

PRESS RELEASE
September 21, 2004

MASON COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
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TO: KMAS, KRXY, SHELTON-MASON COUNTY JOURNAL, THE OLYMPIAN, SHELTON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, NORTH MASON CHAMBER OF COMMERCE, CITY OF SHELTON, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COUNCIL, THE SUN

RE: Crime Down Ten Percent

Crime statistics published by the Washington Association of Sheriffs and Police Chiefs indicate both the rate of crime against people (violent crime) and property have declined markedly since 1998 in unincorporated area of Mason County. The rate per 1,000 population of crime against people has dropped 10.3%, from 48.7 per thousand in 1998 to 43.7 per thousand in 2003, the last reported year. Crime against property for the same period has declined 10.1% from 45.7 per thousand in 1998 to 41.1 per thousand in 2003.

“Although it is impossible to know exactly why this is happening, it is clear this is a good thing. Since 2000, the Commissioners have added four deputy positions in the Sheriff’s office compared to reductions in other areas. Public safety is this Board of Commissioners number one concern and the fact the rate of crime is down is good for our citizens,” said Commissioner Herb Baze.

Criminal Justice consumes far and away most of the Current Expense budget of Mason County, close to 64% in 2004, excluding Community Development which is entirely funded by fee income and grants.

“The Sheriff, his staff, and all the other dedicated people who work in criminal justice should be proud of the job they do for the citizens of our County,” noted Commissioner Wes Johnson.

The unincorporated area of Mason County, which excludes the City of Shelton, compares favorably to Washington State which has also seen a decline in the rate of crime over the same period of 9.6% and 8.9% respectively.

Criminal Justice encompasses many areas. The original Mason County 2004 adopted budget provides for the following: Sheriff’s Offices (\$7,045,665), District Court (\$653,804), Probation Services (\$704,234), Clerk of Superior Court (\$573,715), Juvenile Services (\$168,971), Juvenile Detention (\$733,246), Prosecutor (\$866,332), Child Support Enforcement (\$162,808), Superior Court (\$860,202) and Family Court (\$2,500).

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