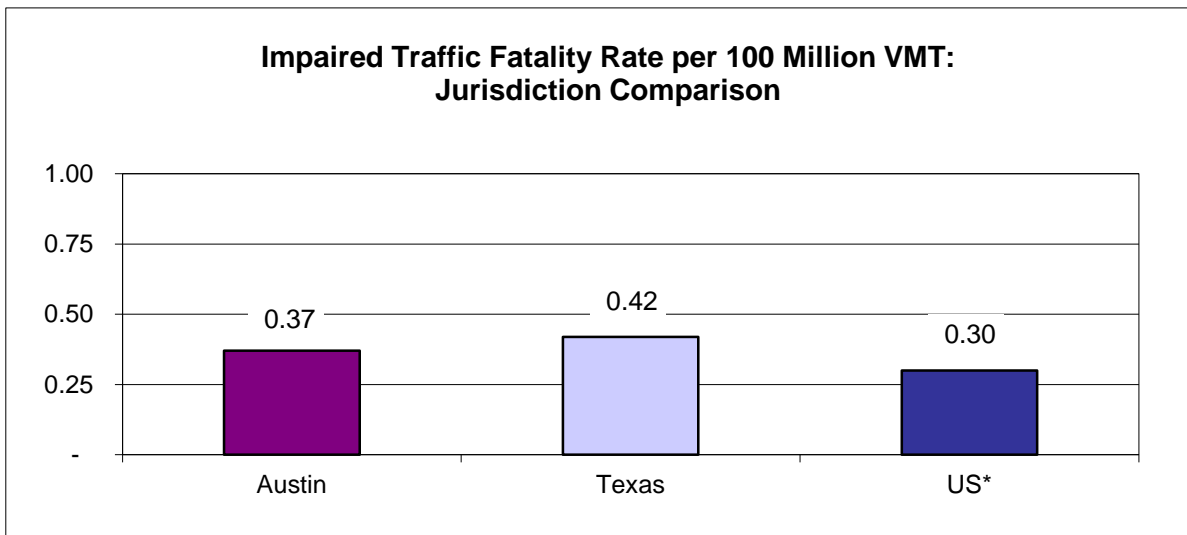
Of all motor vehicle fatalities in 2014, 10 (or 29%) victims were not using restraints, as compared with 16 (or 39%) victims in 2013. Of all motorcycle fatalities, six (or 46%) victims were not wearing helmets, as compared with four (or 36%) in 2013.



Of all fatalities in 2014, 28 (or 44%) involved an alcohol-impaired driver, as compared with 23 (or 31%) in 2013. Of all pedestrian fatalities in 2014, eight (or 53%) involved an alcohol-impaired pedestrian, as compared with 12 (or 55%) in 2013.



Austin's rate of traffic fatalities involving driver alcohol impairment is .37 per 100 million vehicle miles traveled (VMT). That rate is lower than that for Texas (.42), but higher than the rate for the US (.30).



* 2013 US statistics are the most current data available from National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA).

In 2014, 20 (or 36%) fatal crashes involved speed, as compared with 16 (or 22%) in 2013. And in 2014, 29 (or 52%) fatal crashes occurred on freeways (IH-35, Mo-Pac, US Hwy 183, and State Hwy 71/290 West), as compared with 33 (or 46%) in 2013.

