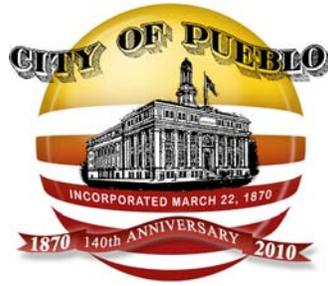


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Pueblo Municipal Court

PUEBLO MUNICIPAL COURT 2010 ANNUAL REPORT



MISSION

The City of Pueblo Municipal Court's mission is to provide an efficient, equitable, and impartial forum to hear and resolve alleged violations of the City of Pueblo Municipal Code and to effectively and efficiently impose and collect fines, costs, and penalties due the City of Pueblo.

OBJECTIVES

- ❖ To make customer service the number one priority and to make the Municipal Court experience a user-friendly, expeditious, and efficient process, whether the contact is personal, by phone, mail, e-mail, electronic, or otherwise
- ❖ To resolve in a speedy fashion all trials to the Court within a three- to four-week period from arraignment and all jury trials within a two-month period from arraignment
- ❖ To continue the expansion of creative alternatives for adults and juveniles, including Juvenile Diversion Programming, Teen Court, Graffiti Removal/Community Service, Work Release, restorative justice, and otherwise
- ❖ To expand the use of computers, technology, and other automated solutions that impact the efficiency of the Court or access to the Court
- ❖ To maintain the transparency of the Court, whereby every defendant and every customer can expect to be treated the same as any other defendant and customer

RECENT ACCOMPLISHMENTS

OFFICIAL “COURT OF RECORD” DESIGNATION. Pueblo Municipal Court was one of only a few courts within the State of Colorado that was not a Court of Record. In November 2009, the Court purchased computer-generated audio recording equipment, and beginning January 1, 2010, the Court implemented a formal Court of Record designation. This change results in a more meaningful appeal process for defendants, improved accountability by the Court, provable integrity, and, ultimately, a more modern approach.

ELECTRONIC TRIAL SCHEDULING. One of the biggest challenges has always been scheduling trials to accommodate the schedules of various entities (the Court, prosecuting agencies, defendants, and witnesses). In January 2010, with the outstanding assistance of the City I.T. Department, the Court implemented an electronic trial scheduling system that merges the Court’s calendar with the prosecuting agencies and defendants, saving a great deal of time scheduling trials, reducing inconvenient continuances, and impacting City resources by avoiding prosecuting agency overtime.

RELOCATION OF OPERATIONS TO THE PUEBLO MUNICIPAL JUSTICE CENTER. In May 2010, the Municipal Court moved into the new Pueblo Municipal Justice Center. The Court’s portion of the facility is nearly 11,000 square feet of the most technologically advanced court facility west of the



Mississippi River. The facility utilizes state-of-the-art electronic dockets published on large monitors throughout the building, media access in the public areas, electronic whiteboards in the courtrooms, video conferencing between the jail and the courthouse, and the flexibility to access video conferencing events across the world. The move to the new facility was the culmination of years of planning and construction.

A great deal of thought and effort was put into creating a floor plan and atmosphere that promotes efficiencies for both customers and staff and that is aesthetically pleasing. The new facility includes an additional customer service counter, creating a total of six one-stop customer counters that expedite the flow of customers during high traffic periods. The new facility also includes a second Courtroom, Probation Offices, and Judge's Chambers, two much-needed attorney/client conference rooms, additional security, and natural lighting. The new facility has become a centerpiece in the community.



CRITICAL STAFFING CHANGE: In May 2010, the Court experienced a significant personnel change in the appointment of Lisa Coughlin as the Court Administrator. The Court has high expectations for this position, and under Lisa's leadership, we look forward to continued high standards in all areas, including case management, customer service, employee morale, electronic processes, training, cash handling, employee dress code, forms and communications, and policy development, as well as a strong focus on promoting the professionalism and integrity of the Court.

PHOTO RED LIGHT. On September 1, 2009, the Court formally implemented the use of Photo Red Light cameras throughout Pueblo. The Photo Red Light System has had an impact on the Court's workload. The Photo Red Light civil penalties are paid either online, at the counter, or at a special kiosk located within the Municipal Court facility. New processes were developed to handle customers, trials, collections, and all aspects of the photo red light tickets. The quality of the video and photos has been outstanding, thereby eliminating any doubts about the integrity of the system.

STAFF: Finally, the highlights and accomplishments of Municipal Court over the past eight years would not be possible without a truly dedicated staff. Processing the intricate details of criminal cases with patience and accuracy while hustling to assist long lines of unhappy customers is commonplace week after week. The staff at Municipal Court work very hard to achieve success and to help the department reach its goals.

CASE FILINGS

In 2010, the number of cases filed at the Court increased in several areas, including traffic and

parking violations. During the same period of time, the number of cases filed decreased in some areas, including adult general offense, juvenile general offense, and animal control offenses. There were a total of 33,623 cases filed at the Court in 2010 compared to 33,545 in 2009. Increases and decreases in filings seem to be directly proportional to law enforcement staffing and enforcement efforts. As a result, the Court staff continues to be pressed to manage and process a high volume of cases. A significant amount of overtime was required to maintain the existing caseload. Despite the increased workload, many customer service improvements have been made or maintained.

As indicated above, overall case filings decreased slightly; revenues decreased slightly as well (economy driven). Nonetheless, staff processed a significant amount of cash, checks, credit cards, and money orders throughout the year.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

Municipal Court provides a long list of customer services that are designed, in part, to educate and to assist citizens in fulfilling their obligations in a convenient, timely, and comfortable manner, including:

- ❑ Customers can pay fines and fees over the telephone with a credit card, enabling customers to make payments and/or clear warrants without appearing in person.
- ❑ In 2007, the Court contracted with TrafficPayment.com, enabling customers to pay their parking tickets online or by calling a toll free number 24 hours per day, 7 days per week.
- ❑ Informational pamphlets are available on 15 court-related topics, such as the arraignment process, deferred sentencing, trials, appeals, elderly drivers, graffiti laws, and a variety of others. Six of the more significant pamphlets are available in Spanish and more are forthcoming.
- ❑ Several public service announcements (PSA) on pertinent topics continue to air regularly on the Government Access Channel. These PSAs encourage public education and promote compliance of City ordinances.
- ❑ Our current facility is customer friendly and includes operational efficiency designs, such as a large customer waiting area and six cash register stations to better handle heavy dockets. For convenience, each cash register station offers “one-stop” customer service, so every portion of a case can be handled at one station during an appearance. The facility is ADA accessible and the aesthetics are pleasing to the staff and the public.
- ❑ The Probation Department continues to provide meaningful oversight of juvenile cases, increased juvenile programming, and expanded community service alternative programs



where parents can participate to assist their child in paying fines, fees, and community service requirements.

FINES/FEES AND COLLECTIONS

In November, 2008, voters approved and adopted a measure amending Pueblo's Charter, changing the maximum penalties for violations of Charter and Ordinance provisions of Pueblo from \$300 to \$1,000 or imprisonment not exceeding one year (up from 90 days), or both fine and imprisonment. In December, 2008, City Council passed an Ordinance establishing those penalties effective January 1, 2009. As a result, the Municipal Judge has been able to impose fines up to \$1,000 (a portion of which is earmarked specifically for law enforcement and graffiti removal efforts) and/or imprisonment not exceeding one year per violation.

In 2010, the Court imposed fines in excess of \$300 in a very limited number of circumstances, typically repeat offender cases (primarily shoplifting and possession of alcohol) and graffiti cases. The amount imposed in 2010 above the historical \$300 limit amounts to \$135,107.90. Of that amount, \$13,049.53 has been paid. To date, \$29,344.92 has been satisfied by serving time in jail, and \$92,713.45 is still outstanding pending the completion of payment plans, community service plans, outstanding warrants, and otherwise.

In 2010, the total amount of revenue collected through fines and costs was \$2,052,678.72 compared to \$2,074,127.36 in 2009 (a slight decrease, but a significant increase when averaged over the last five years).

SENTENCING ALTERNATIVES

Municipal Court continues to offer a variety of services, including deferred payment plans, monthly payment plans, deferred sentencing, and a variety of juvenile sentencing options. These options include counseling for substance abuse, mental health, and anger management, classes on Choices and Consequences, anti-tobacco, anti-shoplifting, anti-weapons, and teen success, Restorative Justice Programming, GED programming, and a variety of extracurricular events.

JUVENILE COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM. Juveniles can perform community service in conjunction with and as an alternative to fines and fees. Parents are encouraged to participate in community service alternative programs to assist their child in paying off fines, fees, and other requirements.

ADULT COMMUNITY SERVICE PROGRAM. Adults can also earn credit toward their fines and fees by performing community service for the City of Pueblo Monday through Friday, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. The majority of community service work performed by both juveniles and adults has been in the area of graffiti removal.

This wide variety of sentencing alternatives continues to give the Court a great deal of flexibility in fashioning sentences that are appropriately tailored for each individual case.

GRAFFITI REMOVAL PROGRAMMING



The City of Pueblo has been plagued with a graffiti epidemic for decades. For the last 15 years, the Court has tried to impact this epidemic through the utilization of restorative justice programming (giving back to the community harmed). The Court's efforts have included the creation of the Court's Graffiti Removal Program and the sentencing of offenders to perform community service on the program. In 2010, the Court's Graffiti Removal Program addressed 2,494 separate graffiti sites. The majority of these sites were in the Bessemer and

Eastside neighborhoods. Over 12,000 hours of community service was completed (a value of approximately \$100,000 based on minimum wage for the juveniles and \$10 per hour for adults). The cumulative affect of this service helps restore public and personal property to its pre-graffiti condition.

TECHNOLOGY

Pueblo Municipal Court is one of few municipal courts in the State that are "paperless," meaning the Court uses electronic scanning (OptiView) software for document imaging, scanning, electronic filing, and paperless processing of cases. The result of this technology is overwhelmingly positive - all aspects of cases, including photos, letters, remarks, dispositions, etc., are available to the Judge and the staff at the click of a mouse.

All case information can be easily accessed both in the Court Clerk's Office and in the Courtroom. The office appears less cluttered, more organized, and electronic files are located quickly. The bottom line is a uniform process for dealing with various types of cases.

SAFETY AND SECURITY

The growing security related needs of court facilities across the nation continue to force courts to take a look at their security plans and has led Municipal Court to implement a number of security related measures to help maintain the safety of the public, Court staff, and the Court itself. The

use of surveillance cameras throughout the facility, strategically located panic buttons for staff, internal high risk case designations/alerts, increased police presence during high risk arraignment dockets, and an after-hours security alarm system help in these efforts. Additional safety and security programming is more prevalent in the new facility, fostering a safe and secure atmosphere.

SPECIAL PROGRAMMING

NIGHT COURT. The “fast track” Night Court session held in Municipal Court is believed to be the only one of its kind in the State of Colorado. On average, about 50 individuals are brought to the Court during one of these sessions, parents are called to come in when necessary, and defendants answer to their charges in front of the Judge within an hour or two of being arrested. The cooperation between the Police Department, Sheriff’s Department, and Municipal Court staff is exceptional, and the sessions are progressive and effective.

FAST TRACK. Fast track sentencing also occurs for other special cases, such as graffiti application, gang related cases, or other serious offenses. “Fast track” means defendants are immediately taken to Municipal Court upon their arrest for appearance before the Municipal Judge. The results are measurable.

FUGITIVE WARRANTS. In 2008, the Municipal Court began enlisting help from the Police Departments School Resource Officers during school breaks, holiday breaks, and summer breaks to track down the City’s most wanted fugitives (defendants with outstanding warrants). These efforts alone have resulted in the collection of over \$100,000 in outstanding fines and costs owed to the City of Pueblo. Several officers including Ray Alvarez, Matthew Purkett, Kim Polk, Ryan Waring, and Patrick Flemming have participating in this successful programming.

TEEN COURT. Teen Court/Peer Court has been a regular program offered by the Court for the last fifteen years. Offenders served by the Teen Court participate in a process in which high school kids from other high schools act as prosecutors, defense lawyers, bailiff, and jury. The students present the offenders case to the jury and the jury decides what the appropriate sentence should be. With the oversight of the Judge, Teen Court has been a rewarding experience for all. The Court conducts approximately six Teen Court sessions annually.

WHAT LIES IN THE IMMEDIATE FUTURE

Goals for the future are mainly technology related and geared toward improving efficiency while making the Court a more user-friendly operation. Change is necessary in a court environment in order to stay on top of legislation and to manage the ever-changing flow of court cases. Coexisting with constant change is a requirement for success. One by one, we are finding new and easier ways to electronically process the various components of case management. We continue to look for ways to improve services, assist customers quickly, and reduce the

likelihood of errors. Several projects that have been recently implemented or are on the horizon for the Court include:

- **TRAINING.** Over the last several years, Municipal Court has become more aware of the increased training needs of City employees. In addition to mandatory training made available through the Human Resources Department, we have held a variety of training sessions exclusively for Municipal Court employees on numerous topics: Americans With Disabilities (ADA), generational differences, time management, robberies, diversity, security, violence in the workplace, and teambuilding. The Municipal Court staff have also taken advantage of computer training made available at Pueblo Community College. We continue to look at other training opportunities made available through other entities.
- **COMPUTER OPERATING SYSTEM.** The Municipal Court has always struggled with limits created by the Court's HTE operating system. Operations have been hindered in case processing, issuing warrants, and maintaining data integrity. The Court is also required to maintain an additional juvenile tracking system to appropriately process juvenile cases. By the end of 2011 and with the assistance of the City I.T. Department, the Court will move to a new operating system by INNOPRISE. This system promises to interface with all other tools, provide consistency, eliminate redundancy, and increase the overall quality of case management and customer service.



A HISTORY OF CHANGE

In just a few short years, Municipal Court has made huge strides in technology, evolving from handwritten case management techniques to paperless, electronic case processing. Eight years ago, a typewriter sat on each desk -- today, each staff member works from a personal computer. Computers in the Courtroom allow on-demand research and case management, and daily dockets

are published on scrolling monitors in the lobby and entrance to the Court Clerk's Office. These measures save paper and eliminate clutter.

OptiView document imaging software is installed on all computers, the use of which also eliminates hard copies of Court files. Auto Cite handheld computerized ticket issuing machines are used to produce electronic parking tickets, which are then electronically uploaded into the main HTE system. Periodic upgrades are made to the Municipal Court website to ensure the most current information is available to the public.

For the convenience of customers, the Court accepts VISA, MasterCard, and Discover credit cards in person, over the phone, and online (the online service is for parking tickets only). We rely on our computer integrated security system for monitoring the building, and the video feed to the County Jail has been upgraded.

COLLABORATIVE EFFORTS

Municipal Court relies in part on donations and grants from throughout the community. In 2008, a CDBG grant was used to purchase a transport van for the community service program. Another CDBG grant was used to purchase a small pick-up truck in 2009 used to transport a portable paint sprayer. Again in 2010, a CDBG grant enabled the Court to purchase a trailer to transport other equipment and haul trash from various cleanup projects. The Court received its most recent CDBG grant, which will be used in 2011 to purchase an additional van to transport offenders to community service projects.

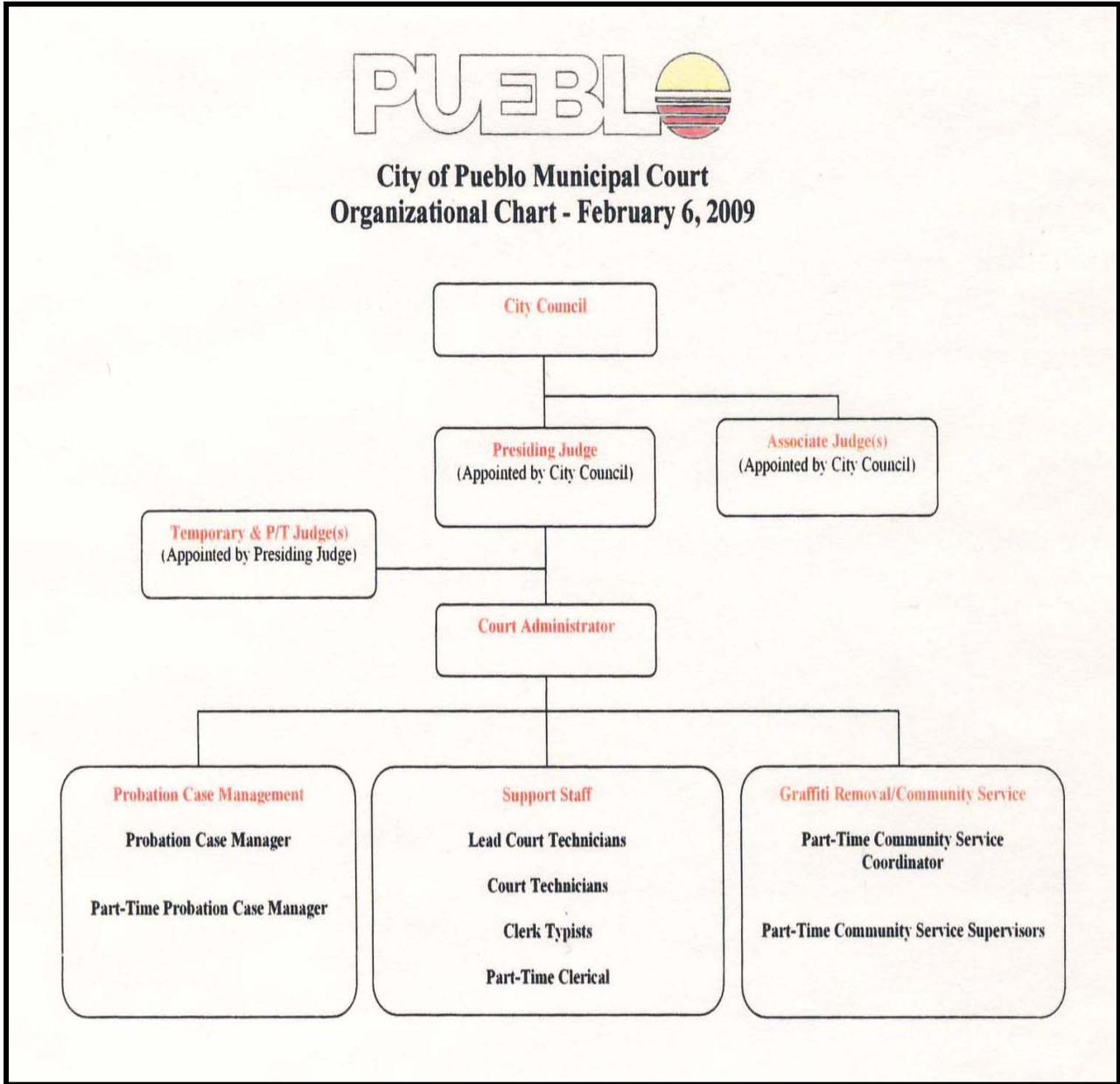
Local service clubs and other organizations continue to donate funds for the purchase of baking soda blast medium, T-shirts for special events and parades, graffiti removal equipment, and paint. Crime Stoppers provided funding for T-shirts and the purchase of a portable intoxylizer to address the challenges we face when dealing with intoxicated offenders at the Court.

COST CONTAINMENT

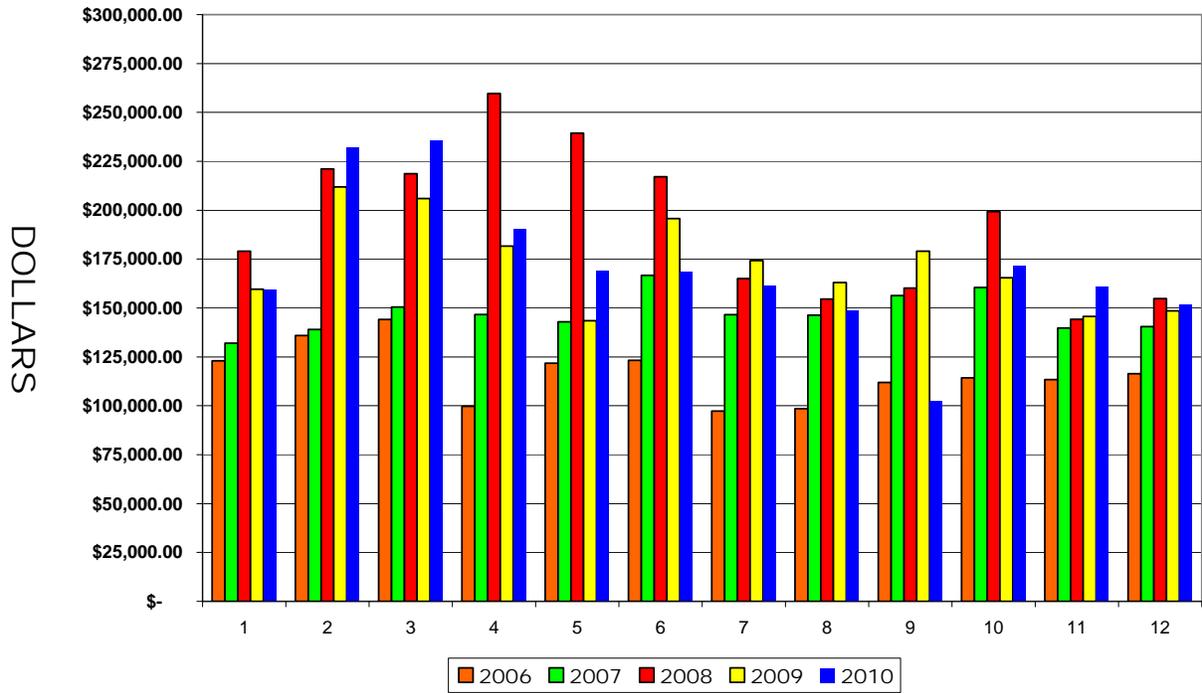
The nature of the Court environment is unique to nearly every other City department in that its caseload can fluctuate drastically from week to week. Fluctuations make it difficult to estimate certain departmental expenses, such as overtime, work release insurance, printing, etc. The Court relies heavily on computers and technology, both of which can be costly to maintain. Municipal Court makes every effort to manage expenses and reduce costs whenever possible while continuing to provide excellent customer service.

Changes have also been made in the past few years relative to the use of the Pueblo County Jail. The result is a more informed decision-making process regarding who should be incarcerated at the County Jail. The use of the jail continues to be limited to more serious offenders, serious repeat offenders, repeat offenders with outstanding warrants, and offenders who have defiantly

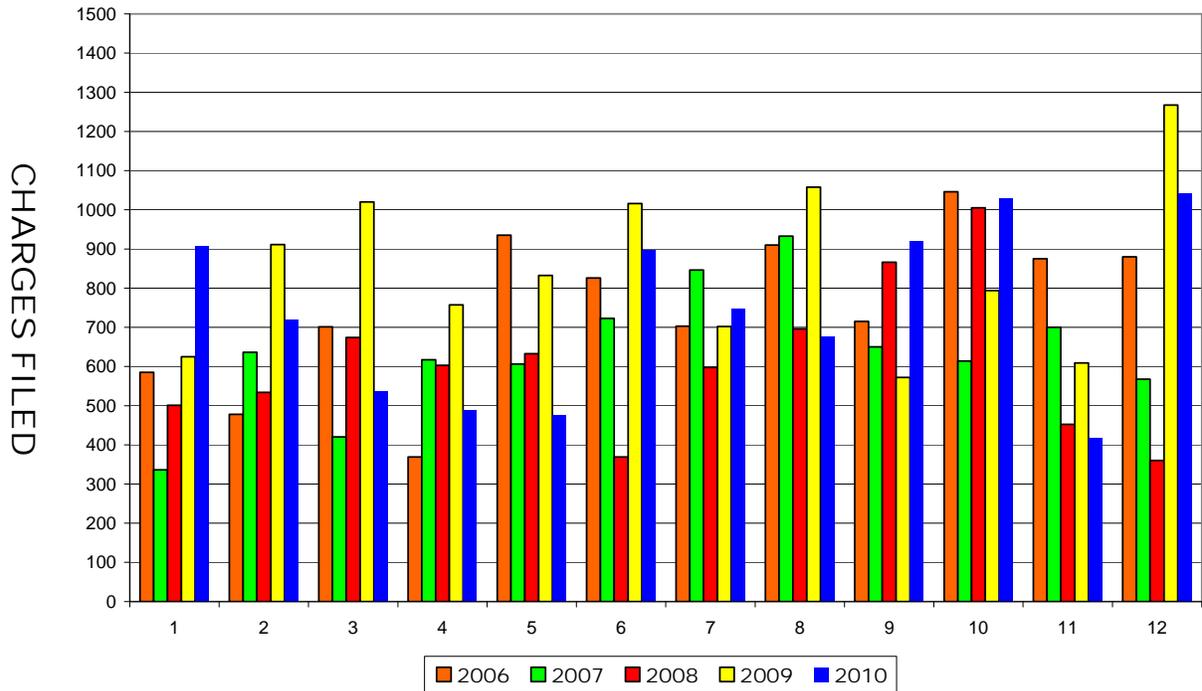
refused to pay fines and fees. This policy continues to affect cost savings to the City of thousands of dollars to house defendants in County Jail.



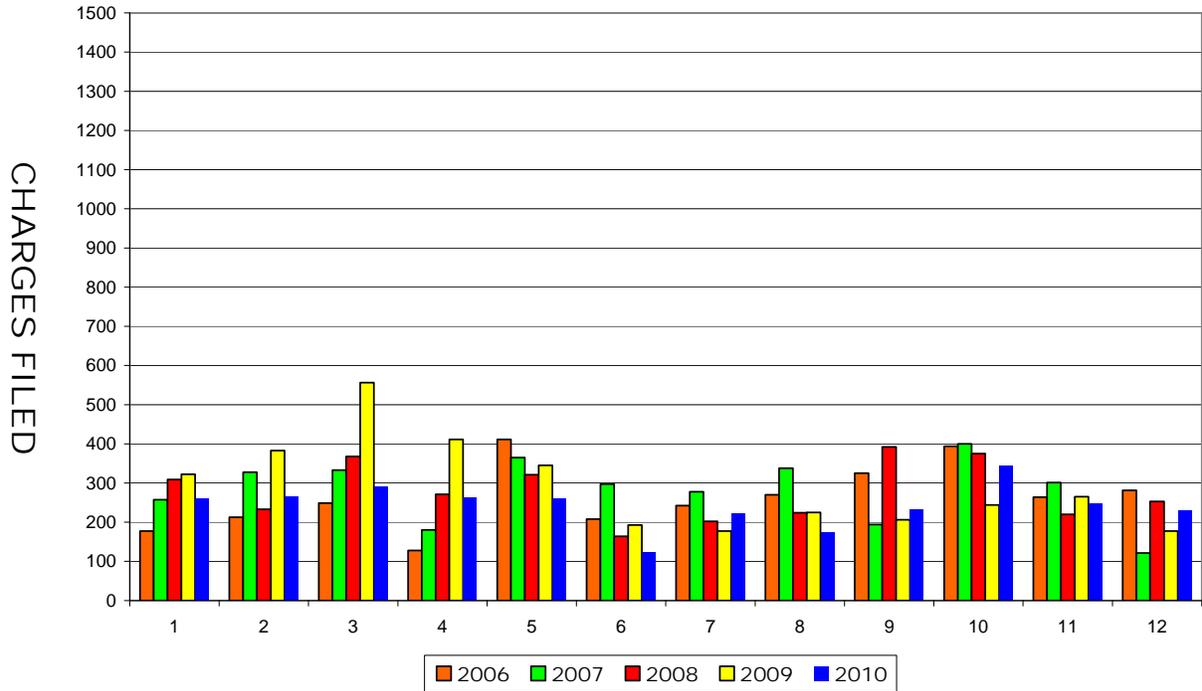
COURT REVENUE



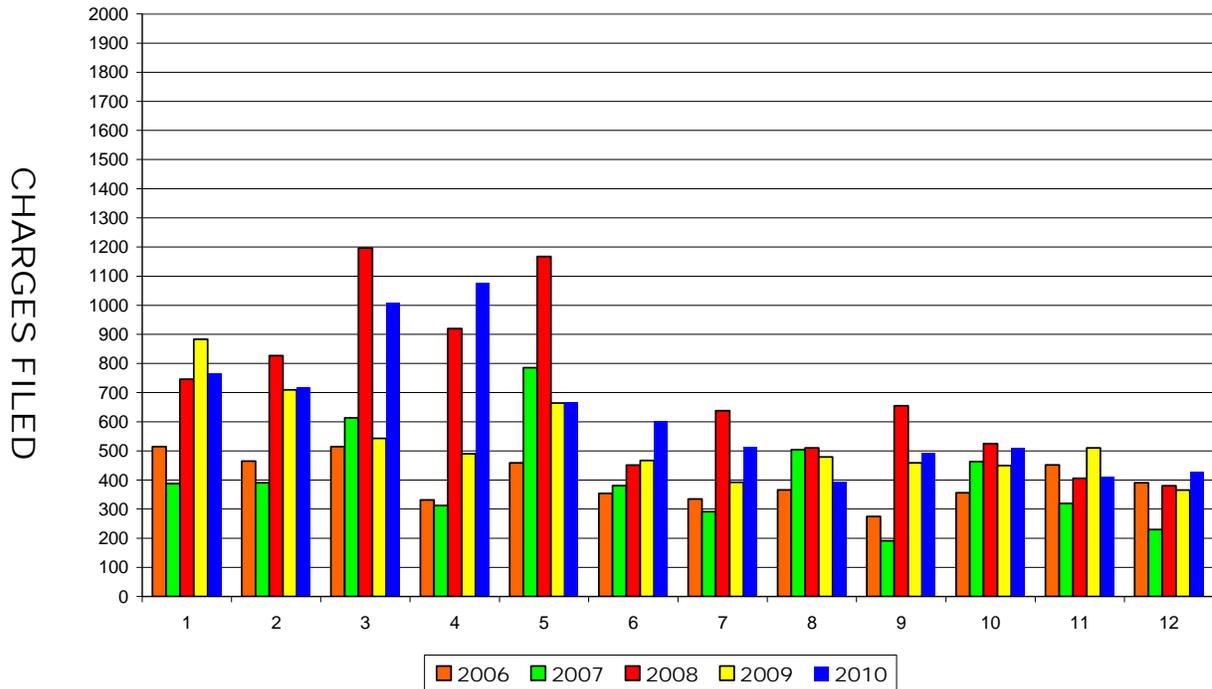
GENERAL OFFENSE CHARGES FILED ADULTS



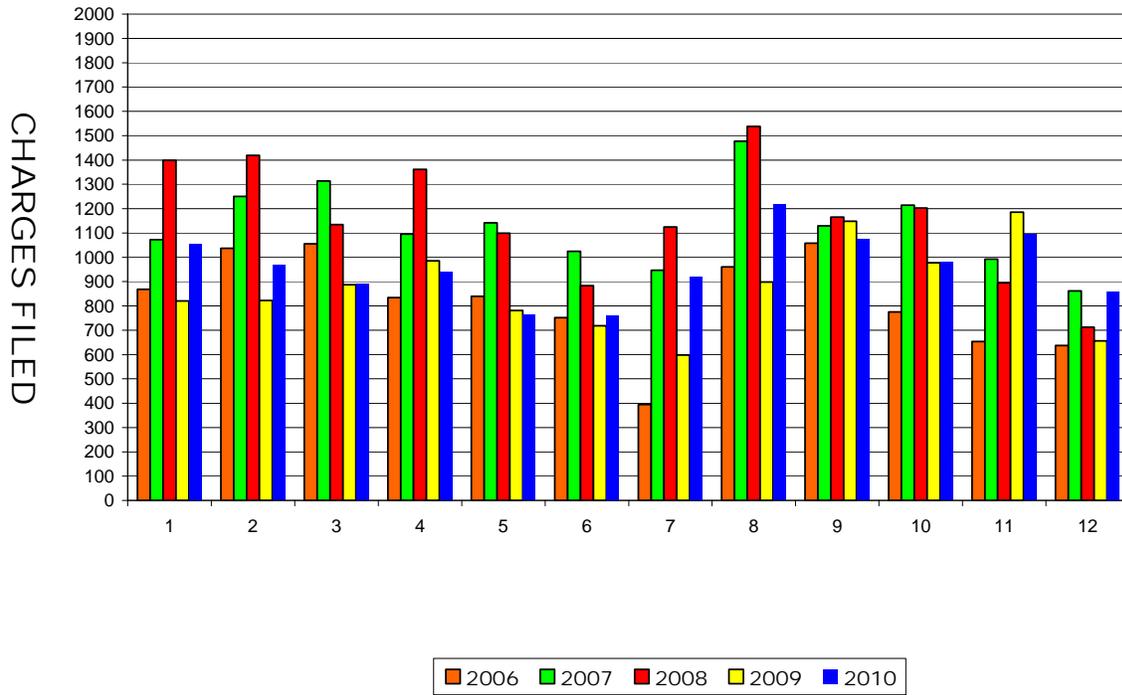
GENERAL OFFENSE CHARGES FILED JUVENILE



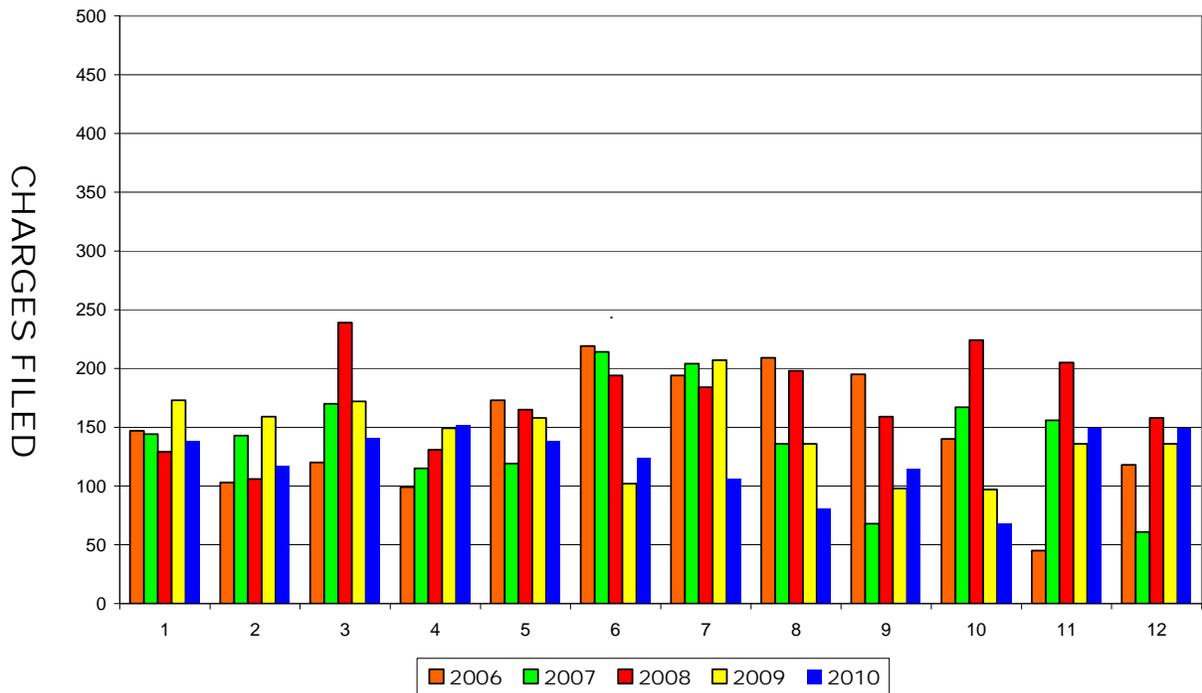
TRAFFIC CHARGES FILED



PARKING TICKETS FILED



ANIMAL OFFENSE CHARGES FILED



CITY COMPLAINT CHARGES FILED
 POLICE SUPPORT-SALES TAX-HEALTH-REG'L BLDG

