



Crime Analysis

Taber Police Service

2024

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and

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INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of crime analysis within the Town of Taber, including contextual background on the community and the Taber Police Service. Due to the Town’s slow but steady growth, the community’s demographic and social composition undergoes minimal changes, offering a stable foundation for effective crime analysis.

The Taber Police Service has been serving the Town of Taber since 1904. The Town of Taber is situated geographically 52 kilometers east of Lethbridge, Alberta and 100 kilometers north of the Montana Alberta border. While Taber acts as a regional hub for the residents of the Municipal District of Taber; its population, according to the 2024 Alberta.ca Regional Dashboard stands at 9853 people. The Dashboard also states that Taber had a 5-year population growth of 9.3%, among the highest in Alberta.

The Taber Police Service operates under the oversight of the Taber Municipal Police Commission. The Police Act (2000) states that a police commission shall,

“Oversee the police service and for that purpose shall do the following:

- A) allocate funds that are provided by the council;
- B) establish policies providing for the efficient and effective policing;
- C) issue instructions, as necessary, to the chief of police in respect to the policies referred to in clause (b);
- D) ensure that sufficient persons are employed for the police service for the purpose of carrying out the functions of the police service.” (p.22)

The Taber Police has three primary functions: Policing Services, Public Safety Dispatch and Support, and Community Support. The regional E911 communications center handles calls for service in Taber and the M.D of Taber, dispatching the Taber Police and local and regional fire services, and forwarding ambulance calls to the Alberta Health Services Southern Communication Centre based out of Calgary. The center also forwards police calls outside the town to the RCMP. Additionally, Communication Operators monitor six Community Peace Officer programs throughout Alberta, as well as call taking/monitoring and dispatching for two Community Peace Officer programs. Taber Police Service Communications Operators' responsibilities do not end with the dispatch function. Their responsibilities also include administrative support of Taber Police members through file creation, court/release document preparation and data information gathering to name a few.

In terms of policing, the Taber Police Service provides 24/7 service, including a Regional Community Standards Unit (CSU), which enforces municipal bylaws. Since October 2022, the CSU expanded its role, partnering with the M. D. of Taber to enforce bylaws in the M.D., including the hamlets of Enchant, Grassy Lake and Hays. The RCSU includes two full-time Police Constables and two full-time summer bylaw students.

As of 2024, the authorized strength of the Taber Police Service is 20 police officers. One officer position is funded by the Province of Alberta, while two officers are funded through and seconded to ALERT. The Service also employs 5 full-time and 3 part-time (Casual) Communication Operators, 1 Public Security Communication Manager, 1 administrative support position, 1 Auxiliary Police officer, a TPS Victim Services Unit, 4 part-time casual prisoner guards and a large volunteer complement.

In its community support role, the Taber Police Service collaborates with various community agencies and volunteers to foster safety and well-being within the community.

As Osborne (2001) noted, “analysis is necessary to understand the scope of a problem and to be certain the problem is actually a problem” (p.23). This highlights the importance of conducting regular crime analyses to verify the existence of crime-related issues in a community. Under Alberta’s police standards, each police service is required to perform an annual crime analysis.

For 2024, the Taber Police Service undertook its eighteenth annual crime analysis. This exercise aims to inform our stakeholders of prevailing crime trends within the Town of Taber and to facilitate the efficient allocation of resources. The Taber Police Service executive continuously monitors trends in criminal activity, which are reflected in reports to the Commission. Although crime analysis in smaller police services may not carry the same weight as in larger police services, it remains a valuable tool for ensuring a responsive and adaptive policing strategy.

RESEARCH METHODS

Data for this analysis was gathered through a comprehensive review of crime statistics reported to Statistics Canada via the Police Reporting and Occurrence System (PROS). We focused on a 5-year period, conducting manual searches of the database, with data spanning from January 1 to December 31 of each year. Crime reports were tallied and compared year-on-year, both numerically and visually through charts.

While crime reports may not directly reflect actual crime levels, we believe the results offer a reliable indication of reported crime within the community. Given the

rigorous data input process and scrutiny applied to our records management system, the analysis serves as a useful tool for making informed decisions regarding policing strategies.

RESULTS

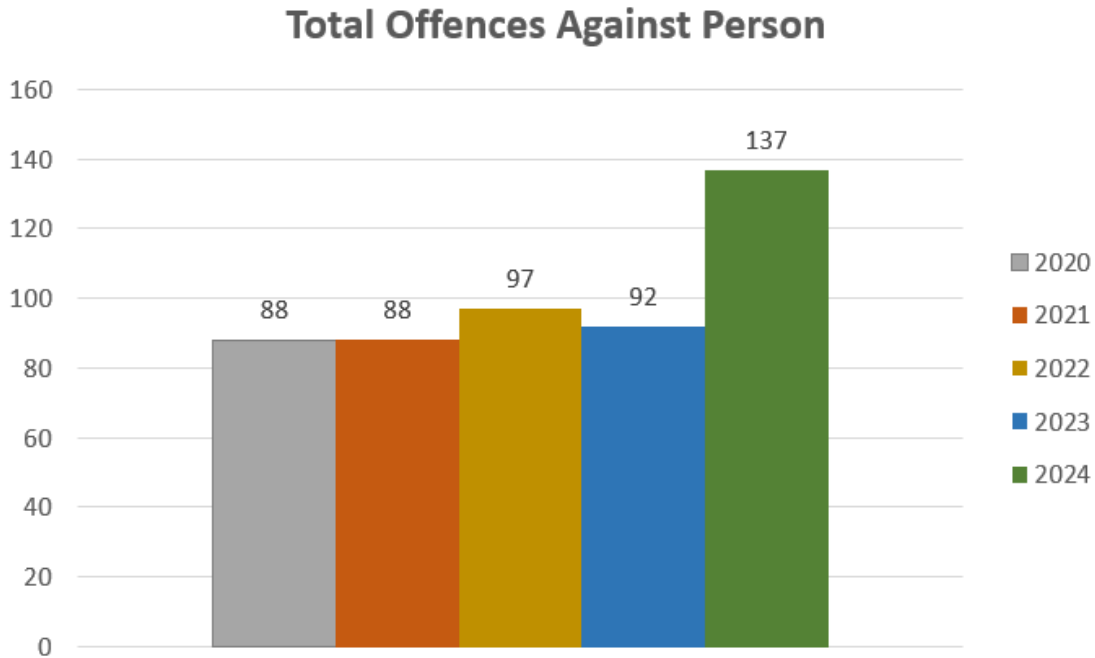
Crime reports are categorized into five primary areas: Offences Against the Person, Property Offences, Other Criminal Code offences, Drug Offences and Provincial Acts. The following table summarizes key findings from the 2024 analysis.

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>% of Difference 2023 to 2024</u>
OFFENCES AGAINST PERSONS						
HOMICIDE						
Attempted Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Murder	0	0	0	0	0	0%
Other	1	0	0	0	0	0%
TOTAL HOMICIDE	1	0	0	0	0	0%
ROBBERY	0	2	2	4	6	50%
ASSAULTS						
Sexual Assault	8	9	14	19	23	21%
Assault (Level 1)	60	48	57	50	76	52%
Assault Weap/Bodyhrm	6	20	10	12	19	58%
Aggravated Assault	3	3	2	0	2	200%
Assault on Police	6	5	8	6	6	0%
TOTAL ASSAULTS	83	85	91	87	126	45%
KIDNAPPING / HOSTAGE / ABDUCTIONS	4	1	4	1	7	600%
TOTAL OFFENCES AGAINST PERSONS	88	88	97	92	139	51%
PROPERTY OFFENCES						
BREAK AND ENTER	33	23	57	58	33	-43%
THEFTS OF MOTOR VEHICLES	19	24	12	21	18	-14%
THEFTS OVER \$5000	7	4	6	5	11	120%
THEFTS UNDER \$5000	156	97	122	179	197	10%
POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY	26	12	19	29	14	-52%
FRAUDS	53	68	46	84	67	-20%
TOTAL PROPERTY OFFENCES	294	228	262	376	340	-10%

	<u>2020</u>	<u>2021</u>	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>	<u>% of Difference 2023 to 2024</u>
OTHER CRIMINAL CODE						
PROPERTY DAMAGE	125	94	95	131	95	-27%
DISTURB THE PEACE	107	124	134	143	126	-12%
CRIMINAL HARASSMENT	10	15	7	15	14	-7%
UTTERING THREATS	40	40	42	45	48	7%
BREACH OF PROBATION/BAIL VIOLATION	13	15	109	130	130	0%
IMPAIRED OPERATION	34	30	36	33	35	6%
TOTAL OTHER CRIMINAL CODE OFFENCES	329	318	423	497	448	-10%
DRUG OFFENCES						
COCAINE POSSESSION	2	2	4	6	5	-17%
COCAINE TRAFFICKING	7	4	9	8	13	63%
METHAMPHETAMINE POSSESSION	10	8	6	5	8	60%
METHAMPHETAMINE TRAFFICKING	1	3	2	1	2	100%
OPIOD POSSESSION	2	0	4	2	0	-100%
OPIOD TRAFFICKING	2	0	4	0	2	200%
OTHER	4	5	1	0	1	100%
TOTAL DRUG OFFENCES	28	22	30	22	31	41%
PROVINCIAL ACTS						
CANNABIS POSSESSION UNDER 30g	17	6	10	5	2	-60%
CHILD WELFARE	22	6	11	15	5	-67%
LIQUOR ACT	79	73	53	92	58	-37%
MENTAL HEALTH ACT	103	112	98	122	102	-16%
OTHER PROVINCIAL STATS	1567	1816	1710	1599	1466	-8%
COLLISIONS	100	127	132	130	114	-12%
MUNICIPAL BYLAWS	467	381	517	646	514	-20%
TOTAL PROVINCIAL ACTS	2355	2521	2531	2609	2261	-13%

OFFENCES AGAINST PERSON

The Offences Against Persons category includes crimes where individuals are the direct victims, such as assaults, sexual assault, abductions, etc.



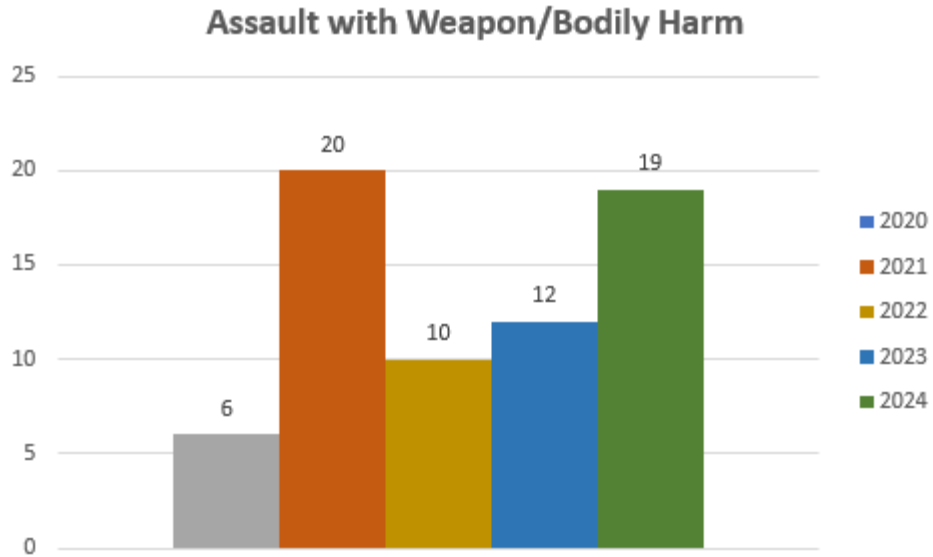
The 2024 crime analysis revealed a 49% increase in the overall rate of these offences. Even with this increase, residents in Taber had only a 1.4% chance of becoming victims of an offence against the person, based on the 2024 population of 9853.



Of the 10 offence types in this category, six increased in 2024.

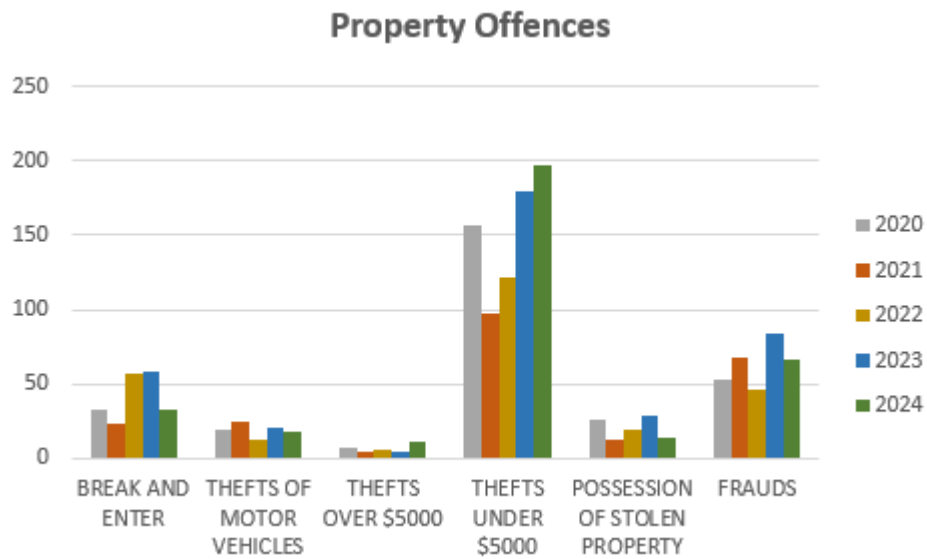
Kidnapping/Hostage/Abductions increased 600%, from 1 in 2023 to 7 in 2024. However, of the seven reported, four were deemed unfounded and the three remaining were cleared by charge. Aggravated Assault was the next highest increase (200%); however, the increase was a return to average. Assault With Weapon/Bodily Harm increased 58%, from 12 to 19 and Assault rose 52%, from 50 to 76. Robbery increased 50%, from four in 2023 to six in 2024. Of the six reported, all six were cleared by charge.

Assaults on Police remained consistent at six. None of the 10 categories decreases.



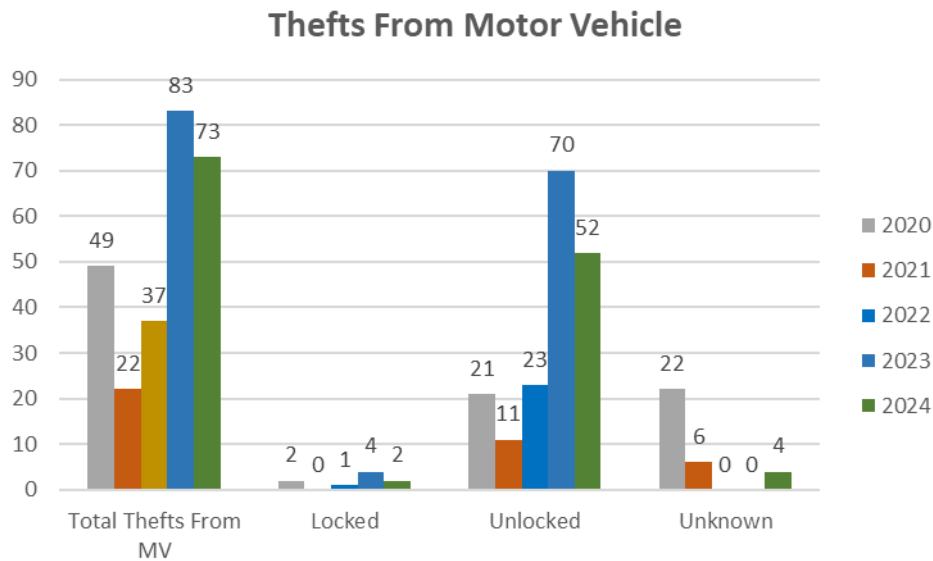
PROPERTY OFFENCES

Property Offences involve crimes related to stolen items, including Theft, Fraud, Break and Enter, etc. There was an overall 10% decrease in Property Offences in 2024.



There were 340 reports in 2024 compared to 376 in 2023. This decrease is still above the reported in occurrences in 2020, 2021 and 2022.

The largest increase was in Thefts Over \$5000 (120%), from 5 occurrences in 2023 to 11 in 2024. Three of those occurrences were unfounded with only one of the remaining occurrences cleared by charge. The largest decrease was Possession of Stolen Property (-52%), from 29 occurrences in 2023 to 14 in 2024. The second largest decrease was Break and Enter (-43%), from 58 occurrences in 2023 to 33 in 2024.

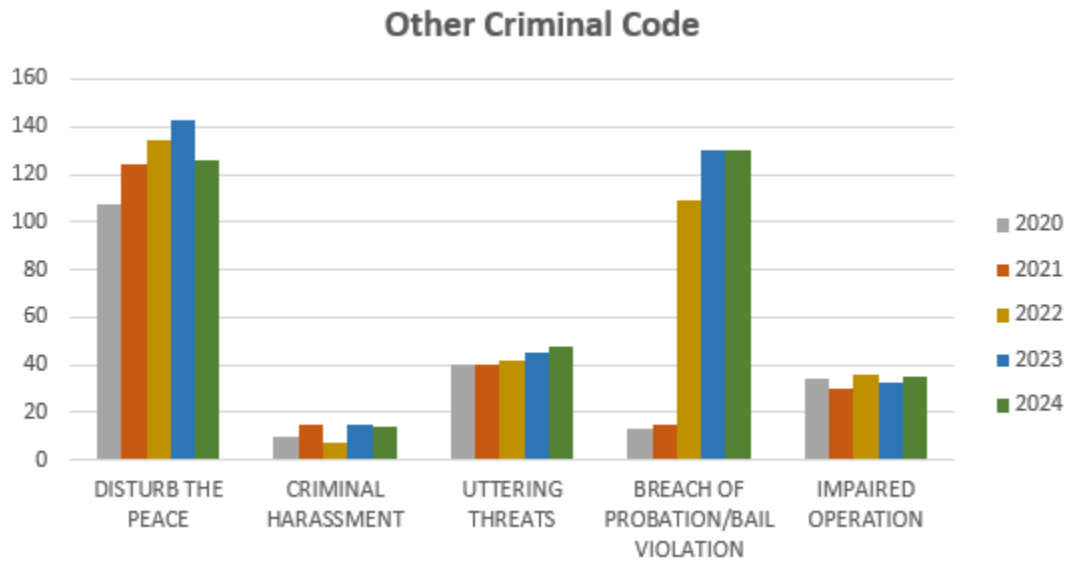


Thefts from Motor Vehicles accounted for 37% (73 out of 197) of all reports of Thefts Under \$5,000. Of the 73 reports of thefts from motor vehicles, 52 occurrences involved items being stolen from the interior of unlocked vehicles, 8 involved license plates being stolen, 5 involved thefts from the exterior of vehicles and 4 were unfounded complaints. Only 2 of the occurrences revealed some type of forced entry. As in years

past, these statistics confirm that ensuring that doors are locked when vehicles are left unattended would likely decrease the number of reportable thefts within these categories.

OTHER CRIMINAL CODE

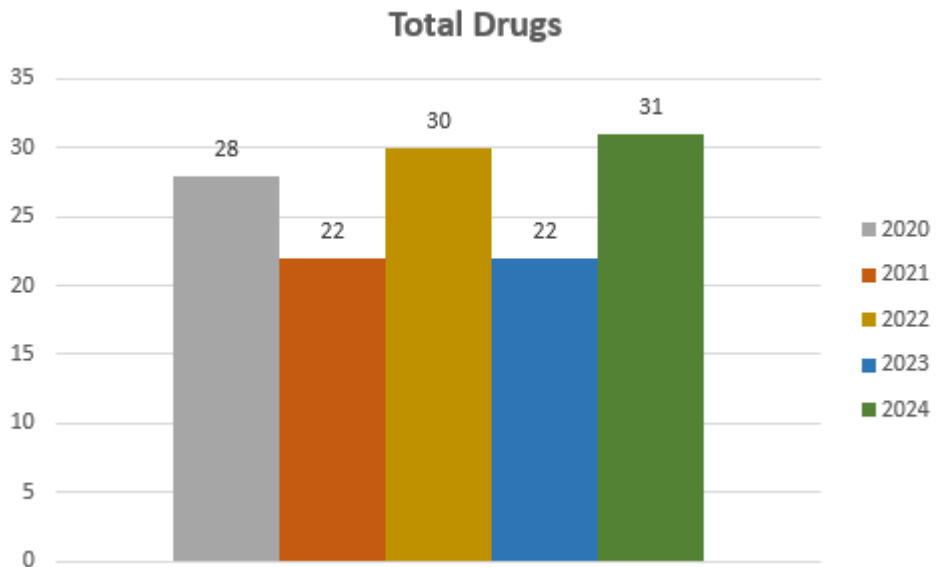
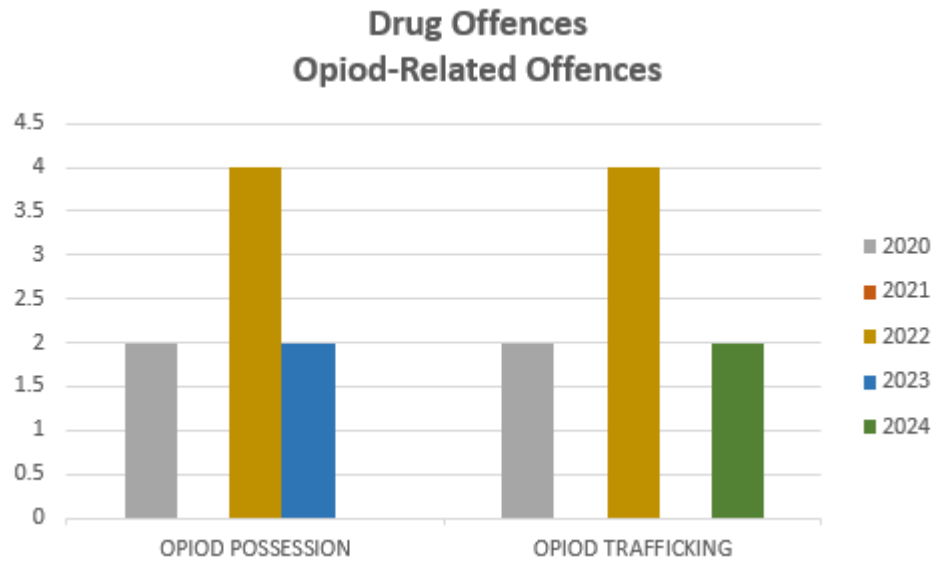
Although not all encompassing, this category includes crimes such as Disturbing the Peace, Criminal Harassment, Breach of Probation, Impaired Driving, etc. Other Criminal Code offences decreased 10% in 2024.



The largest increase noted was Uttering Threats (7%), from 45 occurrences in 2023 to 48 in 2024. Property Damage showed the largest decrease (-27%), from 131 occurrences in 2023 to 95 in 2024. This year's numbers are in line with both 2021 and 2022.

DRUG OFFENCES

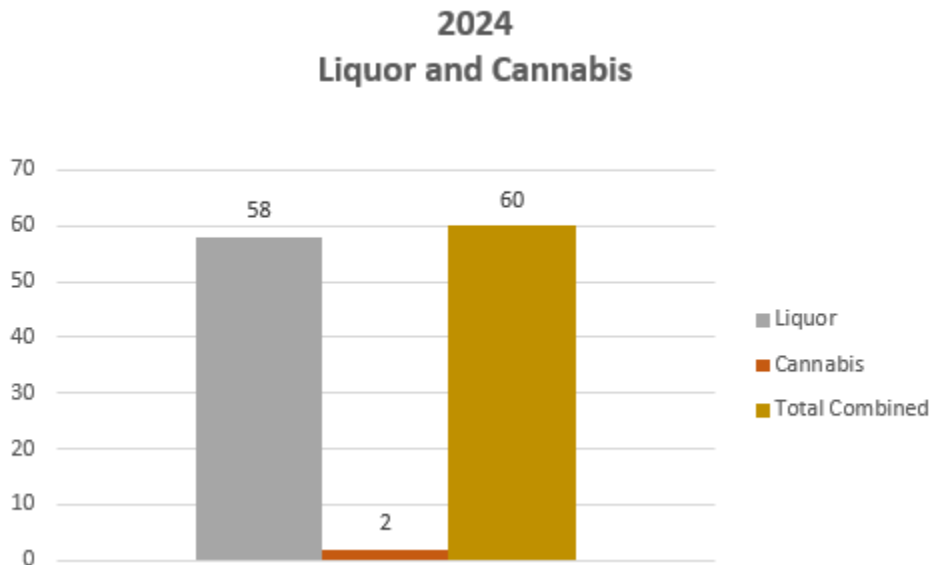
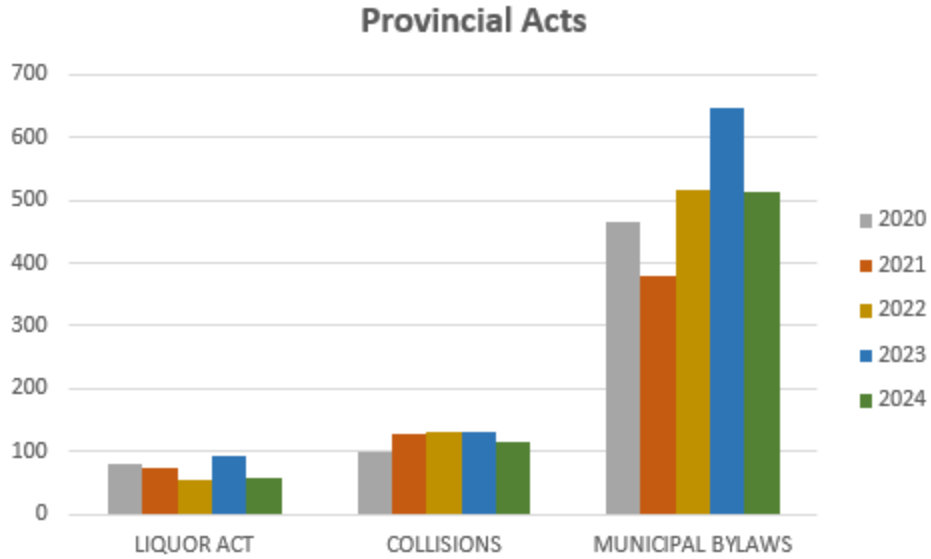
Drug related offences, including possession and trafficking of illegal drugs increased by 41%, from 22 occurrences in 2023 to 31 in 2024.



Almost every category increased in this report; Opioid Trafficking rose from 0 occurrences in 2023 to 2 in 2024, and Methamphetamine Trafficking rose from 1 occurrence in 2023 to 2 in 2024. Cocaine Trafficking rose 63%, from 8 occurrences in 2023 to 13 in 2024; Methamphetamine Possession rose 60%, from 5 occurrences in 2023 to 8 in 2024. It is believed that these increases are a direct result of our dedicated General Investigative position.

PROVINCIAL ACTS

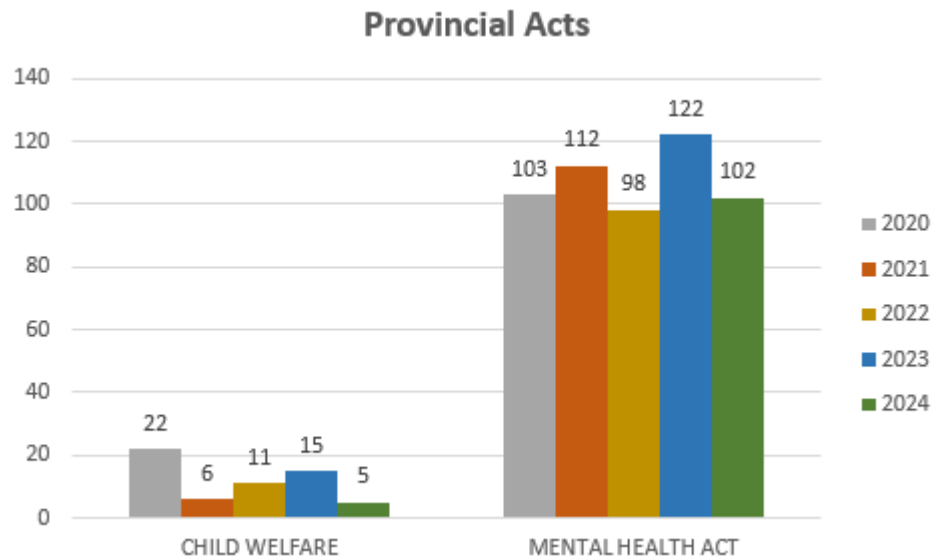
Although not criminal complaints, a large proportion of police resources are dedicated to the enforcement and investigation of Provincial Statutes. Reports under Provincial Statutes, include the Child Youth Enhancement Act, the Gaming, Liquor, and Cannabis Act, and the Mental Health Act saw an overall 13% decrease in 2024. Notably, the Child Welfare category dropped by 67%. Each report made to the Taber Police Service of a child welfare nature is shared with the Taber CFS office to ensure each organization involved can fulfill their mandates and responsibilities. South Region Children and Family Services continues to be an important stakeholder/partner of the Taber Police Service in ensuring the safety of the children within our community. Further to this, our partnership with the Chinook Child and Youth Advocacy Center will foster a multidisciplinary team approach to these types of calls to service.



Cannabis Possession dropped by 60% and Liquor Act reports dropped 37% from 92 occurrences in 2023 to 58 in 2024. Other Provincial Stats dropped 8%, which may correlate directly to our patrol team being three officers short for a quarter of 2024. This category is made up of 14 offences listed under the Traffic Safety Act. Some of these offences are Moving Traffic Violations, Fail to Stop or Remain at an Accident Scene, and

Motor Vehicle Insurance Coverage Violations, to name a few. Other Provincial Stats has shown a steady decline since 2021.

Municipal Bylaw occurrences decreased 20% in 2024 to 514 occurrences as compared to 646 in 2023. This may be attributed to the Community Standards Unit being an officer short almost half of 2024 with a bylaw student assisting.



While Mental Health calls for service were expected to continue to rise, surprisingly this category decreased 16%, from 122 occurrences in 2023 to 102 in 2024.

CONCLUSION

The 2024 crime analysis for the Town of Taber provides an insightful overview of crime trends and law enforcement performance. The data shows that while certain crime categories, such as offences against persons, saw notable increases, particularly in aggravated assault and robbery, the overall crime rate remains relatively low, with a 1.4%

chance of residents becoming victims of personal offences. A significant increase in property crimes was recorded, although the total number of property offences declined overall by 10%. Specifically, thefts from motor vehicles were a notable concern, with many cases stemming from unlocked vehicles, underscoring the importance of preventative measures in reducing crime. Additionally, there were substantial fluctuations within the drug offence category, indicating a rising challenge in addressing trafficking, particularly with opioids and methamphetamines.

While property offences decreased overall, certain crime types saw significant increases, such as thefts over \$5000, which rose by 120%. This highlights the shifting landscape of property crime in the region, with a need for focused attention on higher-value thefts. On the other hand, the decline in possession of stolen property and break-and-enter offences reflects a positive shift in crime prevention or possibly improved law enforcement outcomes. The significant role of the Taber Police Service in tackling both municipal and regional challenges is evident, with their expanded role in enforcing municipal bylaws alongside policing duties. The decrease in municipal bylaw occurrences may be attributed to staffing challenges within the Community Standards Unit, suggesting the importance of consistent resource allocation for sustained enforcement effectiveness.

Lastly, the analysis reveals important trends in provincial acts and mental health-related calls. Although there was a decrease in reports under the Provincial Acts category, including a sharp drop in child welfare cases, this reduction does not necessarily indicate a decrease in the underlying social issues. In fact, the shift may reflect the ongoing collaboration between the Taber Police Service and other community agencies, such as South Region Children and Family Services, to handle these cases more effectively.

Mental health-related calls for service, despite expectations for an increase, decreased by 16%, which could suggest better integration of resources or other unknown factors at play. Overall, the 2024 analysis serves as a valuable tool for the Taber Police Service to understand crime trends, allocate resources effectively, and adapt policing strategies in response to emerging issues in the community.

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