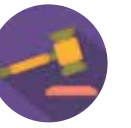


# PUBLIC SAFETY



## Public Safety

When a critical issue or danger arises, we know not to call Ghostbusters or the little pups with paw-patrol, but 911. It is the responsibility of the local government to serve and protect the health safety, safety and welfare of its citizens and businesses. The safety of a community is fundamental to the wellbeing of its residents, economy, and longevity.

In today's world there are critical threats we must keep an eye out for: domestic and international terrorism, drastic shifts in weather patterns, rising sea levels, and more recently- pandemics such as COVID-19. In response to these, a successful government employs departments and passes ordinances in effort to sustain the safety and health of its community. Even in less intense moments of day-to-day life, it is the responsibility of the local government to aid in incidents such as criminal activity, car accidents, house fires, and downed power lines. Generally, for municipalities and local governments public safety includes fire protection, emergency management services, and law enforcement.

## Emergency Management

Chatham County Emergency Management Agency (CEMA) services all of Chatham County to include Pooler and is responsible for the welfare of the County in the midst and aftermath of major disasters and emergencies.

The agency has developed a Disaster Recovery Plan, Emergency Operations Plan, and Hazard Mitigation Plan to proactively provide protection and courses of action in response to a number of different hazards/emergencies. In the Hazard Mitigation Plan, CEMA has listed severe weather, extreme heat, and flooding as the most likely hazards to impact the county.



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### HAZARD MITIGATION PLANNING

Hazard mitigation planning reduces loss of life and property by minimizing the impact of disasters. Mitigation plans are key to breaking the cycle of disaster damage and reconstruction

—FEMA



## Law Enforcement

Law Enforcement in Pooler provides full service public safety and law enforcement services to its citizens and visitors. City of Pooler's Police Department employs 42 sworn officers.

The Pooler Police Department's mission is to protect life and property through the maintenance of peace and order, and the provision of law enforcement services.

## Police Stats and Trends

While the City of Pooler has grown, despite the growth and increase in Police service calls, Part I crimes, which includes offenses such as homicide, aggravated assault, robbery, larceny, and automobile theft have decreased steadily over the past three years.

While Part I crimes are decreasing according to data, there has been a surge in traffic accidents and hazards associated with vehicles on Pooler's roadway systems. According to Pooler Police data from 2014–2019, vehicle wrecks have increased year after year. According to data, from January 1, 2014 to September 24, 2019, there were 2,541 vehicle wrecks.

This information reveals one major thing: there is a need for an alternate solution to accommodating traffic and congestion in Pooler's roadways. While public safety is most often a reactive measure to an issue, solving the issue of traffic and in turn traffic accidents will require a proactive approach in which Pooler rethinks its roadway design, transportation planning, and landuse.

Part I Crime Records

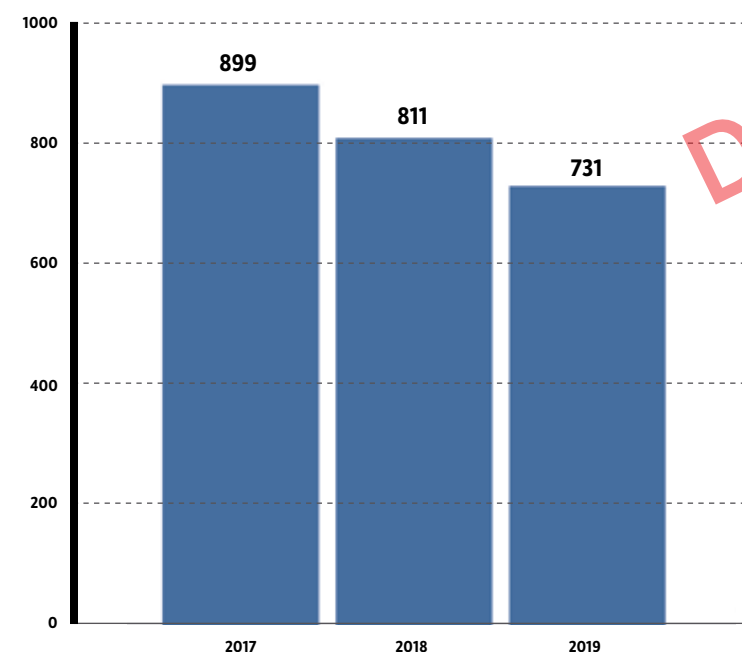


Figure 8.13–Pooler's Part I Reported Crime Records



## Fire

The City of Pooler, GA and the unincorporated fire district has a population of more than 26K, and encompasses an area of 30 square miles. During the day the population can swell to greater than 50,000. There are just over 8,000 occupied dwellings, of which, about a third are rental units, there are also more than 1000 commercial/industrial buildings. Perhaps, the most notable features are Interstate 95 & Interstate 16 that bring over 45 million vehicles through the city annually.

The City of Pooler Fire-Rescue Department stands committed to the core values of integrity, valor, loyalty, professionalism and dedication.

The City of Pooler's Department of Fire-Rescue provides fire protection and emergency response services to the businesses and residences within Pooler and the greater Savannah area upon request. The Pooler Fire Department is comprised of 57 firefighters and 4 fire stations that provide Fire Suppression, Rescue, Prevention services to the City.

Firefighters that make up the Operational Staff of the City of Pooler's Department of Fire-Rescue are uniformed members of the International Association of Fire Fighters, representing the Professional Firefighters Association of Pooler, Local 574.

Although Pooler currently does not have a fire fee, the City should evaluate the need to establish a fire fee as a financing option to provide an equitable, stable and dedicated revenue source to support fire services.

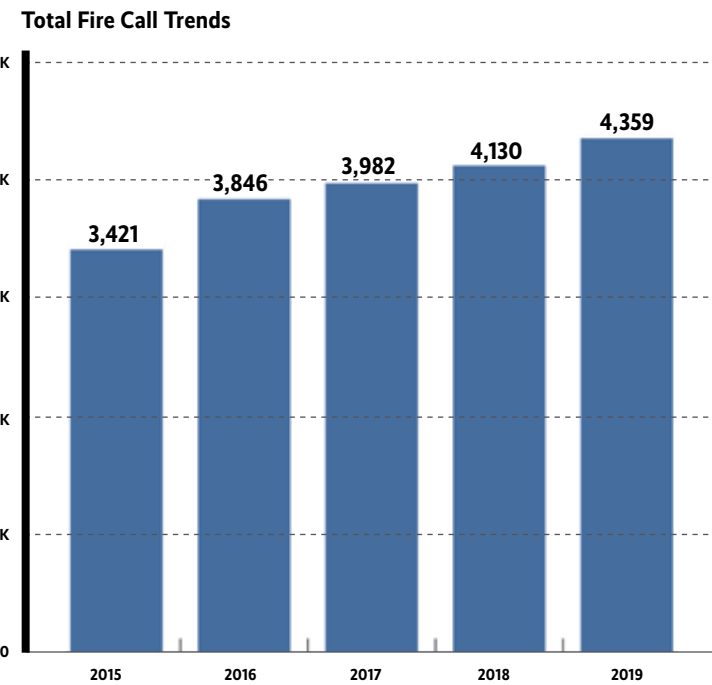


Figure 8.14–City of Pooler's Total Fire Calls

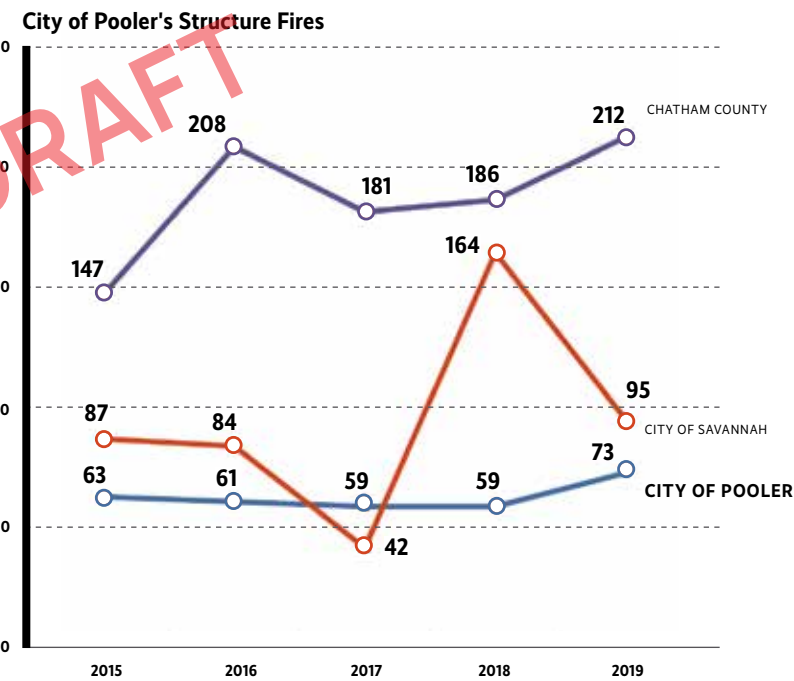
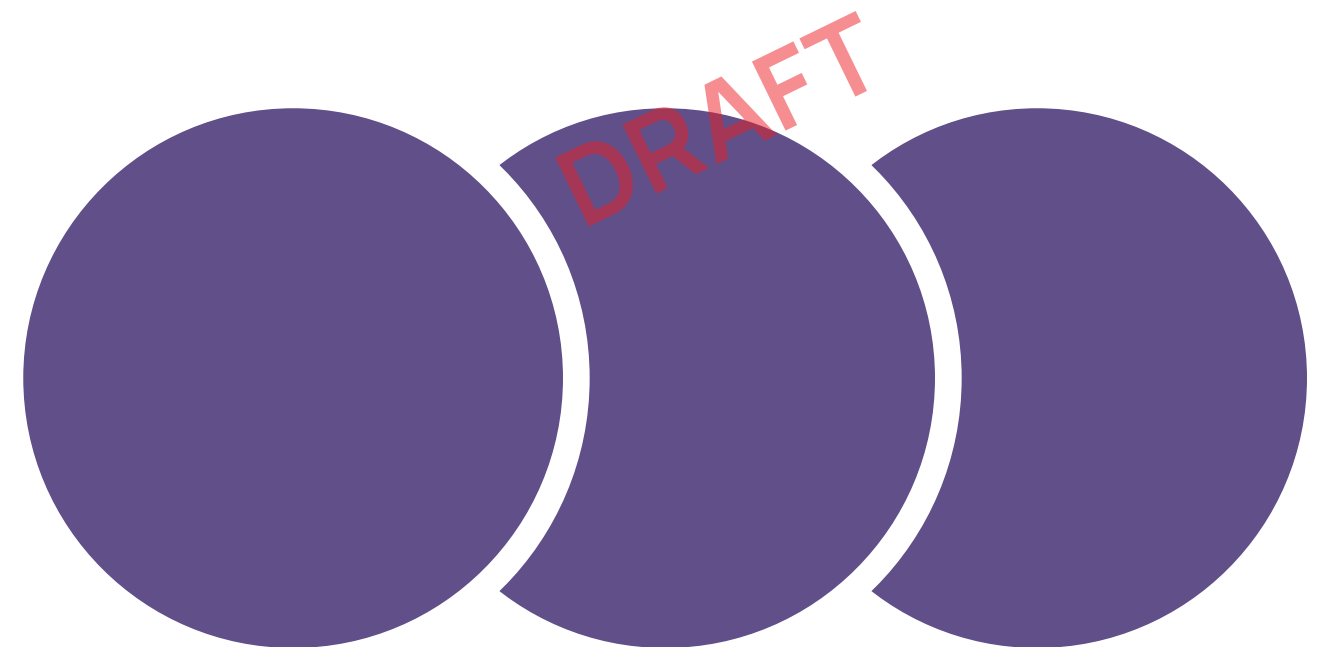


Figure 8.15–City of Pooler's Structure Fires



# PUBLIC SAFETY GOALS

## GOAL 1

### *Reduce crime, particularly violent crimes*

Reducing crime is a top priority for the police department and many members of the community. Lower rates of crime benefits residents, businesses, and the long term development of the area. At the neighborhood level, trust between officers and citizens is an essential component to improving safety. Addressing the root causes of crime- poverty, lack of education and other opportunities, etc.- is vital to reducing crime in the community

#### Objectives:

- Build trust between law enforcement and residents
- Focus enforcement in high crime areas
- Expand visibility of police to ensure all residents feel safe
- Identify and support programs to prevent juvenile involvement in criminal activities
- Identify and support programs to rehabilitate individuals that have been in the judicial system to break the cycle of repeat offenders

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## GOAL 2

### *Integrate environmental design elements which discourage criminal behaviors into the planning and construction of public space*

Discussions about revitalizing commercial corridors and the provision of affordable housing often touch on the perception of safety. This concern about the risk of criminal activity is a barrier to people's willingness to visit commercial areas and neighborhoods. Research in the realm of environmental psychology and criminal justice shows that specific physical attributes of a space can influence the incidence of crime. Collectively, this body of knowledge and practices is referred to as Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)

#### Objectives:

- Incorporate CPTED principals in public projects where possible
- Encourage the incorporation of CPTED principals in private projects with elements that are adjacent to or function like public spaces

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### GOAL 3

#### *Provide efficient and premier emergency response service (Police, Fire and EMS)*

A safe community creates better neighborhoods, economic development and overall quality of life for all residents. It is a primary responsibility of a municipality to ensure public safety that protects and serves its residents. Chatham County and the City of Savannah coordinate their efforts to ensure that police, fire, and emergency management services are provided for all residents. It is imperative to continuously assess the efforts of the service providers and identify strengths and weaknesses and adjust as needed.

#### **Objectives:**

- Collaborative efforts between departments and jurisdictions
- Increase in tax or cost for services where appropriate
- Seek funding from state and federal level
- Ensure that the hiring process selects highly qualified candidates
- Establish rapport and trust within the community

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