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The Massachusetts Gaming Commission Receives Two-Year Public Safety Impact Report for Plainridge Park Casino

*Analysis concludes that number of incidents is commensurate with
Facilities of similar size and number of visitors*

On March 1, 2018 during a public meeting, the Massachusetts Gaming Commission (MGC) released its second **Public Safety Impact Report** analyzing changes in police data after the first two years of operation at Plainridge Park Casino (PPC). The study concludes that the number of crimes and calls for service, at PPC and in its host community of Plainville, is commensurate with non-gambling facilities of similar size and number of visitors. As for the surrounding communities (including six towns), the totality of evidence shows little impact on public safety or calls for service.

As mandated by the Legislature, MGC is carrying out an expansive and groundbreaking research agenda to understand the social and economic impacts of gambling in the Commonwealth. As part of this overall effort, the Commission is specifically studying the relationship between gambling and levels of crime. This two-year analysis compares recent data to a baseline analysis conducted before the opening of Plainridge Park Casino.

MGC consultant and crime analyst Christopher Bruce conducted this public safety research and analysis. Mr. Bruce collected data from the records management systems of Plainville, Attleboro, Foxborough, Mansfield, North Attleborough, Wrentham and Massachusetts State Police since 2010. The analysis compares the period of July 1, 2015 through June 30, 2017 (2 years post-casino) to the same periods of previous years. The study includes both crimes and non-crime calls for service.

The two-year analysis continues to indicate that incidents occurring at PPC are proportionate with expected totals at similar facilities that draw a significant number of people, have a large parking area, offer retail, entertainment, and dining options, and serve alcohol. The types of calls for service to increase are those highly correlated with the numbers of cars and visitors to a community, such as traffic issues and reports of lost property and suspicious activity.

The analysis showed that overall crime was down in the communities, but there were variations across communities and across crime categories within individual communities.



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Christopher Bruce said about the findings, “Any significant increases were analyzed in more detail with both quantitative and qualitative data. Rarely was I able to establish a casino relationship, and the general sense from the participating police agencies were that they did not feel that Plainridge Park Casino had contributed significantly to crime or calls for service.”

MGC Commissioner Gayle Cameron noted, “This important research would not be possible without the commitment and cooperation from local police departments and the Massachusetts State Police. I applaud their ongoing support of this initiative and hope it continues to provide participating police agencies with valuable insight. We look forward to resuming this work and expanding our focus to Western Massachusetts in anticipation of the opening of MGM Springfield.”

A summary of findings from MGC’s second Public Safety Impact Report:

- Plainridge Park Casino continues to produce crime and call figures commensurate with similarly-sized facilities in the region.
- There were 152 arrests at PPC during its first two years of operation.
- Statistics at the casino remain similar to those at the top call for service locations in other communities. The casino directly (incidents on casino property) led to a 10% increase in property crime, 12% increase in total crime, and a 3% increase in calls for service for the Plainville Police Department. (See page 54 of the [full report](#) to view comparative data.)
- Plainville experienced an increase in lost property and suspicious activity reports, as well as an increase in traffic complaints. Analysis concludes that this increase is “likely” related to the presence of PPC, but analyst cannot identify any direct evidence.
- Few significant increases in crimes in the surrounding area.
- The first year of research identified an increase in credit card fraud, but latest analysis notes that this trend has abated in the second year.
- Total arrests and other charges were down significantly in the area, particularly for liquor-related offenses.

To view a copy of the full report, click [here](#).

About MGC Crime Analyst Christopher W. Bruce

Christopher W. Bruce is an internationally-recognized expert in police data systems and police data analysis. He is a career crime analyst with previous service at the Cambridge Police Department and the Danvers Police Department. He was president of the Massachusetts Association of Crime Analysts from 2000 to 2004 and has served in several roles in the International Association of Crime Analysts. He currently consults with the U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance; the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs; the U.S. Department of Transportation, National Highway Traffic Safety Administration; and the International Association of Directors of Law Enforcement Standards and Training.



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