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City of Duluth Communications Office

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SUBJECT: Mayor Emily Larson and DPD Chief Mike Ceynowa hold news conference to provide year-end public safety report

BY: Kelli Latuska, Public Information Officer

Mayor Emily Larson and DPD Chief Mike Ceynowa hold news conference to provide year-end public safety report

[DULUTH, MN] In a news conference held today, January 5, in the Public Safety Building's training room, Mayor Emily Larson and Mike Ceynowa discussed 2022 public safety strategies, challenges, and outcomes.

"2022 was a challenging year for the Duluth Police Department due to a historic staffing shortage and several changes in leadership positions," said Duluth Police Chief Mike Ceynowa. "I am extremely proud of the work that both our sworn and professional staff did this year. Despite these challenges they continue to be creative and innovative on ways to approach public safety with and for our community. In 2023, we will continue to recruit staff with character who want to be part of an innovative and forward-thinking team."

The Duluth Police Department ended 2022 short 22 sworn officers. This year, one of the department's primary focuses is to Rebuild, Recruit, Retain. To that end, the Duluth Police Department created a recruitment and retention plan, which can be found on their website.

Part A crimes, which are the most serious offenses, dropped 1,629 incidents from 2021 to 2022, while Part B crimes dropped 338 incidents.

In the news conference, Chief Ceynowa reported on the Racial Bias Audit process which is underway, and began in October 2022 as a response to the community's calls for improvements to policing across the country and in the City.

"Social issues we see on our streets everyday have a direct impact on people's perception of crime and safety. What our crime statistics show is that our numbers in most categories are lower than last year, our reactive calls for service are trending down

and our proactive calls are trending up,” explained Ceynowa. “Issues like persons experiencing homelessness, Substance Use Disorder, and mental health crises are areas our police department is addressing through a collaborative approach with multiple entities. These issues take time to address and are difficult to tackle with a traditional criminal justice approach.”

The Duluth Police Department is working with entities like SURT, CORE, HDC, CADT, CHUM, and other community groups that provide harm and reduction strategies to come up with creative processes and ways to address and help those suffering. Chief Ceynowa and Mayor Larson are pleased with the direction Duluth’s Police Department and their partners are headed in mitigating these social concerns.

“Thank you, Chief Ceynowa and the entire Duluth Police Department for their continued commitment to public safety and earning the public’s trust and support,” said Mayor Emily Larson. “Feeling safe and being safe are critical to any community, and while we’re all thankful for the work this department does to bring crime numbers down, I’m always proud to see everyone working within public safety committed to constantly improving and we are here to support that as a community.”

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