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Over 600 felony arrests by SFPD's Citywide Plainclothes Team in 2024

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The San Francisco Police Department's Citywide Plainclothes team made 601 felony arrests and seized 73 firearms in 2024 – a vital component of the city's significant drop in crime last year, Chief Bill Scott announced Thursday.

The Citywide Plainclothes team consists of officers in street clothes who work covertly on some of the city's most challenging crimes, such as auto burglaries, drug dealing, retail theft, and all types of violent crime.

The officers work closely and coordinate with investigations bureaus, uniformed patrol officers, analysts, and drone operators.

The number of arrests and gun seizures from the plainclothes team increased from 2023 when the unit made 500 arrests and seized 60 firearms.

New technologies acquired by the SFPD in 2024, like Automated License Plate Readers and drones, have significantly assisted plainclothes officers in their day-to-day operations.

The Citywide Plainclothes team's efforts are already off to a great start in 2025. For example, on Tuesday, Jan. 14, officers received an ALPR hit on a stolen Acura traveling in the South of Market neighborhood.

Plainclothes officers followed the vehicle, deployed a tire deflation device, and arrested the two occupants on charges including possession of a stolen vehicle, possession of burglary tools, and methamphetamine possession.

Last year's increase in arrests coincided with one of the largest drops in crime in decades in San Francisco.

The homicide rate in San Francisco was the lowest it's been since 1960, while property crimes like auto burglaries decreased by 54%. Overall, crime was the lowest it's been in 20 years.

"Our Citywide Plainclothes officers are working harder than ever and doing a fantastic job making important arrests to keep our city safe," Chief Scott said. "With new technologies like ALPR and drones, our officers are empowered like never before. I want to thank them for their tremendous work."

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