Safer Neighborhoods through Precision Policing Initiative

LOUISVILLE (KENTUCKY) METRO POLICE DEPARTMENT

CNA
ANALYSIS & SOLUTIONS

Introduction

The Louisville (Kentucky) Metro Police Department (LMPD) is one of 15 law enforcement agencies selected to participate in the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS Office) Safer Neighborhoods through Precision Policing Initiative (SNPPI). SNPPI provides policy review, assessments, training, and technical assistance to a cohort of law enforcement agencies across the nation. The four goals of the initiative are to identify promising strategies that **reduce crime, protect officers' safety and wellness, establish productive interagency partnerships** with law enforcement and community stakeholders, and **implement innovative and effective technologies** to assist police departments to safeguard neighborhoods.

Methodology

Each of the 15 selected departments is assigned a CNA Strategic Site Coordinator (SSC) and an operations analyst to assist with planning, implementing, coordinating, and delivering technical assistance. CNA worked with the LMPD to develop a customized strategy to capitalize on the great work already in progress across the four policing principles. To do this, CNA looked at the LMPD's policies and practices related to crime reduction efforts, policy effectiveness,technological capabilities, training

structures and offerings, and officer safety and wellness philosophies. The CNA team then helped identify training and technical assistance (TTA) opportunities and additional tools and resources to enhance areas related to the principles of precision policing. The CNA team documented these best practices and will share these initiatives with police departments nationwide to promote public safety.

Identifying Promising Practices to Reduce Crime

Before Louisville became an SNPPI site, a number of its initiatives had made it a national leader in effective policing practices that engage the community to reduce crime. The following two initiatives set the tone for the work the LMPD has done under SNPPI.

One Love Louisville

Between 2009 and 2014, Louisville experienced 1,320 violent deaths— deaths due to homicide, suicide, or drug overdose. Recognizing the sheer number of these cases in Louisville and their impact on the community, Mayor Greg Fischer developed the Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods (OSHN) to address this issue in a collaborative way across Louisville

metro departments, residents, and community organizations. As the guiding framework for this initiative, participants have a common agenda, shared management, continuous communication, and a backbone organization (the OSHN) coordinating activities across the entities.

Under this initiative, called One Love Louisville, the LMPD supported the prevention of homicide within the city. As a result of the One Love Louisville initiative, the LMPD has enhanced its crime-fighting capabilities by creating a real-time crime center and adding enhanced camera systems in key areas around the city.[1]

Louisville Metro Open Data

On October 15, 2013, Mayor Fischer signed an open data policy executive order. The order committed to increasing the availability of government data for their community to use and understand. As part of this initiative, the LMPD developed a transparency website that posts the department's data and reports on topics including Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) and the department's standard operating procedures. The website also provides resources on the Open Data Initiative, the Federal Bureau of Investigation's (FBI) UCR Handbook, and the National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) to help citizens understand how crime data is collected and classified.

The LMPD's transparency website is available at http://www.louisville-police.org/35/LMPD-Transparency.

Establishing Productive Interagency Partnerships with Law Enforcement and Community Stakeholders

Developing meaningful and long-lasting partnerships with fellow law enforcement agencies and the community continues to be a priority for the LMPD. Three LMPD efforts align with this goal: the development and execution of the Louisville Metro Intelligence Taskforce, the continued use of the LMPD's Community Policing Unit, and the expansion of the department's online and social media presence.

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1. "#OneLoveLou," Office for Safe and Healthy Neighborhoods, accessed November 29, 2018, http://onelovelou.org/.

The LMPD's 9th Mobile Division and the Louisville Metro Intelligence (LMINTEL) Task Force

In 2016, Louisville experienced a peak in violent crime incidents, capping a four-year upward trend (figure 1). To address this troubling statistic, the LMPD called upon a competent resource that both the community and police recognized could get the job done. Time after time, the 9th Mobile Division's crime suppression apparatus has been deployed to identify, investigate, and arrest violent criminals and gang members. The 9th Mobile Division has no geographic borders and works anywhere in the city that is experiencing serious crime issues. It combines offender-focused strategies with daily crime tracking and weekly mapping to identify and effectively police some of the most violent offenders in the Louisville community.

The 9th Mobile Division leads the Louisville Metro Intelligence (LMINTEL) task force. The task force is a partnership with 9th Mobile and the FBI; Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives; U.S. Marshals Service; Drug Enforcement Agency; and Louisville Metro Department of Corrections. In early 2017, the task force concentrated on 277 violent individuals with outstanding felony warrants and conducted a 10-day warrant blitz. During this time, 111 total warrants were served, and 82 people were apprehended. As phase two of this effort, the task force will continue focusing on the most violent offenders in the community and will build long-term investigations that will ideally lead to the filing of federal charges.

Figure 1. Louisville UCR violent crime totals, 2012–2017
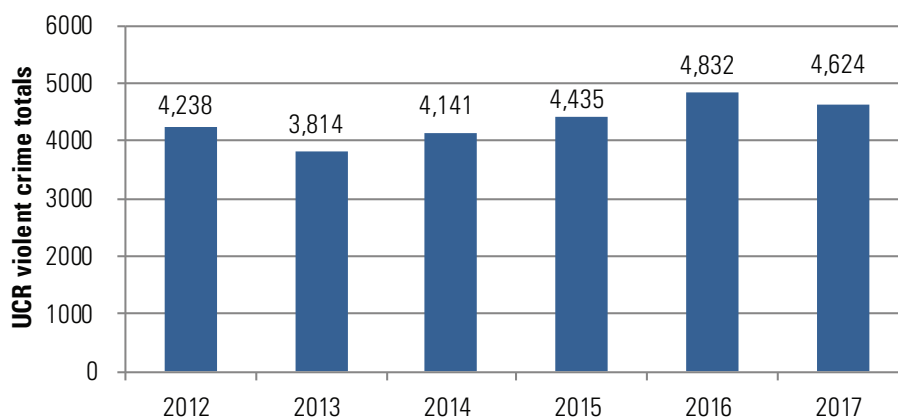
Source: *LMPD UCR Report: January–December, 2017* (Louisville, KY: Louisville Metro Police Department, 2018), https://louisvilleky.gov/sites/ default/files/police/sop_searchable_and_reports/lmpd_ucr_report_december_2017.pdf.

The 9th Mobile Division has perfected conducting surgical strikes into the heart of crime-infested locations to extract known offenders while protecting community integrity. The LMPD attributes some of the decrease in violent crime in 2017 (see figure 1 on page 4) to actions of the 9th Mobile Division and the work of the LMINTEL task force.

Community Policing Unit

Although all LMPD officers are expected to develop and maintain relationships with the communities they serve, the department has also devoted resources to a Community Policing Unit (CPU), which has the primary responsibility of fostering improved police and community relations in the Louisville metropolitan area. The CPU comprises one lieutenant, four sergeants, 27 sworn officers, one civilian employee, and more than 200 volunteers. To build trust and maintain a positive working relationship with the residents of the Louisville metro area, members of the CPU work comprehensively with community stakeholders to reduce crime through partnerships, problem solving, and nonenforcement strategies.

Notable initiatives that have increased community engagement include
the following:

- Citizen Police Academies (CPA) educate the public about the police
  services delivered by the LMPD to foster understanding and develop
  partnerships. A comprehensive training program provides participants
  with an overview of the various patrol divisions, specialized units, and
  daily operations at the LMPD. In 2017, the LMPD operated five CPAs,
  including a Latino CPA and an LGBTQ CPA, and it graduated more
  than 175 CPA participants from all areas of the community. Many of
  these graduates joined the Volunteers in Police Service program, a com-
  munity partnership designed to provide the LMPD with valued input
  and support from the community.

- Chief Steve Conrad's "Chief's Peace Walks." Chief Conrad walks neigh-
  borhood beats throughout Louisville metro area communities that
  typically have high rates of investigative and enforcement involvement
  with government agencies. The weekly Chief's Peace Walks allow Con-
  rad to connect with residents one on one. These walks have allowed
  residents to meet the chief and other LMPD officers in a relaxed, peace-

ful atmosphere. Because the Chief's Peace Walks have been so well received by residents, LMPD division commanders and officers are now conducting weekly neighborhood Peace Walks all over the city.

From January to October 2017, the chief and members of the CPU participated in more than 10,000 hours of community outreach initiatives and programs. The LMPD has expanded the CPU unit by 10 additional officers as a result of a hiring grant from the COPS Office.

Expanding social media and online presence

Based on the command staff review of SNPPI principles, the LMPD identified its digital presence as an area for improvement. Prior to the SNPPI, the LMPD did not have an active social media presence. In October 2016, the LMPD added a dedicated social media officer to assist with transparent community communications. The officer actively manages pages on Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, LinkedIn, and YouTube. The LMPD uses these platforms for proactive outreach to the community as well as timely and accurate communication during critical incidents, modeling Boston's practices after the marathon bombing in 2013. Within six months of implementation, the social media unit had amassed 32,000 Facebook followers.

In 2018, the LMPD focused its SNPPI efforts on redesigning its website to better provide the community with vital police services. The new website design aims to make it easier for citizens to connect with the police in emergency and non-emergency situations, examine crime trends throughout the city, and identify police resources available to the community. The LMPD's social media and online efforts are aimed at linking community members with LMPD support when needed.

Implementing Innovative and Effective Technologies to Help Police Departments Safeguard Neighborhoods

The growing use of technology in law enforcement continues to reduce crime and improve community engagement. The LMPD has been at the forefront of this effort nationally, particularly with its early adoption and broad deployment of wearable video systems (WVS), also known as body-worn cameras.

Wearable video system deployment

After a number of national police-involved critical incidents in 2012, the LMPD, with the leadership of Chief Conrad, began considering the roll-out of WVS to officers. The LMPD recognized that WVS could improve community relations overall, especially during critical incidents like officer-involved shootings. After piloting devices and developing appropriate policy regarding WVS use, the LMPD purchased and rolled out cameras to officers in 2015. By 2016, all nine patrol divisions, the Traffic Unit, the Canine Unit, and the special weapons and tactics (SWAT) team had body-worn cameras. The LMPD currently has approximately 925 cameras in service.

The University of Louisville evaluated the effect the WVS devices had on use of force incidents. After one year, average monthly use of force incidents decreased from approximately 44 incidents per month to 28 per month—an almost 36 percent decrease. The evaluators cautioned that the results may not have been causal because other factors were not controlled for, such as the total levels of crime in the year examined. However, these results provide a starting place for determining the role WVS play in achieving these outcomes. The Year 2 evaluation report will run statistical analyses to see whether these trends are attributable to the WVS and are statistically significant.[2]

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2. B. Schaefer, B. Campbell, T. Hughes, and J. Reed, "LMPD's Wearable Video System Implementation: Year One Report," (Louisville, KY: University of Louisville, 2016), https://louisvilleky. gov/sites/default/files/police/sop_searchable_and_reports/lmpd_wvs_evaluation_year_1_report_ final.pdf.

As a regular practice, Louisville releases the body-worn camera video to the public after a police-involved shooting regardless of circumstance and typically within 12 hours of the incident. Prior to releasing the video to the public, the LMPD holds a viewing with leaders from communities impacted by the incident to provide information on the circumstances of the shooting and answer questions. The LMPD has found that this practice helps the community leaders field questions they may receive from community members after an incident and develops a culture of trust between the LMPD and these individuals or organizations.

Lessons Learned from SNPPI TTA

A targeted TTA plan was developed with the LMPD to ensure continued success in implementing precision policing recommendations and principles. While participating in SNPPI, the LMPD identified two areas—crime analysis and technology integration—to learn more about as it refined its practices in these areas. Leveraging the diverse network of SNPPI sites and police

Sustaining SNPPI Practices – Training and Support

One area that LMPD wanted to focus on through the SNPPI is the integration of precision policing principles in a sustainable way. One visible manifestation of this goal has been providing officers with the skills and knowledge to de-escalate tense situations with citizens using initial and on-going trainings. In 2014, LMPD offered de-escalation skills classes, and implicit bias and de-escalation trainings were included in mandated in-service trainings by 2015. These trainings included two separate mandatory blocks of in-service classes:

- The "De-Escalation Tactics" block provides officers with techniques to "slow down" an incident, employing time as an asset to ease tensions and providing resources available to them during these incidents.

- In the "De-Escalation Communications" block, officers are taught effective crisis communication techniques.

As a result of these efforts and moving forward, all LMPD recruits are taught SNPPI principles that will be implemented throughout their career. For example, while de-escalation has been a part of academy classes for several years, including Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), Domestic Violence, and Pedestrian Stops, the standalone De-Escalation of Critical Incidents class was first implemented in 2017. As of February 2018, 112 recruits had gone through the training. The LMPD is planning to provide mandatory in-service classes on implicit bias and cultural diversity as well.

department contacts through both the COPS Office and CNA, the LMPD visited two police departments to address these areas of interest. This section provides an overview of the technical assistance received by the LMPD in these topic areas and lessons learned that could be applied within the LMPD and fellow departments across the country.

Crime analysis

The LMPD is exploring advancements to its crime analysis capabilities to better evaluate and act on crime trends in the city. To support this effort, CNA linked the LMPD with the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Police Department, a leading department in this area, to provide it with insight and peer support regarding this issue. Lieutenants Theodore Eidem and James Cirillo and Detective Christopher Geoghegan visited Cambridge

and learned how they use crime analysis daily in operations as well as the kinds of products they developed to support targeted crime reduction efforts in the city. During the visit, the LMPD also collaborated with the Boston Police Department and visited the Commonwealth Fusion and the Boston Regional Intelligence Centers.

Through these visits, LMPD officers heard how other departments conduct crime analysis. For example, the Cambridge Police Department integrates crime analysts in each division, while the Boston Police Department uses crime analysts for specific types of crime. Hearing multiple perspectives on the same issue helped the LMPD consider how to implement crime analysis in Louisville. In addition, the LMPD identified crime analysis products that it could model and develop itself, which will provide critical information to operations on a regular basis.

The LMPD considers the peer exchange a great success; it provided key insights as the department considered how to increase its crime analysis capabilities.

Technology Integration

As the need for real-time and coordinated information across the department continues to increase, Louisville identified a need to deploy additional technology tools for more effective policing. In 2017, Major Eric Johnson and Lieutenant Josh Judah visited the New York City Police Department (NYPD) to observe its technology deployment. The site team visited the NYPD real-time crime center and learned about its ShotSpotter and license plate readers deployed throughout the city. The LMPD officials mentioned that the level of technology integration across the NYPD was impressive. All NYPD officers have access to the NYPD data systems through mobile devices, including license plate search, police bulletins, and filing reports. At the moment, Louisville officers either do not have mobile access to these services or have a limited service available. Although full mobile integration will take time and a significant investment in Louisville, the visit helped the department consider what services it could provide to officers in a mobile setting to improve effectiveness and response times.

Conclusion

The LMPD's commitment to excellence and self-improvement will continue now that the SNPPI has concluded in 2018. The department's deployment of modern technology, cutting-edge management practices, and personnel development strategies cement its perennial commitment to community engagement and crime reduction. These efforts are buoyed by a strong mayoral commitment to performance management, problem solving, and a data-driven culture. Together, they create the conditions for the LMPD to build upon its SNPPI successes.

Chief Conrad notes the importance of participation in the SNPPI and the network of leading police departments committed to reducing crime and engaging their communities.

"Successful crime reduction through community and interagency engagement depends upon precision policing initiatives like those the SNPPI brings to the table. Maintaining transparency and active collaboration with community stakeholders delivers us closer to realizing our goal: a better, safer city in which to work and live."

— Chief Steve Conrad

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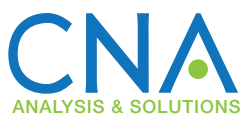
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