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COMMUNITY POLICING: Community Input Into Police Policy-Making

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The National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center

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- Training of police administrators, politicians, and community residents in the principles, management, and operation of community policing programs.
- On-site technical assistance to communities interested in initiating a community policing program.
- Research into all facets of the policies and procedures affecting community policing programs.
- Dissemination of information relating to community policing.

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Introduction

A Radical Departure

This booklet is designed to acquaint you with a radically new kind of survey done by the Lansing (Michigan) Police Department with assistance and funding from the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center.^[1] Before discussing how and why such information can be useful, it pays to understand why this study is such a departure from the past.

The Lansing Police Department Community Survey is unique because it is unusual for a police department to ask residents to provide input concerning how they would prioritize police services and functions as well as categories of crimes. While the concept behind the survey may not at first sound controversial or unusual, the reality is that this survey clearly marks the beginning of a new era in which police solicit the taxpayers' input directly, so that it can be included in the decision-making process that leads to setting police policy.

Chief Richard Gleason of the Lansing Police Department demonstrated a strong commitment to finding new ways to enlist community input and support by participating fully in this survey. Many traditional police administrators remain reluctant to solicit input from the community, out of the misguided belief that only the police themselves have the experience and expertise required to formulate intelligent and effective police policy.

Few police departments conduct any surveys of the citizens they serve. Of those that have undertaken such efforts, the surveys are usually designed to find out how residents assess police performance. While such "satisfaction", surveys are indeed commendable, not only because of the information they provide but because

they foster citizen involvement, these surveys only provide a yardstick of existing police performance--and a yardstick compared to what? In other words, surveys designed to measure satisfaction provide no opportunity for citizens to express their model of the ideal. What makes the LPD Community Survey so uniquely important is that it constitutes a blueprint for the future by involving citizens directly in the policy-making process.

In addition, the LPD survey benefits from being nonadversarial. It does not ask residents to complain or praise, but instead it seeks meaningful input. It signifies the beginning of a cooperative effort between the police department, political leaders, citizens, and the university, showing how they can work together to identify concerns, set priorities, and find solutions to problems.

Police today, with their increasing reliance on technology, risk being perceived as aloof. All too often, they are viewed as reactive, responding only when problems occur. And this perceived aloofness can provide citizens an excuse for apathy. What this survey provides is a proactive approach, an outreach that encourages citizens to participate in finding ways to confront their role in solving crime and quality-of-life concerns.

The survey itself consisted of a two-page questionnaire developed by the Lansing Police Department and the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center that was mailed to 5,462 Lansing residents. A total of 2,328 (42.6%) were returned and analyzed. The survey asked residents:

- how much police attention nine common crimes deserve
- which five of 10 crimes listed require top investigative priority
- which six of 13 community-oriented services police provide should receive top priority
- what citizens feel are their responsibilities in dealing with crime
- how five major activity areas of the Lansing Police Department should be ranked
- whether the individuals surveyed would vote for a tax increase to pay for the foot patrol program

A Review of Typical Community Surveys

Most surveys asked citizens to rate existing police performance.^[2] In many cases, the researchers then analyzed the data based on characteristics of the population surveyed, usually in terms of race, age, income, sex, or victimization or some combination of these factors.

Other studies tended to focus on police-citizen interaction, assessing satisfaction as a result of police-citizen contact or on the response time of police in citizen-initiated contacts. A few studies focused on other variables, such as whether the perceived professionalism of police influenced satisfaction, or on more specific questions concerning police functions. It should be noted that some of the studies reported below are as old as 1967.

Multi-variable surveys--A number of far-reaching studies attempted to look at citizen satisfaction in relation to a number of individual attributes of the respondents. For example, James Garofalo conducted research in eight large cities participating in the Law Enforcement Assistance Administration's High-Impact Crime-Reduction Program: Atlanta, Baltimore, Cleveland, Dallas, Denver, Newark, Portland, and St. Louis. The 1972 U.S. Bureau of the Census survey shows the vast majority (82%) of respondents thought police performance ranged from fair to good, while only 12% rated police performance as poor. The study further broke down the data to show that whites (54%) were more likely than blacks (25%) to think police were doing a good job. In addition, blacks (22%) were more likely than whites (8%) to evaluate local police performance as poor.

In terms of income, 43% of those with the lowest family income rated police performance as good, compared to 54% of those with the highest income. A weaker correlation was evident concerning victimization. Most studies show victims rate police performance lower than nonvictims, and this study confirmed that 46% of nonvictims rated police performance positively, while only 40% of victims did so.

Besides these personal attributes, the study also analyzed attitudes, specifically whether respondents who believed the crime rate was increasing viewed police performance differently than their counterparts who did not think the crime rate was going up. Though the relationship was somewhat weak, this study did show that those who think crime is on the increase tended to rate police performance lower.

Interestingly, this comprehensive study also asked respondents whether police performance could be improved and how this could be accomplished. While 68% indicated a need for improvement, again blacks more often indicated this was true compared to whites. Also, whites favored improving police performance by adding more officers, while blacks felt improving response time was the key. Of note is that age played a role in this question, with respondents 16 through 49 years old consistently indicating police performance needed improvement. This figure dips among those 50 through 64 years old, then it falls substantially among those 65 years old and older.(1)

A survey of more than 5,000 residents of St. Louis in 1977 showed that 92% of the respondents evaluated police positively, while 78% considered police integrity to be fair. Researcher Paul R. Benson found that, regardless of race, social class, degree of political alienation, or belief in police integrity, again those who believe the crime rate is increasing were more critical of police service than those who did not. Benson also found lower socioeconomic class respondents tended to rate police negatively more often than those who are in the middle or upper socioeconomic classes, regardless of other factors. Nonwhites also were more likely to be critical of police performance, and this was especially accentuated among nonwhites who also believed police were dishonest or unequal in their treatment of citizens.(2)

More than 3,000 residents of Virginia returned surveys in 1973 and 1974 that showed 78% felt the police were doing an effective job and deserved thanks. Charles W. Thomas and Jeffrey M. Hyman reported that 66% did not feel police were discriminatory and 82% perceived police as respectful. Only 9% thought police were too willing to use force and violence.

This survey showed that residents outside the inner city, whites, older, better educated, males, and the wealthy were more favorable in their responses than their respective counterparts. Fear of crime and victimization did not seem to play a role, but those who were fearful of victimization were slightly more negative than other in the evaluation.(3)

Ilana Hadar and John R. Snortum surveyed both police officers (52) and suburban residents (202) in communities east of Los Angeles in 1975 and found that white respondents not only rated greater satisfaction with police, but they rated policemen as more active than blacks did. Age also played a role, with younger residents being more critical of police overall and rating them as less active than older residents. Males were also more positive than females. Of note as well is that whites, older persons, and females also set more stringent standards for police performance.(4)

Ethnic surveys--Many studies also focused specifically on how various ethnic groups rated police performance. Some studies were targeted exclusively toward examining black perceptions of police performance. For instance, Angus Campbell and Howard Schuman in 1970 surveyed more than 5,000 blacks and whites in 15 major cities concerning their perceptions and attitudes toward police. According to their findings, blacks are far more likely than whites to feel their neighborhoods do not receive prompt police attention. Blacks also reported they felt they were more likely to experience incidents of police disrespect. While most whites did not feel police frisked or searched people without good cause, a majority of blacks disagreed. More than a third of blacks reported police unnecessarily rough people up, while fewer than one in 10 whites said so. Reports of unfavorable experiences with police were clearly more numerous among young people of both races.(5)

A 1975 survey attempted to identify differences in perceptions of the police between black street people (117) and black householders (176) in a midwestern city. Two of five black householders reported police-initiated

contact, while black street respondents reported even higher rates. While one of three householders rated police service as poor, this figure rose to 47% among black street respondents. Also of note was that when householders initiated contact by calling police, it tended to increase their negativity toward police. Among street blacks, the reverse was true.(6)

A comprehensive survey by Herbert Jacob compared responses from 73 residents in a black ghetto neighborhood with 74 residents of a white working-class neighborhood and 77 residents of a middle-class suburb in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, based on interviews done in 1969. The results showed blacks perceived police as more corrupt, more unfair, more excitable, harsher, tougher, weaker, lazier, less intelligent, less friendly, more cruel, and more bad than good than did whites. Middle-class whites also gave more favorable ratings than working-class whites, though whites ranked closer to each other than to blacks.

The survey also showed two-fifths of blacks had been stopped by the police at least once and had called police for assistance, while among working-class whites, more contacts were initiated by the citizens and fewer had been arrested or stopped. Middle-class whites were more likely to have had police contact as a result of auto accidents, followed by calls for assistance. Ghetto blacks' dissatisfaction with police response was four times higher when compared to residents of the other areas, and, in regard to arrest, ghetto blacks reported dissatisfaction five times more often. Overall, satisfactory experiences with police did not improve the individual's evaluation of police, but bad experiences increased negativity.(7)

Another survey focusing on combined racial and economic indicators involved surveying 270 black residents of a ghetto in Detroit in 1971. Harlan Hahn found that 81% of the respondents failed to express "any" favorable assessment of police behavior. Approximately nine of 10 said most Detroit policemen were not totally honest in the performance of their duties. Slightly more than half also said police treated blacks and whites differently. A third said police discriminated between home-owners and renters.(8,9)

Other surveys that showed a high correlation between race and attitudes toward police were not structured specifically with that focus as the goal, but the results verified the important role race plays in assessing police satisfaction. A major survey of half the 10,000 households contacted by the U.S. Census Bureau in 13 large cities in 1975 done by Wesley G. Skogan found that the strongest individual determinant of how people assess police performance was race: cities with more blacks were routinely less favorable toward police. For instance, 51% of Chicago's whites but only 14% of blacks rated police favorably. In Los Angeles, the gap was 59% to 24%; St. Louis, 61% versus 29%; Philadelphia, 56% vs. 22%. The other cities reported similar gaps. Therefore, the more blacks in any city, the more likely the overall results showed less satisfaction with police.(10)

Some surveys looked at other minorities. A 1969 study by David H. Bayley and Harold Mendelsohn sampled 806 citizens in Denver, Colorado (336 whites, 234 blacks, and 236 Spanish-named). The survey confirmed that, while 54% of whites felt the reputation of police in their neighborhoods was high, only 22% of blacks and 31% of Spanish-named residents said this was true for their neighborhoods. While only 5% of whites said that cooperating with police was "just asking for trouble"; 21% of blacks and 22% of Spanish-named citizens agreed with that statement.(11)

A 1976 survey of 800 local voters in the city and county of Denver confirmed those findings, with 43% of whites reporting the police did a good job patrolling their neighborhoods, while only 28% of Mexican-Americans and 12% of blacks expressed satisfaction.(12)

Three studies examined attitudes of Hispanics. David L. Carter conducted two surveys in Texas, one in 1983 involving 312 Hispanics and another in 1985 of 500 Hispanics. In essence, the 1983 study showed that Hispanics do not believe that the police can significantly affect criminal incidence. The later study showed that any contact with police tended to lower the rating of police performance.(13, 14) In 1981, Alfredo Mirande surveyed 170 residents of a southern California barrio that showed only 1% rated community relations as

excellent, with 48% rating relations as poor. In addition, more citizens in this survey put the police department performance in the below-average or poor category than in the good or excellent category.(15)

Other individual attributes--A Canadian survey of 1,816 households done in 1977 showed age and sex were both correlated with satisfaction toward police performance, with younger people and males more likely to rate police lower. In addition, the survey also examined personal experience and determined that those who had negative contacts with police or heard about such experiences from others reported less satisfaction with police.(16)

A 1967 survey of 511 randomly selected adults in the District of Columbia not only confirmed a correlation between perceived police performance and race, but the study also determined that pro-police sentiment was more common among females than males.(17)

Victimization--A number of surveys looked exclusively at how victims differed from nonvictims in terms of their perceptions of the police, while other surveys were able to break out this analysis from the overall results. Half the 858 residents of London, England, surveyed in 1979 were victims, while the other half were not. Overall, the survey found that all groups rated police performance high, with 83% checking the very good or good categories. The one-fourth who reported dissatisfaction with local police most often said their primary complaint was that there were not enough police patrolling.

Looking only at victims, the survey showed victimization was associated with expressed dissatisfaction with local police. Victims were more likely than nonvictims to think the police did only a fair or poor job, were unfair, and that they should spend more time on serious crimes and community relations.

Most victims said their dissatisfaction was the result of their experience as a victim. The major complaint (41%) was that the police did not take their victimization seriously enough. Approximately 7% said they felt the police had not believed them and 7% also said they were unhappy because the police failed to make an arrest or recover their property. Of 131 respondents who said they had reported a crime, 28%, slightly more than one in four, expressed dissatisfaction because they never heard from the police again. Dissatisfaction with their specific situation correlated with disapproval of police in general, according to this survey.(18)

Almost 4,000 St. Louis area residents were surveyed in 1976 by Roger B. Parks, and the analysis of victimization again showed this population rated police performance lower. Victims were more likely to believe crime was increasing and less likely to say that police would arrive rapidly when called. Nonvictims gave the most favorable responses to police service, police-community relations, police honesty, police courtesy, and equal treatment by police. Next most favorable responses came from those who were victimized outside their neighborhoods, and the least favorable response came from those who had been victimized in their own areas.

As in the English survey, victims who were dissatisfied with how police responded to their own situation were much more negative in their evaluations. The survey also showed that response time played a strong role. Even stronger, however, was the relationship between the actions taken by police and the victim's satisfaction. Efforts that enhanced satisfaction included: filling out reports, questioning subjects, checking premises, and recovering property.(19)

Theodore H. Poister and James C. McDavid reported in 1978 on interviews done in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, that targeted 111 incidents that involved interaction between police and victim. The interviews showed that satisfaction levels among victims were higher among those who had suffered the most serious types of crimes, Part 1 (person) crimes. Victims of both Part 1 (property) crimes and Part II crimes reported demonstrably less satisfaction. Though not statistically significant, victims reported greater satisfaction when they perceived the police conducted a general investigation or dealt with a suspect (59%), as opposed to when police just talked with victims or asked questions (42%). Making an arrest or providing follow-up also added to satisfaction.

Concerning socioeconomic variables, only income was significantly associated with victim satisfaction. The survey showed that satisfaction with the way police handled incidents declined as income rose. Of note as well is that satisfaction with police performance tended to decline beyond the initial contact. In other words, satisfaction was higher concerning the initial investigation than with succeeding efforts. A regression analysis showed that overall satisfaction was directly dependent on the type of crime and perceived response time.(20)

Of interest in the 1970 survey conducted by the National Opinion Research Center was that victims who did not call police expressed the highest levels of dissatisfaction. Those who called police but then police failed to arrive, of course, mostly expressed dissatisfaction. Again, an arrest lowered the dissatisfaction level.(21)

Police contact/response time--Surveys that examined police contact often but not always involved victims. In 1980, Stephen L. Percy surveyed 1,676 citizens who had recent contacts with police and found that the majority reported the police arrived very rapidly when called. The majority rated police service as outstanding or very good, while only 8% rated police service as inadequate or very poor. Percy found that perceived response time correlated with satisfaction. Again, when a suspect was arrested, this tended to increase victim satisfaction.

Of those who had not been victimized but who called police for assistance or because of a disturbance, wealthier citizens reported higher rates of satisfaction. Comforting or reassuring citizens also had a strong, positive impact on satisfaction.(22)

Approximately 4,000 St. Louis residents were interviewed concerning police performance in 1972, and of those who had been victims, there was a negative association with police performance. Quick response time again correlated significantly with increased satisfaction. Citizen evaluation had low association with the clearance rate and with the size of the department.(23)

A specific study of response time gleaned from four surveys done in Kansas City during 1972 and 1973 showed the majority of citizens were satisfied with police response time, with whites more satisfied than blacks and older people more satisfied than the young. In addition, whites and older people overall expressed more general satisfaction with police.(24)

A 1980 survey of 273 citizens in four different kinds of neighborhoods (low-income black; low-income white; racially mixed but predominantly black low-income; and white upper-middle-class) in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, showed that evaluation of service in calls made to police was the single most important determinant of general attitudes toward police. Race was the second most important factor.(25)

Unique or narrow surveys--Other studies examined how police professionalism influenced citizen satisfaction. Of note is a 1973 survey of 284 residents of five cities in Florida that showed professionalism was negatively correlated with citizen satisfaction. Richard Chackerian and Richard F. Barrett found that the more professional jurisdictions fared more poorly in the public eye than less professionalized counterparts. Chackerian and Barrett also found that citizen perception that police rely on force correlated positively with satisfaction.(26) On the other hand, a study of 217 citizens who had called police in 1979 showed that more highly educated officers received better citizen ratings, while number of months in the department or the age of the officer had no effect. The study also showed that officers who appeared personally concerned about the citizen's problem also received higher ratings.(27) From 95 questionnaires returned from residents of Youngstown, Ohio, Daniel J. Bell found that citizens said members of the police organization are inadequately trained and that professionally unaware officers are attempting to perform a difficult task without well-defined procedures. The citizens also reported police lack adequate planning and delegation of responsibilities to qualified personnel. While they evaluated police service positively, they indicated personnel development needs attention.(28)

A survey on police honesty and competence conducted in a small college community showed that 82% felt officers were honest in general, yet almost a third said at least some officers would take a bribe on a minor

offense. With regard to competence, 84% said most police are competent, but more than half agreed with the statement that criminals go free because police do not do their jobs correctly. About 58% also said the police often use the third degree to get confessions. And more than two of three said that police sometimes frisk and search without good reason.(29)

Another unique study, based on data from the ABC News Poll on crime compiled from a nationwide telephone survey of 2,447 adults in 1982, showed that 57% of respondents said police should respond only to calls for help where the caller says there is a crime or suspected crime. However, a majority of blacks said police should respond to all calls. Also of interest was that respondents with knowledge of a victimization in their neighborhoods during the past year were more favorable toward narrowing the police role to that of crime fighter.(30)

A survey of 418 community leaders from Alma County, California, concerning police policy-making, examined the different kinds of roles they want police to play in the daytime versus the nighttime. During the day, the respondents favored a highly visible, nonmechanical form of patrol and foot patrols. At night, respondents preferred routine business and residential area patrols, with the most experienced officers on duty. The results showed they were neutral concerning use of foot patrols at night. Use of a helicopter, whether during the day or at night, was controversial. The highest priorities overall were on violent crime, juvenile drug abuse, police/minority relations, increased police training, drug abuse, and nighttime crime patrol.(31)

As is evident, while typical surveys most often examine overall satisfaction with police, many surveys take different approaches and examine various factors that can influence attitudes toward police performance. Few, however, offer any guidance concerning how to set priorities for future police policy-making.

The Need for Such a Survey

In essence, the major challenge facing police departments today is finding ways to do more with less. This past decade, all public agencies, including the police, have found themselves trapped in a frustrating vise. On the input side, police must cope with declining revenues, which means they must perform their duties with decreased manpower and fewer resources. Yet, on the output side, police face increasing demands from communities to provide more and better services. In addition, many police administrators and political leaders feel that taxpayers do not understand this new dilemma and also that many of today's problems are beyond police control.

For instance, this past decade has marked a whole new era of problems concerning the homeless. Not only has there been a dramatic upsurge in the number of homeless, as funds for government-subsidized housing continue to decline, but also in the composition of this dispossessed class. A decade ago, most homeless were derelicts--primarily alcoholics and drug addicts. Then, great numbers of "mainstreamed"; mental patients joined their ranks, creating chaos on the streets in many communities. Today, a recent study confirms that, in some communities, families constitute half the homeless seeking shelter. Many of this new class came from the ranks of the unemployed. Yet one in five of these families contains a wage-earner who still cannot afford housing.(32) The decline in public-supported housing coincides with the shift still underway from high-paid production jobs that often demanded few skills to lower-paying jobs in the growing service economy that ironically tend to require greater education and more skills.

In addition, many believe that the welfare system fosters dependency and hopelessness among great numbers of recipients. Not only does this situation breed crime, but also disorder. And decreased resources coupled with increased demand has made it necessary for police to involve citizens more intensely in the prevention and solving of the twin problems of crime and lowered quality-of-life that stems from disorder.

How LPD Can Use the Survey

Information is the lifeblood of police work. And information from citizens only flows as the result of a process that begins first with contact. Contact then leads to communication and communication builds trust. Only when trust has been established can information flow.

If the survey had served only to establish contact between the police department and the citizens it serves, it would have been worthwhile in providing that crucial first step that can help foster a climate of trust that leads to sharing information. However, the Lansing Police Department expects to use the survey in many other ways as well.

Obviously, of course, the information generated in the survey is of primary importance as a source of valuable input for future policy-making decisions. For the first time ever, Lansing police administrators need no longer speculate about what "the citizens really think and want"; While some might argue most findings are no more than common sense, the fact is that, when it comes to making tough decisions, defining what constitutes common sense often proves difficult. And even if everyone agrees, common sense cannot prevail without political will.

Indeed, the survey also serves as a political tool. For instance, if the Lansing Police Department must decide whether to assign an officer to investigate attempts to defraud senior citizens or possible gambling, police administrators need to know that 71% of Lansing residents would back the department's decision to concentrate on helping the elderly, while only 4% would say that gambling deserves priority. What the survey also provides is a valid research rationale for that decision. For example, should a city official, perhaps a city council member, challenge that decision, this research should help persuade him or her that the voters he serves have "cast their vote" on this issue.

In fact, the survey has already served to support some recent decisions made before the findings were available. For example, the department expanded its juvenile unit in 1986. However, the new officers soon reported that the majority of their time was spent dealing with child abuse (averaging one new case a day), though the unit's primary mandate was to deal with juvenile perpetrators. Chief Gleason supported having the officers continue their efforts to deal with child abuse and neglect, but now he has the survey findings to bolster his decision. One section showed that child neglect placed as the third highest priority, immediately behind assault and battery and drug violations, when residents were asked to prioritize 10 offenses by picking the top five.

In addition, besides establishing vital contact with citizens, the survey also serves as a way to educate them about today's harsh realities. First, it demonstrates the wide variety of services that police provide. All too often, citizens think of the police only in terms of solving crimes, and even in that regard, the survey reminds residents how many kinds of crimes the police must cope with. But, in addition, simply filling out the survey shows city dwellers how they rely on their police for everything from helping stranded motorists, to checking the homes of vacationers. The survey vividly demonstrates that the police do more than fight crime; they remain our only 24-hour-a-day public agency on call to help maintain a decent quality of life in our cities.

The survey also educates voters how tough it can be to prioritize police services in this era of dwindling resources. Even those who never mailed back the survey learned a lot if they only finished the first question, which asks them to make decisions concerning which five crimes of the nine listed constitute the highest priority. That question alone served as an illustration of the kinds of decision that police today must face when allocating resources and deploying personnel.

The survey process also encourages citizens to recognize that police cannot be all things to all groups and all people. If citizens want an officer to make daily checks on the elderly, that officer cannot at the same time patrol streets to protect them from drunk drivers. Ideally, this realization concerning the limitations on what

police can do will be generalized to all city services. It's a compelling reminder that paying taxes means paying for services rendered.

The hope as well is that the survey will also induce citizens to take additional responsibility. Filling out the survey may be the crucial first step in helping citizens see the value in working with the police to provide the broad range of services that residents say they want and need. It can assist them in understanding that not only their input, but their outright participation as well, is required if certain services they deem vital are to be maintained. For example, a resident who ranked the welfare of seniors as a high priority might therefore be more willing to say yes if the neighborhood foot patrol officer asks him or her to join a neighborhood task force being organized to make daily checks on elderly neighbors. Or citizens might work together with the police to develop new, creative strategies, such as enlisting mail carriers to make periodic checks on seniors when they deliver their mail. The link between accepting personal social responsibility and freeing up officers to perform other more crucial duties that citizens cannot as easily do for themselves becomes clearer when citizens understand the process required to set priorities.

How Others Can Use This Survey

First, it is hoped that other police departments nationwide will use this survey as one model for surveys of their own. With that in mind, besides the overall survey report, two appendices have been included as examples. Appendix A consists of a copy of the actual survey questionnaire. Appendix B is a copy of the news release issued to local media in November when the survey findings were released at a press conference at the Lansing Police Department hosted by Chief Richard Gleason, Dr. Robert Trojanowicz, and Mayor Terry McKane. Appendix B is offered as an example of how police departments can provide positive information to local media concerning such efforts.

Second, we hope this will encourage departments who decide to make similar or related efforts to share their findings. One of the objectives of the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center is to serve as a clearinghouse for community policing research and programs. Please call or write, using the information provided on the back page of this publication, to share information on tactics, strategies, programs, or research that pertains to the goal of involving citizens in the policing process.

Third, the data itself may prove useful as documentation for decisions others must make elsewhere. For example, a police chief or city official can cite the findings as supporting evidence for policy decisions that have been made or will be made. The Lansing results may be generalized to other communities that have similar socioeconomic characteristics.

Survey Highlights

Analyzing the data completely will take time, because the results are subject to interpretation. For instance, when citizens were asked to rank the importance of an offense, for example traffic law violations, it matters whether the person filling out the survey interpreted this as "keeping drunk drivers off the road" or "an officer is going to give me a ticket."

Also, the survey was coded so that the findings could be broken down into five separate subgroups: males/females; above-average/below-average income residents; homeowners/renters; victims/nonvictims; and by Lansing's four wards. Indeed, if it serves a valid purpose, the data can be broken down even further. For instance, it would be possible to find out whether above-average income male homeowners in the 3rd Ward who had not been victimized during the past two years differed significantly in their view compared to some other equally specific group.

Some highlights contained in the report, including both overall data and subgroups comparisons:

Question 1--Ranked in order of those that most residents say require the most attention, the top five crime priorities are: [3] (Note: The most serious crimes, such as homicide and rape, were not included because, obviously, the police will always spend a great deal of time on their solution.)

1. **Burglaries**
2. **Robberies**
3. **Auto Theft**
4. **Property Destruction**
5. **Larceny of Car Parts**

OVERALL: These findings require interpretation because average citizens do not always make the same distinctions among terms like burglary, robbery, and larceny as those in the field of criminal justice. It should also be noted that the top two crimes were a virtual tie. However, what is evident is that there is great consensus concerning what constitutes the top five offenses.

Offenses that ranked as the lowest four of the nine offenses listed were: **traffic law violations, juvenile curfew violations, loud parties and prostitution.**

SUBGROUPS

Sex: While women rank robberies somewhat higher than burglaries, and men do the reverse, these two crimes were in a virtual tie. In all cases where male/female results showed significant differences, the women's percentages are higher than the men's for each category of crime, perhaps reflecting a greater consensus among women concerning what constitutes the most serious threats. Another interesting finding is that men rated prostitution as the lowest priority, while women rated it as a higher priority than loud parties.

Income: A case where income level seems to make a difference concerns juvenile curfew violations, with below-average income residents placing this offense in the "much attention" column much more often than their above-average income counterparts. Above-average income residents also put prostitution above loud parties, unlike below-average income residents.

Home ownership: Homeowners placed auto theft and traffic law violations in the "much attention"; column significantly more often than renters.

Victimization: Victims put traffic law violations into the "much attention" column more often than nonvictims. Victims also put prostitution at the bottom of the list, while nonvictims rate prostitution above loud parties.

Residence: While all four wards showed great consensus concerning the top five crimes that deserve priority, again, there was variation by ward concerning the ranking between loud parties and prostitution, perhaps reflecting the severity of each problem in specific neighborhoods.

Question 2--The top five investigative priorities are:

1. **Assault and Battery**
2. **Drug Law Violations**
3. **Child Neglect**
4. **Defrauding Senior Citizens**
5. **Auto Theft**

OVERALL: This question showed that Lansing residents show more concern about crimes against people than crimes against property. The high priority given to crimes that affect children and the elderly also shows a high degree of altruistic concern for others. Of the 10 crimes listed, the bottom five were: **concealing stolen property, simple larceny, check forgery, credit card fraud, and gambling.**

SUBGROUPS

Sex: The most striking difference is that women rank child neglect second and auto theft fifth, while men did

the exact reverse. A total of 14% more women than men considered child abuse as one of their top five priorities. In general, women expressed greater concern for crimes against people while men showed greater concern for crimes against property. Women rated assault and battery higher than men, while men more often expressed concern for simple larceny, auto theft, and concealing stolen property.

Income: Both above-average and below-average income residents showed great consensus concerning the top five crimes, though below-average income residents placed a somewhat lower emphasis on auto theft and drug law violations. The only difference in the rankings between these two groups was that above-average income residents put credit card fraud above check forgery while below-average income residents did the opposite.

Home ownership: The major difference here is that homeowners rate drug law violations as their top priority, while among renters, it falls to fifth place. If this anomaly is removed, homeowners and renters would otherwise rank the remaining four top-priority crimes identically.

Victimization: The only major difference here again concerns drug law violations, with 9% more nonvictims than victims placing this offense among their top five.

Residence: While there was great consensus concerning the top five crimes, there were variations within the rankings by ward.

Question 3 --The six top-rated community-oriented services the police could provide:

1. **Assisting Stranded Motorists**
2. **Checking the Welfare of Senior Citizens**
3. **Investigation of All Vehicle Accidents**
4. **Teaching Rape Prevention Programs**
5. **Home Security Checks for Vacationers**
6. **Teaching Grades K-6 Pedestrian Safety**

OVERALL: Concern about the threat of personal harm appears to be the bellwether concerning how citizens overall rank these services. It's interesting to note that never in recent memory has a stranded motorist in Lansing been attacked, yet residents rate this service as their top priority. It should be noted, however, that brutal crimes against stranded motorists have made headlines in Detroit's two daily papers, which are both widely read in Lansing, the state capitol. It appears that fear of crime is as important a predictor as the crime rate itself.

In descending order, the lowest-ranked community-oriented services were: **business buildings security inspections, assist people locked out of their cars, vehicle safety inspections, assisting people locked out of their homes, pick up found property, school truancy checks, and deliver personal messages.**

SUBGROUPS

Sex: While both sexes rated the same six services as the highest priority, women's apparent increased concern for children's safety is reflected in their placing teaching pedestrian safety higher than home security checks for vacationers, while men did the reverse. Even among the lesser-ranked services, women placed a greater value on school truancy checks, while men placed greater emphasis on picking up found property. Again, these data seem to show women exhibit greater concern for personal safety, while men expressed greater concern about property.

Income: While the same services constitute the top six, above-average income residents place teaching pedestrian safety above home security checks, while below-average income residents do the reverse. Similar reversals occur with two pairs of lesser-ranked services, with above-average income residents placing a higher priority on vehicle safety inspections compared to assisting people locked out of their homes, and above-average income residents also placed a higher priority on picking up found property compared to assisting people locked out of their homes. In both cases, below-average income residents reversed these rankings.

Home ownership: The only difference in the rankings showed that homeowners indicated that picking up found property was less important than assisting people who are locked out of their homes, while renters reversed these items.

Victimization: While victim and nonvictim alike agreed on the ranking of the top six services, significant differences appear among lesser-ranked services, with nonvictims rating vehicle safety inspections eighth, while victims placed this service tenth. And while both groups rated investigation of all vehicle accidents as their third priority, nonvictims did so by a 5% greater margin than victims.

Residence: The top six priorities remain the same for all four wards, and even the ranking within the top six stays the same through the top four services.

Question 4--Which activities citizens felt were their responsibility in relation to dealing with crime (ranked from those checked most often to least often):

1. **Reporting Crime 93%**
2. **Report Suspicious Activity 88%**
3. **Assist Victim Needing Help 81%**
4. **Assist Police Officers Needing Help 80%**

(Note: Two other meaningless categories were offered merely as a statistical check and are therefore omitted from the final tabulations.)

OVERALL: The responses indicate that Lansing residents exhibit an encouragingly high degree of personal commitment to participating directly in efforts to combat crime.

SUBGROUPS

Sex: While both sexes ranked these responsibilities identically, a greater percentage of women than men said they would report suspicious activity. However, in contrast, a significantly smaller percentage of women indicated they would be willing to assist victims or police needing help. Again, what this appears to reflect is women's increased concern about exposing themselves to possible physical danger.

Income: While both groups ranked these items the same, below-average income residents tended to do so in lesser percentages, though the differences were not significant.

Home ownership: Both groups ranked these citizen responsibilities identically, but significantly fewer renters than homeowners said it was their responsibility to assist police officers needing help.

Victimization: While the rankings remained the same, in all cases, a greater percentage of victims showed a commitment to taking personal responsibility. As expected, 5% of victims said they would come to the aid of victims needing assistance, compared to their nonvictim counterparts.

Residence: This was the only case where the rankings themselves showed any difference, with the residents of the 1st Ward indicating they would be more likely to assist a police officer than a victim needing help. The reason for this variance has not been clearly established.

Question 5--How citizens ranked five Lansing Police Department activities, from most to least important:

1. **Motor Vehicle Patrols**
2. **Investigation of Complaints by Detectives**
3. **Foot Patrols**
4. **Crime Prevention**
5. **Helicopter Surveillance**

OVERALL: Again, while this ranking of police activities may seem to be only common sense, it verifies that residents understand the purpose and function of many police activities.

SUBGROUPS

Sex: While both sexes rated these activities in the same order, women tended to rate helicopter surveillance somewhat higher than men, while men appeared to place more emphasis on crime prevention.

Income: While both above-average and below-average income residents ranked these services the same as in the overall survey, a significantly higher percentage (7%) of above-average income residents selected motor patrols as their

top priority. Also, 4% more of below-average residents made foot patrol their choice for first place.

Home ownership: Homeowners deviated from the overall rankings by placing helicopter surveillance in fourth place, above crime prevention, while renters reflected the same ranking as in the overall results. Indeed, renters placed so much emphasis on crime prevention that, even though renters were not as well represented in the survey as homeowners were, their support for placing crime prevention ahead of helicopter surveillance allowed their view to prevail in the overall results.

Victimization: Though the rankings for victims and nonvictims alike mirror the overall results, a significantly greater percentage of nonvictims rate helicopter surveillance higher than victims, perhaps reflecting the fact victims did not feel helicopter activity prevented their own victimization.

Residence: Again, the 1st Ward deviated from others, in this case by placing foot patrol in second place, ahead of investigation of complaints by detectives, while all the other three wards in Lansing rated these police activities the same as in the overall results.

Question 6 --Whether citizens would vote for a tax increase to fund foot patrol:

Yes 47.9% No 49.6% No answer 2.5%

OVERALL: Taking the "no answer"; category into account, the outcome is obviously too close to call, though it appears a vote to fund foot patrol by a special assessment might be narrowly defeated.

SUBGROUPS

Sex: Males: Yes 47% No 53%
Females: Yes 51% No 49%

Obviously, sex plays a very big role in how a person would vote on this question. Among females, such a millage would likely pass, while among males, such a millage would likely fail.

Income: Above-Average Income: Yes 46% No 54%
Below-Average Income: Yes 54% No 46%

Income also plays a strong role, and it appears above-average income residents would vote down such a millage, while below-average residents, the ones who so strongly supported foot patrol as demonstrated in Question 5, would vote in a tax increase to pay for the program.

Home ownership: Homeowners: Yes 47% No 53%
Renters: Yes 57% No 43%

Obviously, the strongest vote of approval for the idea of a tax increase to pay for foot patrol comes from renters, while such an issue would appear likely to fail among homeowners.

Victimization: Victims: Yes 55% No 45%
Nonvictims: Yes 47% No 53%

In this case, victims would apparently vote in such an increase, while nonvictims would not.

Residence: 1st Ward: Yes 56% No 44%
2nd Ward: Yes 44% No 56%
3rd Ward: Yes 47% No 53%
4th Ward: Yes 50% No 50%

According to these findings, residents of the 1st Ward would vote in a tax increase to fund foot patrol, while the 2nd and 3rd Wards would not, and the 4th Ward is evenly divided on the question.

As mentioned earlier, a review of the research shows that a number of individual attributes can affect attitudes toward police. Specifically, race, age, sex, socioeconomic status, victimization, and subculture indoctrination (influences on young people in their neighborhoods) play varying roles in how individuals feel about their police.

Using these individual attributes as indicators, those who hold negative or hostile attitudes toward police tend most often to be: nonwhite, younger, male, lower-income, victims, and those who were raised in neighborhoods or among subgroups that held police in low repute.

Exposure to police also appears to play a strong role in shaping attitudes. Basically, if the exposure was voluntary (a citizen called police in time of need), the citizen was more likely to feel positive about police, unless response time was slow. However, if the contact was involuntary (contact was initiated by the police, most often inquisitorial), then the citizen's attitude was more likely to be negative.

Lansing Police Department Community Survey

A total of 2,328 Lansing residents completed and returned Community Questionnaires developed by the Lansing Police Department and the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center to help the Lansing Police Department prioritize its functions and services. The purpose of this unique survey was to solicit direct input from the citizens of Lansing concerning what they want from their police department.

The survey itself covered areas of major importance. It asked residents how they would prioritize specific crimes, where they felt the department should concentrate its investigative efforts which community-oriented police services deserve the highest priority, what role citizens should play in assisting police, and how residents would rank five activities with LPD. The survey also asked residents whether they would be willing to vote for a tax increase to maintain a foot patrol program.

Methodology

Funding for this \$11,200 survey was provided by the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation in Flint, Michigan, as part of its continuing commitment to community policing efforts such as foot patrol.

The LPD Community Survey covered approximately one of every eight area homes. Lansing contains approximately 48,000 housing units, and a total of 5,462 two-page questionnaires were distributed, with 2,328 surveys returned. Results were compiled by the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center.

It should also be noted that, given the illiteracy rate in the United States falls somewhere between 20% to 30%, this survey may not accurately reflect the attitudes and opinions of all residents. The survey itself demanded a fairly high level of reading skill, but the decision was made to conduct a postal survey, as opposed to a telephone survey, at least in part because residents were asked to prioritize as many as 13 variables, making it virtually impossible to conduct such a survey by phone.

However, it should be noted that illiteracy could play even a stronger role when analyzing the data concerning various subgroups. For instance, for obvious reasons, illiteracy is strongly associated with below-average income, therefore the bottom end of the socioeconomic spectrum may well be underrepresented in the comparison between responses from above-average and below-average income residents. Quite probably, this might have made the differences in their views even more pronounced than the resulting statistics show. Omission of the illiterate could also logically play a role in the analysis of homeowners versus renters, since those who face the limited career options imposed by an inability to read would be less likely to own their own homes. In addition, since criminals often prey upon the poor, the analysis comparing victims and nonvictims, which already shows strikingly higher rates of recent victimization among below-average income residents and renters, might show even a higher correlation had those who cannot read been included in this survey.

NOTE: Totals do not always equal 100% because of rounding and also because not all residents responded to all questions asked.

Overall Results

1. Survey question number one asked residents how much attention should be given to nine different types of problems. Results have been ranked beginning with those that residents most often said required much attention to those residents felt deserved the least attention:

	Much Attention	Some	Little
1. Burglaries	95%	2%	0.6%
2. Robberies	93%	3%	0.5%
3. Auto Theft	74%	19%	3.0%
4. Property Destruction	68%	27%	3.0%
5. Larceny of Car Parts	49%	37%	9.0%
6. Traffic Law Violations	36%	47%	12.0%
7. Juvenile Curfew Violations	27%	44%	25.0%
8. Loud Parties	22%	50%	24.0%
9. Prostitution	25%	38%	30.0%

NOTE: To calculate the rankings for this question, in the overall survey and for all subgroups, answers were weighted to reflect the intensity of the response. All percentages in the "much attention" column were multiplied by 3; all percentages in the "some attention" column were multiplied by 2; all percentages in the "little attention" column were multiplied by 1. The "much," "some," and "little" column scores were added together for each crime, then ranked from the highest score to the lowest.

DISCUSSION: Analysis of all findings is subject to interpretation. For instance, while the terminology is familiar to police, many Lansing residents may not make any distinction between robbery, larceny, and burglary. Also, for example, the traffic law violations category elicits one type of response if the person surveyed interprets it as "Don't give me a ticket" as compared to a different response if he or she thinks it means "Let's get drunk drivers off the roads." Also note that the ranking in column one (Much attention) is not a mirror image of column three (Little attention). For example, prostitution is a controversial crime. While 26% of Lansing residents said it deserves much attention, an even greater percentage, 30%, apparently consider it a victimless crime unworthy of police money and time.

Overall, these results clearly show Lansing residents are most concerned about five major types of crime: burglaries, robberies, auto theft, property destruction, and larceny of car parts. These findings suggest that while traffic law violations, juvenile curfew violations, loud parties, and prostitution are of concern to many residents, most would not want the Lansing Police Department to deploy additional resources to tackle these problems if it meant neglecting the five major categories of crimes cited as deserving the highest priority.

2. This question asked residents to pick five of ten crimes as those where the Lansing Police Department should concentrate its investigative efforts. Results show the percentage of residents who picked the specific crime as being among the top five deserving attention:

1. Assault and Battery	81%
2. Drug Law Violations	78%
3. Child Neglect	75%
4. Defrauding Senior Citizens	71%
5. Auto Theft	68%
6. Concealing Stolen Property	45%
7. Simple Larceny	28%
8. Check Forgery	21%
9. Credit Card Fraud	20%
10. Gambling	4%

Discussion: Again five categories emerge as being the most serious concerns, deserving of the greatest attention: assault and battery, drug law violations, child neglect, defrauding senior citizens, and auto theft. What these data strongly suggest is that Lansing residents are concerned more about crimes that hurt people than

property crimes. The high ranking given to crimes that affect children and the elderly also shows Lansing residents exhibit a high degree of altruistic concern for others.

The high priority given to child abuse also provides valuable confirmation that the Lansing Police Department's additional efforts in that regard are merited. Traditionally, the mandate given to police juvenile units is to concentrate on juvenile offenders, for example, members of juvenile gangs. Yet last year, when the Lansing Police Department expanded its manpower complement in the Juvenile Unit, the officers discovered they spent most of their time working with juvenile victims of child abuse, averaging one new case a day. What this survey verifies is that shifting the focus in this unit to deal with the serious problem of child abuse has broad-based community support.

The information gleaned also provides a documented rationale for making certain choices. For instance, should the Lansing Police Department decide as a result to divert personnel from assignments relating to gambling to dealing with child abuse instead, these survey data not only insure widespread community support for such a decision, but they provide vital confirmation for other branches of government that might question the validity of such a choice. Therefore, though many findings appear to be "common sense," verifying them through this process provides the needed supporting documentation to allow "common sense" to prevail.

3. This survey question asked residents to choose the six most important types of services of 13 public service-oriented services that police departments could perform:

1. Assisting Stranded Motorists	85%
2. Checking the Welfare of Senior Citizens	79%
3. Investigation of All Vehicle Accidents	77%
4. Teaching Rape Prevention Programs	62%
5. Home Security Checks for Vacationers	56%
6. Teaching Grades K-6 Pedestrian Safety	54%
7. Business Buildings Security Inspections	37%
8. Assist People Locked Out of Their Cars	27%
9. Vehicle Safety Inspections	25%
10. Assisting People Locked Out of Their Homes	21%
11. Pick Up Found Property	20%
12. School Truancy Checks	17%
13. Deliver Personal Messages	6%

DISCUSSION: Obviously, compared to a critical police function, such as investigating major crimes, such peripheral community-oriented services would not rate as high a priority. So the goal in this section was to rank them against other similar services.

Viewed as a unit, these findings again suggest great concern about personal harm. Interesting as well is that there is clear consensus concerning which six services rate the highest priority.

Also evident is that fear of crime is as important an issue as crime itself. For instance, the category of assisting stranded motorists was rated as the most important problem, no doubt because many residents fear being stranded could make them a victim of personal assault. Of note, however, is the fact that no one within recent memory in Lansing has been a victim of this kind of crime, yet fear of that specific crime remains pervasive.

These findings also suggest ways in which residents could assist the department by increasing their own efforts as private citizens. For instance, checking on the welfare of senior citizens ranked as a very high priority. Though the survey does not discuss solutions, an alternative to having police perform this task might be to have an officer for each beat organize neighborhood groups to perform this valuable service. Or, in the role of

community liaison to other agencies, the area's officer could identify seniors who require daily check-ins, then perhaps he or she could enlist U.S. mail carriers to see if they might assist in making such checks.

What this survey suggests is that creative strategies will be required to provide Lansing residents all of the services they want and need. If it becomes a choice between whether a police officer must be assigned to robberies or checks on senior citizens, obviously the former demands the highest priority. But to provide this community the quality of life suggested by this survey means that the police, Lansing residents, and other government and private agencies must work together in new ways to attempt to meet all the community's needs.

4. The fourth survey question asked residents to check as many of the six items listed that they felt were their responsibility as a citizen in relation to dealing with crime:

1. Reporting Crime	93%
2. Report Suspicious Activity	88%
3. Assist Victim Needing Help	81%
4. Assessing Police Officers Needing Help	80%
5. Avoiding Involvement With Police	4%
6. Avoiding Involvement With Victims	3%

DISCUSSION: What this question highlights is that Lansing residents exhibit an encouragingly high degree of personal commitment to participating directly in efforts to combat crime. (NOTE: The latter two categories were intentionally ambiguous, so that they would not be selected often, as a statistical check to verify respondents were answering each question carefully.)

5. The fifth survey question asked residents to rank five services provided by the Lansing Police Department:

- 1. Motor vehicle Patrols**
- 2. Investigation of Complaints by Detectives**
- 3. Foot Patrol**
- 4. Crime Prevention Programs**
- 5. Helicopter Surveillance**

(See Table 1 for total findings.)

DISCUSSION: Again, while this ranking appears to be "common sense," it verifies the necessity of keeping priorities in order when deploying manpower and resources. Obviously, motor patrol ranks highest because its quick response time is crucial at traffic accidents and crime scenes. Investigation of serious crimes is no doubt the second-most crucial service any local police department can provide. Foot patrol, with its proactive focus on helping residents mobilize to combat crime and its high-visibility deterrent, falls closely behind, while crime prevention and helicopter surveillance follow in importance.

However, the fact that helicopter surveillance ranks last in this particular survey question can be attributed to the limited number of choices presented, and the other four choices are more traditional in nature, providing a more personalized service.

It should be noted that the helicopter program placed fourth in a number of the surveys. This indicated that while controversial in some respects, and certainly expensive, it does provide a unique service that can only be achieved through a helicopter program.

Such services as rapid response to reports of crimes in progress provide reporting citizens with a sense of security via the medium of sound, while otherwise they might never be aware of a surface vehicle. Providing

support to police and fire personnel that increase their margins of safety eliminates the need for high-speed pursuit.

These are a few of the positive considerations that must be assessed by administrators when evaluating complaints of noise and expense involved when providing a helicopter patrol.

6. The sixth question asked residents whether they would support a tax increase for officers to patrol on foot in their neighborhoods:

Yes 47.9% No 49.6% No answer 2.5%

DISCUSSION: Allowing for statistical error and factoring in the no answer category makes this straw vote too close to call. Some communities, such as Flint, have voted in special millages to maintain foot patrol programs. In this era of declining police resources, this form of funding for such special programs may be required.

7. Question seven asked residents whether they had been a victim of crime within the past two years:

Yes 26.0% No 73.2% No answer 0.8%

Part of question also asked respondents to identify their sex:

Male 43.6% Female 51.1%

Comments

Fifteen percent of respondents (317 of 2,328) also took the time to provide written comments. Viewing those comments as a whole, 55 (17%) were positive, 89 (28%) were negative and 173 (55%) were "neutral." The neutral category included questionnaires where any respondent made a mark or added information such as "I was a victim in the last three months."

The positive comments were mainly **good job** (21 comments), **thank you** (11), **good response time**(3), **keep the helicopter** (3) and **good project** (8).

Negative categories fell into six major areas:

Questionnaire construction (9 comments) -- Complaints included: bad questions, not understandable, not in-depth enough.

Helicopter (18) -- These complaints centered around the noise and that the helicopter is like "Big Brother."

Never see Patrol Car (7)

Slow Response Time (8)

Don't Need Foot Officers (6)

Need More Traffic Enforcement (6)

Negative comments reported by fewer than five residents included: **officers are racist** (1), **officers harass citizens** (2), **need more foot patrol officers** (3), **need more drug enforcement** (2), **officers should be city residents** (1), **need new chief** (1), **enforce noise ordinance** (2), **use more civilians** (2), and **eliminate motorcycles** (1).

TABLE 1
RANKING OF LPD SERVICES--OVERALL SURVEY

Priority	Motor Patrol	Foot Patrol	Detectives	Crime Prevention	Helicopter	NA
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1	47%	10%	11%	11%	9%	12%
2	21%	19%	22%	10%	16%	13%
3	12%	21%	22%	18%	15%	13%
4	5%	19%	21%	25%	16%	14%
5	3%	19%	12%	22%	31%	14%

NOTE: To tabulate the rankings for this question, priority 1 percentages were weighted by multiplying by a factor of 5; priority 2 by a factor of 4; priority 3 by a factor of 3; priority 4 by a factor of 2; priority 5 by a factor of 1. The combined totals were used to determine the final rankings that appear in the overall survey.

Note: Synopses of the survey results by subgroup were included in the introduction. They have been omitted from this booklet because of space considerations; however, if you would like further information about the data concerning the subgroups or you would like actual copies of that information, please contact the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center. See the back of this booklet for the telephone number and address of the Center.

Conclusion

The information included in the Lansing Police Department Community Survey as well as the other surveys that have been done to assess citizen satisfaction with police has great potential importance for community policing programs nationwide. For one thing, much of the information generated by these studies shows how community policing objectives mesh with the goals expressed by citizens in terms of what they want and expect from their police. For instance, the LPD survey shows tremendous altruistic concern for the young and the elderly, two groups that are often targeted for special attention in community policing efforts. For example, Flint's neighborhood foot patrol program lists among its objectives increasing the safety of both groups.

Other surveys show that residents want increased visibility of police. A major strength of community policing efforts such as foot patrol is that they provide an armed symbol of authority on city streets, at the same time the officer is an accessible ombudsman who can assist residents in finding ways to handle their own problems and prevent crime. As these surveys show, victims more often negatively evaluate the police, compared to nonvictims, therefore community policing efforts, such as foot patrol which, by definition, involve pro-active efforts to prevent crime and reduce fear of crime, can help improve police-community efforts by keeping more citizens out of the victim category.

Research done on the Flint foot patrol program also shows that community policing has a positive effect on race relations. Many of the surveys mentioned earlier showed that race was the primary predictor of increased dissatisfaction with police performance. In the NNFPC publication *The Impact of Foot Patrol on Black and White Perceptions of Policing*, the research shows that foot patrol has a positive effect on black perceptions of the police. This stems from the fact nine of 10 contacts between foot officers and residents are nonadversarial, whereas nine of 10 contacts between motor patrol and residents are adversarial. (33)

In addition, the Lansing survey also shows that, if necessary, many subgroups would be willing to tax themselves to support foot patrol programs. While the overall vote within the city would be close, certain constituencies surface as those who would be potential supporters. This demonstrates a broad commitment to foot patrol on the part of many subgroups within most cities.

However, it should also be noted that certain predictors of police satisfaction do not correlate with community policing programs such as foot patrol. For instance, response time is a crucial predictor of satisfaction with the police, and motor patrol will almost always be able to respond to calls for service more rapidly than foot patrol. But understanding the strengths of both foot patrol and motor patrol means that both should work together to

complement each other so that overall community satisfaction remains high. And information such as that gathered in the LPD Community

Survey can help set priorities that will allow police departments nationwide to make intelligent decisions concerning where best to deploy limited resources.

Appendix A

Lansing Police Department Community Questionnaire

This is an anonymous questionnaire produced for the Lansing Police Department. Its purpose is to determine the concerns and views of the residents of the City of Lansing about their Police Department and how it could best serve the needs of the community. In light of the current economic situation which impacts all City resources, the Chief of Police and Board of Police Commissioners want to allocate departmental resources as efficiently as possible keeping in mind the needs of the community. Therefore, your views concerning the following questions are of utmost importance. Remember, your responses are completely anonymous. Please answer each question carefully, and return the completed questionnaire in the enclosed envelope by JULY 15, 1986.

It is generally recognized that the police through preventative patrol can discourage the following types of criminal activity from being committed. Which would you like to see your police concentrate their efforts on?

Check one column for each item only:

	1 Much Attention	2 Sometimes	3 Little
Attention			
1. How much priority should the police give to:			
a) Burglaries	_____	_____	
b) Property Destruction	_____	_____	
c) Auto Theft	_____	_____	
d) Traffic Law Violations	_____	_____	
e) Robberies	_____	_____	
f) Prostitution	_____	_____	
g) Juvenile Curfew Violations	_____	_____	
h) Larceny Of Car Parts	_____	_____	
i) Loud Parties	_____	_____	

2. On which of the following crimes that are committed do you think the Lansing Police should concentrate their investigative efforts toward solving? Choose only five (5).

- a) Simple Larceny _____
- b) Assault and Battery _____
- c) Credit Card Fraud _____
- d) Defrauding Senior Citizens _____
- e) Gambling _____
- f) Check Forgery _____
- g) Concealing Stolen Property _____
- h) Auto Theft _____
- i) Drug Law Violations _____
- j) Child Neglect _____

3. The following is a list of service types of activities performed by your Police Department. Which of these do you feel are the most important.

Choose only six(6).

- a) Pick up found property _____
- b) Home security checks for vacationers _____
- c) Assist people locked out of their cars _____
- d) Investigation of all vehicle accidents _____
- e) Deliver personal messages _____
- f) School truancy checks _____
- g) Vehicle safety inspections _____
- h) Business buildings security inspections _____
- i) Teaching grades K-6 pedestrian safety _____
- j) Teaching rape prevention programs _____
- k) Checking the welfare of senior citizens _____
- l) Assisting people locked out of their homes _____
- m) Assisting stranded motorists _____

4. What is your responsibility as a citizen in relation to dealing with crime?

(Check one or more)

- a) Avoiding involvement with victim _____
- b) Assist victim needing help _____
- c) Report suspicious activity _____
- d) Avoiding involvement with police _____
- e) Reporting crime _____
- f) Assisting Police Officers needing help _____

5. Keeping in mind that there are limited resources, please rank the following services.

(1 will be your top priority, 5 will be your lowest priority).

- a) Motor vehicle patrols _____
- b) Foot patrols _____
- c) Investigation of complaints by Detectives _____
- d) Crime Prevention Programs _____
- e) Helicopter surveillance _____

6. Over the past few years there has been much discussion both pro and con within the City Government and interested neighborhood groups concerning the need for neighborhood foot patrol officers. As a citizen and taxpayer would you support a tax increase to pay for police officers to patrol on foot in your neighborhood?

Yes _____ No _____

7. Were you a victim of a crime within the last two years?

Yes _____

No _____

For analysis purposes, please indicate your sex/gender.

Male _____

Female _____

Now that you have completed this questionnaire, please enclose it in the envelope and mail it in any mailbox. When the questionnaires have been tallied up, the results will be announced publicly by the Lansing Police Department. Your response will be helpful in setting Police priorities and policies. Thank you for your cooperation.

Appendix B

NEWS RELEASE

Release date: Immediately

For further information, call:

Dr. Robert Trojanowicz, Director
National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center
School of Criminal Justice
Michigan State University
(517) 355-2192 -- Office
(517) 699-2740 -- Home

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Lansing Police Department
(517) 372-9400

GROUND-BREAKING LANSING POLICE DEPARTMENT COMMUNITY SURVEY ALLOWS RESIDENTS A VOICE IN SETTING PRIORITIES

A unique Lansing Police Department survey of one in every eight area households has been completed and will be used to help the department set future priorities. "Police departments nationwide face tough choices concerning where to concentrate increasingly limited manpower and resources and Lansing is no exception" says Lansing Police Department Chief Richard Gleason. "This survey was designed to allow Lansing taxpayers a voice in deciding what kind of police services they want and need."

"Chief Gleason should be commended for involving the community in these critical decisions," says Dr. Robert Trojanowicz, director of Michigan State University's School of Criminal Justice and the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center, funded by the C.S. Mott Foundation of Flint that also provided the \$11,200 for the Lansing survey. "Traditionally, many police chiefs and police officers feel they should rely on their expertise to make such decisions," says Trojanowicz. "Allowing citizens to play such a great role in the decision-making process is a ground-breaking innovation."

The two-page questionnaire developed by the Lansing Police Department and the National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center was mailed to 5,462 Lansing residents; a total of 2,328 (42.6%) were returned and analyzed. The survey asked residents: to determine how much police attention nine common crimes deserve; which five of 10 crimes require top investigative priority; which six of 13 community-oriented services police provide should receive top priority; what citizens feel are their responsibilities in dealing with crime; how the Lansing Police Department's five activities should be ranked and whether the individuals surveyed would vote for a tax increase to pay for the foot patrol program.

"This comprehensive survey contains a wealth of important information," says Chief Gleason. "While some people might say it's mostly just common sense, when it comes time to decide whether to assign an officer to investigate attempts to defraud senior citizens or gambling, it pays to know 71% of Lansing residents would back our decision to help the elderly while only 4% would say gambling deserves as much attention. This will be a valuable tool in helping us make difficult decisions."

"One thing that comes through clearly is that Lansing residents express great concern for the needs of children and the elderly," says Dr. Trojanowicz. "Our second question asked residents to pick five kinds of crimes that deserve top investigative priority. First place went to assault and battery and second place to drug law violations, but child neglect, then defrauding senior citizens ranked third and fourth ahead of auto theft. In another section, where residents were asked to rank 13 community-oriented services the police could provide, they ranked checking on the welfare of seniors as second, immediately after assisting stranded motorists. The people in this community demonstrate a high degree of altruism, which speaks well for the entire city."

Chief Gleason agrees that such information can prove valuable when making decisions concerning how to deploy officers. "We expanded our juvenile unit this past year, and the traditional mandate of that unit has been to concentrate on problems with juvenile offenders, for example, gang members. Instead, the officers report the majority of their time is spent on child abuse, averaging one new case per day. This study confirms that this is in keeping with what the community wants and needs."

The survey also shows a high degree of personal commitment toward combating crime on the part of Lansing residents. Nine of 10 said they feel it is their responsibility to report crime, while 88% said they considered it their responsibility to report suspicious activity. Eight of 10 said they would assist both victims and police officers needing help.

To implement the findings of the survey requires assessing the information, then combining it with the specific needs of police officers. For instance, the overall survey shows residents rank motor patrol as the most important police activity, followed by investigation by detectives and foot patrol, crime prevention and helicopter surveillance.

Analyzing the data completely will take time because the overall information has also been broken down into five separate subgroups: males/females; above-average/below-average income residents; homeowners/renters; victims/nonvictims; and by Lansing's four wards. "These analyses contain tremendous amounts of information that will prove useful to both the police department and government officials who provide the funding for police services," said Trojanowicz. "For instance, just concerning the question of whether residents would be willing to tax themselves to support foot patrol, the overall survey shows it would be a close vote, with 47.9% voting Yes and 49.6% voting No, with 2.5% failing to answer. But if you look at the other sections of the report, you find 51% of women; 54% of below-average income residents; 57% of renters; 55% of victims; and 56% of the residents of the 1st Ward and 50% of the residents in the 4th Ward would vote Yes on a tax increase for foot patrol."

"We have the capacity to analyze the data even further if we feel it would be useful," says Trojanowicz. "For instance, if it served a purpose, we could break out the findings to see whether above-average income male homeowners who had not been victimized in the past two years who live in the 3rd Ward differed significantly from some other equally specific group."

"We must also keep in mind that this data is subject to interpretation," says Chief Gleason. "For instance, when you look at the ranking given to traffic law violations, you must keep in mind that it made a difference if the person filling out the survey thought of this as keeping drunk drivers off the road or whether he or she read this and thought it might mean being stopped and given a ticket themselves. We intend to take the time to digest these findings to insure we understand completely everything that is contained in this extensive report."

Some highlights contained in the 60-plus page report:

Ranked in order of those that most residents say require the most attention, the top five crime priorities are:

- 1. Burglaries**
- 2. Robberies**
- 3. Auto Theft**
- 4. Property Destruction**
- 5. Larceny of Car Parts**

The top five investigative priorities are:

- 1. Assault and Battery**
- 2. Drug Law Violations**
- 3. Child Neglect**
- 4. Defrauding Senior Citizens**
- 5. Auto Theft**

The six top-rated community-oriented services the police could provide:

- 1. Assisting Stranded Motorists**
- 2. Checking the Welfare of Senior Citizens**
- 3. Investigation of All Vehicle Accidents**
- 4. Teaching Rape Prevention Programs**
- 5. Home Security Checks for Vacationers**
- 6. Teaching Grades K-6 Pedestrian Safety**

Which activities citizens felt were their responsibility in relation to dealing with crime (ranked from those checked most often to least often):

- | | |
|---|------------|
| 1. Reporting Crime | 93% |
| 2. Report Suspicious Activity | 88% |
| 3. Assist Victim Needing Help | 81% |
| 4. Assist Police Officers Needing Help | 80% |

How citizens ranked five Lansing Police Department activities, from most important to least important:

- 1. Motor Vehicle Patrols**
- 2. Investigation of Complaints by Detectives**
- 3. Foot Patrols**
- 4. Crime Prevention**
- 5. Helicopter Surveillance**

Whether citizens would vote for a tax increase to fund foot patrol:

Yes 47.9% **No 49.6%** **No answer 2.5%**

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Footnotes

1. The National Neighborhood Foot Patrol Center is funded by a grant from the Charles Stewart Mott Foundation of Flint, Michigan. A total of \$11,200 was used to conduct the Lansing survey.
 2. The review of the literature was conducted by Yoon Ho Lee, graduate student of the School of Criminal Justice, Michigan State University, East Lansing, Michigan, 1986.
 3. The most serious crimes, such as homicide and rape, were not included because, obviously, the police will always spend a great deal of time on their solution.
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