

III. SOCIAL AND POLITICAL INDICATORS

2. CRIME (CALIFORNIA CRIME INDEX: VIOLENT AND PROPERTY CRIME)

Crime Down in the State, But Not As Much in the Central Valley

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

A safe, low-crime environment is a major determinant of our quality of life. High incomes do not necessarily bring a high quality of life if one is afraid to go out of the house.

HOW ARE WE DOING?

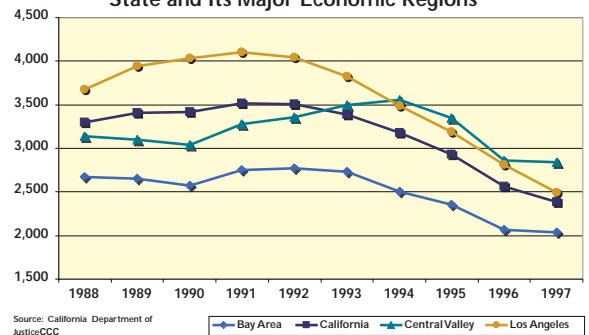
Crime has been declining in both the nation and the state. The causes given for these declines include more law enforcement personnel, tougher sentencing laws, and the aging of the population—i.e., fewer young men in the crime-prone ages of late teens, twenties, and early thirties.

The California Crime Index, which consists of violent and property crimes* fell by 32%, 39%, and 26% in the state, the Los Angeles region, and the Bay Area, respectively, between 1991 and 1997. In the Central Valley, however, crime decreased by only 13% during this period. Between 1996 and 1997, crime fell by less than 1% in the CV, while it fell by 7% and 11% in the state and the Los Angeles Region, respectively.

Within the CV, the Sacramento and San Joaquin regions had very similar incidences of crime (see line graphs). Between 1996 and 1997, however, crime rose 2% in the former while it declined 3% in the latter. North Valley has not only had the lowest crime per capita of the three subregions, but its trend in incidence of crime has been distinctive from those of the other two subregions (see line graphs). Between 1988 and 1991, crime declined 26% there while it rose 7% and 8% in the Sacramento and San Joaquin regions, respectively. Between 1996 and 1997, however, crime increased 10% in North Valley.

* Violent Crimes consist of Willful Homicide, Forcible Rape, Robbery, and Aggravated Assault. Property Crimes consist of Burglary and Motor Vehicle Theft.

California Crime Index (Violent and Property Crimes) Per 100,000 Residents in the State and Its Major Economic Regions



California Crime Index (Violent and Property Crimes) Per 100,000 Residents in the Central Valley Subregions

