



SUFFOLK COUNTY POLICE DEPARTMENT

Annual Report on Hate Crimes

2017

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30 Yaphank Avenue, Yaphank, New York 11980
Prepared by the Office of the Police Commissioner

SCPD HCU 2017

Hate Crimes in New York

New York State's Hate Crimes Law is codified in Article 485 of the Penal Law. It defines a "Hate Crime" as one of the crimes specifically listed in §485.05 committed when an offender selects a victim because of a belief or perception about the victim regarding race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation, or when an offender commits a certain crime because of a belief or perception regarding race, color, national origin, ancestry, gender, religion, religious practice, age, disability or sexual orientation.

The Legislative Findings codified in §485.00 state the importance of addressing such criminal acts:

Hate crimes do more than threaten the safety and welfare of all citizens. They inflict on victims incalculable physical and emotional damage and tear at the very fabric of free society. Crimes motivated by invidious hatred toward particular groups not only harm individual victims but send a powerful message of intolerance and discrimination to all members of the group to which the victim belongs. Hate crimes can and do intimidate and disrupt entire communities and vitiate the civility that is essential to healthy democratic processes. In a democratic society, citizens cannot be required to approve of the beliefs and practices of others, but must never commit criminal acts on account of them.

Functions of the Hate Crimes Unit:

The Hate Crimes Unit (HCU) is responsible for the investigation of all hate incidents throughout Suffolk County. Incidents involving death or other special circumstances as determined by the Department command staff may be investigated by other units, such as Homicide, but the HCU will retain responsibility for any hate element of that investigation. In addition to these responsibilities, the HCU is also responsible for analyzing patterns and trends of Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes throughout the County. To aid in this analysis the HCU maintains a database that contains the following types of incidents:

- New York State Department of Criminal Justice Service (DCJS): Specified Hate Crimes pursuant to §485.05 of the New York State Penal Law. (These crimes are reported monthly to DCJS)
- Non-Specified Hate Incidents: offenses that are not defined as Hate Crimes in the law but appear to be based on a belief that the victim is a member of a protected class
- Other incidents that are flagged as "Possible Hate Offenses". HCU detectives routinely review the 911 log multiple times a day and then review the narratives of these incidents in the Incident Reporting System to ensure the incidents are properly classified

Data collected from reviewing records such as the 911 log, Precinct Tour Reports, and the Incident Reporting System is then used to create a map of Hate Crimes and Hate Incidents. Cases ultimately classified as neither Hate Crimes, nor Hate Incidents are mapped as "Other". The mapped data is then analyzed to detect possible patterns and trends across types of incident, geographic incident locations, time frame, and demographic characteristics of both the offenders and the victims.

A random audit of all Hate Crimes and Incidents is done on a quarterly basis by the Commanding Officer of the Major Case Section and is reviewed by the Commanding Officer of the Major Crimes Bureau. These cases are reviewed to ensure that the performance standards delineated in policy are met in every instance.¹

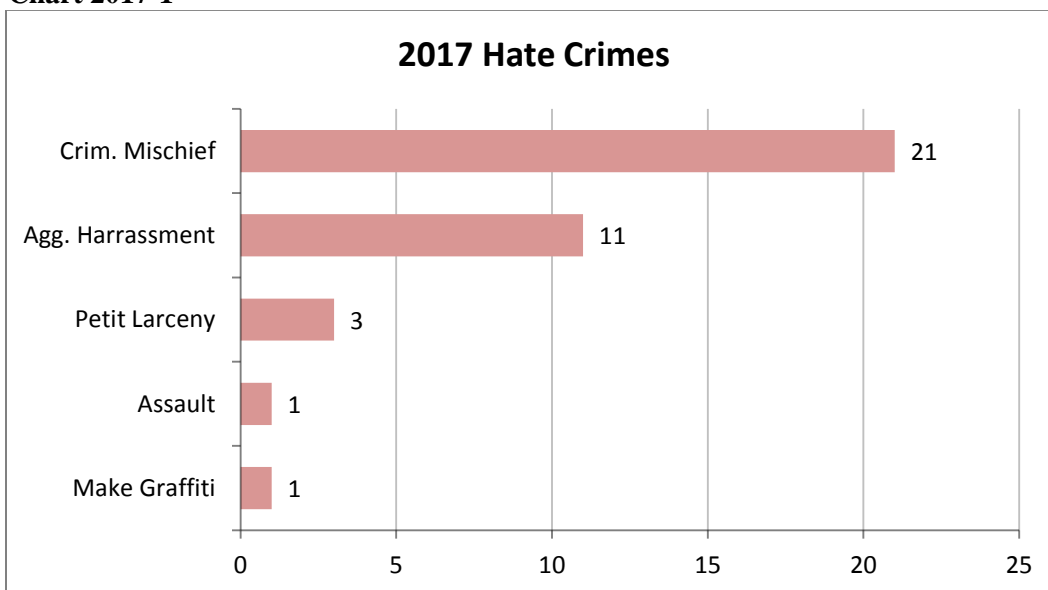
In addition to its investigative, analytic and quality control responsibilities, the HCU provides instruction to Department personnel and members of the community on Hate Crimes and Incidents. Its instructional efforts re-enforce the need to report all incidents that appear to contain a “hate element” so that evidence may be timely preserved, and witnesses identified. This also increases opportunities to provide victims with counseling and referral services.

2017 Case Data and Visualizations:

A total of 119 cases were investigated in 2017, 37 of which were classified and reported as Hate Crimes. An additional 181 incidents were also examined by Hate Crimes detectives but not carried as investigations. Many of these non-criminal incidents included expressions of protected speech.

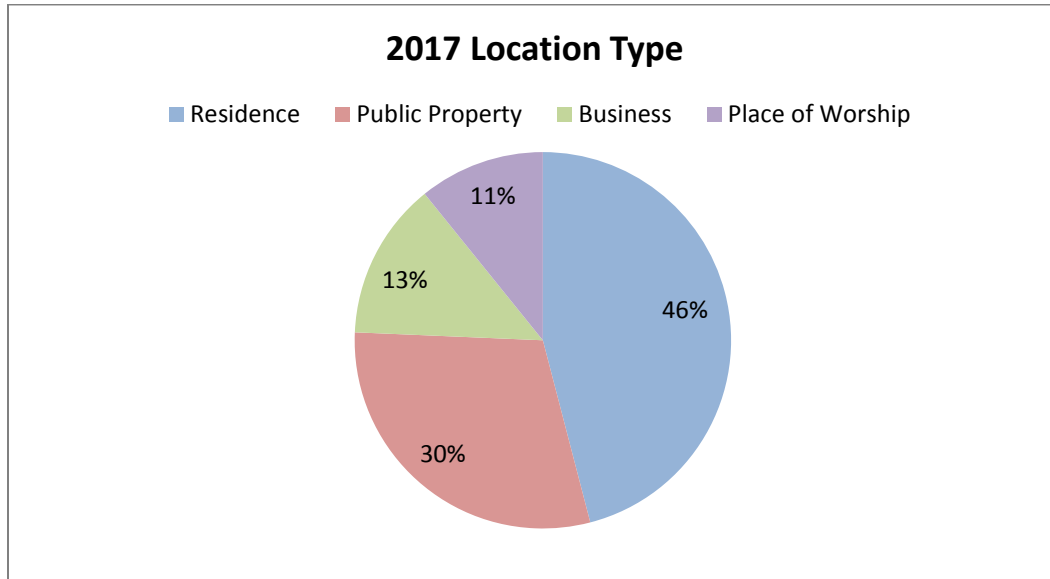
The two most common underlying offenses were Criminal Mischief and Aggravated Harassment (Chart 2017-1), and the two most common locations for hate crimes were Residences and Public Property (Chart 2017-2).

Chart 2017-1



¹ Rules and Procedures Chapter 24, §6 (VI)(D)

Chart 2017-2



Of the 37 reported Hate Crimes, “Religion” represented the most frequently targeted demographic. Judaism was the most targeted faith, followed by Islam. The second most prevalent demographic in reported Hate Crimes was “Race/Ethnicity”, with African-American the most targeted group. Notably, there were no anti-Latino Hate Crimes reported in 2017. (Charts 2017-3 and 2017-4).

Chart 2017-3

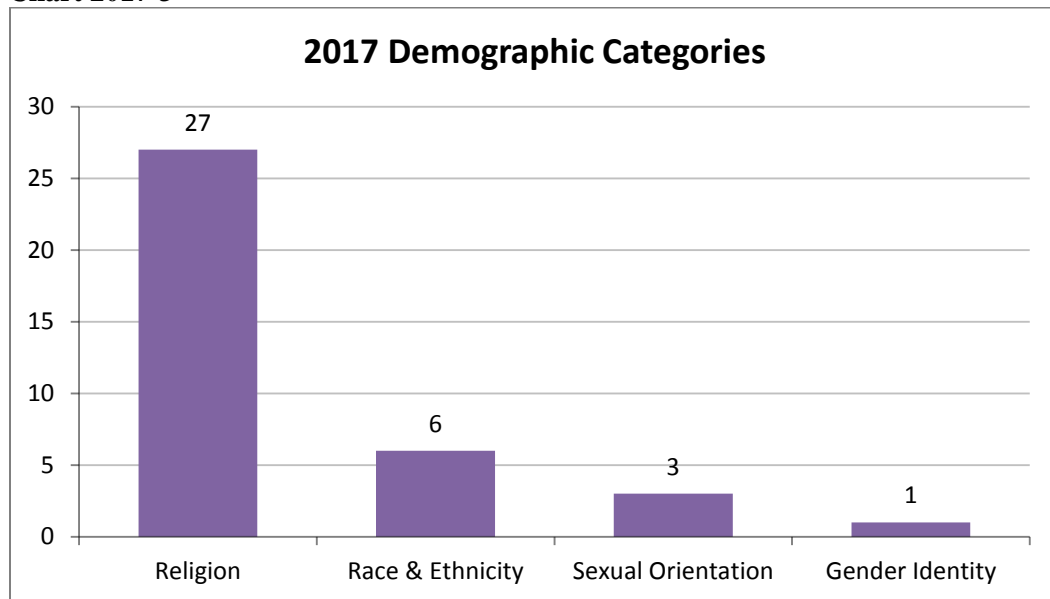
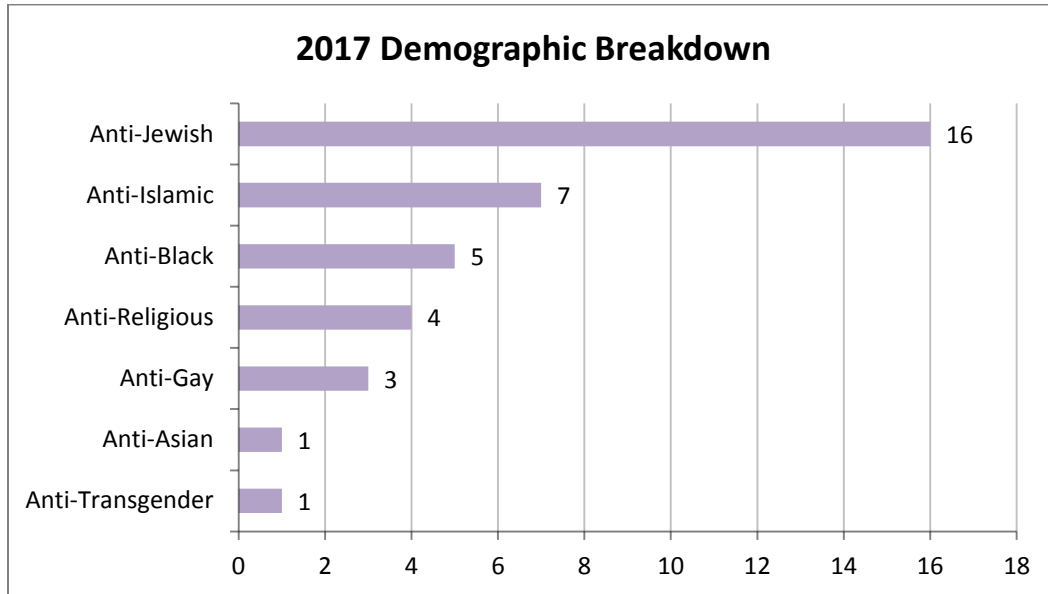


Chart 2017-4



Assessing the “Victim Type” within the targeted demographic groups showed that individuals were targeted more overall, and also within each group, except when that group was “anti-Jewish”. (Charts 2017-5 and 2017-6).

Chart 2017-5

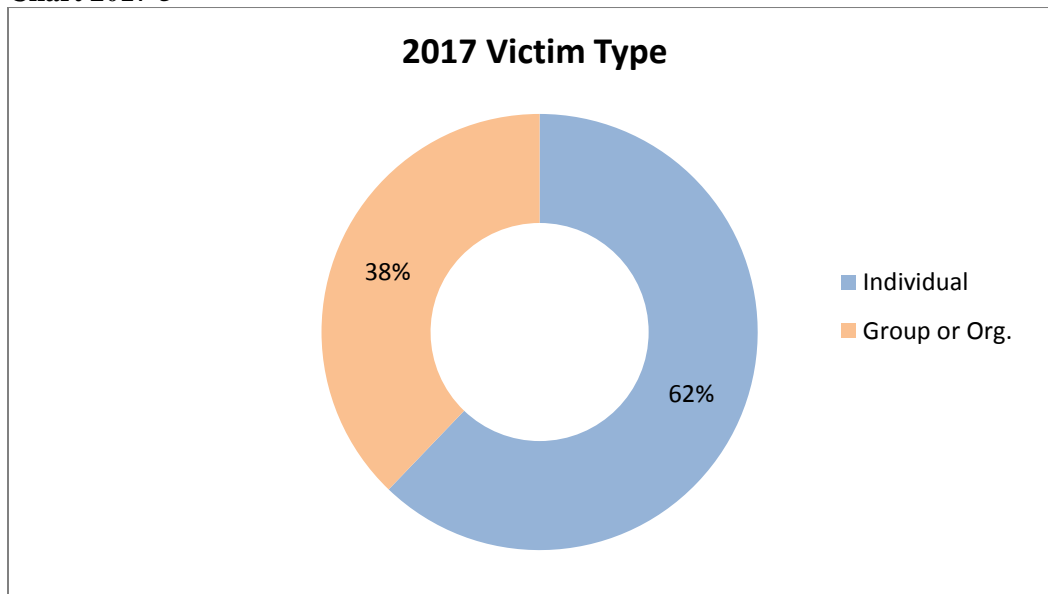
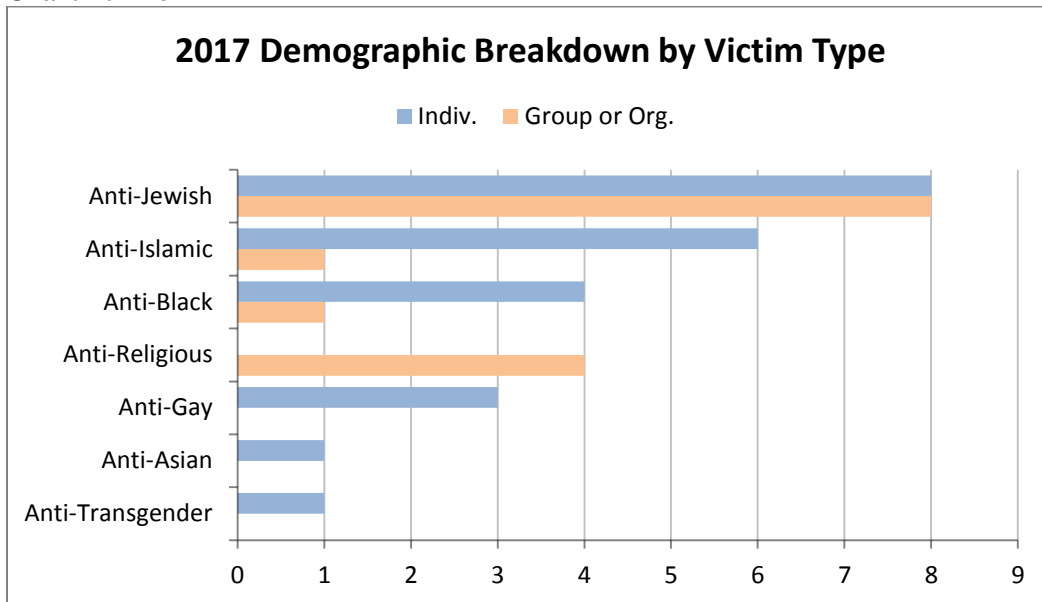


Chart 2017-6



The vast majority of Hate Crimes were committed against property rather than persons, a trend which holds when taking the victim type into consideration. (Chart 2017-7). Using the previous demographic breakdown, more crimes with a religious-based bias were committed against property than against persons (Chart 2017-8); however when considering race or gender identity, more crimes were committed against persons than property.

Chart 2017-7

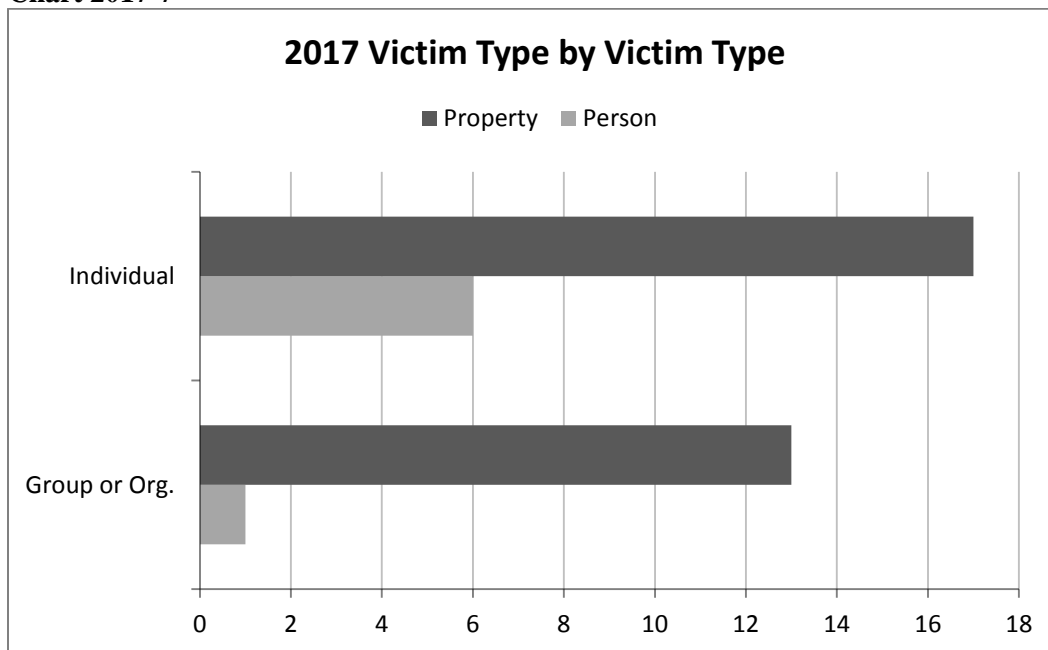
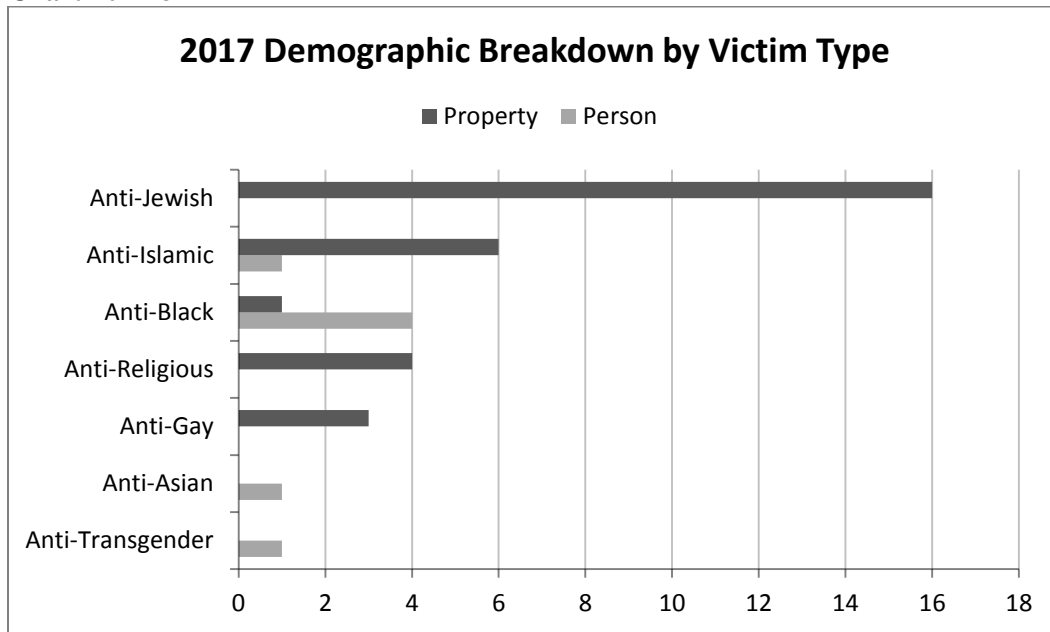
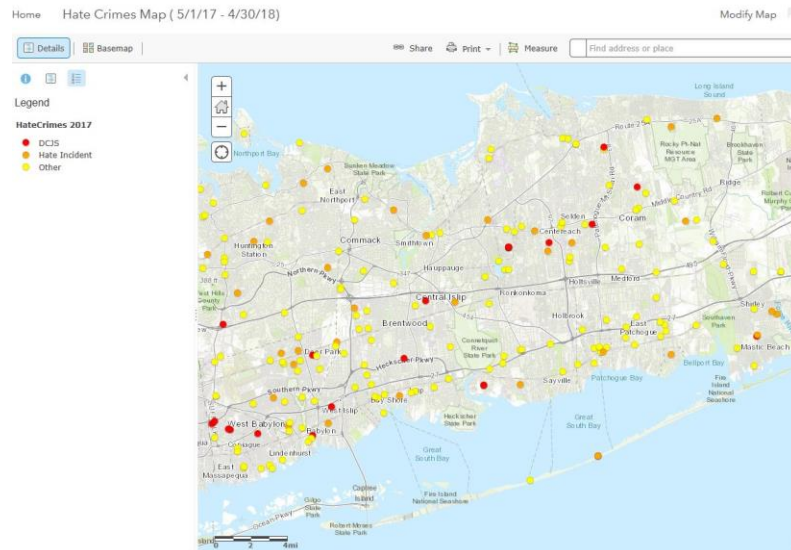


Chart 2017-8



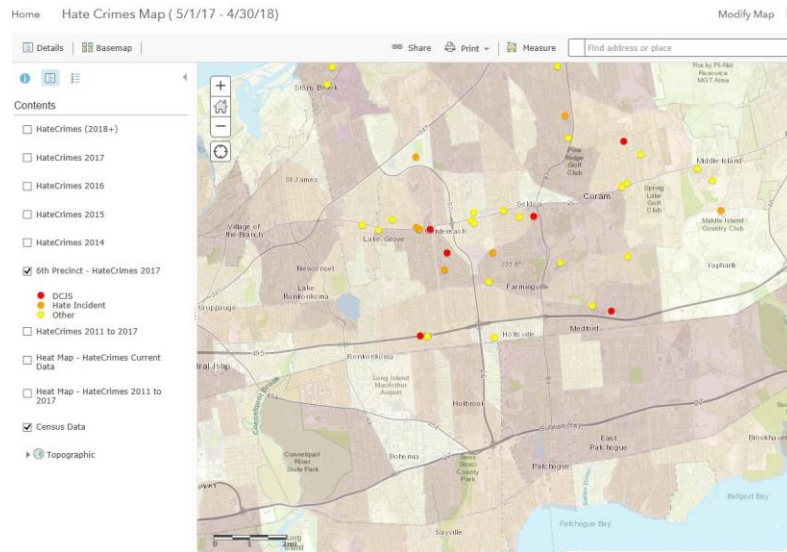
Enhanced Hate Crimes Mapping Initiative:

The purpose of the new mapping initiative is to advance Hate Crimes reporting from static, pin maps, to dynamic interactive mapping. The former static map application limited the degree of analysis and demonstrable visualizations.

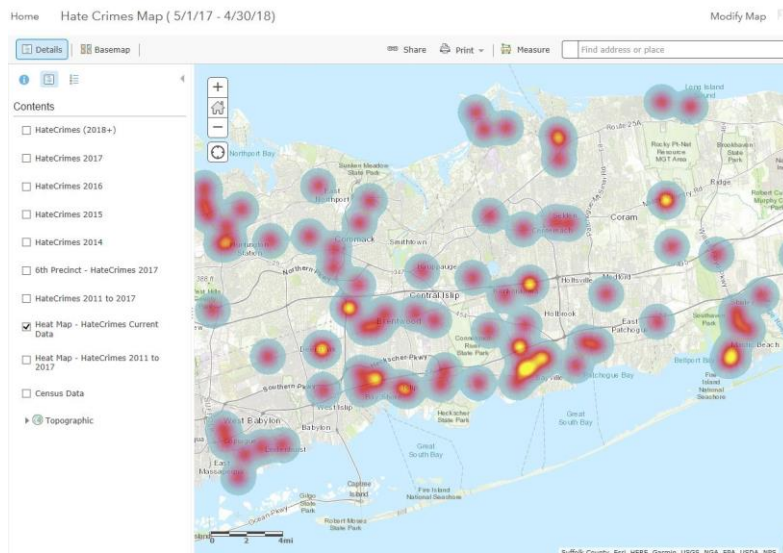


In contrast, the new platform allows for limitless types of analyses. This new program is supported through the use of a new database which now permits the user to search and filter data various data sets against a variety of basemaps.

For example the new application could allow the user to view suspected hate incidents and the demographics of a particular neighborhood or Precinct for comparisons.



Computer filters, such as “heat maps” and color coding can also be used to identify hot spots of activity and various categories of crimes.



Additional advantages of the new mapping initiative include the collection of data into a database rather than a spreadsheet, allowing for secure storage and easier access. Applications utilizing the data can also be made available to other members of the Department for broader dissemination, including, posting information on the intranet/internet and in emails. Application users will also have the ability to add their own mapping layers, such as street views and aerial photography. As the application grows and

develops in sophistication over time, it will prove to be an invaluable asset to the Hate Crimes Unit and the entire Department.

Patterns Analysis:

The Hate Crimes Unit reviews the GIS application and mapping in real time. After new data is entered a map is generated with information dating back through the prior 12 months.

The calendar year of 2017 was reviewed and no overlying patterns or trends regarding Hate Crimes or Incidents were identified. Should a pattern or trend be detected by the Hate Crimes Unit at any time, notification will be made through the chain of command to the Chief of Detectives.

Comparisons by Year:

Table 2017-1

	Year			
	2014	2015	2016	2017
Calls Considered	256	290	297	300
Total Cases	138	139	102	119
DCJS Designation	87	69	42	37
% Cases as DCJS	63.0%	49.6%	41.2%	31.1%

Conclusion:

Similar to prior years, an analysis of incidents reported within the Suffolk County Police District in 2017 indicates the majority of Hate Crimes and incidents are anti-religious in nature (Chart 2017-3) individuals are targeted more than structured groups or organizations (Chart 2017-5), and residences are targeted more often than other locations (Chart 2017-2). It is important to note however that the vast majority of cases are crimes committed against property rather than persons (Chart 2017-7). The total number calls considered and cases investigated by year remain relatively stable over time, with a decreasing amount of cases receiving the DCJS Hate Crime designation.

The majority of reported incidents are Anti-Jewish (Chart 2017-4), usually involving the painting or drawing of swastikas on property, with many incidents occurred on school property especially on school desks and bathrooms. This follows the trends of prior years (Chart 2017-8).

In 2018 the Hate Crimes Unit will continue to vigorously investigate all Hate Incidents and Hate Crimes detectives will continue to work closely with school staff and community organizations with the goal of educating the public to reduce the occurrence of Hate Crimes and incidents.