



## Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence: A Final report

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## Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence

The Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV) is a multipronged program funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance's Strategies in Policing Innovation (SPI) suite (hereafter, Saginaw SPI). The program focused on reducing violence through two primary strategies: strengthening community relations and the implementation of surveillance technology. Specifically, the Saginaw Police Department (SPD) collaborated with its Michigan State University (MSU) research partner to develop an innovative approach to community meetings and relationship building in the form of front porch roll calls. SPD also plans to install several closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in key parts of the city to help with gathering evidence crucial to the investigation of violent crimes committed in the jurisdiction. This report will be separated into two results sections for each component of the Saginaw SPI.

### Front Porch Roll Calls

Developing strong community relations is a key mechanism by which law enforcement agencies alter crime patterns in local areas (Skogan, 2006; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). As fate would have it, developing positive relationships with citizens is particularly challenging for police agencies in high-crime jurisdictions. For example, citizens residing in high-crime neighborhoods generally trust the police less and are less satisfied with the police (Lai & Zhao, 2010; Reisig & Parks, 2000; Wu et al., 2009). Research also indicates that citizens are less likely to cooperate with police in high-crime communities, which can negatively impact ongoing police investigations and clearance rates (Brunson & Wade, 2019; Tyler & Fagan, 2008). Furthermore, lack of community trust and engagement with the police leads to more offending (McLean & Wolfe, 2016; Nix et al., 2015). In this way, restoring trust, improving cooperation, and engaging in police-community problem-solving partnerships are key to violence reduction efforts; however, developing solutions in communities that desperately need it is less straightforward (Coldren et al., 2013).

Many law enforcement solutions have been offered over the years to reduce crime by focusing on community-oriented policing. This strategy works by shifting the decision-making process from traditional agency hierarchies and towards front-line officers who directly engage with the communities they serve (Trojanowicz & Bucqueroux, 1998). Officers work with communities to reduce crime and improve citizen relations by developing collaborative solutions identified by and for the community. Systematic reviews conclude that community-oriented policing strategies improve police-citizen relations and perceptions of the police while their effect on crime is less consistent (Gill et al., 2014). Accordingly, recent attention is directed at constructing innovative solutions that reduce crime and improve citizen engagement with the police.

A promising solution advanced by several agencies throughout the U.S. involves hosting roll calls in public forums through what is commonly referred to as a "front porch roll call" (FPRC). This innovative strategy involves police departments holding daily shift roll calls in the community (e.g., in a resident's front porch/yard, driveway, or sidewalk) rather than in the typical station briefing room. The primary purpose of an FPRC is to produce an unrivaled level of transparency to an agency's operations, and in doing so provide a supportive environment through which agencies can begin to break barriers, build relationships, and work together with citizens to solve problems.



Anecdotal evidence suggests that FPRCs can boost police-community problem-solving partnerships (Columbia Police Department, 2019; Fort Pierce Police Department, 2019), however, more rigorous empirical evaluations are needed to determine the effectiveness of the strategy.



In May 2019, the city of Saginaw, Michigan and its police department partnered with Michigan State University through funding from the Bureau of Justice Assistance to implement a multipronged violence reduction strategy—SIRV. As part of the SIRV, SPD hosted FPRCs in an effort to improve community member trust, cooperation, and engagement across local neighborhoods. The current study describes the implementation of the FPRC program by drawing on data from field observations, qualitative interviews, and surveys that took place after each roll call. In the following sections, we discuss the theoretical foundations surrounding the FPRCs while also highlighting its practical implications for the types of problems they aim to address. We conclude by discussing the logistics of implementing FPRCs within an agency and provide an overview of the lessons learned along the way.

### Community-Oriented Policing

In addition to reducing crime, community-oriented policing efforts can improve citizens' evaluations of the police and community relations (Gill et al., 2014; Weisburd et al., 2015). Community-oriented policing represents “strategic attempts to redefine the traditional functions of the police; to modify key programs, tactics, and technologies on which the police rely; and to redefine sources of police legitimacy” (Reisig, 2010, p. 4). The purpose of community-oriented policing is to establish police-community partnerships in order to tackle neighborhood problems (i.e., crime and disorder) that have adverse effects on public safety concerns. Moving toward community policing, citizens are encouraged to partner with their local police agencies to address neighborhood problems rather than playing a passive role. Both qualitative and quantitative

research has demonstrated that residents who viewed police-community partnerships reported feeling safer in their neighborhoods and believed there were fewer physical and social incivilities (i.e., indicators of disorder) in their community (Carr, 2005; Reisig & Parks, 2004). Accordingly, empirical evidence indicates that the relationship between structural disadvantage and neighborhood quality of life can be mediated by the police-community partnerships (Reisig, 2010). This relationship does not appear to be constrained to people living in affluent areas. Community policing has been shown to act as a source of social capital that protects residents from the adverse effects of concentrated disadvantage.

In addition to the provision of public safety, community-oriented policing can help the formation of cooperative relationships necessary for the police to function effectively. Related research suggests that solid police-community relations can improve police legitimacy (Kochel, 2011). Public perceptions of police legitimacy are tied directly to the level of cooperation the public gives to the police. When people believe police are legitimate authority figures, they are more likely to cooperate with the police by calling to report suspicious activity and offering information relevant to solving crimes and community problems (Mazerolle et al., 2013; Murphy et al., 2008; Reisig & Lloyd, 2009; Tankebe et al., 2016). Conversely, more aggressive policing styles tend to alienate residents and decrease perceptions of legitimacy (Gau & Brunson, 2010). Without legitimacy, the police are likely to suffer from low public cooperation. The research literature is clear: community-oriented policing strategies involving collaborative problem solving with residents stand a good chance of improving community relations and citizens' perceptions of police legitimacy (Reisig, 2010).

The primary goal of community outreach is to engage with community members proactively rather than in a reactionary way by waiting for a problem to occur. Implementing different programs dedicated to outreach, police agencies not only try to build partnerships with community members but also collaborate with social agencies and community service providers to create more opportunities for collaborative problem-solving projects. This has resulted in the development of many community outreach programs by police agencies and their community partners over the past several decades. The effectiveness of some of these programs has been subjected to empirical scrutiny.

### ***Evaluations of Community-Oriented Policing Strategies***

Citizen Police Academies (CPAs) have been used to engage with the community and help citizens to have a better understanding of police. CPAs operate like a class offered by police agencies and involve citizens participating in ride-alongs, handling mock crime scenes, and attending moot court. The purpose of such academies is to improve understanding of what police do, strengthen police-community relationships, have better communication with community members, and, ultimately, reduce crime and disorder. An empirical study of 31 CPAs implemented over 20 years in Tennessee found a positive relationship between participation in the academies and familiarity with the local law enforcement and community crime (Lee, 2016). The study also found that participants left CPAs with a better appreciation of the importance of the police in the community. In addition, participants became more aware of how the police can influence crime, community safety, and overall community well-being.

The Police Assisted Addiction and Recovery Initiative (PAARI, 2006) is an example of a community outreach program that aims to reduce drug use within communities. The principal purpose of this program was to provide assistance to people who use drugs rather than arrest them. The collaboration between PAARI and local police agencies focused on connecting individuals with substance use conditions to treatment centers. In the first year of its implementation, the program trained police officers in 143 agencies and assisted over 400 people with entering treatment facilities. Some of the communities where the program was implemented witnessed up to 25% reductions in crime.

“Police Working with Youth in Non-Enforcement Roles” (Anderson et al., 2006) was funded by the State of Connecticut through the Office of Policy and Management and is an example of an effective community outreach program that focused on juvenile delinquency. The program’s goal was to increase opportunities for positive police-citizen interactions with youth outside of enforcement contexts. Agencies that participated in this program offered different outreach activities to achieve this goal (i.e., police academies – consisted of law enforcement classes and seminars, Police Explorers/Scouts programs – involved youths in police operations, and after-school/mentoring programs – involved police working with and educating youth). This outreach program resulted in some promising outcomes. Youth with lower levels of psychosocial functioning (i.e., self-assertive efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, and empathy for others) showed improvements after participating in this program. Overall, a vast majority of participants expressed a high degree of satisfaction with the program.

While programs such as these offer promise in terms of involving some elements of community relations and reducing crime or disorder, community outreach efforts of this type are not necessarily the same thing as community-oriented policing. As Cordner (2014) reminds us, community-oriented policing has less to do with the types of outreach activities police departments engage in and more to do with their philosophical and strategic orientation toward addressing crime and disorder problems. Community-oriented policing leverages systematic partnerships with community members and groups to mutually identify problems and solutions. Unfortunately, this is difficult to achieve in practice and has resulted in many agencies claiming to engage in community-oriented policing when, in reality, they simply engage in occasional community outreach activities. Playing basketball with kids in the park or having “coffee with a cop” are decent activities for the police to engage in but they are not community-oriented policing in themselves. Working *with the community* to identify and solve local problems is community-oriented policing.

### **Community-Oriented Policing and Front Porch Roll Calls**

Front porch roll calls may represent a community outreach activity that more closely resembles the spirit of community-oriented policing. To restore trust, improve cooperation, and engage in police-community problem-solving partnerships, which are key to violence reduction efforts (Coldren et al., 2013), several agencies around the U.S. have begun using front porch roll calls (Columbia Police Department, 2019; Fort Pierce Police Department, 2019). This innovative strategy involves police departments holding daily shift roll calls in the community (e.g., in a resident’s front porch/yard, driveway, or sidewalk) rather than in the typical station briefing room.



Front porch roll calls aim to break barriers between the police and public, facilitate better communication between the groups, and enable collaborative problem solving. One of the goals of front porch roll calls is to provide citizens a glimpse into the problems officers encounter daily and to lift the blue curtain associated with law enforcement. During the roll calls, officers have opportunities to interact with community members, present an overview of crime patterns and other important information, and listen to community members' concerns and suggestions.

Comprehensive, multicomponent initiatives that include a coordinated criminal justice and community response are effective approaches to violence prevention and reduction (Oliver, 2000; Skolnick & Bayley, 1988). More importantly, front porch roll calls provide opportunities not only for community members to ask questions, voice concerns, and meet and greet officers from their neighborhood but also police officers have the opportunity to engage in positive, non-enforcement contacts. A long line of literature demonstrates that providing a voice to residents is a key element of procedurally fair policing (McLean et al., 2019; Wolfe et al., 2016). During their interaction with community members in a non-enforcement context, officers treating citizens with respect and dignity, giving them opportunities to voice concerns, and conveying trustworthy motives can have a positive impact on community members' perception of police legitimacy (Tyler, 2006; Wolfe et al., 2016). Empirical research demonstrates that officers' procedurally fair treatment will improve citizens' attitudes toward the police and their willingness to abide by the law and cooperate with police, ultimately reducing criminal offending. In this way, front porch roll calls are an ideal community-oriented policing strategy. These meetings increase the opportunity for beneficial, non-enforcement contacts with the public and meaningful conversations geared toward implementing procedurally fair treatment while identifying local problems and developing a solution tailored to that context.

## Research Context

Located in Mid-Michigan, the City of Saginaw was home to approximately 48,650 residents in 2019 (Census, 2020). Saginaw is a diverse city with most residents being either White (49.5%) or African American (46.6%), while roughly 15% are Hispanic. Like many Michigan cities, Saginaw was financially crippled by the lengthy national recession and deterioration of the domestic auto industry. Saginaw has a median household income of \$29,582 and per capita income of \$16,960, both nearly half the state of Michigan and U.S. averages. About 35% of the total population lives below the poverty line, which is more than twice the state of Michigan (12.6%) and nearly three times the U.S. average (11.4%).

Deteriorating property values, shrinking income tax collections, and drastically reduced state revenue sharing continue to impact the city's ability to provide basic public services, which creates quality of life issues. For example, Saginaw was forced to reduce the size of its police department from 160 police officers in 1997, to its current level of 54 officers (66% decrease). Historically, Saginaw also suffers from high levels of violence. From 2010-2020, Saginaw experienced an average violent crime rate four times that of Michigan and an average homicide rate roughly 4 ½ times the state's rate. In short, violent disputes not only occur more frequently in Saginaw when compared to the state, but they are also more likely to end fatally.

## **The Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence**

The combination of depressed economic conditions, lack of community trust and cooperation, and lack of police resources created the need for an innovative strategy to combat violent crime in Saginaw. From 2019-2022, SPD partnered with MSU to implement SIRV which is a multipronged violence reduction strategy. SIRV's approach contained two primary components: (1) enhance citizen trust and engagement through the implementation of FPRCs in local communities and (2) use video surveillance technology to monitor frequent gang retaliation corridors (several bridges connect rival gang territories) to aid in investigations. Each prong of the SIRV targets resource gaps in the Saginaw community that may be contributing to the violent crime and gang problems in economically distressed neighborhoods.

### **The Saginaw FPRC Design**

Tasked with designing and implementing the FPRC initiative in Saginaw was a multi-disciplinary team consisting of an SPD Lieutenant, SPD Victim Services Specialist (VSS), and a researcher from MSU. In October 2019, the team began by developing community contacts for potential sites in which FPRCs could be reasonably hosted. SPD's VSS was primarily responsible for contacting potential community hosts and scheduling the FPRCs. Initially, this involved the VSS connecting with current community group and individual citizen partners. But, as the FPRCs took place and word spread about such events, more community members reached out to SPD with their willingness to serve as hosts. The roll calls took place in residential areas and community center parking lots. Many of these potential sites were located in crime hotspots known for high levels of firearm-related violent activity.

FPRCs were strategically designed to serve three overarching purposes. First, the FPRCs were designed to enhance transparency within the agency. By having roll calls in open, public settings, agencies can provide local residents an opportunity to take part in a unique day-to-day process carried out by its officers and learn more about what officers are currently doing in the community. In Saginaw, a FPRC worked by first having the Lieutenant greet community members and share information about the ongoings of the department. Standing by the Lieutenant were the patrol officers going on shift following the roll call. Much like a traditional roll call, many topics were covered at the beginning of the FPRC, such as what community-led initiatives were currently happening, what the state of the departmental staffing shortage was, and what various crime problems were occurring in local patrol areas. Each FPRC was built to engage the public and enhance transparency by opening with an ice breaker question that asked residents to share their thoughts on how many sworn officers work at SPD, and how many would be going on shift after the roll call. Residents frequently overestimated the number of officers that would be patrolling their streets.

The second purpose of the FPRC was to improve citizen engagement. Unlike traditional outreach events where the goals tend to center solely on relation-building, FPRCs in Saginaw provided the added benefit of encouraging citizens to identify and solve problems with SPD. This more closely approximates the overarching goals of both community- and problem-oriented policing (Reisig, 2010). The VSS followed the Lieutenant's lead with an overview of information regarding support services offered by SPD. Community members were encouraged to ask

questions during this time about the resources that residents can access through SPD when crises emerge. Shortly afterwards, residents were prompted to discuss any grievances they had, ask more questions, and talk about local issues in their neighborhoods. This provided a non-confrontational and community-driven medium through which citizens could speak with SPD officers about the issues they felt most pressing in their communities. These conversations provided residents and SPD officers the space and time to learn more about how to work together to solve local problems.



The third overarching purpose of the FPRCs was to build citizens' trust in the agency. The roll calls themselves provided an inviting and transparent opportunity to engage with SPD in residents' front yards and community centers. SIRV stakeholders also attended these roll calls, such as representatives from the Michigan State Police (MSP) and U.S. Attorney's Office, and, occasionally, the Chief of SPD and a member from the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services. Each of these individuals represented the local, state, and federal partnerships that SPD currently leverages in multijurisdictional efforts to combat violence in the Saginaw area. Residents were encouraged to engage in conversations with all members participating in the FPRC so as to reassure residents that SPD and the broader law-enforcement community shares similar values and cares for their overall welfare. The hope was that these conversations became the foundation through which citizens could regain trust in SPD, and in doing so be reassured that there are active crime reduction initiatives attempting to enhance public safety in their communities.

### **FPRC Evaluation**

The MSU research partner's evaluation of the FPRC program consisted of three components. The first component involved the administration of surveys at the end of each FPRC to gauge citizen assessments of the program. The second evaluation component involved field observations conducted by the research team during each FPRC. These observations gauged the intangible

aspects of the FPRC rollout, including both perceived citizen engagement and implementation characteristics that were successful and in need of improvement. The third evaluation component involved conducting qualitative interviews with the key FPRC law enforcement participants. Information drawn from these interviews was used to inform implementation and sustainability questions surrounding FPRCs as well as shed light on what obstacles administrators may face when conducting them in the future.

### **Current Study: Saginaw FPRCs as a Case Study**

Following the design and prospective rollout of the FPRCs in spring of 2020, the program was abruptly delayed due to a variety of factors revolving around the COVID-19 pandemic. On March 16, 2020, the Office of Research and Innovation at Michigan State University distributed a memo to faculty outlining restrictions for research during the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. This would eventually foreshadow a complete halt to in-person research, including all in-person evaluative research activities relating to this program following Michigan Executive Order 2020-21 (i.e., Michigan's "stay home and stay safe" executive order). Ultimately, the stay-at-home order also restricted SPD's ability to have in-person meetings.

To mitigate the spread of COVID-19, SPD pushed back the first FPRC until October 2020. Subsequent FPRCs were pushed into late spring 2021 following increases in COVID-19 cases in Michigan during late 2020. A total of 11 FPRCs were hosted between October 2020 and May 2022, many of which occurred in the summer of 2021.

Implementing a collaborative, community-centered program between the police and public during a global pandemic provides a unique opportunity to delve into the logistics of implementing FPRCs within an agency. In this report, we draw from survey data, field observations, and interview data to describe the implementation of the FPRC program. In doing so, we seek to clarify the mechanisms that facilitated and impeded success, and how agencies can pivot to overcome setbacks when they arise. We also provide an overview of the general lessons learned along the way so that others may draw from these insights when implementing similar programs in their own agencies.

## **Data and Methods**

This study leverages a mixed methods approach by drawing on survey data, field observations, and qualitative interview data to describe how FPRCs were implemented, what shaped their implementation, and what can be improved when future researchers and law enforcement agencies implement FPRCs in their communities.

### **Post-FPRC Surveys**

As members of the MSU research partner team, we attended each FPRC and were given an opportunity to speak briefly with attendees. We would introduce ourselves and describe our role as a research partner in evaluating the impact of the FPRCs. We would then distribute a cover letter to the attendees that invited them to participate in an online survey regarding the FPRCs. The cover letter provided a link and QR code to the survey. Each FPRC was assigned a different link

so the researchers could keep track of response rates from each meeting. Attendees were also invited to provide their email addresses at the end of each FPRC which was used to send a reminder email about the opportunity to complete the survey. The online survey was anonymous and did not collect identifiable data from respondents. The survey items focused on participants' assessments of the FPRCs themselves and attempted to examine whether attending the FPRCs improved respondents' views about SPD and their local patrol officers. These items tapped into perceptions of police legitimacy, procedural justice, and willingness to cooperate with SPD (see Appendix A for a copy of the survey).

## Field Observations

During each roll call, the research team took detailed observational notes on its implementation and reception. We focused on capturing information about the environmental characteristics, roll-call specific details, issues brought up by residents, and general attendance information when appropriate. We detail some of the themes that came out during those observations in the results of this report.

## Qualitative Interviews

Upon finishing the last FPRC, the research team interviewed the primary law enforcement-FPRC participants involved in the roll calls ( $N = 4$ ). This interview data provided the research team an opportunity to evaluate six key questions pertaining to the rollout, success, and sustainability of FPRCs: 1) What facilitated success in the rollout of the FPRCs; 2) What impeded success in the rollout of the FPRCs; 3) What could be improved about the rollout of the FPRCs; 4) Do FPRCs improve attitudes/relations between Saginaw residents and SPD; 5) How might FPRCs better target younger population groups; 6) Do you think FPRCs unfolded how the stakeholders envisioned/planned? Interviewees were provided a document detailing their rights as a research participant and notified that their identities would remain confidential. The semi-structured interviews lasted roughly 20 minutes each and took place through virtual meeting platforms (e.g., Zoom) and over the phone. We took detailed notes during each of the interviews.

# Results

## Survey Findings

We begin the evaluation of the Saginaw FPRCs by analyzing data from surveys completed by roll call attendees. The survey questions tapped into residents' attitudes towards police, perceptions of crime in their communities, and assessments of the FPRCs themselves. Eleven FPRCs were held between October 2020 and March 2022, hosting a total of 238 residents, and having an average attendance of 24 residents per meeting. A total of 42 surveys were completed by participating residents; thus, we achieved a response rate of 17.6% ( $N = 42$ ).<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> We provided a cover letter to all participants. Roughly 41% of residents who attended the roll calls were additionally willing to be contacted about the post-FPRC survey through email. Respondents were provided the option to access the survey via link ( $n = 36$ ) and QR code ( $n = 6$ ). The overwhelming majority elected to use the link (86%).

Table 1. Respondents' perceptions of the FPRCs

Survey Item	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
<i>The FPRC...</i>								
...was beneficial to me	57.5%	23	42.5%	17	0%	0	0%	0
...provided useful information	63.4%	26	36.6%	15	0%	0	0%	0
...provided me a better appreciation for what SPD officers do	67.5%	27	30%	12	2.5%	1	0%	0
...allowed me to meet the officers that patrol my neighborhood	58.5%	24	31.7%	13	9.8%	4	0%	0
...allowed me to voice my concerns about my neighborhood	48.8%	20	46.3%	19	4.9%	2	0%	0
...allowed for community residents and SPD to work as a team to address local problems	53.7%	22	39%	16	7.3%	3	0%	0
...was a good way to improve community relations	64.1%	25	35.9%	14	0%	0	0%	0
SPD should continue hosting FPRCs	64.1%	25	35.9%	14	0%	0	0%	0
SPD officers honestly listened to residents' concerns during the FPRC I attended	71.1%	27	28.9%	11	0%	0	0%	0
SPD officers treated residents respectfully during the FPRC I attended	82.1%	32	17.9%	7	0%	0	0%	0
SPD explained why they make certain decisions during the FPRC I attended	66.7%	26	33.3%	13	0%	0	0%	0
...made me feel safer in my neighborhood	37.8%	14	35.1%	13	27.1%	10	0%	0
...improved my sense of belonging to my community	39.5%	15	55.3%	21	5.3%	2	0%	0
...was too long	2.6%	1	2.6%	1	66.7%	26	28.21%	11
...was too short	2.56%	1	12.8%	5	66.7%	26	17.9%	7
...was well planned by SPD	43.6%	17	56.4%	22	0%	0	0%	0
There was enough time for questions	53.8%	21	46.1%	18	0%	0	0%	0
...had adequate representation	43.6%	17	53.8%	21	2.6%	1	0%	0

Table 1 outlines FPRC implementation metrics. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents who elected to take the survey had favorable opinions about how the roll calls were implemented. All respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the FPRCs were beneficial ( $n = 40$ ) and provided useful information ( $n = 41$ ). A vast majority of respondents believed the FPRCs



allowed them to meet with officers in their local community (90.2%,  $n = 37$ ). All respondents agreed or strongly that the roll calls were well planned ( $n = 39$ ) and had enough time for questions ( $n = 39$ ), while most also agreed that the FPRCs had adequate representation (97.4%,  $n = 38$ ).

Table 1 also sheds light on how well SPD implemented the roll calls in alignment with procedural expectations outlined in the FPRC initiative. Respondents agreed or strongly agreed that the Saginaw FPRCs allowed residents to work with SPD officers to address local problems (92.7%,  $n = 38$ ) and improve community relations (100%,  $n = 39$ ). The FPRCs also appeared procedurally fair to residents, with all respondents indicating SPD officers treated them respectfully (100%,  $n = 39$ ) and explained why they make certain decisions (100%,  $n = 39$ ). Importantly, many but not all respondents, agreed or strongly agreed that the FPRCs made them feel safer in their neighborhood (72.9%,  $n = 27$ ), thereby highlighting the potential influence the roll calls may have.



Table 2 outlines how citizen perceptions changed after attending an FPRC. Many residents indicated that their view of SPD as caring about people (67.5%,  $n = 25$ ), doing a good job (62.1%,  $n = 23$ ), and treating citizens with respect in their neighborhood (75.9%,  $n = 22$ ) at least slightly improved. Several respondents also indicated improvement in their perceptions of the police as capable of being trusted to make decisions that are right for their community (47.2%,  $n = 17$ ).

Table 2. Respondents' perceived change in their perceptions of SPD

Survey Item	Greatly Improved		Slightly Improved		Remained the Same		Slightly Worsened		Greatly Worsened	
	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>	%	<i>n</i>
<i>After attending the FPRC, my belief that...</i>										
...the Saginaw police care about people in my community has...	43.2%	16	24.3%	9	32.4%	12	0%	0	0%	0
...the Saginaw police are doing a good job in my neighborhood has...	35.1%	13	27%	10	35.1%	13	2.7%	1	0%	0
...Saginaw police officers' values are very similar to my own has...	48.6%	18	32.4%	12	18.9%	7	0%	0	0%	0
...the police in my neighborhood treat citizens with respect has...	41.4%	12	34.5%	10	24.1%	7	0%	0	0%	0
...the police in my neighborhood take time to listen to people has...	43.3%	13	36.7%	11	20%	6	0%	0	0%	0
...the police in my neighborhood explain their decisions to the people they deal with has...	33.3%	9	29.6%	8	37%	10	0%	0	0%	0
...the police in my neighborhood provide the same quality of service to all citizens has...	25.7%	9	28.6%	10	45.7%	16	0%	0	0%	0
...you should obey police decisions because that is the proper and right thing to do has...	22.9%	8	22.9%	8	54.3%	19	0%	0	0%	0
...the police can be trusted to make decisions that are right for my community has...	25%	9	22.2%	8	50%	18	2.8%	1	0%	0
...the police in my community approach their job with a strong moral code has...	37.9%	11	27.6%	8	34.5%	10	0%	0	0%	0
...because of their training and experience, the police are best able to decide how to deal with crime in your neighborhood has...	28.6%	8	25%	7	46.4%	13	0%	0	0%	0

Table 3 reports on whether respondents felt their willingness to cooperate with police had changed after attending the roll calls. More than half of all respondents indicated an increased likelihood of calling SPD when crimes arise (56.1%,  $n = 22$ ), provide information to the police to help solve crimes (61.1%,  $n = 22$ ), and report suspicious activity to SPD (75%,  $n = 27$ ).

Taken together, most participants who responded to the surveys were satisfied with the overall product SPD provided. Most respondents indicated that the roll calls were not too long, nor too short. Almost all respondents were pleased with the information provided, and many residents were content with their interactions involving SPD personnel. Although attending the FPRCs did not necessarily influence all residents' feelings of safety, the roll calls improved citizens' views of SPD officers as legitimate, procedurally fair, and respectful. Moreover, attending the FPRCs positively influenced citizens' willingness to interact and cooperate with SPD officers.

## Field Observations

The research team conducted field observations at each of the 11 FPRCs to better understand the social context under which each roll call took place. The researchers utilized an "observer-as-participant" role, ensuring not to embed themselves directly in the data generating process (Gold, 1958). Data analysis involved systematically categorizing repeating observations, which in turn, allowed for substantive conclusions to be ascertained.

### *FPRCs in action*

Contrary to their namesake, most FPRCs took place in local community organization parking lots, many of which were in the most active hotspots for firearm-related violent activity in Saginaw. In one such FPRC, gunshots could be heard no further than a few blocks from where the roll call took place. It was clear from attending officers' body language that they heard the gunshots as they began looking at one another and listening to the call for service regarding the incident that was dispatched over the radio shortly after the shots occurred. Yet, as a testament to the attendees' familiarity with local shootings and violence, not one community member in the audience seemed to flinch at the sound of the gun fire during the roll call. We tell this story because it demonstrates the real-world impact of violence in such communities. Despite apparently being desensitized to the sound of gunfire, the residents were willing to listen to the police and offer their own suggestions for community improvement.

Each roll call started with a background overview of the police department, which included the Lieutenant's opening question to residents about how many officers they believed would be patrolling their neighborhood that evening. The roll calls followed with an overview of different projects, trainings, and current departmental initiatives the agency was involved in. Residents frequently asked questions during this period given their general lack of knowledge on these topics. For example, in one roll call, residents were particularly interested in learning more about a Violence Interruption Initiative, whereby SPD planned to coordinate a victim-outreach program to provide resources for those recently involved in shootings. Such communication was important because it allowed the FPRCs to provide residents with critical information about what services the department currently provides.

Table 3. Respondents’ perceived change in their willingness to cooperate with the police

Survey Item	Much More Likely		Somewhat More Likely		Remained the Same		Somewhat Less Likely		Much Less Likely	
	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N
<i>After attending the FPRC, how likely are you to do the following?</i>										
Call the police to report a crime occurring in your neighborhood.	36.1%	13	25%	9	36.1%	13	2.8%	1	0%	0
Provide the police information to help them solve a crime.	27.8%	10	33.3%	12	38.9%	14	0%	0	0%	0
Report suspicious activity in your neighborhood to the police.	30.6%	11	44.4%	16	25%	9	0%	0	0%	0
Volunteer to attend a community meeting to discuss crime in your neighborhood.	55.6%	20	27.8%	10	16.7%	6	0%	0	0%	0
Work with others in your community on neighborhood watch activities designed to lower crime.	36.1%	13	33.3%	12	27.8%	10	2.8%	1	0%	0

Thereafter, the FPRCs would transition to a more traditional roll call whereby the Lieutenant would address the officers getting ready to go on shift. Here, the officers would discuss current problems in the current neighborhood, issues to be on the lookout for, and any other necessary information that would normally be provided to an officer at roll call. This allowed residents to get firsthand knowledge of local problems and the issues that officers face on a daily basis. In many cases, the residents were not aware of significant problems currently taking place in their own neighborhoods. However, on several occasions this process opened the door for a conversation about the problems. This could provide a mechanism for police departments to gain vital information pertaining to investigations and facilitate problem solving with the community's participation.

The FPRC would finish with a question-and-answer period. Community members primarily dominated the conversational space during this component of the roll call, whereas SPD personnel served as a moderator and source for continued discussion. This allowed community members to voice concerns and participate in the problem-solving process which is wholly consistent with the goals of procedural justice and community-policing more broadly. While many questions were answered, and solutions developed, the time for questions frequently encroached on the allotted time of the FPRC (normally ~ 2 hours). This highlights a potential point of improvement for future FPRCs, in that staff should be prepared to allocate additional time after the FPRC to allow for continued conversations.

One of the common themes across FPRCs was that many residents cited concerns about crime such as gang fighting, shooting, and illegal speeding on their local streets. At one roll call, a young child recounted the exact times and locations where recent shootings, assaults, and gang fights took place in their neighborhood. This was an eye-opening experience for both residents and officers alike of the harsh reality felt in one of Saginaw's most violent crime hotspots. Citizens also cited issues with the quality of SPD services in general, noting both the limited hours of operation at the department headquarters and the lack of officers patrolling their neighborhoods. Other residents noted issues of slow response times as well. SPD representatives responded to these concerns by explaining to residents how these issues are situated within the broader context of officer staffing and budget cuts. At the same time, however, they acknowledged the residents' concerns and offered to do everything in their power to improve. Collectively, this time of open conversation served as a period of reflection on the state of affairs within SPD and across Saginaw neighborhoods. Importantly, this also served as a starting point for the agency and community members to organize and develop plans to tackle these issues.

For example, in one roll call, community members were particularly interested in staffing shortages and learning more about SPD recruitment initiatives. This manifested into a productive dialogue between participants and SPD personnel, whereby ideas on how to recruit local youth in hopes of developing a more racially-diverse and representative department were workshopped. Accordingly, the FPRCs afforded residents both the opportunity to share their concerns with the agency as well as to learn more about how to work with SPD to resolve local problems moving forward.

### ***Major takeaways***

Three recurring themes emerged from the field observations. First, with an average attendance of 24 community members, and a loud baseline level of motor vehicle noise (i.e., music, cars driving by), speaker systems became increasingly common at FPRCs to facilitate clear communication. Chairs, drinks, and SPD “gear” (e.g., koozies, stickers, magnets) were also incorporated into the meetings to increase turnout and thank residents for attendance. Police agencies that consider hosting FPRCs in the future should consider allocating funds and supplies for these materials to improve attendees’ experiences at the roll calls. Second, the overall quality of the FPRC was contingent in part by the community sponsor, who coordinated with SPD to host the roll call. Community sponsors not only provided space and accommodations (i.e., chairs, food, water) to host the roll call but were also catalysts in the attendance recruitment process. Heavily attended meetings were the result of hard-working and well-connected sponsors. Agencies considering FPRCs should prioritize developing and expanding their ties with potential community sponsors to ensure high turnouts. Lastly, most conversations with SPD personnel occurred towards the end of the roll calls and after they finished. While some attendees felt comfortable asking questions during the FPRC, many respondents waited until afterwards. Indeed, the FPRC in and of itself served as an icebreaker of sorts by elevating the agency’s transparency with the public. With attendees’ nerves at ease, many felt comfortable conversing with local officers and staff on an individual basis after the roll call itself ended. Accordingly, the process of breaking barriers and re-building those relationships between SPD and Saginaw residents tended to occur not only during the roll call but after it ended as well. SPD staff intentionally left time for such informal conversations at the conclusion of each roll call. Some of the best interactions can occur in such a setting and we encourage future police agencies to allocate plenty of time for informal conversations and mingling after the conclusion of the formal aspects of the FPRC.

### **Qualitative Interviews**

The research team interviewed key stakeholders involved in Saginaw’s FPRCs. We analyzed our notes from the interviews by collating repeated ideas to identify potential response themes for each question. Throughout this process, we identify commonalities and distinctions across respondent accounts to ascertain a comprehensive set of recurring themes (Clarke, Braun, & Hayfield, 2015). Each of the interviewees revealed that a primary contributing factor to the success of the FPRCs was participant engagement. For example, one respondent indicated that “[residents] making themselves accessible and talking about problems...” was a key component to the successful implementation of the roll calls in Saginaw (Respondent 1). In support of this claim, another respondent noted that it was difficult to host an interactive dialogue throughout the roll call if attendees were not willing to engage with SPD in the first place. Accordingly, FPRCs were at their best when residents immediately (or eventually) became willing to engage in conversations with SPD. One potential way to facilitate this process was to break the silence and be transparent with citizens (Respondent 2). Breaking down barriers and elevating transparency from the very beginning of the roll call seemed to create a more welcoming environment through which attendees would be more willing to engage in the FPRC.

The interviewees indicated that lack of resident attendance was one of the primary impediments to ensuring a successful FPRC. If residents do not show up to the roll calls, then the



potential impact that FPRCs can have on Saginaw residents' attitudes towards SPD is limited. A limited capacity to recruit residents contributed to low attendance at some of the FPRCs. Hosting FPRCs during a pandemic was a notable factor some interviewees attributed to low attendance rates at some of the events. As one respondent put it, "...COVID made things so very difficult in everything that we do.... People are still reluctant to attend out of fear [of COVID-19]" (Respondent 3). Not surprisingly, field observation data revealed that FPRC attendance was generally higher in the summer months, when FPRCs could be hosted outdoors and when COVID-19 infection rates were lower.

While fear of COVID-19 limited residents' willingness to attend some of the roll calls, one interviewee noted that, "[residents] ...may know their neighbors but may not want them at their house because they 'know' their neighbors" (Respondent 2). In other words, FPRC hosts may not necessarily want to invite some of their neighbors to the meetings because they may be the people responsible for the neighborhood's crime and disorder problems. The lack of trust in some community members frequently manifested through field observations where residents would describe the ongoing crime problems in relation to their neighbors within the local area. Accordingly, both fear of contracting COVID-19 and lack of social cohesion among some neighbors contributed to low attendance when implementing some of the FPRCs.

Furthermore, we observed that FPRC attendance recruitment could be increased by leveraging greater broader contacts within a community. SPD primarily recruited residents through their social media platforms; however, one respondent rhetorically asked, "how many people that we actually need to talk to are there" (Respondent 4)? SPD's FPRCs were attended by a racially diverse group of people depending on the neighborhood location of the event. The attendees reasonably resembled the racial diversity of Saginaw. But, as is typical with most community-based meetings hosted by the police, most attendees were older adults with deep roots in their neighborhoods. Such people are needed at FPRCs, but it would be beneficial if larger numbers of younger people were made aware of the events and demonstrated a willingness to attend. Beyond attaining a diversity of viewpoints at the roll calls, the main reason this could be beneficial is that younger people are much more likely to be involved (or know people who are) in risky behaviors that contribute to neighborhood problems. Indeed, the issue of attracting a younger population would not be solved by advertising FPRCs through traditional social media platforms given that the segment of the Saginaw population that generally follows SPD media and attends the meetings "...are more than likely predisposed to having a positive view of the police" (Respondent 1). Accordingly, SPD learned they needed to utilize a different strategy to advertise FPRCs to younger residents in Saginaw.

When asked how to improve overall recruitment, most of the interviewees' comments centered on the need to have better sponsors and more advertisements. One potential recruitment innovation might include coordinating multiple community sponsors when roll calls are to be hosted in neighbors' front yards. Unlike community directors/leaders who are well-connected and can recruit large audiences, local residents were less connected with their neighbors and struggled to produce large turnouts. Accordingly, one interviewee mentioned that SPD should, "...have other groups like community organizations or churches help get the word out" when residents volunteer to host a roll call (Respondent 4). Indeed, leveraging community

connections through non-profit organizations and other local institutions with deep social networks in the community may reap larger turnouts at future FPRCs. This could be especially important when trying to recruit attendance at FPRCs held in high-crime neighborhoods where some residents are fearful of “being labeled a narc” for attending a “police meeting.” Ensuring larger numbers of attendees may help minimize concerns of this type.

Other suggestions related to recruitment centered on expanding the types of outlets for advertising the FPRCs. Common across three interviewees was an emphasis on working with local Saginaw schools to recruit attendees. One respondent mentioned soliciting recruitment through high school sports programs while others suggested utilizing school district email lists to assist in contacting Saginaw parents about the FPRCs. One respondent even mentioned the possibility of having schools host a roll call, in hopes of expanding youth outreach as well.

In terms of improving the quality of the FPRCs, respondents primarily focused on ways to enhance the overall experience for attendees. Included in these recommendations, were suggestions to provide “...more crime data specific to the neighborhood where the FPRC took place” (Respondent 2) and to include more sworn and non-sworn officers and personnel at the FPRCs (Respondent 1). Many attendees were more concerned about what problems occur in their own neighborhoods, rather than what happens across the city of Saginaw. SPD attempted to personalize the FPRCs by describing current, local problems during the roll call briefing portion of the meetings. Based on our field observations, attendees enjoyed this portion of the meetings. But, our interviewees noted that including more crime-specific statistics for the areas where the FPRCs took place may increase the personalization of the FPRCs and further increase attendee engagement. Such information may help facilitate direct conversations about specific problems in the immediate area. This may instigate fruitful conversations about problem solving and, in turn, build cooperative relationships between SPD and citizens. Again, this would be consistent with the expectations of community- and problem-oriented policing. Although staffing shortages limit SPD’s capacity to bring more personnel to the roll calls, having several officers attend the FPRC may increase residents’ willingness to speak about local problems.

## Discussion

Developing innovative solutions to bolster police-community relations continues to be a first-order concern for police practitioners and academics alike. The current study described an innovative strategy premised on enhancing community outreach by hosting police roll calls in local community neighborhoods. We gathered data using multiple methodological approaches as a first step towards evaluating the utility of this potential solution for developing police-community relationships. In doing so, we described the implementation of the approach, and highlighted what works and what can be improved moving forward.

In general, evidence from the survey data revealed that the FPRCs worked as intended. Although these data are not amenable to statistical scrutiny, they showed that residents were frequently satisfied with the FPRCs SPD provided. Moreover, residents frequently reported improvements in their views of SPD as legitimate and procedurally fair, both of which are key mechanisms towards crime reduction in community-oriented policing strategies. Importantly,

these data represent only a select sample of individuals, which highlights the need for further research on this issue.

Data from qualitative interviews and field observations revealed that attendance was critical to FPRC success and a lack of attendees at some roll calls inhibited efforts to improve working relationships with SPD. Attendance was contingent on many factors stemming from advertising initiatives, community sponsors, and resident recruitment. For those who wish to build an FPRC program of their own, we recommend exploring an array of advertising initiatives that vary in both mode of contact as well as target population. Key personnel involved in the FPRCs suggested it would be helpful to explore the use of emailing community members through school district messaging systems. This may help target adolescents and their families and thereby help diversify the groups of people that attend the FPRCs. Another lesson for agencies looking to implement FPRCs in their jurisdictions is to leverage the community leaders' connections to help spread the word. Our field observations and interview data indicated that the level of attendance hinged primarily on the community members that hosted the roll calls. Where advertising may fall short, community sponsors may fill those gaps by recruiting through their own social platforms and networks. Working with these people to develop an attendance recruitment strategy may help ensure greater attendance. One way to accomplish this is to put local residents who volunteer to host an FPRC into contact with local community leaders to aid in the process of recruiting attendees. This may be particularly useful for those living in high-crime and disorderly areas, where evidence indicates that community trust and social mobilization can be particularly weak (Marschall, 2004; Sampson et al., 1997). Another possibility is for agencies to dedicate funds to a community liaison that could help coordinate community partners and plan the meetings. A version of this strategy was used by SPD and it was instrumental to their success.

The qualitative interview data and field observations provide further "lessons learned" during Saginaw's first experience with FPRCs. First, agencies should consider providing chairs, refreshments, and agency-labeled gear when resources allow (or work with a community partner that has such resources). Based on our observations with Saginaw's FPRCs, these small steps seemed to have a positive impact on attendees' overall experience at the roll call and assisted in easing any apprehension towards participating in the meetings. This may be particularly useful for agencies who have historically weak relationships with the public, as issuing small acts of kindness indicates consideration for their well-being and assists in the process of building long term relationships. On a related note, including non-sworn police personnel at the FPRCs may assist in the process of breaking barriers between the agency and the public. Respondents, especially those who historically distrust the police, may be apprehensive or intimidated by the presence of multiple police officers standing at the front of a meeting. Having more non-sworn personnel to converse with may help ease tensions and provide a useful indirect contact with the agency. Lastly, when agencies describe current crime trends in the city, they must also provide crime statistics that are specific to each community area where the FPRC takes place. Our field observation data revealed that residents were mostly concerned with the issues that took place in their communities, and qualitative interview data further confirmed this. We observed the most engagement from residents when problems within their micro-context were discussed at the FPRCs.

In the end, this evaluation of FPRCs in Saginaw provides preliminary evidence that it may be a useful strategy for enhancing police-citizen relations and building trust in police agencies. However, this remains a preliminary assessment due in large part to data limitations stemming from the COVID-19 pandemic. Accordingly, more evaluations of FPRCs and similar strategies are needed to better understand what types of programs provide the best opportunities to strengthen community trust and build legitimacy in police agencies. It is our hope that the evidence garnered from our evaluation provides a useful tool for agencies and researchers in the future who look towards developing innovative solutions aimed at improving citizen engagement with the police.

## Hot Spot Surveillance

Throughout the SPI grant, the MSU research team and SPD simultaneously partnered on a BJA-funded Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) grant. The PSN project involved person- and place-based components that targeted repeat offenders and crime hot spot locations. Specifically, the PSN Taskforce completed offender notification meetings and the MSU research partner conducted hot spot analyses to help SPD and its law enforcement partners target patrol efforts in Saginaw's most violent neighborhoods. As part of the SPI grant, SPD integrated a technology component into its targeting of violent, firearm-related crime in the identified hotspots. Research has identified several promising strategies for curbing violent crime in hot spots (Braga et al., 2014). One promising avenue is to install closed-circuit television (CCTV) cameras in strategic locations (Circo & McGarrell, 2020; Clarke, 1997; LaVigne et al., 2011; Ratcliffe, 2006). Deterrence theory would suggest that the placement of CCTV cameras in hot spots may reduce violent crime because it increases the chances of an offender being caught (Clarke, 1997; Gibbs, 1975; Ratcliffe, 2006; Zimring & Hawkins, 1973). Simply put, the presence of CCTV cameras may cause would-be offenders to perceive a higher risk of getting caught and punished for criminal behavior (Blumstein et al., 1978; Cook, 1980; Nagin & Pogarsky, 2001; Paternoster, 1987). Indeed, research tends to support this possibility (Clarke, 1997; Ratcliffe, 2006). One study showed that the presence of cameras was positively associated with citizens' perceived sanction risk (Piza, Caplan, & Kennedy, 2014). According to Tilley (1993, p. 5), the introduction of CCTV cameras can reduce criminal behavior "...by deterring potential offenders who will not wish to risk apprehension and conviction by the evidence captured on videotape..."

### Placement of CCTV Cameras

CCTV cameras only appear to have an impact on crime when there is considerable thought put into where the cameras are installed. Piza and colleagues (2019) recently demonstrated that other evidence-based strategies must be used in combination with CCTV cameras to effectively deter street crimes like violence (see also Piza et al., 2014). Namely, CCTV camera installation should be preceded by an in-depth analysis of the spatial distribution and nature of crime patterns in a local area. Consistent with the evidence base on hot spot policing (Braga et al., 2014; Braga and Weisburd, 2010), concentrating CCTV surveillance systems within high-crime area is more effective than randomly allocating cameras across a city (Piza et al., 2014; Piza et al., 2015).

Accordingly, the MSU research partner has assisted SPD with the spatial analysis of violent crime in the jurisdiction to inform the evidence-based placement of the CCTV cameras (Asirvadam

et al., 2014; Caplan et al., 2011). SPD's goal of using video surveillance technology is to help deter criminal behavior but also provide valuable video evidence to help investigate and prosecute individuals who engage in violent crime.

The city is divided by the Saginaw River, which serves as a natural boundary between the east and west sides of the city, home to rival gangs. Much of the gang-on-gang violence involves members driving from one side of the river to the other to assault their rivals and then returning to their home side of the river. Our hot spot analyses of Saginaw's data over the past few years confirms the presence of several large concentrations of violent, firearm-related crimes on either side of the river. Unfortunately, SPD does not have enough officers to adequately police the gun violence problems it faces. With only seven detectives to investigate all violent crimes in the city, the agency simply lacks the resources to accumulate enough evidence for prosecution. In order to augment their investigatory capacity, SPD's original plan was to install surveillance cameras on either side of the seven bridges connecting east and west Saginaw.

However, we completed three reports providing descriptive and spatial analyses of the distribution of crime in Saginaw. In one of these reports, we identified five spatial concentrations of firearm-related offenses that occurred in Saginaw from 2017 to 2019 (Carter et al., 2020). This led to a series of recommendations to SPD on the placement of their CCTV cameras. In addition, we provided a presentation to SPD regarding specific information related to the location of cameras and how they could be set up to maximize the collection of evidence. We recommend placing cameras near key violent crime hot spots, and underscored the need to consider the direction the cameras are pointed and the coverage they provide. CCTV cameras must be set up to acquire a clear view of the most traveled corridors of entrance and egress into the hot spot locations (Asirvadam et al., 2014). Take a city block as an example. Ideally, you would want to install three cameras: two cameras at each end of the block and another somewhere near the middle of the block. While potentially effective, such a strategy is cost-prohibitive in most jurisdictions.

Fortunately, SPD was able to secure the installation of several sets of video surveillance cameras at eight intersections located on Michigan Avenue on the west side of Saginaw. The stretch of Michigan Avenue where the cameras will be installed is a heavily traveled commercial/business district located just west of the Saginaw River. There is a mixture of retail stores, restaurants, lounges, and motels, and single- and multi-family residences on the surrounding streets. The area borders two violent crime hot spots on the west side of the city and serves as a main travel corridor to the east side of Saginaw.

SPD will be installing three cameras (i.e., the H4 Edge Solution Camera Line from Motorola) and one license plate reader (i.e., the L5F Fixed License Plate Recognition Camera System from Motorola) at seven intersections along Michigan Avenue. And, at one intersection, there will be four cameras and four license plate readers installed. The CCTV cameras are not going to be attached to the utility poles at the corners of intersections. Polearms will be used which will allow them to hang over the intersection and view all vehicles and pedestrians in the area. SPD will be able to access up to 30 days of cloud-based data from the CCTV system at no additional cost. This is an evidence-based strategy that takes into consideration the hot spot reports and recommendations provided by the MSU research partner. Specifically, SPD is targeting a highly

traveled corridor in proximity to key hot spots and worked with the CCTV company to ensure adequate coverage of the location.

### **Evaluation Strategy**

The COVID-19 pandemic introduced considerable delays in the implementation of the CCTV component of the SPI grant. Throughout 2020 and much of 2021, SPD was unable to schedule meetings with camera vendors due to stay-at-home orders and staffing shortages (both with the vendors and SPD). Manufacturing and shipping delays further complicated the finalization of CCTV contracts. Fortunately, as of early spring 2022, SPD has agreed to terms with a camera vendor and received procurement approval from the City of Saginaw. SPD plans to install the cameras during 2022.

After the installation of the CCTV cameras, the MSU research partner will conduct a process evaluation of the implementation of the cameras. Specifically, we plan to track criminal cases in which video surveillance was used as evidence to arrest and/or prosecute an offender. Depending on final placement of the cameras and data availability, the MSU research partner will consider a more rigorous, quantitative evaluation of the effectiveness of the cameras. For example, we may assess whether crime trends, especially violent crime, appear to have been impacted by the installation of the surveillance cameras. This process will account for the extent to which the technology benefits the investigation of crimes and the cameras' deterrent effects. Given that the delays in the implementation of the CCTV portion of the grant, we plan to complete this evaluation during the no-cost extension of the project. We plan to complete an addendum to this final report to detail these findings.



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## Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV): Addendum to the Final Report

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## SIRV Addendum Executive Summary

This is an addendum to the report entitled, “Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence: A Final report,” submitted to the Bureau of Justice Assistance in July 2022.<sup>1</sup> The final report covered an evaluation of the front porch roll call portion of the Strategies in Policing Innovation (SPI) grant. Beyond the report, a manuscript detailing the front porch roll call implementation was published in *Policing: An International Journal* (a peer-reviewed academic journal).<sup>2</sup> The SPI grant also afforded the Saginaw Police Department (SPD) the opportunity to install close-circuit television (CCTV) surveillance cameras and License Plate Reader (LPR) technology in strategic locations within Saginaw. These technologies were viewed as a vital tool to enhance the investigatory capacity of the SPD with its limited resources and to reduce crime.

Due to COVID-19 and subsequent supply chain challenges, a significant decline in staffing levels, internal review program modifications which required different positioning of hardware and placement reviews, CCTVs and LPRs were not installed until Fall 2023 during a no-cost extension of the grant. Practical use of the system began January 2024, when notification alerts were activated on designated computers within the SPD and access provided (sign-in instructions/identifications) to supervisory staff. All sworn staff were provided access to the system through their in-car laptops and/or on designated computers within the SPD beginning March 2024. While the CCTV and LPR systems are not monitored in a real time crime center, supervisors and officers can monitor alerts or hits on their in-car laptops and desk-top computers within SPD headquarters. This addendum to the final report discusses the implementation of the CCTVs and LPRs in Saginaw, challenges encountered, and relevant metrics on its utility to the agency.

### Targeted Problem

As discussed in the final report, the MSU research team and SPD simultaneously partnered on a BJA-funded Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) grant. The PSN project involved person- and place-based components that targeted repeat offenders and crime hot spot locations. Specifically, the PSN Taskforce completed offender notification meetings and the MSU research partner conducted hot spot analyses to help SPD and its law enforcement partners provide additional although sporadic proactive uniformed patrol efforts within Saginaw’s most violent neighborhoods. The goal of these additional uniformed patrol efforts was to reduce crime by being a visible presence in these neighborhoods, making proactive contacts with suspicious and/or known violent offenders and making positive community contacts to help strengthen perceptions of community safety. The current SPD PSN project period ends September 2025. One promising avenue to enhance these crime reduction efforts on a year-round, 24/7 basis is to install CCTV and LPR cameras in strategic locations (Circo & McGarrell, 2020; Clarke, 1997; LaVigne et al., 2011; Ratcliffe, 2006). These advanced technological tools/systems were viewed

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<sup>1</sup> Carter, T., Wolfe, S. E., Nam, Y., & Lawson, S. G. (2022). *Saginaw Initiative to Reduce Violence (SIRV): A Final Report*. East Lansing, MI: School of Criminal Justice, Michigan State University.

<sup>2</sup> Carter, T., Wolfe, S. E., Nam, Y., & Lawson, S. G. (2023). Front porch roll calls: an innovative approach to community-oriented policing in Saginaw, MI. *Policing: An International Journal*, 46(5/6), 766-779.

as being a significant advancement in the SPD's ability to identify suspects and/or vehicles involved in the commission of crimes, identify areas frequented by those suspects and/or vehicles, and facilitating the apprehension and subsequent conviction of the perpetrators of these crimes. The SPD had some previous success with CCTVs that were installed by the city and the Downtown Development Authority within business districts and other key locations across the city. These successes were primarily achieved during the investigation phase of crimes and were instrumental both in identifying suspects and during the prosecution phase. The SPD was also aware that other law enforcement agencies across the country were having success in crime reduction through expanded CCTV and LPR systems.

### **Strategies Employed**

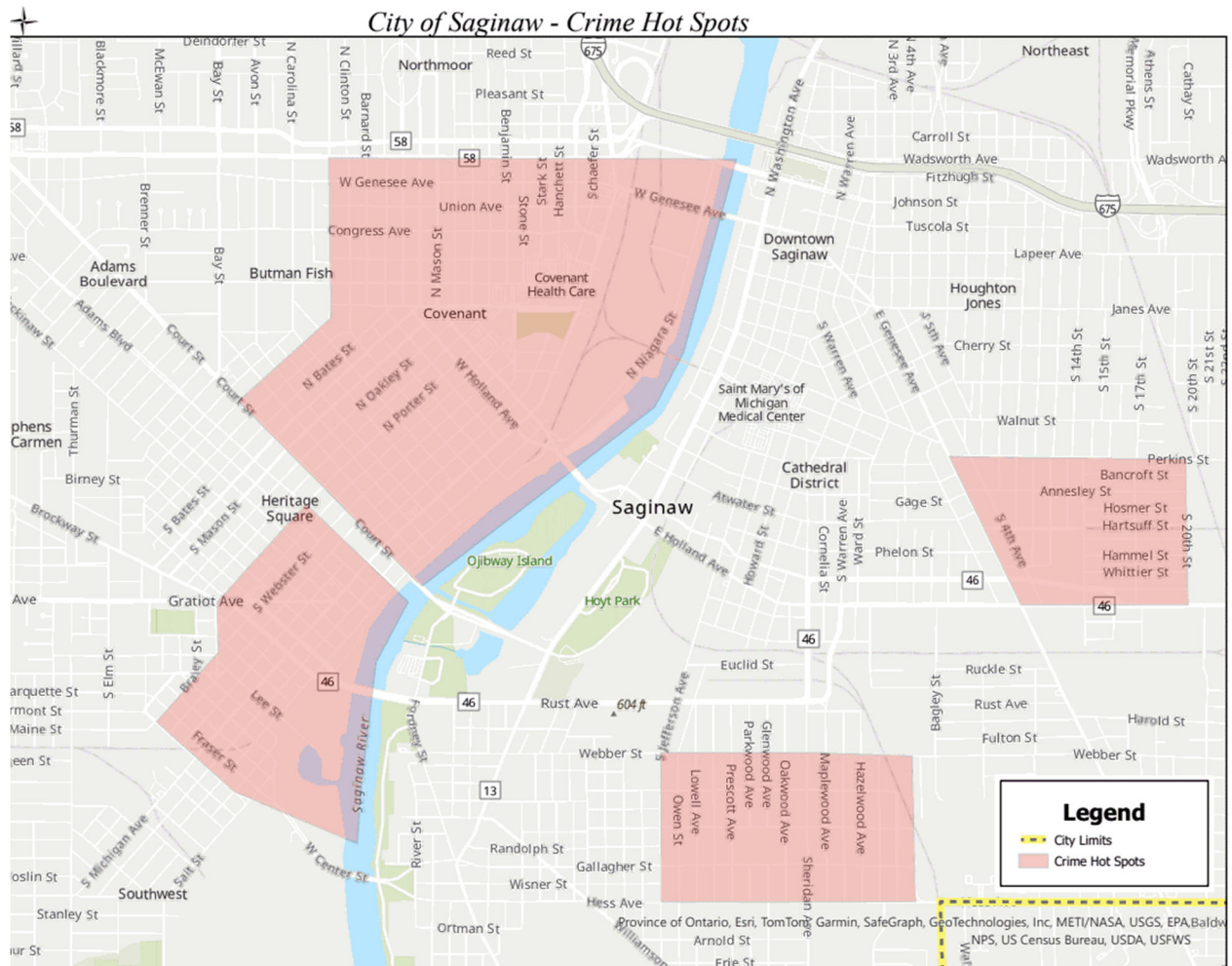
MSU assisted SPD with the spatial analysis of violent crime in the jurisdiction to inform the evidence-based placement of the CCTV and LPR cameras (Asirvadam et al., 2014; Caplan et al., 2011). CCTV and LPR cameras were considered viable technology tools that would further enhance crime prevention and reduction efforts by a department struggling with diminishing personnel in a community with unusually high violent crime rates and is often identified by the Federal Bureau of Investigation's Uniform Crime Report as one of the United States statistically most violent cities. The research team identified five spatial concentrations of firearm-related offenses that occurred in Saginaw from 2017 to 2019 (Carter et al., 2020). These general areas would serve to be our focus for the Front Porch Roll Calls (see main text of final report), additional hot spot patrols through the PSN initiative and for strategic positioning of CCTVs and LPRs that would serve to strengthen investigations and reduce crime. In respect to the proximity of hot spot areas and their geographical footprints, the SPD outlined four geographical hot spot areas that would receive concentrated proactive patrols consisting of a team of four officers and one supervisor. The hot spot areas would be slightly modified in response to trending violent crime and the capability of the five person teams to also focus on "warm" spots radiating out from the epicenter of the hot spot areas. In addition, the team provided a presentation to SPD regarding specific information related to the location of cameras and how they could be set up to maximize the collection of evidence. The SPD focused on the following hot spots:

Court St., N. Charles St., State St., Saginaw River

Adams St., S. Porter St., Bullock St., Braley St., Vermont St., Saginaw River

Webber St., S. Jefferson, Hess Ave., Elmwood St.

E. Genesee Ave., E. Holland Ave., S. 20<sup>th</sup> St., Perkins St.



The Saginaw River runs through the heart of the city and divides the city in half, resulting in the common designations of “the east side” or “the west side”. Historically, the east side is where most violent crimes were committed, and the west side had significantly lower violent crime rates. Within the last 25 years, violent crime has increased significantly across the west side of the city and decreased its footprint across the east side. The SPD was able to secure the installation of multiple sets of CCTVs and LPRs at eight key intersections located along Michigan Avenue which parallels the Saginaw River on the west side of the city. The stretch of Michigan Avenue where the cameras were installed is a heavily traveled commercial/business and residential district, with a mixture of retail stores, restaurants, lounges, and single- and multi-family residences on the surrounding streets. The location or placement of CCTVs and LPRs inside or near violent crime hot spots along Michigan Avenue at points where bridges crossed the Saginaw River were ideal pinch points to monitor, collect intelligence and evidence that would facilitate the identification and apprehension of those committing violent crimes and/or the recovery of stolen vehicles and other property in or near hot spot areas.

The SPD installed 28 cameras (i.e., the Avigilon 8MP H5A) and 26 license plate readers (i.e., the Avigilon 3MP H4ALPC Fixed License Plate Recognition Camera System) at eight intersections

along Michigan Avenue. Seven of the eight intersections covered bridge pinch points and the other intersection covered a major intersection where five heavily traveled roads come together, one of which feeds into a state highway running through the city. Each intersection has a combination of CCTVs and LPR's (up to four of each at an intersection). The CCTVs are attached to utility poles near the corners of intersections. Polearms allowed them to hang over the intersection and view vehicles and pedestrians in the area. This allowed highly traveled corridors in proximity to key hot spots to be monitored.

SPD sworn staff and selected professional staff were trained and provided access to the CCTV and LPR platform. The platform contains up to 30 days of cloud-based data (no additional cost) that SPD personnel can access. Front line officers were provided access to monitor the system or receive alerts and both supervisors and detectives were provided with the additional capability of entering and removing wanted vehicle or license plate information. Front line officers have the capability to respond to locations where they received a live "hit" notification of a wanted vehicle and/or wanted person. This would enable front line officers to make faster apprehensions and/or identifications of perpetrators of various crimes. Detectives are also able to use the platform to identify vehicles and/or persons who committed crimes at or near those locations, establish proximity to the commission of a crime and evaluate known or regular patterns of travel. CCTV and LPR footage that is relevant to the commission and subsequent investigation of crimes leading to the identification, apprehension and subsequent prosecution of offenders is saved, uploaded to the case file, and shared with the assigned prosecutor(s). Information gathered by these platforms may also be used by prosecutors to strengthen search warrant requests in furtherance of the investigation and prosecution of the case.

### **Community Outreach and Collaboration**

The SPD conducted its first FPRC in May 2021 and was arranged by a community activist/partner (Mexican American Council) to be held at a church. Due to the on-going staffing constraints and the heavy workload, officers attended the FPRC's outside of their normal hours. The FPRC's were structured to begin with a mock roll call and then transitioned into an update of our current efforts and concluded with a question-and-answer session.

SPD staff members participating in Front Porch Roll Call (FPRC) events felt they were great opportunities to educate community members about SPD initiatives, collaborations, and successful crime reduction efforts in their neighborhoods. SPD staff members felt these opportunities for personal interactions with community members were critical to strengthening community relationships, building trust, and facilitating the exchange of information. Throughout this initiative, SPD leadership would often receive requests for informal (emails or telephone calls) or formal (repeat FPRC's) updates on the implementation of the CCTV and LPR systems. Initial and on-going information exchange about the CCTVs and LPRs was particularly helpful in alleviating the occasional voiced concern about how they would be used, what the city's intentions were, and if there were protocols/guidelines in place for their use. In this way, the Front Porch Roll Calls allowed SPD to alleviate concerns about the installation of the CCTVs and LPRs, while also communicating to the community the steps being taken to address crime in



Saginaw. The SPD continues to engage in FPRC events with its community members and they have evolved into opportunities to showcase partnerships that are relevant to community needs. Our most recent FPRC was held in April 2024, in partnership with the Covenant Neighborhood Association. The SPD integrated or highlighted its partnership with Families Against Narcotics and our joint initiatives such as Hope Not Handcuffs and The Quick Response Team. Hope Not Handcuffs is a partnership where individuals seeking help with substance misuse or addiction can walk into the SPD, ask for help, and be connected with a FAN Angel who can help get that person into a treatment facility or receive other needed services or support. The Quick Response Team is a combination of SPD officers and both FAN peer and family coaches who proactively reach out to persons who are known to be struggling with substances with the goal of offering treatment and/or support services. FAN team members highlight these partnership initiatives, provide education about substance misuse, distribute Narcan and provide instruction for its use. The SPD has received accolades from persons in attendance at these FPRC's for our willingness to be open to partnerships that help persons who are in need and address root causes that may contribute to crime or social disruption.

### **Challenges Faced & Opportunities Discovered**

Award notification came at or a little after the award start date and then there are the typical contracts and other necessary administrative processing necessities that must occur before project implementation can reasonably begin. Like most awards, this process is typically finished 3-4 months after the official award date has begun; generally, sometime in December or January.

For SPD, this was about January 2020 – which coincided with the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost immediately, the SPD was directly impacted when a young officer in his 20's went into the hospital and was on life support for more than three months. Michigan was quickly put under local, state, and federal guidelines/restrictions, which remained in place until June 2021. Other SPD staff members soon became ill, required hospitalization and were unable to work for significant periods of time.

In the meantime, SPD sworn staff numbers had plummeted from 60 to about 38 (nearly 40%) and non-sworn staff numbers had fallen from 16 to about 10 persons (nearly 40%). Factors contributing to this decline included the COVID pandemic and the national sentiment against some law enforcement practices and outcry of bias against minority populations. The SPD struggled to perform basic law enforcement services which resulted in an “all hands-on deck” situation where senior leadership also helped to fill gaps throughout the patrol division including night shift patrols (in addition to regular day shift responsibilities) for three or more years until staffing levels were rebuilt.

The SPD continued to experience challenges with the implementation of the CCTVs and LPR components of the SPI initiative due to COVID supply chain issues and delivery of necessary equipment. Supply chain issues continued throughout 2023.

Additionally, the technical lead for the CCTV and LPR for the program who also oversees all non-sworn staff, and all department technology went on extended medical leave. Continued

reductions in staffing levels further hindered progress in the installation of the systems during this time.

When system implementation began, further internal review concluded that there was a need to reduce costs (annual service plan fees) that the SPD would be responsible for after the life of the grant. SPD staff were instructed to seek additional bids for system service implementation. Implementation was temporarily halted until additional bids were secured which also resulted in modifications to the system service plan (i.e. switching from fiber optic lines to coax cable service and moving away from a system platform that included NCIC programming). These changes lowered annual operating expenses/fees. Additionally, these changes also required different equipment components which needed to be ordered. While these changes were being worked out, it was also discovered that misinformation had been relayed from another city department, in relation to ownership of city owned utility poles which had been identified as strategic placements for the equipment. This took additional time and coordination between other city departments and outside entities to resolve before going forward. As new placement locations were being finalized, additional delays occurred during contract negotiations with the new service vendor in relation to fees and contractual language.

The CCTV and LPR systems became functional for designated desk top computers within the SPD in January 2024. SPD leadership is still working with the (co-ax cable) service vendor to maximize the effectiveness of LPR “hit” notifications. It was recently discovered that the service vendor subcontracts use of a national network or framework to process the LPR data. Currently, the system has a “filter” in place which prevents live “hit” notifications from being delivered to SPD personnel via email and/or text messaging. The only way these live “hit” notifications are being received, is if the SPD staff member is currently signed into the system via desktop or in-car laptop computer systems. In other words, if the program is not open and actively monitored, live or real-time “hit” notifications are not effective.

SPD leadership worked with Saginaw County 911 and its vendors/partners to install real time notification software onto patrol vehicle laptops in March 2024. All sworn law enforcement personnel have been provided access to the CCTV and LPR systems, with the capability of live monitoring and conducting search functions for wanted vehicles via license plate numbers (complete or partial) or vehicle characteristics such as color and vehicle type (i.e. car, truck, motorcycle etc.), and within specified time periods. Currently, the CCTV and LPR system can retain data for a period of 30-60 days.

In July 2024, the city, and SPD, were notified by a state regulating department, that two intersections where the CCTV and LPR systems were located on city poles, were inside the state department’s right-away and had to be removed. That department’s requirements and a historic agreement with the city which enabled use of city poles for that department’s operations, prohibited the city from utilizing those poles for anything other than their original purpose, including placement of CCTV and LPR systems. New locations have been identified, with approval of that state department, and installation/movement of the CCTV and LPR systems near those intersections is expected to be accomplished September 2024.

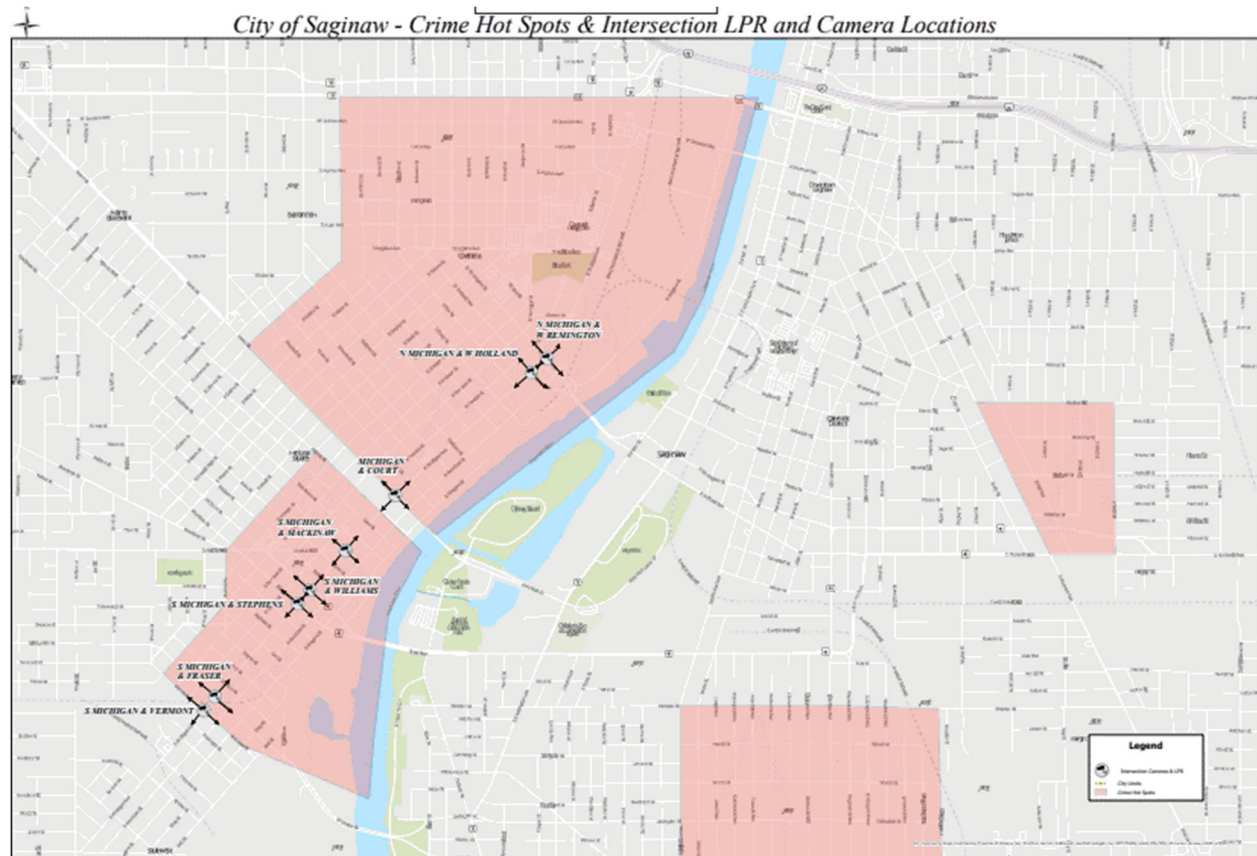
## Data and Intelligence

Hot spot areas identified by our research partner continued to be a primary element of our crime reduction efforts. In addition to placing CCTVs and LPRs in or near those areas, the SPD continues to focus extra patrols inside those hot spot areas through the PSN initiative. Citizens living inside these hot spot neighborhoods have expressed a greater feeling of safety when they know and see police officers more frequently. Their feelings of safety are increased further when they know and feel they have a relationship with their local police officers. FPRCs are an important element of relationship building with the community and the SPD will continue forward with these engagement opportunities after the formal SPI initiative has concluded.

After review and consideration of crime data provided by our research partner that highlighted hot spot areas within the city, SPD leadership pinpointed key pinch points within or near those hot spot areas that would be crucial to investigating, identifying, and apprehending the perpetrators of violent and other crimes in those areas. The systems would serve as an important tool/resource to Investigation Division personnel saddled with high caseloads and all-to-often few leads or opportunities that resulted in the apprehension and/or conviction of repeat offenders. Additionally, Patrol Division personnel would be better equipped to identify the perpetrators of violent crimes, track their route of ingress and egress from the crime, and identify known areas habited or frequented by those perpetrators more quickly.

Our CCTV and LPR systems were placed at the following locations:

- S. Michigan & Vermont – 4 cameras, 4 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Fraser – 3 cameras, 3 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Stephens – 3 cameras, 2 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Williams – 3 cameras, 3 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Court – 4 cameras, 4 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Gratiot & Mackinaw – 3 cameras, 4 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Holland – 4 cameras, 3 LPR's.
- S. Michigan & Remington – 4 cameras, 3 LPR's.



The SPD will continue to focus on the identified hot spot areas through continued concentrated community outreach and relationship building efforts, in addition to deploying extra uniformed patrols. The SPD will continue to work with research partners, the Michigan Department of Corrections, and other partners such as the Michigan State Police who are dedicated to Saginaw's crime reduction efforts through the provision of proactive patrols through its Safe Cities Initiative. Through our combined efforts and funding opportunities provided such as the Strategies for Policing Innovation, we are better positioned to enhance services in hot spot areas and respond to evolving and emerging crime trends.

### Analysis and Evaluation

The CCTV and LPR systems have already proven successful. They were helpful in a recent homicide investigation in which the cameras were positioned in the direction of a private building where a homicide had been committed inside on January 1, 2024. The CCTV & LPR system near Mackinaw, S. Michigan, and Gratiot (M-46) were able to capture the arrival of the suspect, victim, and witnesses in addition to when they left the scene. The suspect's vehicle was also caught on camera at the scene.

On January 20, 2024, patrol units were responding to the 400 block of N. Hamilton St. for a report of shots fired at a residence. Responding officers were notified that a male victim had walked into a local hospital with gunshot wound(s). Responding officers were able to obtain a

description of the suspect and suspect vehicle from the victim. Investigating officers contacted a road supervisor and requested the system be checked - Court & Hamilton CCTV & LPR system is four to five blocks from the scene. The supervisor was able to locate footage of the suspect vehicle on that system and Downtown Development Authority (DDA) surveillance systems. Unfortunately, the suspect vehicle did not enter the LPR system field of range.

On January 24, 2024, the streets department filed a hit and run police report that a utility pole had been snapped off near the intersection of Court & Michigan. A review of the CCTV and LPR system at that location resulted in the identification and location of the semi-truck tractor and trailer that had caused the damage. The city was then able to file a claim with the suspect vehicle's insurance carrier and recoup the costs to replace the damaged property.

On February 4, 2024, officers were dispatched to a call for shots fired near Court and Woodbridge. A short time later they were sent to the Southwest side of the city for a report of a vehicle that had been struck by gunfire near Court and Woodbridge. Officers were able to obtain a description of the suspect and suspect vehicle including the license plate. Officers were able to obtain video that captured the incident from a local source in that area and was able to determine the suspect vehicle was last seen W/B Court toward the Court & Michigan CCTV/LPR system. A supervisor was able to locate CCTV/LPR footage of the vehicle at or near the time of the incident at Court & Michigan and various times at Michigan & Remington and Michigan & Holland.

On March 2, 2024, a road supervisor collected a list of stolen vehicles from Saginaw County and surrounding counties including Bay and Midland Counties and entered approximately 200 license plates into the LPR system. One of the stolen vehicle license plates was caught on the CCTV/LPR system sites and it was determined that it was now on a completely different vehicle. The information was disseminated to road officers and the vehicle was located and stopped on March 7, 2024. While that vehicle's vin was not reported as stolen, the vehicle was impounded for suspicious circumstances as the ignition was damaged and had been rigged with a homemade starter button.

During the weekend of March 8 – 10, 2024, a white Chevrolet Trailblazer had fled from the Michigan State Police (MSP) on two occasions and the SPD on one occasion. Utilizing the CCTV & LPR systems, a road supervisor was able to identify the license plate of the vehicle and determine that it was improper. That information was disseminated to the shift(s) who attempted to locate the vehicle. A road supervisor that was actively monitoring the LPR system identified the suspect vehicle at Michigan & Court. The supervisor notified road patrol units who were able to locate the suspect vehicle and ultimately apprehend the suspect.

On March 17, 2024, a vehicle fled from a traffic stop initiated by the MSP. LPR was utilized and indicated the vehicle had passed through. A responding officer located the suspect vehicle in a drive-thru of a restaurant. Officers were able to contain the suspect and suspect vehicle which enabled MSP to conduct their investigation.

On April 9, 2024, a female with life threatening gunshot wounds arrives at a local hospital in a private vehicle. The on-duty supervisor uses the LPR system to track the path of the victim's vehicle and ultimately identify the location of the shooting. Also accessing DDA cameras in the area, the supervisor was able to locate video footage of the shooting in progress. The suspect vehicle was also caught on video surveillance and the CCTV/LPR system at Michigan & Vermont.

Officers went to the registered address of the suspect vehicle's license plate and ultimately were able to obtain information as to the location of the suspect vehicle which was hidden behind a residence not far from that area.

On April 18, 2024, deputies put out information about a vehicle and its license plate that were involved in a retail fraud that had just occurred. The on-duty patrol supervisor used that information to search the LPR system and determine that the vehicle had a history of significant traffic at one CCTV/LPR site. A short time later, the vehicle was located in that area. The vehicle fled from the officers, but the suspects were apprehended a short time later. The stolen property in question was recovered along with other stolen property located inside the vehicle. One of the suspects was also lodged for two outstanding felony warrants.

On April 22, 2024, officers were asked to assist the local paramedic company in the retrieval of a \$25,000 piece of equipment that was left behind in a residence. The resident claimed to have delivered it to one of the local hospitals. Utilizing the CCTV/LPR system, officers were able to determine that the resident was untruthful which led to the recovery of the equipment.

On May 28, 2024, the license plate of a vehicle that was involved in a shooting incident was entered into the LPR system which furthered the investigation by confirming the make, model, color and unique damage that would help to locate the suspect vehicle.

On July 11, 2024, the license plate of a stolen vehicle was entered into the LPR system which provided alerts to the presence and location of the stolen vehicle, which was recovered a short time later.

On July 29, 2024, a stolen vehicle from a nearby city was entered into the LPR system. A patrol officer receiving the hit alert began checking the location (Michigan & Mackinaw) and located the vehicle occupied by four subjects. A felony stop was initiated, and the vehicle was recovered.

Initial training with multiple road patrol and investigation supervisors resulted in several taking a leadership role in utilizing the system during their shift to successfully locate and identify vehicles and/or suspects who had just committed crimes or were driving wanted vehicles. Use of the CCTV/LPR systems during the initial response to and follow-up investigations continues to grow with increased familiarity of the system. There will be additional training sessions soon to ensure that all supervisors, detectives, and road patrol officers are familiar with the system and its capabilities.

The CCTV and LPR systems have been positively received by the community and with much anticipation. There have been many inquiries from throughout the city about when they can expect the implementation of those systems in their neighborhoods. There seems to be minimal concern about the systems when citizens learn they are not continually monitored, and the SPD has safeguards (policy) in place about how they are to be used and by whom.

Due to the recent installation of the CCTV and LPR systems, while we are quickly accumulating anecdotal information that demonstrates the success and effectiveness of the SPI initiative, there has not been enough time to accurately furnish numerical data that would demonstrate the long-term success or effectiveness of these systems within hotspots and/or crime suppression in general.

Despite the lack of a significant amount of data to process and analyze, it should be noted that a comparison of Saginaw's State of Michigan Index Crimes from January – April 2023 (516) to January – April 2024 (381) resulted in a total decline of -26%.

### **Integration and Sustainability**

SPI training and technical assistance providers were helpful in identifying and providing sample CCTV/LPR policies, protocols and procedures that were modified and adopted by the SPD. This was vital so that SPD had protocols and procedures for appropriate use and oversight of these systems in place.

Due to the early and initial success of the CCTV and LPR systems, the SPD is looking to not only sustain its current CCTV and LPR initiative, but is also in the process of expanding further implementation of these systems throughout the city, in collaboration with community partners and a variety of local, state, and federal funding sources including grants, appropriations etc. CCTV and LPR systems will be expanded into other strategic locations within the city to help prevent and reduce crime in or near identified hot spot areas. The SPD will continue to evaluate prospective vendor systems, equipment, and associated costs as the agency moves forward to ensure the community is being served with effective and reliable systems far into the future. On-going monitoring and collection of data relating to the successes of the CCTV and LPR systems is also necessary for information purposes to be shared with the citizenry, including both elected and appointed officials to increase support for on-going and/or additional internal funding toward the sustainability of these systems. Successful and/or significant use of the CCTV and LPR systems is entered into the Chief's Log which is disseminated daily to supervisory staff. This information is being maintained by the Grants/Victim Services Division and is available for formal or informal distribution purposes.

The SPD has sought and received a Congressional Appropriation to support and expand our current CCTV and LPR system program. Currently, Phase 2 of CCTV and LPR system, will result in these systems placement at the following strategic locations, not currently served by with CCTV and LPR capabilities.

- N. Michigan & W. Genesee – 2
- N. Michigan & Congress - 1
- W. Genesee & Schaefer -1
- W. Genesee east of N. Michigan – 1
- E. Genesee & Water – 1
- E. Genesee & Washington – 2
- E. Genesee & Baum -1
- N. Washington & Tuscola – 2
- N. Washington & Carrol -1
- Johnson & Saginaw River – 1
- Johnson & N. Washington – 1



## Johnson & N. Franklin - 1



The SPD continues to seek additional appropriations that will sustain and further expand the program across the city.

### Insights Gained

There were many lessons learned during the SPD's integration of CCTV and LPR systems. While police officers and other public safety personnel are experts in regular and on-going crisis management in environments that are extremely resource challenged, unexpected events such as a worldwide pandemic can occur, and these unpredictable events can be a significant obstacle to progress. While these challenges (large and small) may come globally, may come from outside entities, or may even come from within one's own organization, perseverance, partnership, leadership, mentorship from experts, flexibility, and being open to positive change are fundamental to the success of any initiative such as SPI.

The ability to maintain adequate staffing levels and/or even be able to expand staffing to permit the establishment of a real-time crime center that would be able to monitor these



systems in real time would be ideal for use of these systems as a primary or even proactive response tool rather than a secondary follow or investigatory tool. Use of these systems even as an investigatory tool is productive in the identification, investigation and apprehension of suspects involved in a variety of violent and other crimes.

Ensure that there is cross-training in sworn and professional staff ranks can help to avoid project delays should a key member be sick, injured, or otherwise unavailable for any period of time.

Project managers and team members should be prepared to pivot at any time during development or implementation of the project. Progressive internal review may dictate a change of direction due to differing priorities, fiscal considerations etc. The cost of ownership is real.

Changes in service providers and service systems (moving from fiber to co-axial cable) that lowered purchase and annual operating costs for the project came at a price in relation to CCTV and LPR system efficiency, connectivity, and effectiveness. Careful consideration should be given to quality in relation to quantity of CCTV and LPR systems. Systems that are integrated with the NCIC system and/or regional/state systems may be worth the initial and on-going investment in relation to efficiency, effectiveness, and data sharing on a broader scale. Systems that are not integrated with NCIC make little sense in the big picture. Challenges such as these can be mitigated or overcome through engagement and training with field officers, patrol supervisors and investigation staff that are encouraged and enabled to utilize systems under any type of limitation(s).

The value and capability of the CCTV and LPR systems were quickly proven. The SPD quickly committed to expanding these systems to additional strategic sites that were seen as critical service gaps unaddressed in this, Phase 1 of CCTV and LPR systems, for the SPD and City of Saginaw. Through SPD's partnership with Michigan State Police (MSP), strengthened through Michigan's Secure Cities Initiative, the SPD learned that MSP and the State of Michigan was now utilizing Flock Safety CCTV & LPR systems across the State of Michigan and the Saginaw region. Additional regional law enforcement agencies were also utilizing Flock Safety systems and allowed for greater interconnectivity. After evaluating the Flock Safety product and its capabilities, implementation of Phase 2 CCTV and LPR systems, began through use of Congressional Appropriations funding. An additional benefit provided by the Flock system, enabled the SPD to lease systems hardware thereby reducing purchase costs, which enabled more funding to be directed at even more strategic locations. Another benefit with utilizing the Flock systems was that they have an agreement in place with the state's regulating department that permitted operation of their systems within state right-of-ways.

Project advisors or mentors provide a level of expertise and experience, not to mention professional contacts that are very helpful when undertaking new projects or initiatives. They may be able to provide or serve as a connection to an established program, initiative and/or vendors that have proven track records with similar initiatives. These opportunities may include a peer exchange program and/or the facilitation of connections to other experienced

organizations who are able to provide a detailed template or model for building a new initiative, project, or program. Do not recreate the wheel if you do not need to!

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