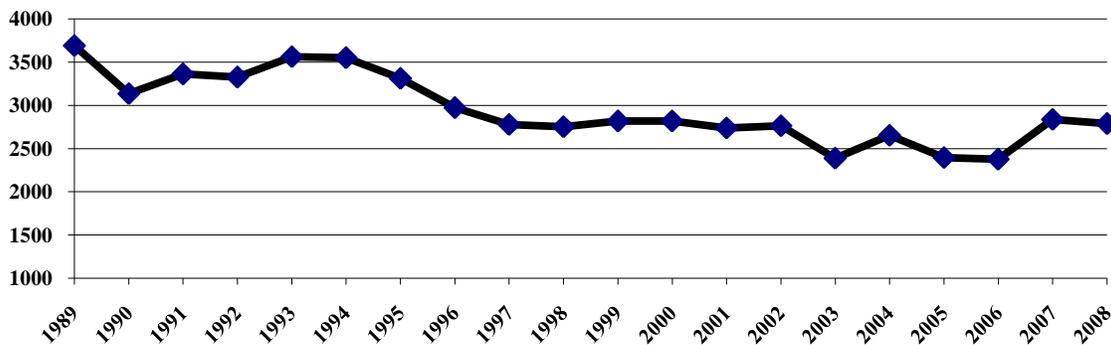


L A R C E N Y

Larceny is the unlawful taking, carrying, leading, or riding away of property from the possession of another. It includes crimes such as shoplifting, pocket picking, thefts from motor vehicles, thefts of auto parts and accessories, horse thefts, and bicycle thefts, in which no use of force, violence, fraud, or trespass occurs. In the Uniform Crime Reporting Program, this crime category does not include embezzlement, “con” games, forgery, or worthless checks. Motor vehicle theft is also excluded from this category, as it is a separate crime index offense.

**Twenty Year Review:
Larceny in Cambridge, 1989-2008**



2,838 reported in 2007 • 2,788 reported in 2008

Larceny is always the most common of the Part One crimes in Cambridge, this year accounting for 70% of the part I crime and 80% of the total property crime. Larceny often produces the most patterns. The three categories that produce some of the highest numbers – larcenies from motor vehicles, buildings, and persons – are often fueled by changes in technology. As electronics such as laptops, GPS navigation systems, and portable music players become more popular and evolve, they become easier targets, easier to conceal, and ultimately easier to sell. This year’s larceny total represents a 2% decrease from last year. The majority of the decrease can be attributed to a 15% decline in larceny from motor vehicles.

Larceny is further broken down into the nine categories listed in the table below. As can be seen from the total number above, there was an overall decrease in larcenies this year in comparison to 2007. However, increases were actually reported in a majority of the larceny categories.

Categorization	2007	2008	% Change
Larcenies from Buildings	418	417	No Change
Larcenies from MV	1,234	1,053	-15%
Larcenies of Bicycles	228	277	+21%
Larcenies from Persons	344	357	+4%
Shoplifting	349	352	+1%
Larcenies of Services	22	26	+18%
Larcenies from Residences	162	214	+32%
Larcenies of License Plates	37	65	+76%
Other (Unclassifiable) Larcenies	44	27	-39%
TOTAL	2,838	2,788	-2%

LARCENY FROM BUILDINGS

Larcenies from Buildings are non-burglary thefts from commercial establishments. “Non-burglary” means that either the offender had a specific right to be on the premises, or that the building was open to the general public, and that no force was used to gain entry to the building where the theft was committed.

GEOGRAPHIC BREAKDOWN BY BUSINESS DISTRICT		
Area	2007	2008
Central Square	100	72
Harvard Square	63	67
Galleria/East Cambridge	60	51
Alewife/West Cambridge	59	48
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	23	39
Kendall Square/MIT	27	33
Porter Square	23	32
Inman Square	20	31
1500–1900 Mass. Ave.	29	26
Cambridgeport/Riverside	14	18
Total	418	417

There were 417 larcenies from buildings reported this year. This total represents a decrease of just one incident from the previous year and is 17% lower than the five-year average of 466 incidents.

TOP 5 HOT SPOTS OF 2008

1. Cambridgeside Galleria Mall
100 Cambridgeside Place – 27 incidents
2. Bally’s Health Club
1815 Massachusetts Avenue – 12 incidents
3. Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway – 11 incidents
4. The Dance Complex
536 Massachusetts Ave – 9 incidents
5. Hyatt Regency Hotel
575 Memorial Dr. – 7 incidents

The following are the most common larceny from building scenarios in Cambridge in 2008:

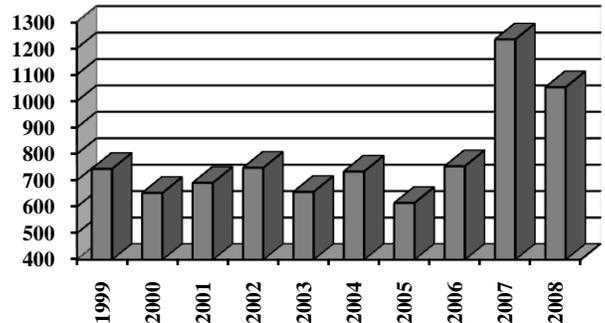
1. A thief walks into an office building during open business hours, posing as a delivery person or claiming to be looking for an employee that does not exist. The thief moves unnoticed into an empty office and takes personal or company property. Laptops and purses were the favorite target this year. This scenario accounted for 19% of the total reported larcenies from buildings this year.
2. Someone leaves his or her belongings unattended for a short time and then comes back to find the property missing. Examples include leaving a coat in a public coat closet at a bar or leaving purses/bags at the back of a church during service. This scenario also accounted for 19% of the incidents in 2008.
3. An employee of a commercial establishment leaves his or her personal property in a “back room” where he or she thinks it will be safe. Later, the employee notices that the property is missing. The most common targets in this crime include purses, bags, and cell phones. Approximately 11% of incidents reported occurred in this manner.
4. A thief waits for or finds the opportunity to steal property left unattended in classrooms or left unlocked on school desks or lockers. This scenario accounted for 9% of the total reported in 2008. Cell phones, school laptops, and teachers’ wallets were often the common targets.
5. An employee finds him or herself in a situation where the opportunity arises to steal from another employee or steal merchandise from their place of employment. This scenario accounted for 6% of the 2008 larceny from building incidents.

LARCENY FROM MOTOR VEHICLES

Larcenies from Motor Vehicles (LMVs) involve an offender either breaking into a car and stealing valuables from within or stealing an exterior accessory (such as tires or hubcaps) from an automobile.

After a dramatic increase in larcenies from motor vehicles (LMVs) in 2007, this crime type registered a 15% decrease in 2008, dropping from 1,234 incidents down to 1053. Despite this decline, the 2008 total was still 175 reports above the five-year average of 878 incidents. The East Cambridge neighborhood reported the largest number of LMVs in 2008 with 140 incidents, followed closely behind by West Cambridge with 139. West Cambridge also experienced the largest numerical increase, with 34 more larcenies reported this year than in 2007, equaling a 32% rise. (Strawberry Hill reported the largest percentage

Larceny from Motor Vehicles, 1999-2008



Neighborhood	2007	2008	% Change
East Cambridge	171	140	-18%
West Cambridge	105	139	+32%
Cambridgeport	140	120	-14%
Mid-Cambridge	144	115	-20%
Peabody	125	105	-16%
North Cambridge	100	90	-10%
Agassiz	89	76	-15%
Riverside	63	75	+19%
Area 4	140	73	-48%
Inman/Harrington	89	35	-61%
MIT	29	33	+14%
Strawberry Hill	18	32	+78%
Cambridge Highlands	21	20	-5%
Total	1,234	1,053	-15%

increase of 78%, but only rose numerically by 14 incidents.) Inman/Harrington saw the largest decrease this year (-61%), followed by Area 4 (-48%) and Mid-Cambridge (-20%).

Entry was gained in 69% of the larcenies by smashing a car's window. Roughly 8% of the entry methods were through open windows or unlocked doors. An additional 8% of the LMVs were from the exterior of motor vehicles, targeting items such as tires and headlights.

The major factor in the high number of LMVs again this year continued to be the theft of GPS navigation systems. Approximately 43% of all the LMVs in 2008, or 453 incidents, involved the theft of GPS systems. This is similar to



2007 when 485 GPS thefts were reported, equaling roughly 40% of the LMVs citywide.

Although by far the most popular targets, GPS systems were not the only items to be stolen in these larcenies. Other common targets included car stereos, small electronics left in plain view (MP3 players, cell phones, laptops, etc.), cash, purses/wallets, and clothing. Tires and other miscellaneous car parts were also stolen with high frequency this year. Larcenies from motor vehicles have been seen both during the day and overnight, as well as on weekdays and weekends.

Considering how widespread and pervasive this type of crime is in Cambridge, it is often difficult to determine when a pattern is emerging. However, there are a few areas where LMV activity tends to be concentrated in this city. One of these areas includes Cambridge Center, Technology Sq, Kendall Sq and the streets near the Galleria Mall. This area typically sees a high number of daytime GPS thefts from vehicles in local parking garages and lots. Another concentration can often be found along the Mass Ave corridor between Agassiz and Peabody, where larcenies are typically committed overnight while vehicles are parked on Mass Ave and residential side streets. The periphery of Harvard Sq tends to be a third common area for concentrations of LMVs to appear, particularly south and west of the Square between Concord Ave and Mt. Auburn St, and east of the Square along Kirkland St between Agassiz and Mid-Cambridge.

Another LMV trend that emerged in 2008 was the theft of tires from Hondas across the city. Tires on Honda Civics, Honda Fits, and occasionally Acuras were targeted most often, with a majority of the incidents taking place overnight. An arrest was made in March after a Cambridge male was seen removing tires from a Honda Civic on Dana St.

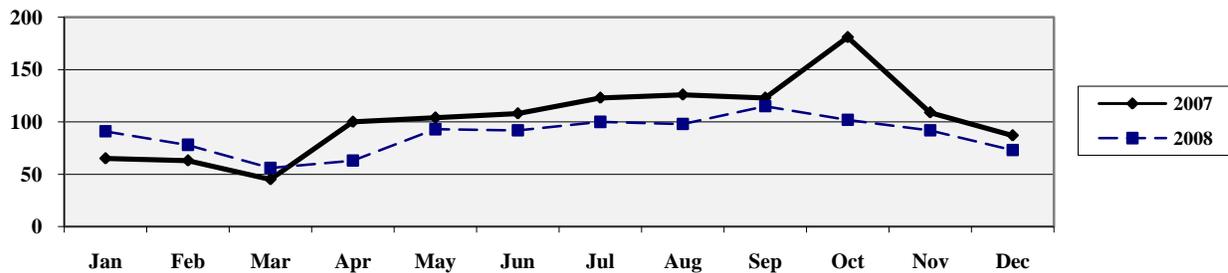
Top Three Methods of Entry

1. The most common method of entry into motor vehicles in 2008 was by breaking one or more windows of the vehicle. This method was reported in 69% of the larcenies.
2. The second most common method of entry into motor vehicles was by unknown means. That is, there were no signs of forced entry into the vehicle. This method was reported in 10% of the incidents.
3. The third most common larceny from motor vehicle method of entry was through an unlocked door or open window, which occurred in nearly 8% of the larcenies.

Top Ten Stolen Items of 2008

1. GPS Navigation Systems – 453 reported stolen
2. Various Automobile Parts – 103 reported stolen
3. MP3 Player – 94 reported stolen
4. Car Stereos/CD player – 74 reported stolen
5. Cash – 72 incidents
6. Laptop Computers – 68 reported stolen
7. Backpacks/purses – 64 reported stolen
8. Miscellaneous Electronics – 58 reported stolen
9. Clothing – 39 items reported stolen
10. Cellular Telephones – 37 reported stolen

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Motor Vehicles



HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

- Larcenies from motor vehicles have consistently averaged between 16-20% of the total serious crime index in Cambridge for over 20 years. This year's car break total accounted for 27% of the Crime Index Total.
- For the first five years of the 1980s, Cambridge averaged 1,050 larcenies from motor vehicles. This average increased to 1,175 per year between 1986 and 1990. From 1991 to 1995, incidents decreased to an average of 879 incidents per year. Between 1996 and 2000, incidents dropped significantly to an average of 684 per year. From 2001 to 2005, the average number of larcenies from motor vehicles rose ever so slightly to 692 incidents per year. The average number for the past three years (2006-2008) has risen dramatically to 1014 incidents, rising to a level not seen since the 1980's.
- The 2008 larceny from motor vehicle total of 1,053 incidents has undoubtedly been impacted by the continued high levels of GPS thefts in the City. The GPS system has become the favorite target of thieves not only in Cambridge, but in police jurisdictions throughout the region, Massachusetts, the United States, and the world.

LARCENY OF BICYCLES

Note: The Cambridge Police Department's bicycle theft statistics do not include thefts reported to the MIT or Harvard University Police Departments. These additional thefts could add several hundred to the theft total.

Between 1989 and 1994, bicycle theft exhibited a sharp ascent, soaring from an average of 270 per year in the 1980s to 584 in 1994. During the time frame between 1994 and 2003, the crime was steadily decreasing, with the exception of a slight increase reported in 2000. Since 2004, bicycle thefts have averaged approximately 236 thefts a year. The 277 thefts reported in 2008 is the city's highest total since 2001.

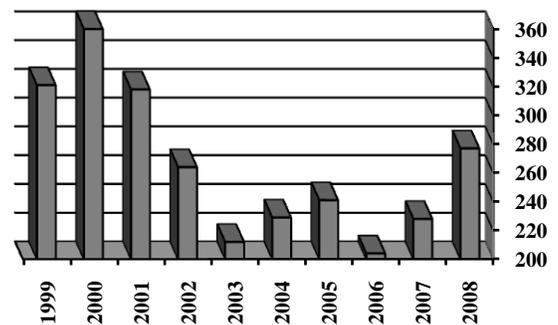
This year saw 277 incidents of stolen bicycles, an increase of 21% over 2007. Not surprisingly, the largest numbers of bicycle thefts occurred in the summer months of July and August (48 and 45 incidents, respectively), when bicycles typically pack the streets and sidewalks because of the warmer weather. However, June and the fall months of September and October also experienced higher rates of these incidents (between 34 and 36 incidents each). The majority of the bicycles were stolen from Central Sq (47

thefts), Harvard Sq (43 thefts), and Porter Sq (41 thefts).

Two patterns of bicycle thefts developed in 2008. In mid-May, at least ten bicycles were stolen from backyards and porches of private residences near Donnelly Field in Inman/Harrington; a Cambridge teen was arrested in connection with at least one of the thefts. The other pattern took place in the Harvard Sq area in late July and August. Eight or more bicycles left locked up in the area were taken. A homeless male and female were arrested in mid-August after the male was caught with one of the stolen bikes.

NEIGHBORHOOD	2007	2008
North Cambridge	26	42
Cambridgeport	35	34
Mid-Cambridge	25	34
Area 4	30	32
Riverside	17	30
Inman/Harrington	18	24
Peabody	17	24
West Cambridge	22	21
East Cambridge	19	20
Agassiz	11	9
Strawberry Hill	3	3
MIT	5	2
Cambridge Highlands	0	2
Total	228	277

Bicycle Larceny, 1999-2008



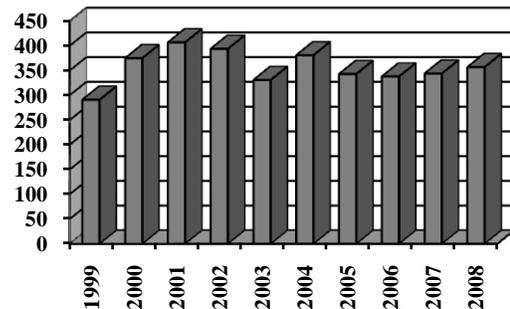
Locks present little difficulty to bicycle thieves, who often bring bolt cutters or pry bars with them. Half of all reported bicycle thefts this year involved a locked and unattended bicycle on the street, sidewalk, or rack. Unlocked bicycles that were on private property followed, making up 18% of reported incidents. These thefts occurred in apartment building hallways, or when bicycles were left in private yards. Another 18% percent of the larcenies were because the bicycle was left unlocked and unprotected.

LARCENY FROM PERSONS

Larceny from person describes pocket picking or any theft that occurs within the victim's area of control. The thefts are non-confrontational, and often the victim is not aware of the theft until after it has occurred. If any confrontation between offender and victim takes place, the crime is recorded as a robbery.

In 2008, larceny from persons was the third highest type of larceny in Cambridge, with 357 incidents. Periodic dipper activity in Central Square and Harvard Square drove this total. Two patterns of larcenies from persons emerged in Cambridge this year, both of which took place in Harvard Sq. The first pattern began in early May and involved patrons at cafes and restaurants/bars in the area, such as Starbucks, the Grafton St Grille, and Z Square. Wallets and purses that were left on the floor or hanging on the back of the victim's chair were targeted. The series came to an end after an Allston man was arrested for a larceny in Harvard Square in mid-June.

Larceny from Persons, 1999-2008



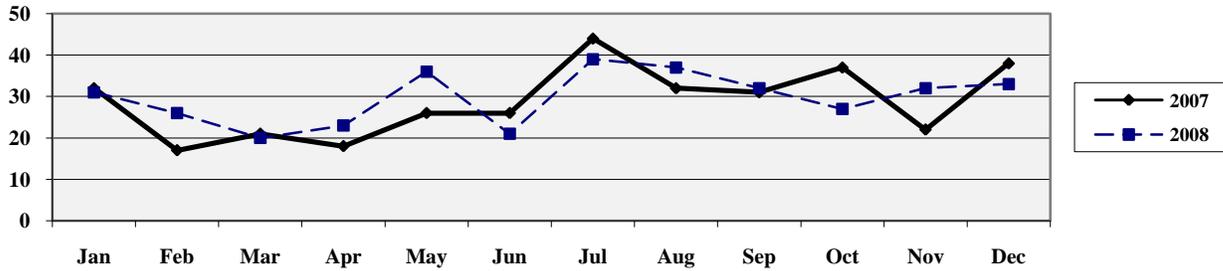
BUSINESS DISTRICT	2007	2008
Central Square	89	98
Harvard Square	73	74
Galleria/East Cambridge	46	54
Inman Square/Harrington	25	27
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	19	22
Porter Square/North Cambridge	25	19
Alewife/West Cambridge	31	19
Kendall Square/MIT	12	18
Cambridgeport/Riverside	10	14
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	14	12
Total	344	357

The second Harvard Square pattern was similar to the first, except that it also included the thefts of employee property from back offices at these establishments. The incidents took place in October. A homeless man was arrested in early November in connection with this pattern.

The following represents three recurring scenarios that typically dominate larcenies from persons in Cambridge:

1. Nearly 45% of the larcenies from persons in 2008 were thefts of items left unattended by their owners. This includes purses and wallets left briefly unattended in restaurants, churches, schools, stores, bus stops, parks, etc. In one typical scenario, a shopper may leave her purse in a shopping cart while looking at items on a shelf; when she returns to the cart, the purse is gone. In another scenario, a student enters a café and places all of his possessions at a table. When he leaves his belongings behind to use the restroom, his valuables may be missing when he returns to the table.
2. Another scenario is when a diner places his or her jacket over the back of a chair, or places her purse under a chair. Someone sitting behind the victim either goes through the coat or purse and takes the valuables within, or takes the coat or purse entirely. This accounted for 26% of the larcenies from persons in 2008. Incidents at restaurants and cafes located in Central Square (31 incidents) and Harvard Square (30 incidents) dominated this categorization. In Central Square, establishments on Massachusetts Avenue saw the majority of the incidents. In Harvard Square, concentrations were reported at and around local restaurants, specifically between the 1100 to 1400 blocks of Massachusetts Avenue, 30-50 Church St, and 80-100 Winthrop St. Incidents at the Cambridge-side Galleria have been dropping in recent years, with only three reported in 2008. These types of larcenies from persons are generally easy to prevent. Remember to always keep your belongings within your control. Do not leave purses on the floor, on the back of your chair, or otherwise unattended. Do not leave wallets or cell phones in the pockets of hanging coats.
3. Yet another popular scenario is while a victim is walking through a public place, a pickpocket stealthily reaches into the victim's coat, purse, or backpack and removes valuables. This scenario accounted for about 20% of the larceny from person reports in 2008. Harvard Square reported the highest pocket-picking numbers, with concentrations in the mid to late afternoons.

Monthly Totals for Larceny from Person



SHOPLIFTING

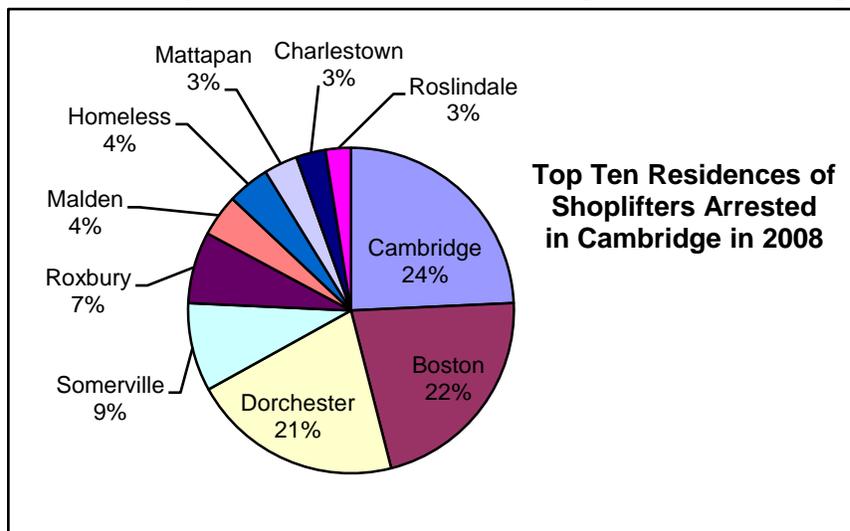
Shoplifting remained relatively stable from 2007 to 2008, with an increase of only three incidents. The Cambridge-side Galleria reported more than twice as many incidents as any other area in Cambridge this year; Central Square and Harvard Sq reported the next highest amounts. It is important to note that since shoplifting incidents are often only reported when an arrest is made, underreporting can be a serious problem. The actual shoplifting total may be six to ten times greater than the statistic given. However, this year half of the reported incidents did *not* result in an arrest, which may indicate an increase in the tendency to report incidents regardless of whether an arrest was made or not.

BUSINESS DISTRICT	2007	2008
Galleria/East Cambridge	121	167
Central Square	102	63
Harvard Square	48	61
Alewife/West Cambridge	17	30
Porter Square/North Cambridge	32	13
Cambridgeport/Riverside	16	7
Inman Square/Harrington	5	5
Kendall Square/MIT	2	3
1500-1900 Mass. Ave.	5	2
Bay Square/Upper Broadway	1	1
Total	349	352

Shoplifters usually fall into one of five categories:

1. **Juvenile Shoplifters**, who steal on a dare to impress their peers, to get an “adrenaline rush,” or to compensate for lack of money.
2. **Impulse Shoplifters**, who seize a sudden chance, such as an unattended dressing room or a blind aisle. Sometimes, the “impulse” is a long line or sudden lack of money.
3. **Alcoholics, vagrants, and drug addicts**, who steal erratically and clumsily. When caught, this type of shoplifter is more likely than others to get violent (see “Shop Owner/Patron” assaults in the Assault section).
4. **Kleptomaniacs**, who steal to satisfy a psychological need.
5. **Professionals**, who steal expensive items and resell them to fences or “flea markets.”

The following is a breakdown of the residences of persons arrested for shoplifting in Cambridge in 2008:



Top 10 Shoplifter Residences	
Cambridge	58
Boston	52
Dorchester	50
Somerville	21
Roxbury	17
Malden	10
Homeless	10
Mattapan	8
Charlestown	7
Roslindale	6

LARCENY FROM RESIDENCES

Larcenies from Residences are non-burglary thefts from apartments, hallways, garages, or yards. “Non-burglary” means that no force or trespass was involved in the theft. A majority of these thefts are committed by people who have the right to be on the property. They include thefts committed by guests, roommates, family members, workers, and home health care providers. They also include thefts committed in common areas of apartment buildings, and thefts committed in property surrounding a house, such as the front yard, walkway, or tool shed.

Since larcenies from residences are usually committed by someone known to the victim, pattern identification and intervention by the police department is difficult. There were 214 of these larcenies reported in 2008, a 32% increase over 2007. The rise in larcenies from buildings can be attributed to spike in guest thefts, up 32% from 2007 and in mail/package thefts which rose by 45% compared to last year. These two categories alone account for 57% of all larcenies from buildings in 2008. The most common larceny from residence scenarios are:

- *Thefts committed by visitors or guests of a residence: 29%*
- *Thefts of mail/packages delivered by a parcel service: 28%*
- *Thefts from a yard, porch, or other area surrounding a residence: 18%*
- *Thefts committed by someone working in the residence, such as a painter, plumber, contractor, or maintenance worker: 8%*
- *Thefts from a common hallway, foyer, or common area of an apartment building: 7%*
- *Thefts committed while victims are in the process of moving: 5%*
- *Thefts committed by a family member, spouse, or romantic partner (i.e., “domestic thefts”): 4%*
- *Thefts from a storage area of an apartment building or complex: 2%*

NEIGHBORHOOD	2007	2008
Mid-Cambridge	27	36
Cambridgeport	24	29
North Cambridge	22	28
Area 4	19	27
East Cambridge	14	22
Peabody	12	22
Riverside	15	14
Inman/Harrington	9	12
West Cambridge	8	11
Strawberry Hill	3	7
Agassiz	7	6
Cambridge Highlands	1	0
MIT	1	0
Total	162	214

LARCENY OF SERVICES

This crime includes taxicab fare evasion, “dining and ditching,” “gassing and going,” and other failures to pay for services already rendered.

There were 26 of these crimes reported in 2008. “Dining and ditching” incidents were reported most often this year (11 incidents), followed by gasoline thefts (6 incidents) and taxi fare evasion (5 incidents). The other four incidents consisted of suspects not paying for either auto repairs or parking.

LARCENY (MISCELLANEOUS)

Larceny miscellaneous includes all other unclassifiable larcenies.

Unlike in recent years when Cambridge experienced an extensive series of parking meter thefts, there were no patterns of any miscellaneous types of larceny in 2008. Miscellaneous larcenies dropped 39% this year.

Please see the Protect Yourself section starting on page 151 for ways to protect yourself from larceny.