







CITY OF BOULDER

Reimagine Policing Plan

AUGUST 2023

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LETTER FROM THE CHIEF



Maris Herold, Police Chief

Dear Boulder City Council, City Manager, city colleagues, and community members,

As we conclude an extensive process of community engagement, strategic thinking, and shared learning, I am pleased to share this Reimagine Policing Plan.

It is abundantly clear that policing cannot continue as it is. This is true for police agencies throughout the United States, and it is true for the Boulder Police Department. I believe the plan outlined through this document represents the transformation that policing needs to meet the expectations and values in Boulder and beyond, and as chief, I am committed to using this document as a touchstone for our department.

At its heart is a realization that communities across America are questioning the traditional approach to policing. This approach emphasizes responding to calls for service from those who are comfortable calling the police and enforcement, with officers holding the primary (and sometimes sole) responsibility for creating and maintaining safety. In this model, all too often, police become a pipeline to the larger criminal justice system. While this system has a necessary and valuable role when the situation presents an immediate risk with people in harm's way, we also know it can be fraught with undesirable outcomes, including disproportionate and devastating impacts on communities of color.

I am incredibly proud of the profession I have chosen. In most of the millions of interactions officers across the US have with communities every day, police act with integrity and bravery. Unfortunately, there are times when this is not the case, and as with the murder of George Floyd in 2020, a lack of respect for the sanctity of human life and racial bias can lead to deadly consequences. This type of unacceptable response stems, at least in part, from the notion that officers are enforcers, not peacemakers or problem-solvers.

Boulder's Reimagine Policing Plan seeks to shake up this foundation.

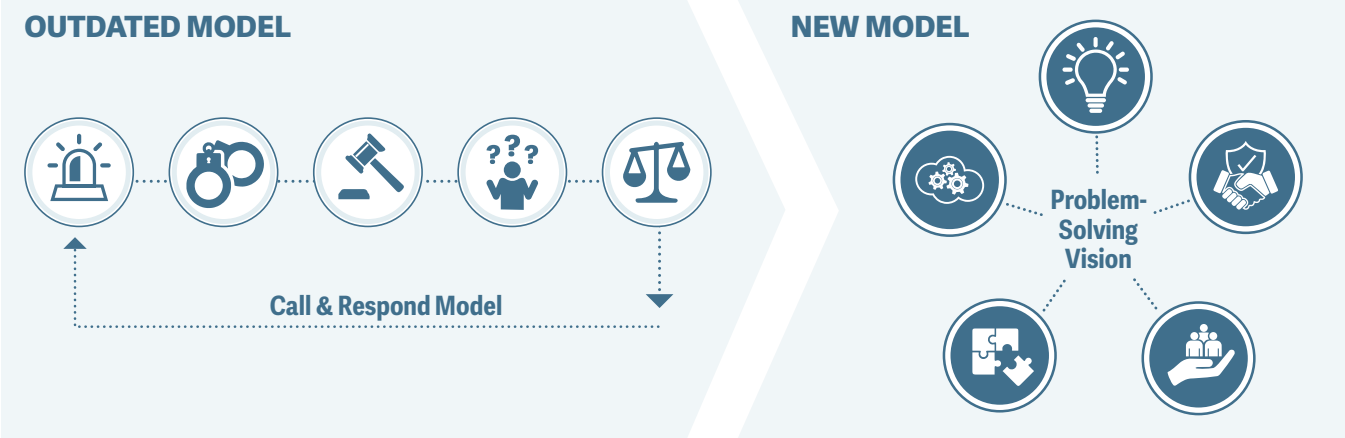
This plan is defined by a central strategy, which we call Problem-Solving Policing. The strategy seeks to change the emphasis of policing from reactively responding to calls and putting people in jail to reducing the likelihood of a crime from happening in the first place. It works best when combined with a holistic governance approach, or put more simply, when police are not the only city or community resource at the table. The problems that cause harm today are complex, and they require a multi-disciplinary approach, in partnership with community members.

Again, there are certainly times when legal consequences are necessary to protect victims and society. Police must continue to step up – and be well-trained – for these circumstances, However, there is incredible power in prioritizing prevention and problem solving, especially when it is done by partnering with community. This is a best practice shift, supported by evidence collected through extensive research and on-the-ground implementation in New Zealand and other parts of the world.

Figure 1 below illustrates the shift we are working toward:

Figure 1

A New Vision for Policing



In the pages that follow, we explore the challenges the department faces today; the community engagement that was conducted to inform this plan; the desired outcomes as defined by this engagement; the central strategy that will help us achieve this vision; the critical action steps required to implement this new strategy; and key indicators that will help us determine if our work is making a difference. Lastly, we discuss the resource needs to make the plan successful and provide supporting documentation for readers who wish to dive deeper into this content.

Moving well-entrenched systems to new ones takes time. Change will occur gradually, with implementation within the next three to 10 years, but Boulder is well-positioned to set a bold path in service of its values – and perhaps as an example to others.

In partnership and solidarity,

Maris Herold
Police Chief, City of Boulder

CHAPTER 1

THE WORK OF THE BOULDER POLICE DEPARTMENT

Establishing a Shared Understanding of the Existing State

The Boulder Police Department plays a significant role in the community, responding to a variety of needs, often in high-tension contexts. As is the case across the country, officers are regularly tasked with addressing issues that have gone unaddressed by other parts of "the system" -- and when they are called in, many situations have come to a potentially dangerous point.

Before considering any change, it is helpful to have a shared understanding about "what is." This chapter provides this background, with an emphasis on some of the most significant challenges: staffing and workload. It draws from a study conducted last year by Dr. Troy Payne, a data scientist with Bauman Consulting Group. Dr. Payne was asked to examine department data and make staffing recommendations. His full report is available at: bldr.fyi/rp-bpd-staffing-analysis. In addition to requesting this independent assessment, the Boulder Police Department has long participated in annual Benchmark Cities reports. Benchmark Cities is a group of approximately 30 midsized police departments in predominantly midsized university towns. The annual Benchmark Cities Survey (bldr.fyi/rp-benchmark-cities-survey) can be a helpful resource to understand how the Boulder Police Department compares to other agencies across many relevant public safety topics, including budget, calls for service and crimes per capita.

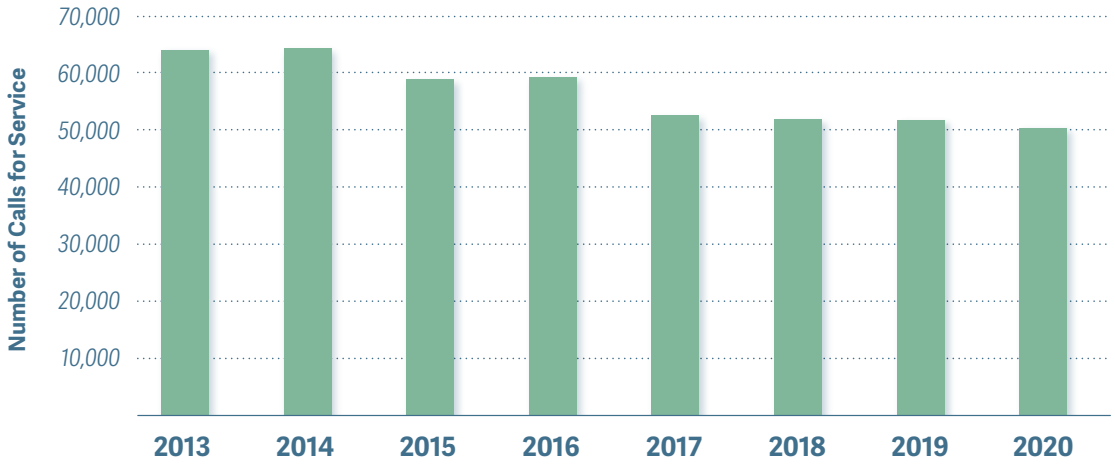


Call Load, Types of Calls, & Where They Come From

In the current state, most police action in Boulder starts with a call for service. From 2017-2020, the department averaged 52,000 calls from the public per year. This average is down from 2013, when the department handled about 64,000 calls (Figure 2)[1].

Figure 2

Calls for Service to the Boulder Police Department, 2013–2020



Although the volume of calls to the police has gone down, the Boulder Police Department handled far more calls per 1,000 community members in recent years than other benchmark cities (Figure 3). The Boulder Police Department had the most calls per 1,000 community members in 2020, and the third most calls when using data from both 2020 and 2021.

Figure 3

Calls per Capita – Boulder & Benchmark Cities 2020–2021

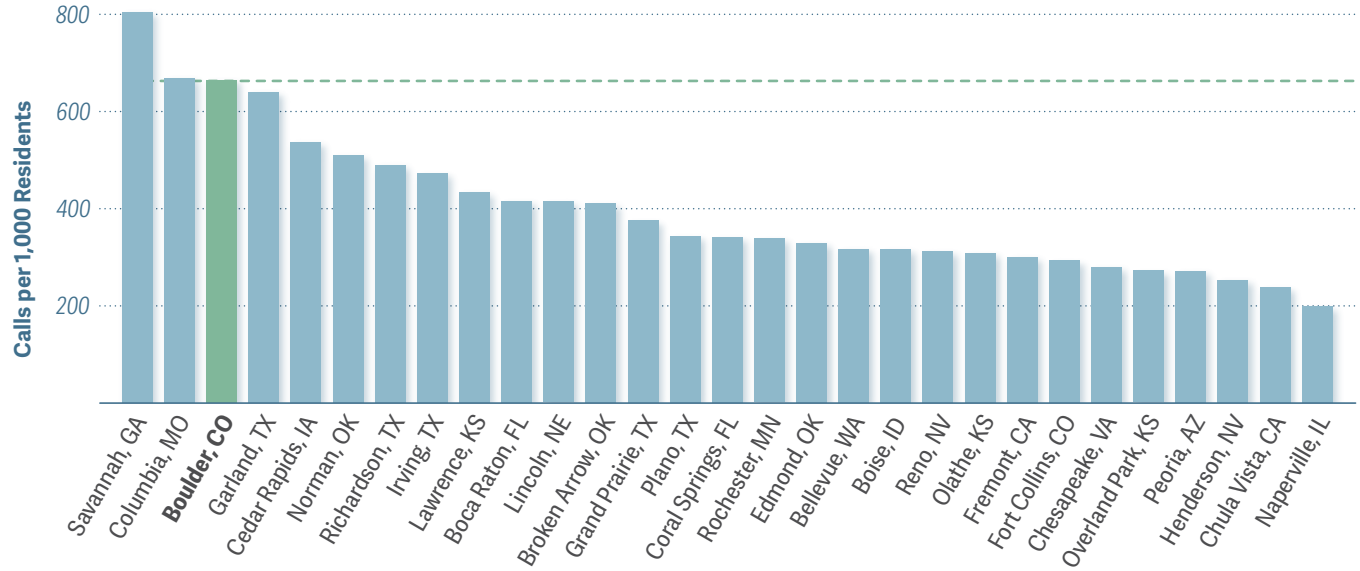
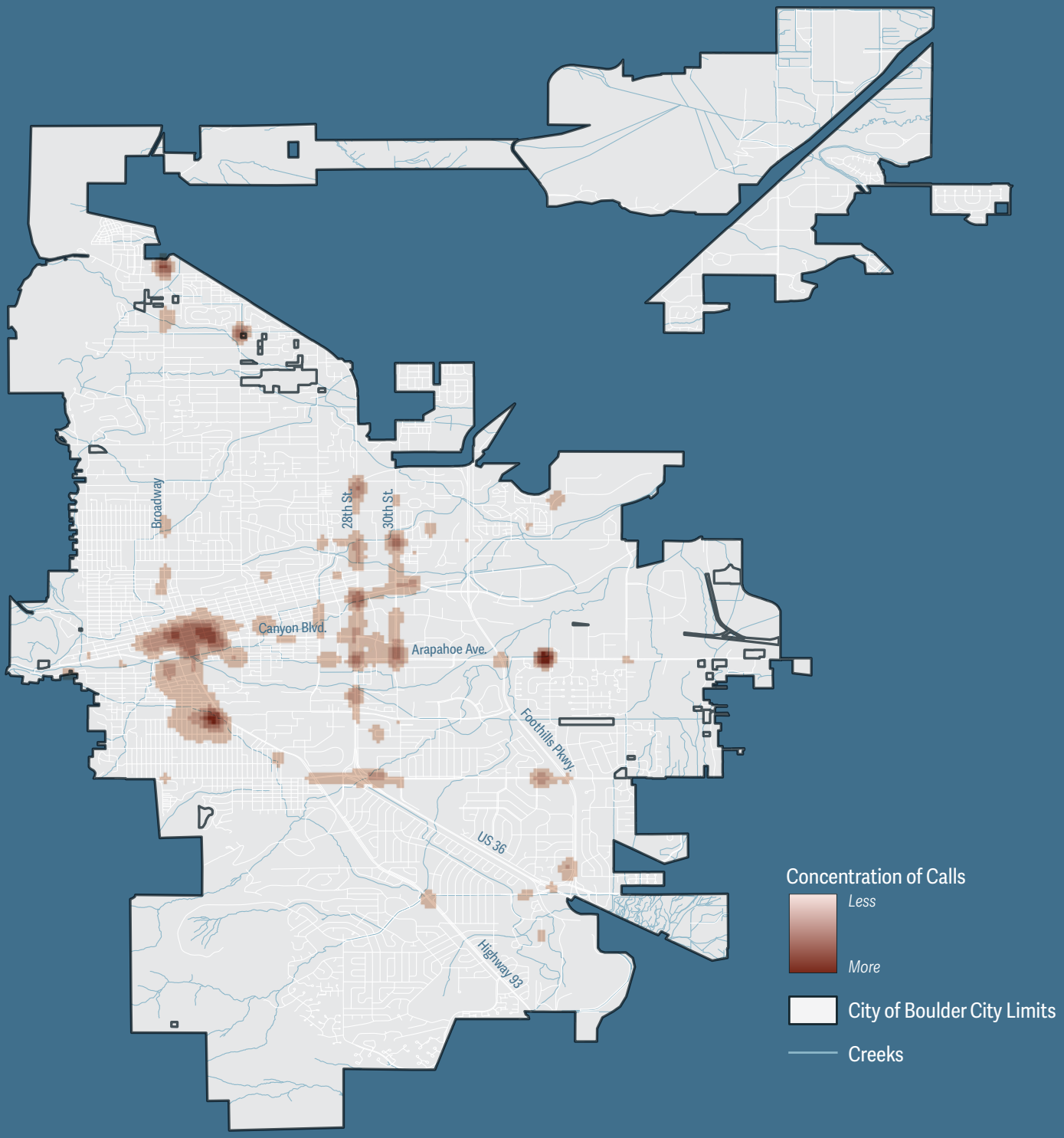


Figure 4

Calls for Police Help are Concentrated in a Few Areas of the City[2]



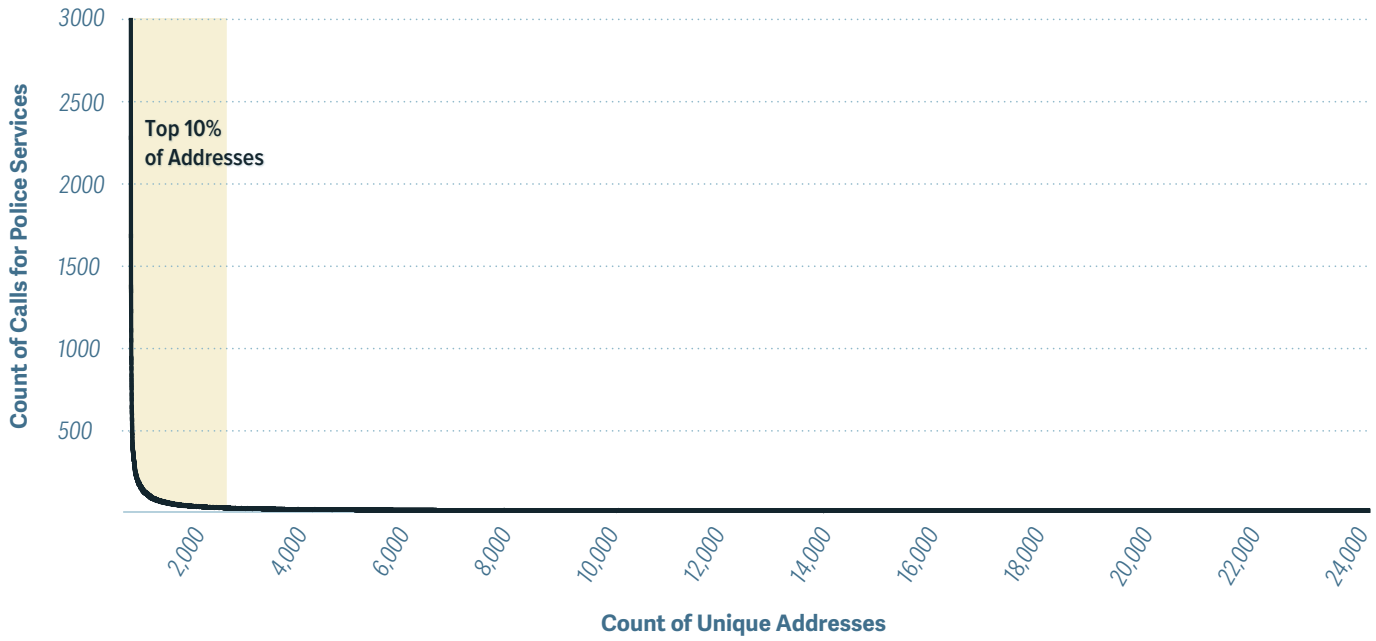
Calls for police assistance come from all over the city. However, people in some parts of the city call far more often (Figure 4). The downtown business district, University Hill neighborhood, and parts of 28th Street generate many calls, while large tracts of the city have very few calls. There are many reasons for this, but it does mean that police are present in a few areas far more often than other areas.

If we drill down even more from this concentrated view, it becomes clear from Boulder data and from a significant body of research[3] from around the world that a small fraction of the addresses within the high concentration areas have most of the trouble that prompts people to call the police.

Here's how this looks: In the years 2020 through 2023, there were 206,678 calls for police help from the public. These numbers exclude officer-initiated encounters with the public and reports people brought directly to the police station. Figure 5 shows that 10% of the addresses in Boulder accounted for 72% of all calls, and one percent of the addresses produced a third of the calls to police. These addresses accounted for thousands of calls for service during the last few years.

Figure 5

Most of the Calls Come from a Small Fraction of Addresses[2]

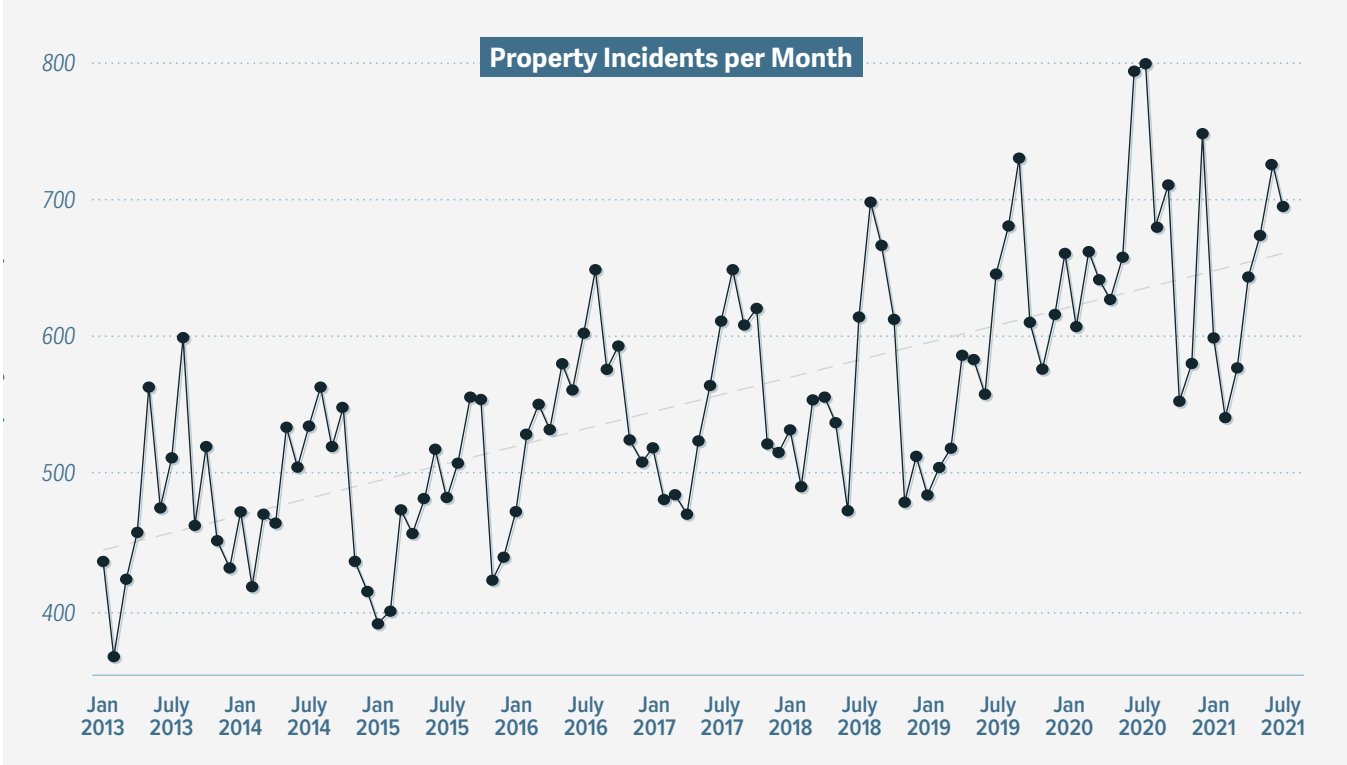




Although the volume of calls overall has declined, property and violent crimes are trending upward in Boulder, even when accounting for month-to-month fluctuations. The national trend for the violent crime rate increased and then decreased, while the national trend for property crime generally decreased during these years.

Figure 6

Property & Violent Crime are Going Up



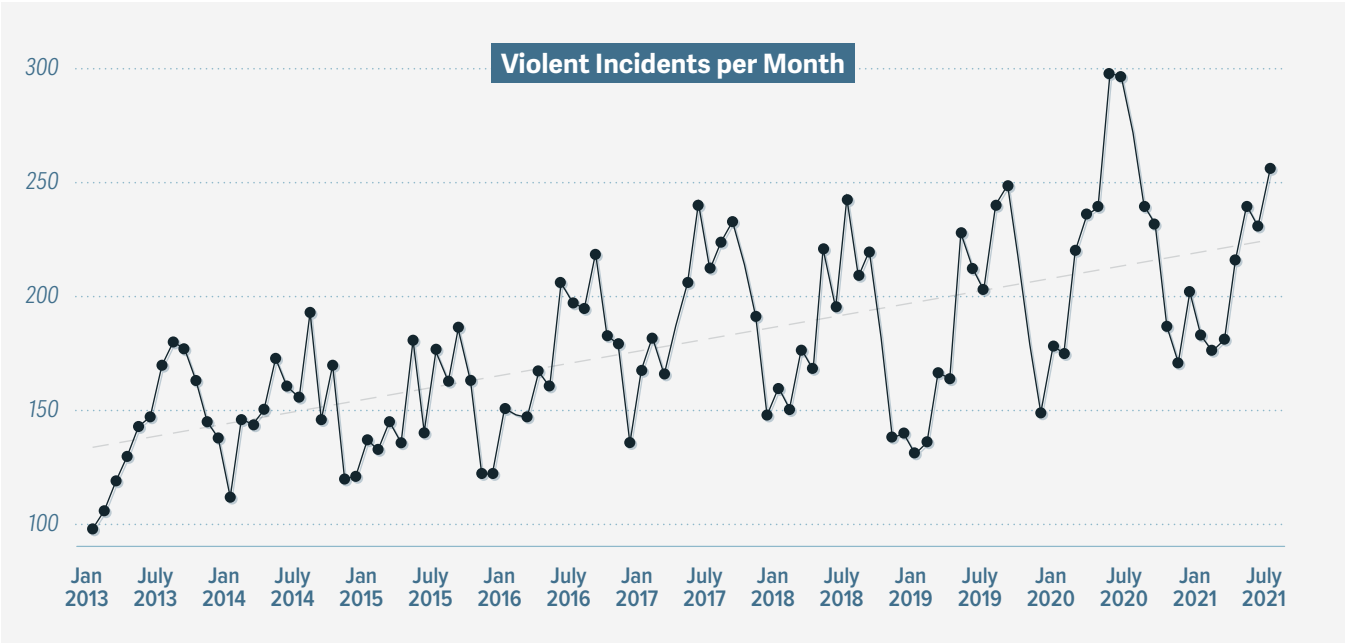
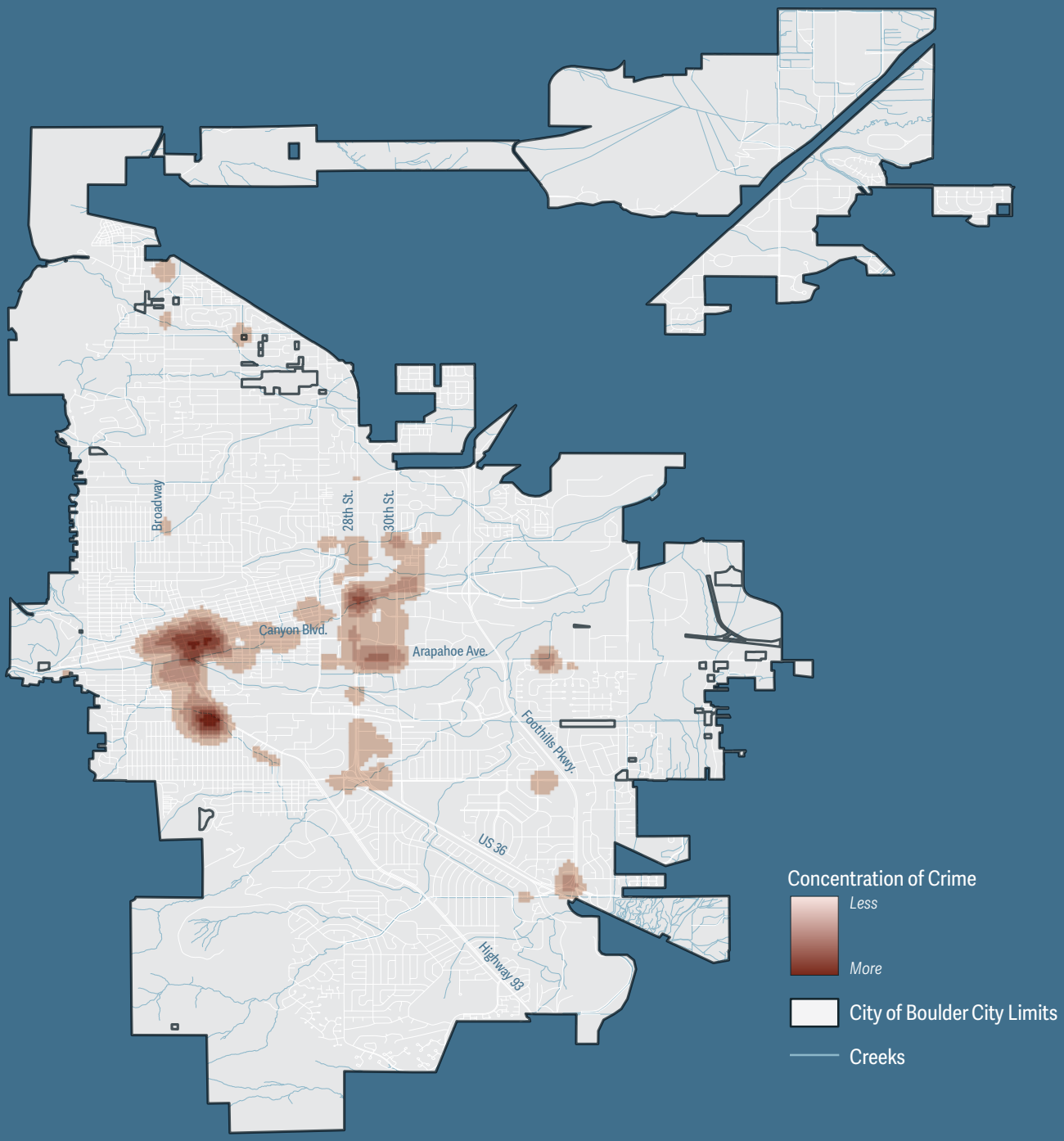


Figure 7

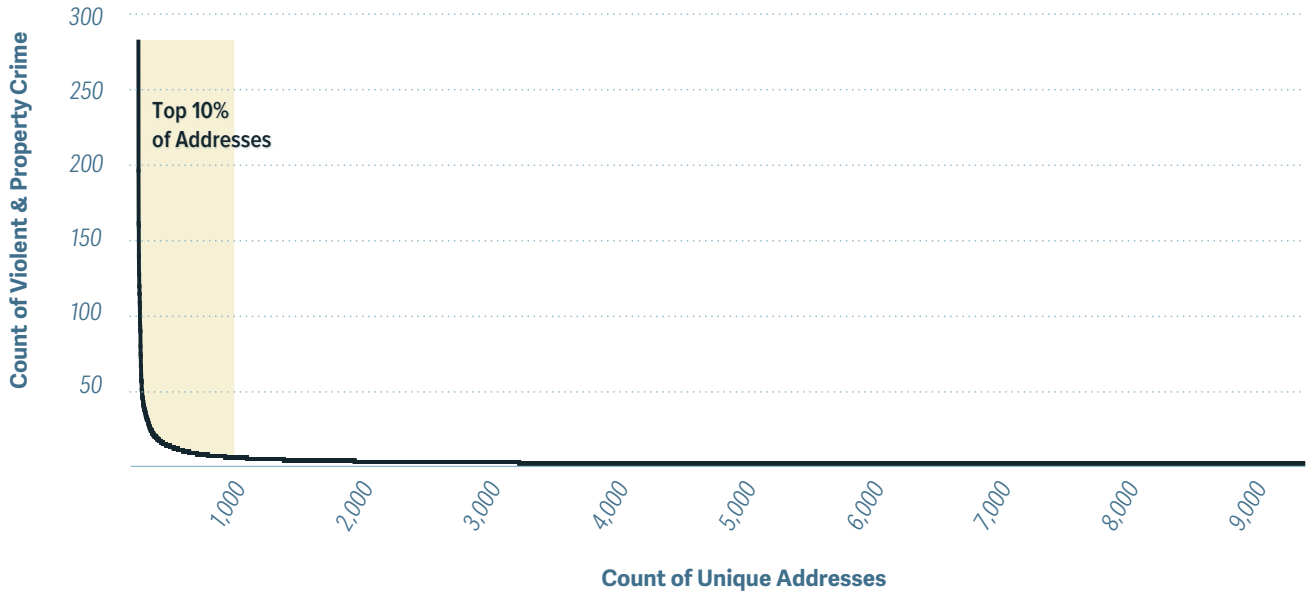
Some Parts of the City Have More Reported Crime than Others[2]



Like other calls for police, calls related to property and violent crimes are concentrated in particular parts of the city, and at relatively few addresses. In the years 2020 through 2023, there were 18,498 property crimes reported to the police. Ten percent of the addresses with at least one property crime account for about half of the property crime. Throughout the same years, there were 3,658 personal crimes (crimes committed against an individual), and they were almost as concentrated: the top 10% of addresses with violence generated about 45% of the violence. This is important because repeat crime addresses signal opportunities for effective crime prevention.

Figure 8

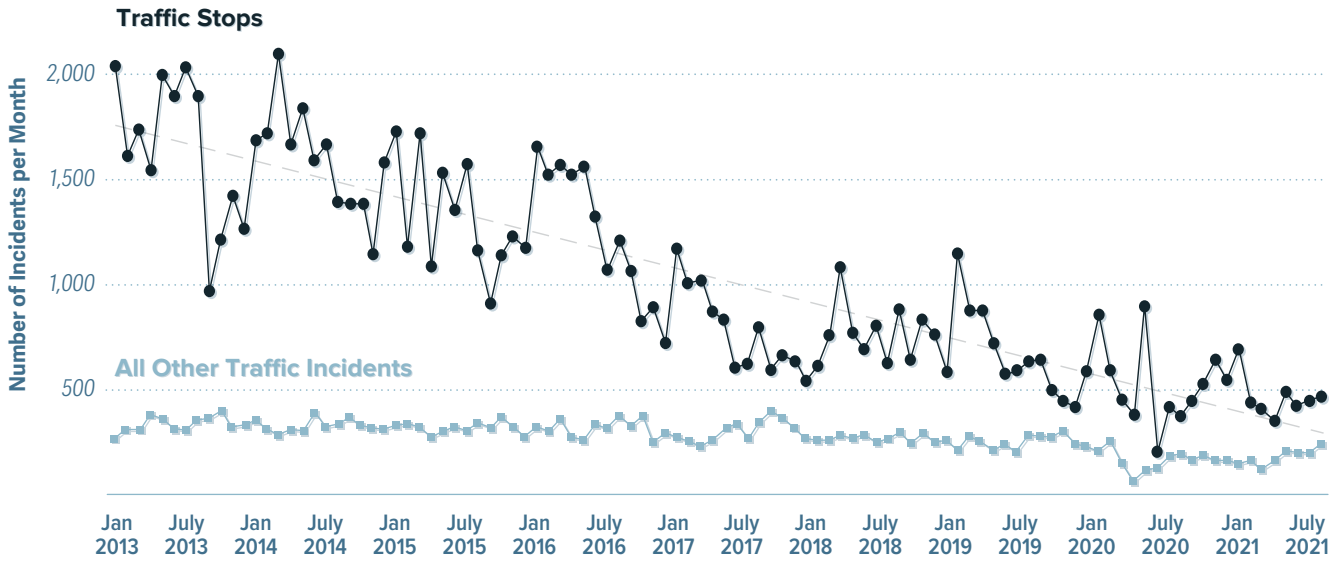
A Small Fraction of Addresses Account for Most of the Reported Property & Violent Crime [2]



In addition to responding to calls for service, the traditional model of policing often prioritizes traffic incident response and enforcement. The Boulder Police Department handled an average of 1,400 traffic incidents per year from 2013 to 2021. Traffic incidents have trended downward in Boulder during that time. Likewise, Boulder officers have been making fewer traffic stops. Compared to 2013, officers have decreased stops about 50 percent.

Figure 9

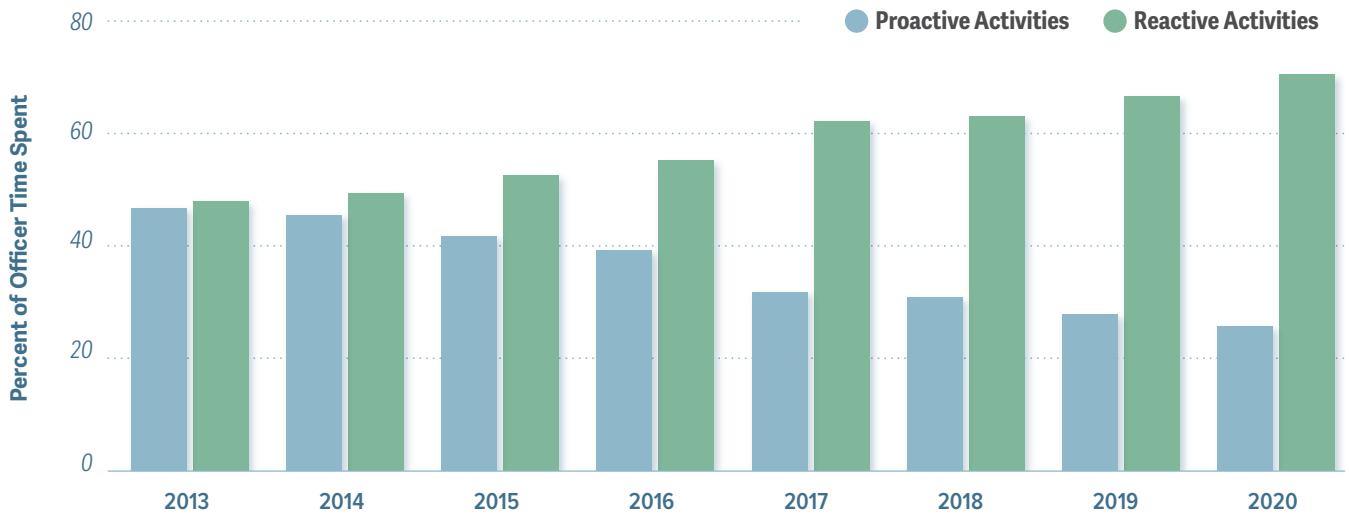
Traffic Incidents & Police Traffic Stops Have Declined



The decline in traffic stops is part of a larger trend away from officer-initiated (aka proactive) stops of people and vehicles. In 2013, 47 percent of the Boulder Police Department's workload involved officer-initiated activities. By 2020, that figure was down to 26 percent (Figure 10). These reductions were also impacted by staffing reductions in key specialized units such as traffic, and the change in driving patterns during the COVID pandemic.

Figure 10

Boulder Police Department Officer Time Spent from 2013–2020



Like with calls for service for other types of situations, traffic incidents are highly concentrated on a relatively few street segments within the city.

Who Interacts Most with Police

A similar concentration is true of victims and offenders.

From 2020 to 2023, the City of Boulder had 19,099 reported victims of crime. Most of these victims reported only a single crime. As Figure 11 shows, repeat victimization (when people suffer from crime frequently) occurs most often among a relatively small number of people. Ten percent of reported victims accounted for almost one third of all crime experienced (over 10,000 events). Repeat victimization is also well documented in crime research[4].

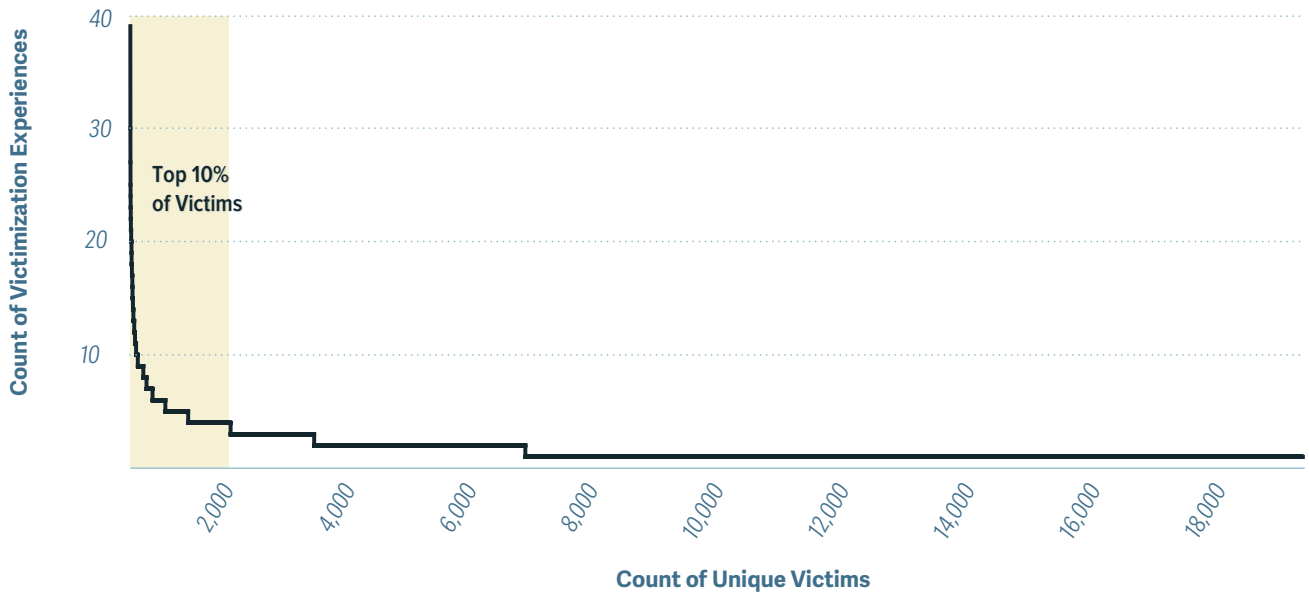
To be clear, these data points are not intended to blame victims. The victims who interact with Boulder police deserve compassion and support, and the department seeks to center them in all policing models. This information is helpful, however, because just like with repeat places, repeat victimization signals opportunities for prevention.

Although general numbers indicate that the Boulder public calls upon police a lot, a small proportion of the city consumes most police services. Many people have little reason to call the police. Often, it is the marginalized who need help the most. People living or working at the repeat call, repeat property, and repeat addresses with violence face threats most others do not encounter. Many studies show that offenders are often victims, and sometimes repeat victims. In fact, many historically excluded people – unhoused community members and those with serious and persistent mental illness, for example – are the most vulnerable to crime. The data here probably under-account for their suffering.



Figure 11

Ten Percent of Victims Experience Almost a Third of Crimes in Boulder[2]



Now, let's consider offenders. Researchers have known for decades that a relatively few offenders are responsible for most of the crime events[5]. This is true in Boulder. Data show that between 2020 and 2023, there were 8,854 unique identifiable individuals engaged in crime. The most active 10% of these people (fewer than 1,000) account for over 40% of the crimes that could be linked to specific names. Given unreported crimes, and unknown perpetrators, it is possible that the concentration of crime among offenders is even greater.


A. JOHNSON
POLICE

CHAPTER 2

COMMUNITY EXPECTATIONS & VALUES

While information about the nature of the work is valuable, any plan that is intended to serve community must also reflect the context of that community.

To understand how policing in Boulder is perceived, and to determine what community members want from the department as it evolves, the city launched a comprehensive effort to engage with the public. This process spanned 19 months and included four phases, or windows, for feedback. Each one was designed to reach interested community members, and especially those who belong to populations that have been disproportionately impacted in negative ways by policing. Some approaches worked well; others provided lessons. The city refined its process as it went, based on these lessons. Community process was also informed by the Reimagine Policing Process Subcommittee, comprised of two councilmembers and two community members selected through an application process[6]. The city's overall engagement process, including more details about who participated, is described in the Community Engagement Summary at: bldr.fyi/rp-engagement-summary.

This chapter provides an analysis of the feedback and draws from the following four sets of information:

1. **A survey conducted by the National Policing Institute (NPI)**, an outside consultant contracted by the city to conduct community engagement in the last engagement period, which centered on response to a draft Reimagine Policing plan.
2. **Qualitative feedback collected from approximately 1,600 people** during all four engagement periods, including the identification of shared community values related to safety; deep participation by young people; and finally, interviews and focus groups conducted by NPI, which accompanied the survey.
3. **A survey of people who called the Boulder Police Department** for help over a five-month period in 2021. Most people in Boulder, as in other communities, have little or no direct contact with police. These results provide the perspective of individuals who interacted directly with officers in 2021. They were invited to provide feedback in 2022 as part of a research project.
4. **Responses from local and national civil rights experts** to the first draft of the Reimagine Policing plan, as requested by Boulder City Council. This audience, particularly in the case of experts that are not local, may be less familiar with the context of policing in Boulder but has studied standard policing practices deeply and is often more critical of them.

Looked at holistically, respondents put forth a set of challenging questions that are valuable as Boulder seeks to reimagine policing.

7 National Policing Institute Survey

The city contracted with NPI in 2022. The goal of this contract was to ensure a level of independence and rigor in the engagement, while also addressing limits to city staff capacity.

NPI created and conducted a communitywide survey, which launched in November 2022 and closed in January 2023. The NPI survey attempted to produce a representative sample and was designed to ensure that members of communities of color were sampled in large enough numbers that their views would not be overlooked. NPI sent survey invitations to over 1,000 households in Boulder and followed up with reminder postcards. Invitees could complete the survey online or request a telephone interview. At the end of the survey period, 140 households had completed a survey. NPI weighted the data so that these households could better represent the demographics of the Boulder community. The full NPI report is available at: bldr.fyi/rp-npi-boulder-community-assessment.

The survey was also open to any Boulder community members interested in participating. This convenience sample of 416 surveys should not be considered representative because these participants are more likely than the representative sample to have strong views – either highly positive or negative – about police. However, the NPI report indicates that the convenience sample results are consistent with the representative sample results.

The findings described below draw only from the representative sample. Of the 140 people completing this survey, 32 had contact with the Boulder Police Department in the prior six months. All but three of these people had voluntarily contacted the police. For most survey participants, perceptions of the Boulder Police Department were formed from indirect sources, such as the experiences of friends, relatives, and coworkers; news reports; and social media.

What Respondents Said About Draft Plan

In the survey, NPI asked participants about their support for 22 strategies supporting six focus areas, each of which had three to five strategies. This was based on how information was categorized in a draft version of the Reimagine Policing Plan.

The Six Focus Areas

Focus 1: Increasing Partnership with the Community

Focus 2: Ensuring the Right Response, Role For Police

Focus 3: Providing Leadership in Preventing/Reducing Crime

Focus 4: Serve as a Trusted Partner in Racial Equity, Support of Vulnerable Populations

Focus 5: Recruiting & Supporting a Professional Workforce with Integrity

Focus 6: Modeling Transparency & Accountability

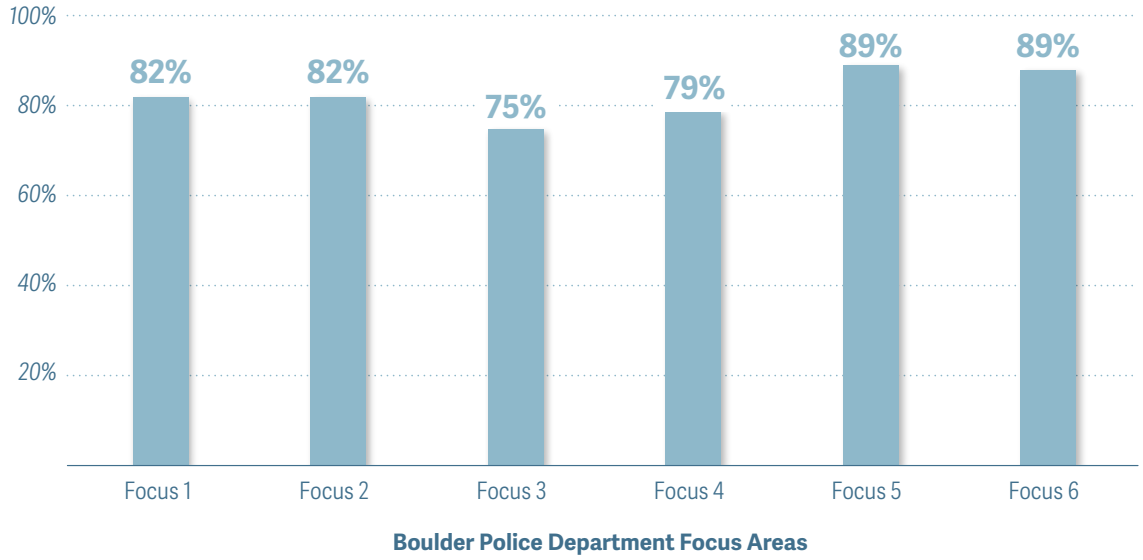


NPI's full report shows these results in detail. The following assessment was created by averaging the percentage of those answering the survey who indicate that they somewhat or strongly support the strategies.

In general, there was consistent support among the six focus areas. Of the 22 strategies, 16 had 80% or more support and 21 had 70% or greater support. The least supported strategy was the use of technology to combat crime and reduce officer and suspect injuries (and even with this indicator, 52.3% of the households supported or strongly supported it).

Figure 12

Overall Support for 22 Strategies within Six Focus Areas



2 Qualitative Feedback

This plan was informed not just by best practices in policing reform but also by 19 months of engagement with the Boulder community. The effort spanned four windows of engagement, which started in mid-2021. The engagement was conducted by a mix of city staff and outside consultants.

By design, much of the engagement was left as open-ended as possible to allow for a wide variety of perspectives, in community members' own words, to avoid influencing the outcome.

Community Hopes, Dreams & Concerns



The most open-ended solicitation for feedback occurred in the first window, which was focused on understanding the community's hopes, dreams, and concerns around policing.

This engagement occurred through a variety of methods, including an online questionnaire completed by 504 participants, five online forums, two public events, internal Police Department engagement, and specific population outreach to elevate voices historically underrepresented in city planning processes. This included Black, Indigenous, People of Color (BIPOC) community members, people experiencing homelessness, and youth. The Engagement Window I summary report is located at: bldr.fyi/rp-window-1.

Feedback collected during this time was invaluable, in that it allowed the city to develop a set of value statements around safety. It was clear from the community's comments that not everyone views police as a key component of safety, and in fact, for some segments of the community, policing, as conducted today, is a source of negative feelings and experiences, including unease and oppression. It is as clear, however, that there is also deep concern among some portions of the Boulder community that crime is increasing and that police

may not be resourced sufficiently to address these impacts. These perspectives, which many may see as contradictory, provided a powerful challenge to the city to approach safety and policing in an unconventional way.

Through careful analysis, the feedback took shape in the form of six value statements that represented themes expressed by participants. It is worth noting that this analysis was conducted not just by city staff, but also by two University of Colorado graduate students who are also members of BIPOC communities. This recommendation was made by the Boulder County NAACP, who shared concerns that an all-white city team may perceive the input with bias. This work resulted in the following value statements.

Value Statements

We Feel Safe in Our Community When:

1. We are all free to enjoy public and private spaces without fear of harm;
2. Laws are enforced equitably;
3. Police respond professionally and respectfully when we need them, but we have alternative and creative resources to address problems not suited to policing;
4. We demonstrate we are a compassionate community that supports the basic needs and the right to be free from crime for all community members;
5. Criminal behavior is met with accountability measures that are fair and just within policing and other systems, with opportunities for individuals to be supported in underlying issues;
6. Officers are part of the communities they serve, building relationships and understanding and addressing problems before having to step up enforcement and resort to force.

These statements were considered throughout the creation of the Reimagine Policing Plan. Later in this document, we will return to them to show how a shift in policing strategy will support these desired outcomes.

Youth Perspective

While the city welcomed participation from any member of the Boulder community, the project team was eager to hear from young people, who will grow into adulthood experiencing any new policing model. The city contracted with longtime engagement partner Growing Up Boulder (GUB) and a new partner, Mayamotion Healing, who worked together to create opportunities for feedback through all four engagement windows. In all, more than 3,200 hours were spent on preparing for, conducting, and summarizing the results of youth engagement.

Input was shared from young people who ranged considerably in age. Most of GUB's work involved hearing from young people in elementary and middle schools, through innovative classroom collaborations at Whittier International Elementary School and the Journey School. GUB also worked with the Youth Equity Council of the Boulder Valley School District and parents of young people involved in EXPAND: Exciting Programs, Adventures & New Dimensions (bldr.fyi/rp-expand).

High school-aged students participated in one of two ways:

- Through the Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (YOAB). YOAB is a city-sponsored leadership development program that builds capacity in Boulder high school students while also gathering their feedback and participation on a range of city issues. Reimagine Policing was one of the group's focus areas in 2021 and 2022.
- The second method was new to the city and involved the convening of a group of young people who were more likely to have experienced negative impacts of policing, either directly or because they and their families are from communities of color. Licensed Clinical Social Worker Maya Sol Dansie, founder and CEO of Mayamotion Healing, oversaw these efforts, carefully designing opportunities that recognized possible emotional experiences and provided cultural relevancy and somatic support for the young people who were invited to participate. This second group included teens from the following organizations: I Have A Dream, the Black Student Alliance, Z Club, ELLOS, Generations, and TGTHR (formerly Attention Homes).

The full reports for each of the youth engagement windows are available at: bldr.fyi/rp-combined-youth-engagement.

The following excerpt from the GUB/Mayamotion Window III summary report shows that young people want many of the same things that were expressed through engagement with adults, but their level of skepticism that their feedback would be considered and that change could be sustained was higher.

Window III Youth Summary Report:

"For adult decision-makers wishing to enact change, our engagement groups offer numerous recommendations, including a safety system that includes mental health workers, investment in community needs (such as culture, housing, and mental health), less police access to and use of lethal force, police who partner with the community instead of punishing them, and a police force well-trained in the areas of racial bias, disability, cultural differences, and homelessness."

"On one hand, young people believe that:

- *Transparency and accountability are essential in all aspects of policing*
- *Equity, diversity, and training are the keys to changing the policing system*
- *Supporting mental health needs and the needs of the unhoused population should be city priorities*
- *Focus areas and value statements are foundational documents and critical to the success of all future Reimagine Policing efforts (and should be updated to reflect teen opinions)*

On the other, young people are skeptical that:

- *Any meaningful change will actually take place – they want to believe that change is possible, but they're old enough to have seen plenty of reform fail and the violence and targeting of Black and Brown communities has persisted since George Floyd's murder*
- *Adult decision-makers will support their recommendations."*



In Window IV, young participants expressed a desire to have meaningful and ongoing dialogue with police to ensure their views were being heard and considered. This Reimagining Policing Plan recognizes the value of relationship-building with young people and commits to a future co-created youth engagement program that encourages dialogue, active listening, shared learning, and problem solving.

NPI Focus Groups & Interviews

In addition to conducting the communitywide survey mentioned above, NPI was a partner in collecting qualitative feedback. The focus of this work, which occurred in late 2022 and into 2023, was to build upon earlier efforts to prioritize feedback from historically excluded communities in Boulder.

Focus groups and interviews were conducted by NPI researchers, who conferred with organizations identified for Community Advisory Group (CAG)[7] outreach to develop a list of representatives who might be willing to provide feedback. The goal was to focus on historically excluded populations including communities of color, individuals experiencing homelessness, the LGBTQ+ population, and people with disabilities, in Boulder.

NPI conducted interviews and focus groups about elements of the draft plan and provided opportunities for feedback about additional strategies. In all, 14 different sessions were held, with a total of 58 community members participating.

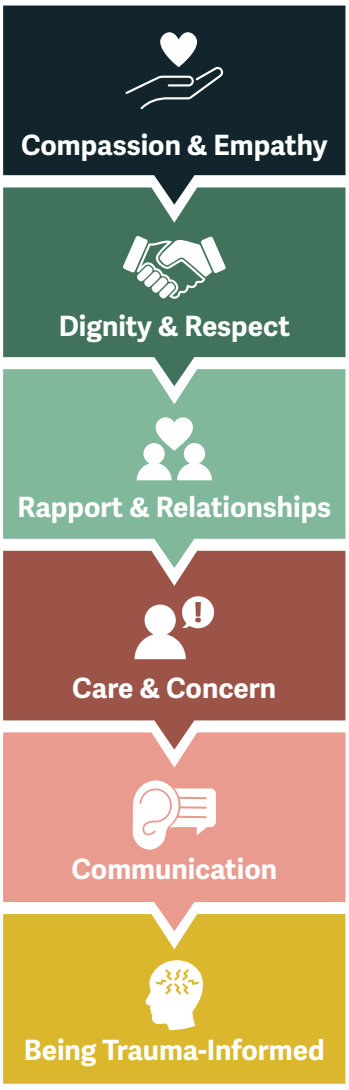
As with previous engagement efforts, the feedback centered on many similar themes as those expressed in the community values and by young people. As summarized in NPI's report:

- *"Participants were broadly supportive of building stronger partnerships with community-based organizations to prevent and reduce crime."*
- *"Participants suggested that the Boulder Police Department could more fully utilize community expertise to deliver training to sworn and non-sworn staff."*
- *"Participants believed it was important for the Boulder Police Department to acknowledge the history of policing and its harms."*

The NPI qualitative engagement was also helpful in identifying a set of core attributes that Boulder community members, especially those who have been disproportionately impacted by policing, want to see from police in any reimagined future. Figure 13 describes the attributes.

Figure 13

Emergent Themes from Narrative Analysis



People want to be seen and heard, to feel valued, important, and accepted without judgment regardless of their socioeconomic status, race or ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, (dis)ability, religion, language, or appearance.

People want to be treated with dignity and respect. Participants felt they were treated as less than a whole person; affording individuals with greater dignity and respect would make them believe they were 1) seen as a human being and 2) treated as a human being instead of a threat.

Relationship building is a two-way street, and there was a need for more rapport and relationships to "recognize faces" instead of bodies. Participants spoke about officer approachability (body language, posture, tone) and how that can interfere with building community relationships.

People want greater focus on care and concern over punishment. A change in mindset that focuses on responding to and supporting vulnerable populations is one that "helps before people die or just sends them to prison." Success requires collaboration across communities.

Participants spoke about the importance of soft skills, including active listening - "listen to hear instead of listen to respond." Participants also described the need for the police to acknowledge mistakes and past harms (including the role of the police in upholding systems of oppression).

People want to be engaged in ways that are meaningful to them, not in ways solely defined by the police. This theme also emerged around the role of the police in crime prevention or violence reduction. People want police to be part of these efforts but recognize that complex problems necessitate a multi-disciplinary response rooted in community and collaboration.

Each of these indicators is helpful in assessing the outcomes that the central strategy, supporting goals, and action items in the next few chapters are designed to support. Look for these icons again in Chapters 4 and 5.

3 Survey of People Who Called Police

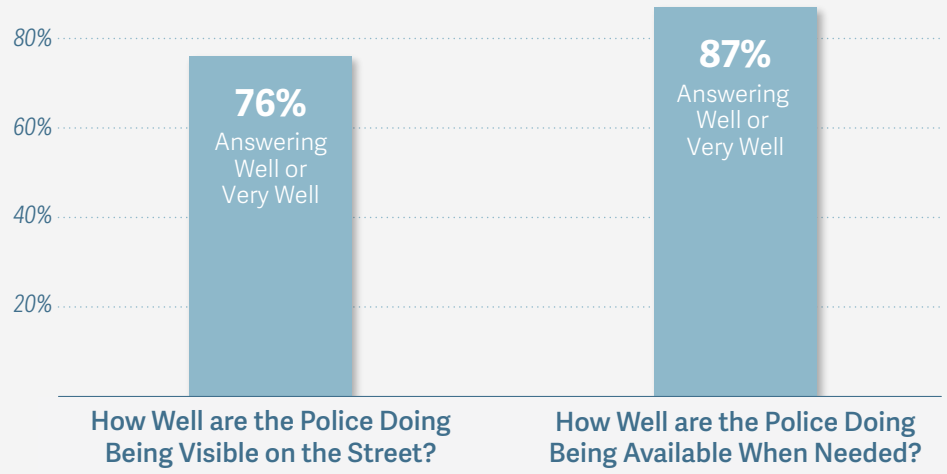
In July 2022, James Quackenbush, a researcher from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, conducted a survey of individuals who had called Boulder's Police and Fire Communication Center for help between Feb. 1 and July 31, 2021. He obtained **102 completed surveys**. The respondents' racial characteristics are very close to the community racial characteristics reported by the U.S. Census Bureau. The questions asked were from the Police-Community Interaction Survey (PCIS), developed and validated by Dennis Rosenbaum of the University of Illinois-Chicago. The research can be found at: bldr.fyi/rp-quackenbush-survey.

The survey contains several general assessments of the Boulder Police Department.

All data shown in Figures 14–20 are based on the 102 survey responses received.

Figure 14

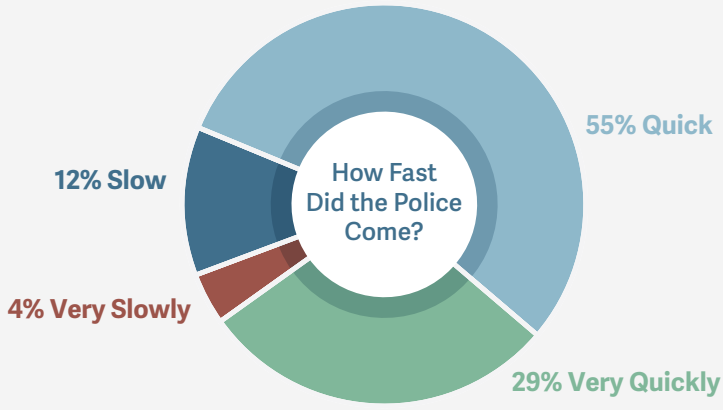
People Who Call the Police – Perceptions of Visibility & Availability



Over three quarters of the police callers thought the Boulder police were visible and an even greater percent thought the police were readily available when needed.

Figure 15

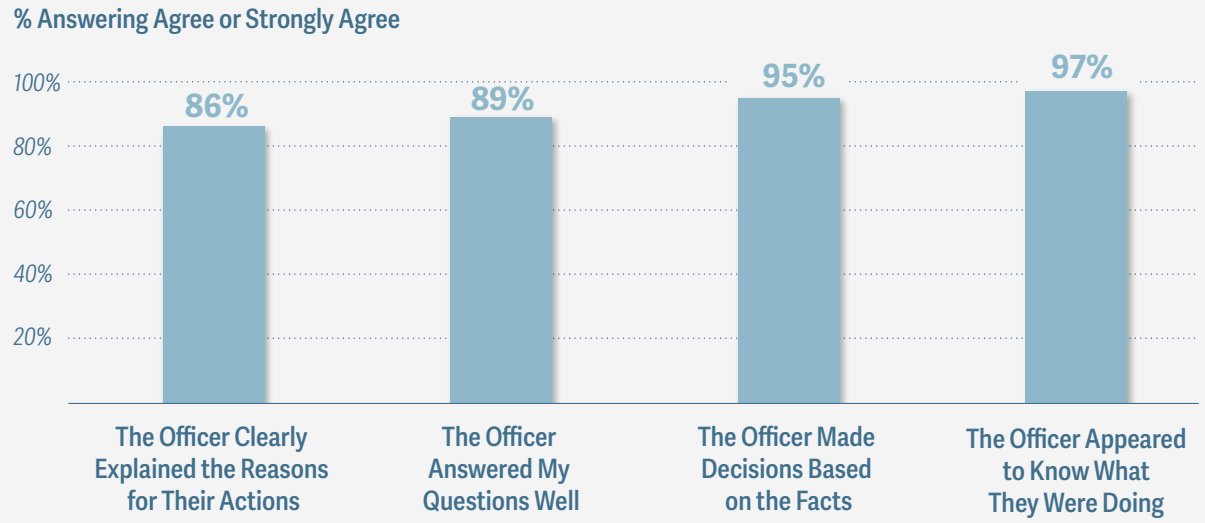
The Police Come Quickly



Well over 80% of the people who called the police thought the police were quick to respond.

Figure 16

Perceptions of Police Interactions



The respondents indicated that when officers arrived, they investigated the situation in a reasonable manner.

This research is helpful because it relates to direct experience with police services. The Reimagine Policing Plan will seek to enhance opportunities for feedback after interactions, preferably in real time.

This survey also asked questions that correlate to five of the six community safety values described in the previous section.

1. We are All Free to Enjoy Public & Private Spaces Without Fear of Harm

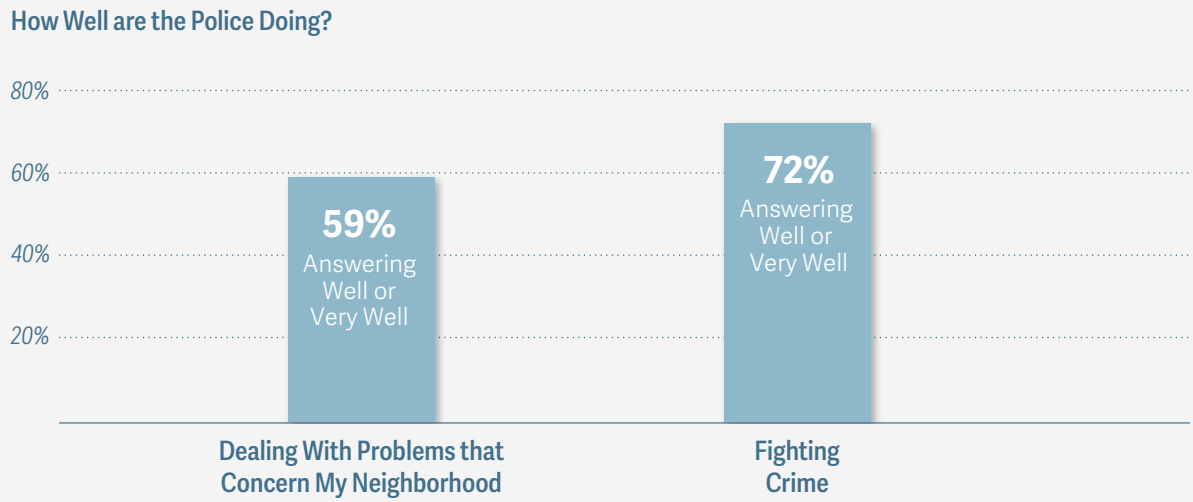
There are three questions on the survey of police callers dealing with fear, crime, and safety. The first question asked, "How safe do you feel, or would you feel, being alone outside in your neighborhood at night?" Seventy-eight percent of the callers responded they felt safe or very safe. Considering that these are people who called the police for help, which indicates there was a point where they did not feel safe, this is a very high score.



When these same people were asked about police ability to address neighborhood problems, the percent responding well or very well was only 59%. For fighting crime, in general, these people give the police good marks; over 70 percent said the police are doing well or very well (Figure 17).

Figure 17

There is Room for Improvement in How Police Deal with Neighborhood Problems



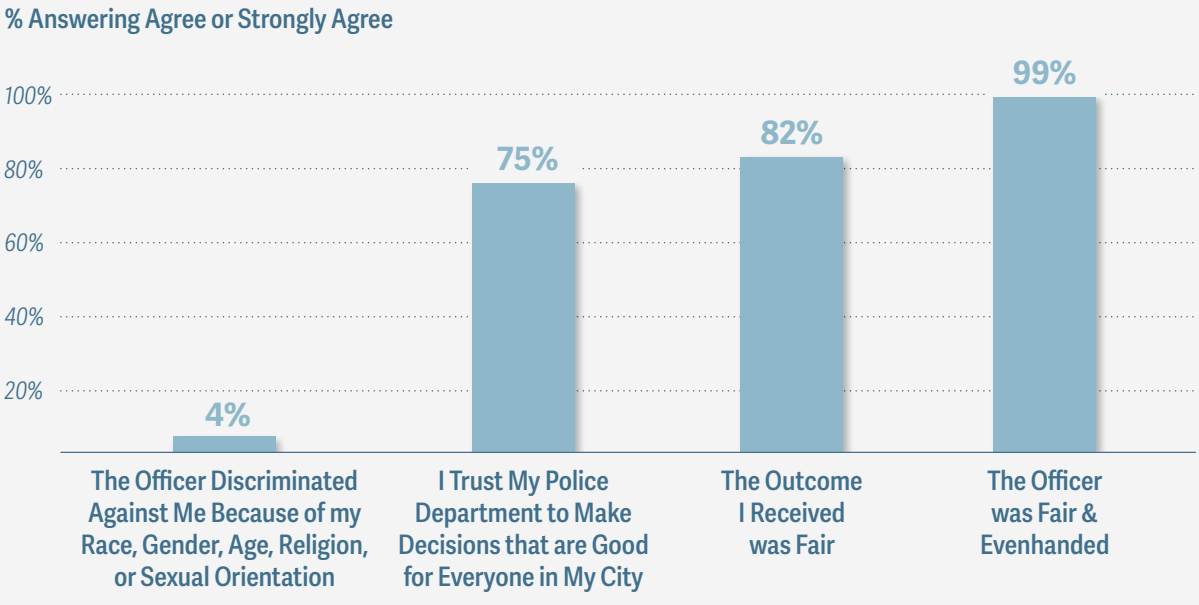
2. Laws are Enforced Equitably

The survey asked five questions that address this value. When people who called the police were asked, "How well are the police doing at treating people fairly regardless of who they are?" 82% said either "well" or "very well."

Figure 18 shows the percentage of callers responding "agree" or "strongly agree" to the other four other questions relating to bias, judgement and equity.

Figure 18

People Who Call the Police Feel They are Treated Fairly

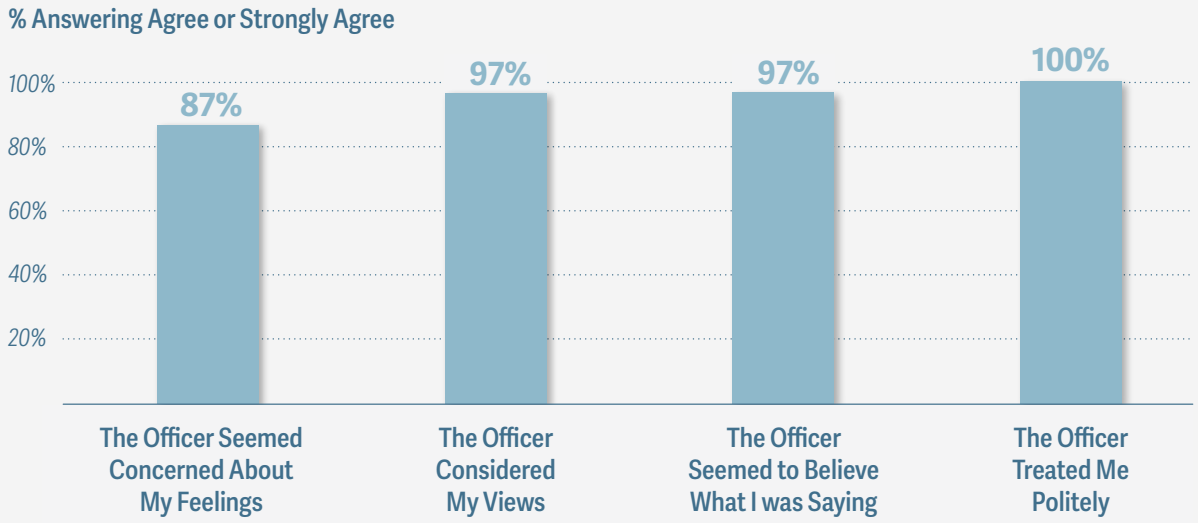


3. Police Respond Professionally & Respectfully When We Need Them, but We Have Alternative & Creative Resources to Address Problems Not Suited to Policing

The survey of police callers did not ask specifically about alternative resources. It did, however, ask respondents to provide feedback about the level of professionalism and respect shown by officers.

Figure 19

Perceptions of Respect in Police Interactions

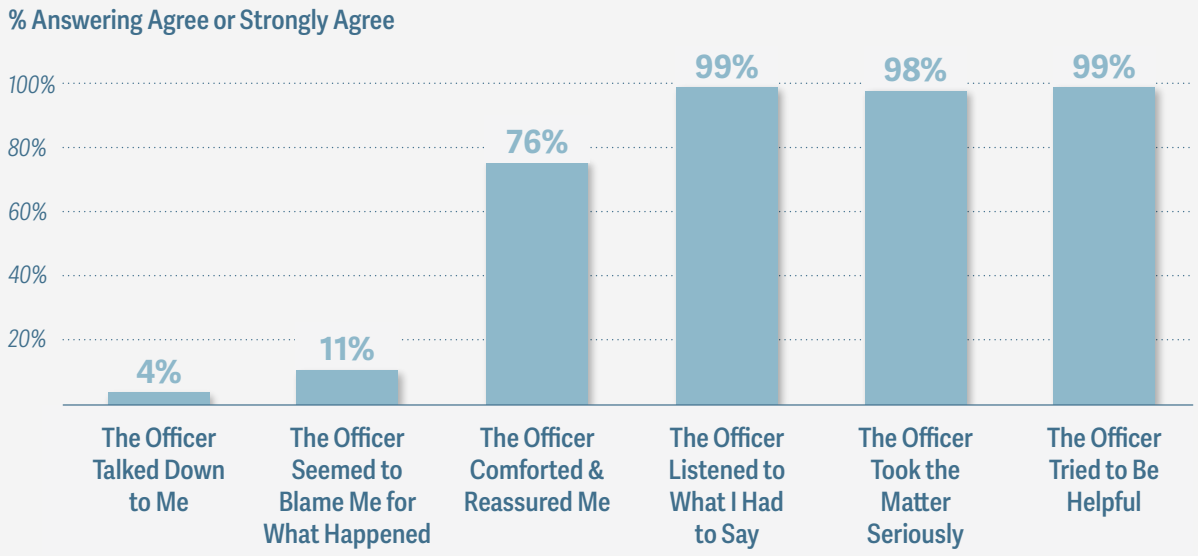


4. We Demonstrate We are a Compassionate Community That Supports the Basic Needs & the Right to be Free from Crime for All Community Members

The survey asked five questions that related to compassion expressed by the officer responding to the call. (Figure 20).

Figure 20

Perceptions of Compassion in Police Response



5. Criminal Behavior Is Met With Accountability Measures That Are Fair & Just Within Policing & Other Systems, With Opportunities for Individuals to be Supported in Underlying Issues

Two questions in the survey touched on the issues addressed by this value. When asked, "How likely would you be to work with the police to identify a person committing a crime in your neighborhood?", ninety-one percent said "likely" or "very likely." This indicates that for the people who sought help, the police are seen as a key partner in addressing criminal behavior.

The question of whether current accountability measures are fair or just is more nuanced. Fifty-four percent of the people who called the police said they "agreed" or "strongly agreed" with the statement, "I sometimes question the laws we are asked to obey." This suggests potential disagreement in the Boulder community about policy measures that have been enacted to address crime. This survey did not seek to gauge opinion about whether there are sufficient opportunities for support for underlying issues.

4 Response from Civil Rights Experts

As part of the process, and for the first time in any police department planning effort in Boulder, the project team asked civil rights experts from Boulder and around the United States to comment on the draft Reimagine Policing plan. Fifteen local and national civil rights organizations and individual consultants were identified for outreach by council members, the National Policing Institute, the city manager, and staff working on the project. Eight of those experts provided feedback (more detail available at: bldr.fyi/rp-civil-rights-feedback, which includes all civil rights feedback, and a list of experts asked to provide input.)

Civil rights experts provided comments in a variety of formats, with some input focused on high-level concepts and others suggesting changes to more detailed tactics or organizational elements of the first plan draft. The city also received feedback that the first Reimagine Policing draft plan was too long and complicated, without clarity about the fundamental way the department would be "reimagining" policing. In response, the plan was re-written to focus on an explanation of the key concept of the new strategy – problem-solving policing – and a simplified set of action items directly related to the issues that community members expressed the most interest in. Therefore, not all comments on the first plan draft directly applied to the language in the revised, streamlined plan. However, the more detailed comments will still be utilized as part of tactical operations/implementation planning.

The city sorted the comments and questions into three categories – each of which also appeared in varying degrees in feedback collected from the Boulder community:

1. How will the department address concerns of discriminatory treatment of members of the public by the Boulder Police Department?
2. Is the Police Department the appropriate arm of government to handle some problems? How can the Boulder Police Department shift parts of its workload to other public agencies or private organizations that are better equipped to deal with problems?
3. How can police build trust and sustain meaningful engagement with the public after the completion of the Reimagine Policing plan?

These questions present a serious challenge. In the next chapter, we show how we accept and take on this challenge.


RAVE
14:15

CHAPTER 3

A NEW CENTRAL STRATEGY: PROBLEM-SOLVING POLICING

Despite results that show general satisfaction with the response of officers when individuals call for help, transformation that builds trust, actually reduces crime, and prevents disproportionate harm to communities of color, requires a whole new model.

We call this problem-solving policing, and it is the central tenet of the Reimagine Policing Plan.

This strategy is important because short interactions, particularly in moments of crisis, are unlikely to build long-term trust, even if police handle every call well. If the Boulder Police Department is to take the comments and values of its community seriously, it cannot merely tinker with the status quo.

What Do We Mean by Problems?

Problems are conditions that occur in a community that cause harm. They may be actual crimes. In other instances, they may be situations that are likely to lead to crime or generally make people feel unsafe.

In the traditional call-and-respond model of policing, where individuals summon officers by dialing 9-1-1, officers become involved in the most immediate and visible result of the problem. They are expected to resolve the issue, usually by arresting the offender. When this is done well, the individual who has been immediately harmed may get some form of support from victim advocates.

But then, police clear the scene.

The problem, however, rarely leaves with them.

Let's consider the following examples: Say there is an apartment building in Boulder that has little security. This situation creates an ideal environment for burglaries. Police handling of each burglary, if and when it is reported, will not stop the burglaries. Even the arrest of one burglar is unlikely to make much of a difference, because nothing has been done to address the opportunities for burglary. Another example is an intersection that is the site of multiple car crashes. Quick responses to each crash, humane treatment of the people involved, and thorough accident investigation reports will not stop the next crash. Fights among students leaving a high school will not be stopped by breaking up each fight as it occurs.

In problem-solving policing, officers become partners with the communities that are impacted by harmful situations. Problems that respond best to a collaborative approach between community and police typically have the following characteristics:

- **Community** – The problem must be occurring within the community.
- **Harm** – There must be a tangible harm suffered by community members. This is the harm the problem-solving effort will try to reduce.
- **Expectations** – There must be a current expectation that the police need to be involved. There should be no expectation that police must continue dealing with the problem if better alternatives can be found.
- **Events** – Problems are made up of discrete incidents, such as assaults, injuries, car crashes, and drug overdoses.
- **Repeat** – It must be likely the event will occur again unless addressed. This is necessary because a one-off event, regardless of how serious, cannot be prevented. The prevention of future harms is what problem-solving is designed to tackle.
- **Similarity** – The repeating events must have common characteristics. They all may occur at the same address. Or they may all involve the same type of victim.

How Does it Work?

In Chapter 1, we saw that a relatively small number of places, offenders, and victims are involved in most of the crime. The common name for this is the 80-20 rule: a few are involved in the most. Problem solving is open to a wide range of ways of addressing the problem rather than presuming a solution. It involves anyone who can help resolve the problem and is not restricted to police. And solutions are judged by the evidence that they drove down the problem.

Data can be helpful in identifying places where a problem might be occurring, but community is key. Those who live, work, or spend time in an area are usually the most familiar with the issues. Engagement with communities, based either on location or identity, is an important component.

Ideally, officers and commanders form relationships with impacted audiences, share data available to police, listen deeply to the community perspective and then, together, identify an issue to tackle.

The most basic problem-solving process is the SARA model, shown in Figure 21, used worldwide.

Figure 21

SARA Model of Policing



Problem solving starts with problem identification, or **Scanning**. Anyone can nominate a problem: police crime analysts, officers and detectives, residents, business operators, other government officials.

Depending on the size and nature of the problem, one or more people are appointed to dig into it. Extremely simple problems might have a single police officer or detective. For large and complex problems, a team will be assigned. Team members can include anyone in the city who has some expertise that can help understand the problem. This includes community members and potentially, individuals from other government organizations or businesses.

The second step is **Analysis.** Here the team tries to discover how the problem arose and what physical and social circumstances contribute to it. The team asks questions like, why at this place and not other nearby places? Why at these times and not other times? Why these people and not other people? The simple analytic tool used here is the problem triangle, shown in Figure 22.

The inner triangle lists the three essential elements for crime events: a willing offender must come into contact with a suitable target at a specific place. This is also true for non-crime problems: pedestrian-car crashes occur when a pedestrian and car meet at a place. Removing any one of these elements can solve a problem.

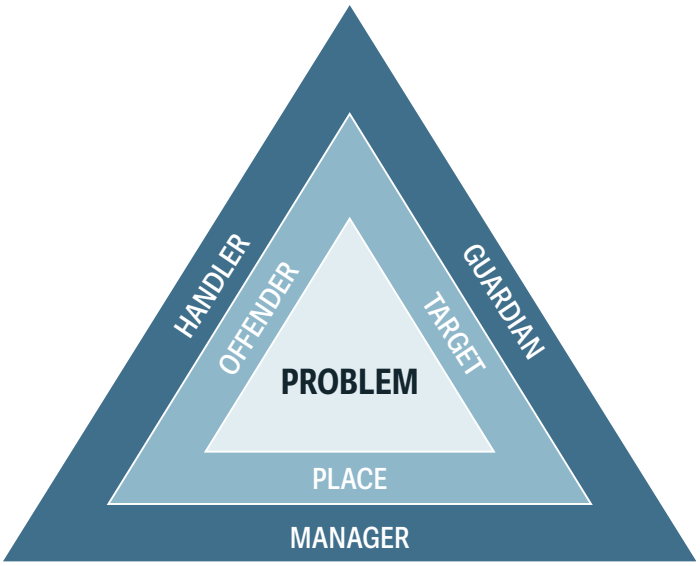
The outer elements are people who can control the inner elements. Handlers are people who can keep offenders out of trouble, if they are present (example: parents of young people). Guardians are people who protect other people or things (examples: loss prevention agents in stores or a tenants' association). And managers are people who own or operate places (example: homeowners or business employees).

Step three is **Response**. Here the problem-solving team reviews a broad list of solutions.

They use the information they have on the problem to narrow the list to a few that are likely to work, are legal, are acceptable to the community, and can be achieved with the resources available. Having people on the team who understand the community involved, and the resources available from other agencies and businesses, helps ensure the solutions chosen are likely to succeed. Once selected, the team implements the solution. This often requires that the solutions be handed over to others to carry out. But that does not end the team's role.

Figure 22

The Problem Triangle for Understanding How Problems Arise



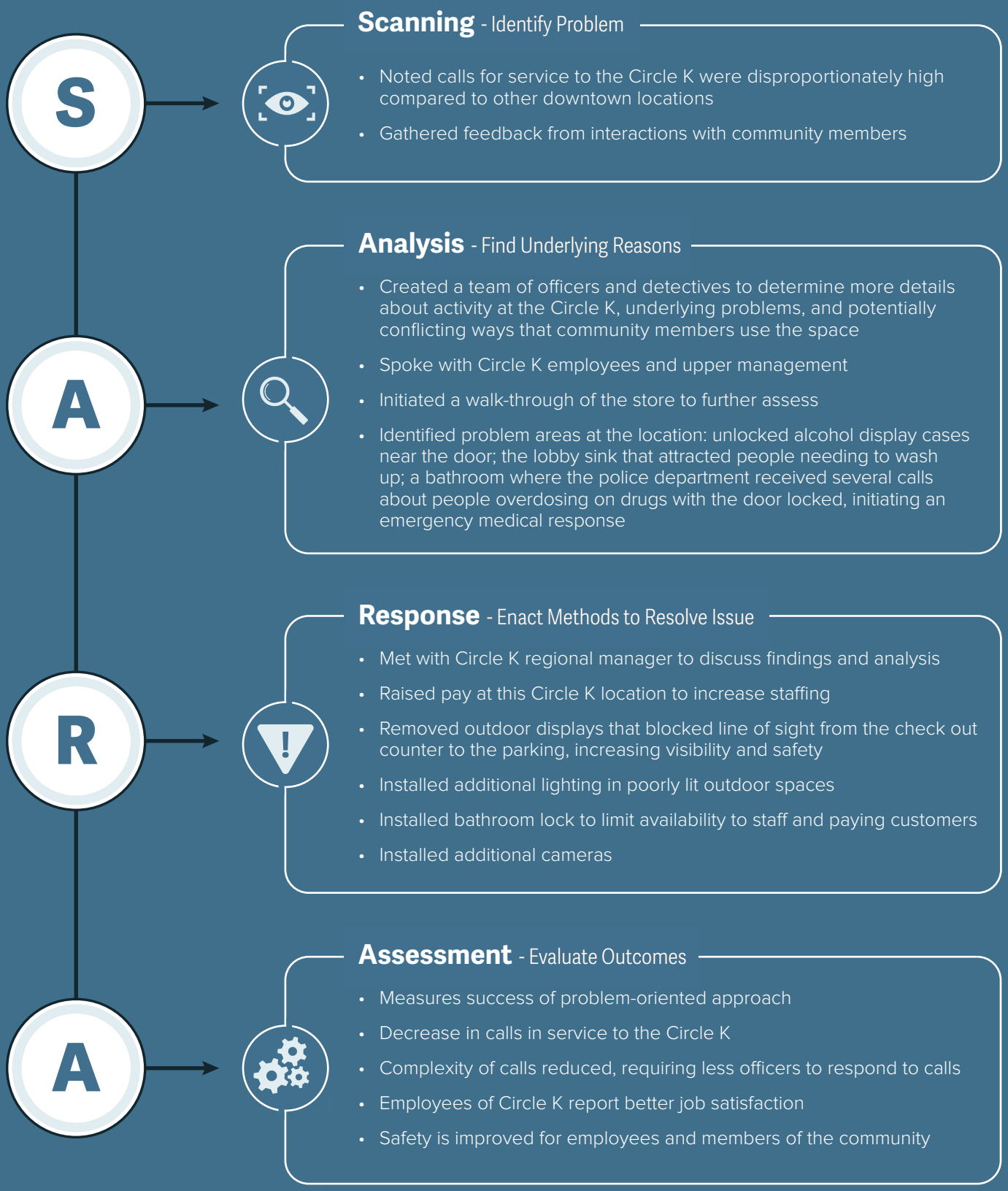
The last step is **Assessment**. Here the police department, with the assistance of community and other agencies, evaluates whether the solution worked as planned. If it did not, then adjustments may be needed. Or, in the extreme, a problem-solving team may have to go back to earlier stages of the SARA process to make large changes in the solution.

A recent case study here in Boulder shows how the process works. Over the past year, it became apparent that a significant amount of crime was happening at the Circle K on Canyon Boulevard and 15th Street.

Rather than addressing this in the traditional way, Boulder police began working with partners on a problem-solving approach. Here is how that looked.

Figure 23

Problem-Solving Policing Case Study: Circle K



There is considerable evidence that when police engage in problem solving, they can reduce problems. So why haven't more police departments shifted to this model? The difficulty is that problem-oriented policing is very hard to maintain. This is because problem solving is often shoe-horned into a call-and-respond system. Typically, a police chief institutes a problem-solving approach, often using a special unit. Then, when the chief leaves, the next chief fails to maintain the approach, even when the public prefers it. Today, the only policing agency in the world that has sustained a problem-solving approach over multiple police leaders is the New Zealand Police, a national police service. If the City of Boulder commits to problem-solving policing, and embeds it into a holistic governance model, it will be a leader in reimagining policing in the U.S.

What is Holistic Governance?

Holistic governance is a cross-disciplinary model that recognizes that in a world as complex and challenging as ours, problems often require a more coordinated approach. The police may be the group that originally detects a problem, but to solve the problem, the police need to bring in other experts from the city and the public. In this way, problem solving shifts the ownership of the problem from the police – who may not be well equipped to deal with the impacts the problem creates – to others who are.

The City of Boulder has already started to adopt this model. The cross-departmental team that is addressing unsanctioned camping is a good example. Police are involved, but the team's work is driven more by the Utilities Department, which is responsible for protecting the waterways, where much of the camping is occurring; and the Housing and Human Services (HHS) Department, which supports social resources for individuals in need. Another good example is the creation of two different types of mental health response teams: the Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT), which pairs HHS mental health clinicians with officers for calls that may involve someone in emotional distress, and the newer Community Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) model, which dispatches trained mental health clinicians with paramedics instead of officers. The Boulder community has made clear that it wishes to see alternative responses to police. These efforts demonstrate the city's commitment to this approach.

A holistic governance public safety model offers a promising approach to police reform for three reasons:

1. Holistic governance redefines the role of police. Officers serve as local government ambassadors, rather than strict enforcers. They investigate commonly reported problems, and help the community find sustainable solutions to longstanding issues. Police continue to enforce the law, show up to calls and arrest offenders, as needed. However, over time, fewer calls lead to less direct interventions, and fewer arrests in our most historically impacted communities reduce ethnic and racial disparities across all criminal justice outcomes.

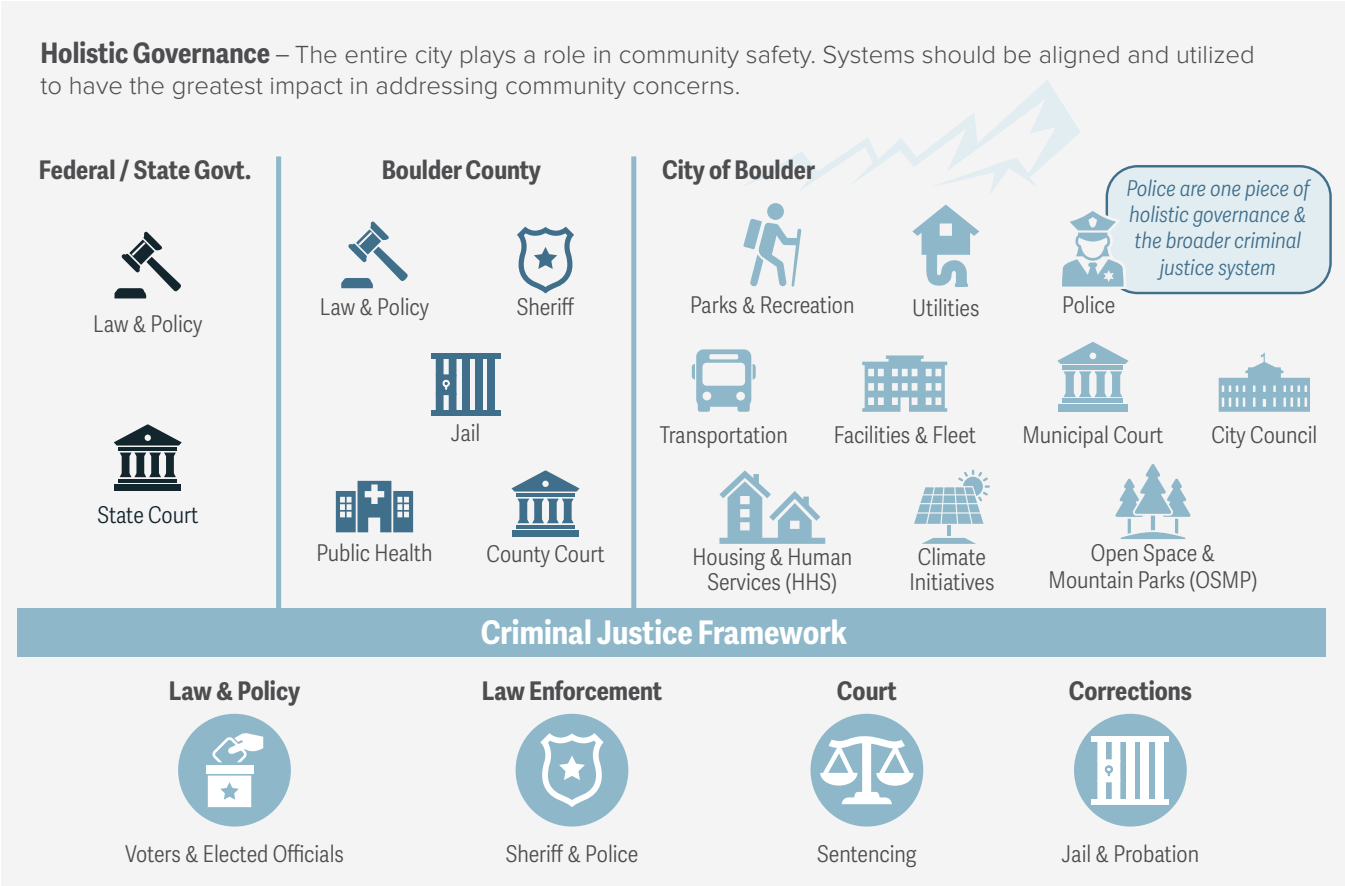
2. Holistic governance utilizes the full range of city resources to reduce crime by addressing its complex roots. Crime can be driven by indirect factors like lack of housing, food security, and transportation access. Since police have less influence in these areas, the whole city is called to relieve social burdens that can stop crime from ever happening. It helps identify non-enforcement solutions to our community's most pressing safety problems and emphasizes prevention rather than reactive measures.

3. Holistic governance prioritizes the safety of community members and officers. When we allow crime to continue, community members and officers are placed in harm's way. Research finds that officer injuries are overly concentrated in the same places where community members experience higher levels of victimization. Asking officers to continually respond to the same problems, with no plan to address the source of issues, is unacceptable.

The basic tenets of holistic governance address many equity concerns in that it leverages a wide variety of resources – many of which do not involve the criminal justice system at all. Figure 24 illustrates the many different areas of government that can be tapped through holistic governance, with fewer cases entering the justice system.

Figure 24

How Police are Linked to Holistic Governance & the Criminal Justice System



How the Problem-Solving Model Helps Address Community Concerns, Hopes, & Values

Now that we've described problem solving, let's return to the three big questions that were raised by the Boulder community and civil rights experts:

- How can we trust police to treat people equitably?
- Are the police the appropriate agency for handling troublesome events?
- Can the police sustain meaningful public engagement?

Problem-solving policing helps answer each of these questions.

Improving Trust & Increasing Equity

Problem-solving policing should improve trust in three ways. First, by addressing problems upstream there are fewer events that bring police into conflict with members of the public. Second, problem solving does not rely on law enforcement as its principal tool. Though law enforcement may be required on occasion, the goal is to find solutions that address the problem but are not coercive. This approach also addresses bias exhibited by people who call police. In a call-and-respond model, officers are obligated to investigate a call, even if it is based less on a safety risk and more on a community member's perception. Focusing on problems is less about individuals and more about issues. This approach must be implemented with an equity focus, utilizing the city's racial equity tools and partnership with community leaders to avoid

concerns about community policing simply resulting in more police in communities of color. The City of Boulder Racial Equity Instrument was utilized throughout the Reimagine Policing development process and will be important in the next steps putting the plan into action.

Appropriateness

Civil rights experts and community members raised the concern that police are often drawn into problems that would be best handled by others. We agree. When digging into problems, a problem-solving team should look for the most appropriate organization to handle the issue. Shifting the responsibility for handling problems is a goal when a public or private entity can reduce them. For example, if a store is generating significant shoplifting arrests, rather than have the police continue to process the arrests, a solution may be to have the store institute effective loss-prevention measures that do not rely on police.

Sustained Engagement

Some community members expressed concern about a lack of trust with police and speculated that the department would stop involving the public once this plan was completed. Others expressed the desire to have more than just liaison officers talking to or with the public. These concerns are well founded; responding to calls does not provide a context for meaningful dialogue; but problem-solving teams do. As participants on such teams, community members can shape how local government handles problems. This is particularly true of teams tackling problems faced by historically excluded populations.

Another way to consider the benefits of problem-solving policing is to look again at the community values identified through this process.



Figure 25

Supporting Community Values through Problem-Solving Policing

Community Safety Value	How Problem-Solving Policing Supports the Community Safety Value
1 We are all **free to enjoy public and private spaces** without fear of harm.	Solving problems reduces fear-generating conditions and aims to reduce crime.
2 **Laws are enforced equitably.**	Problem-solving policing can reduce the dependency on traditional enforcement and can be used to identify and address inequitable processes and circumstances.
3 **Police respond professionally and respectfully** when we need them, but we have alternative and creative resources to address problems not suited to policing.	Police-public partnerships in the problem-solving policing model help build mutual respect and understanding, and a holistic governance approach centers alternatives to policing.
4 We demonstrate we are a **compassionate community** that supports the basic needs and the right to be free from crime for all community members.	The problem-solving policing model helps to identify and create compassionate support systems.
5 Criminal behavior is met with **accountability measures that are fair and just** within policing and other systems, with opportunities for individuals to be supported in underlying issues.	The problem-solving policing model does not impede holding people accountable for their behaviors, but it does help get at root issues behind behaviors.
6 **Officers are part of the communities they serve**, building relationships and understanding and addressing problems before having to step up enforcement and resort to force.	The problem-solving policing model builds relationships between the public and police while working on tangible and meaningful concerns. It is designed to prevent issues so that enforcement becomes less necessary.



Staffing for Community Problem-Solving

Implementing long-term solutions in partnership with community stakeholders will require a combination of sworn and civilian employees dedicated to the task. While a later section of this plan will address budgetary resources needed to implement a problem-solving policing strategy, it is important to be transparent about something that might seem counterintuitive. In order to implement a deeply community centered, problem-solving approach, and be less reactive, the Boulder Police Department will need more – not fewer – personnel.

Rule of 60

Through its research across the country, the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) has developed guidelines for best practice, collectively known as the Rule of 60. In general the ICMA has found that the Rule of 60 guidance balances many concerns well. The Rule of 60 guidelines have two parts:

1. **60% of all sworn officers should be assigned to patrol and respond to routine incidents.**
2. **60% of patrol officer time should be committed to responding to the service demands of the community.**

On average, the Rule of 60 guidelines have been found to be effective at providing enough coverage to handle workloads while not needlessly overstaffing departments. The Rule of 60 is a benchmark that should be used to guide staffing decisions. These are general guidelines and deviations are expected. It is not the case that 60% of every shift for every officer will be limited to responding to community requests, even when staffing is based on that target.

Currently, approximately 74% of BPD officers' time is spent in reactive activities, putting it well beyond the 60% threshold of the common best-practice framework, known as the Rule of 60 (bldr.fyi/rp-icma-staffing-analysis), for police staffing. Achieving appropriate staffing to meet Rule of 60 standards allows officers more time for community problem-solving partnerships.

An independent analysis of BPD's current staffing and historical workload (bldr.fyi/rp-bpd-staffing-analysis) offered the following recommendations using the Rule of 60:

- BPD should add eight to 14 officers to its authorized strength and add those positions to Watches II and III (swing shift and graveyard shift)[8].
- Vacant patrol positions should be filled, and BPD should focus on recruitment and retention of officers.
- BPD should continue to enhance its problem-solving capabilities to address increasing crime.
- BPD may not be able to maintain critical units including the Homeless Outreach Team, Neighborhood Impact Team, and the Pearl Street Team if current staffing cannot be increased.


BOULDER POLICE
SCHMEITS
BOULDER POLICE

CHAPTER 4

GOALS & ACTIONS

Supporting the Successful Implementation of the Reimagine Policing Plan

There are many things the Police Department can do – and is doing – to support the change in strategic direction outlined in this plan.

While moving to a problem-solving policing approach is the most sweeping and transformative change proposed in this plan, the department recognizes it will need to take shorter-term and critical action steps to meet the community's needs and aspirations. There is also, of course, a desire to understand and be able to track concrete action steps. This chapter describes the specific commitments the department will make over the next two to five years.

Focus Areas

This chapter outlines the actions the department will take in the next two to five years to reimagine policing in Boulder. These actions are separated into three focus areas:

1. **Department / Officer Readiness for Situations Where Police Need to Take the Lead**
2. **Enhanced Engagement / Relationships**
3. **Improved Accountability & Transparency**

Goals of the Focus Areas

The specific actions listed under each Focus Area were selected to meet the following criteria:

- **Most necessary to achieve the full promise of problem-solving policing**
- **Most responsive to what Boulder community members have said they want from police**

Department / Officer Readiness

In order to make a transformation as significant as this, the department and officers who will be expected to interact differently with the community must be prepared. To support readiness, the department will take the following actions:

Figure 26

Strategic Actions to Improve Department / Officer Readiness

GOALS	THEMES COVERED IN THIS TOPIC	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	LINKED DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OR IDEA
Address staffing needs and restructure assignments to allow officers to spend an average of 40 percent of their shift time on prevention and solving problems in accordance with the Rule of 60	 Rapport & Relationships	Achieve staffing analysis goal of 205 officers and less than 5 percent vacancies *More information at: Staffing Analysis (bldr.fyi/rp-bpd-staffing-analysis)*	N/A
	 Communication	Continue robust recruiting strategies, with a focus on hiring diverse officers *More information at: Boulder Police Department's People (bldr.fyi/rp-bpd-people)*	Yes
Train all officers in strategies and techniques that support de-escalation	 Dignity & Respect	Implement joint Colorado POST- (Police Officer Standards and Training) certified academy with the University of Colorado Police Department to offer more advanced, evidence-based training and incorporate community-based training to advance other city goals such as those in the Racial Equity Plan (bldr.fyi/rp-racial-equity-plan)[9]	Yes
	 Care & Concern	Continue evidence-based Use of Force training, ICAT (Integration, Communication, Assessment, Tactics), to fill a gap in training officers on responding to violent situations (mental and behavioral health crisis) not involving a firearm. At the heart of the model is the sanctity of human life and the peaceful resolution for all involved.	Yes
	 Trauma Informed	Implement ABLE – Active Bystander for Law Enforcement (bldr.fyi/rp-implement-able) – training. The Center for Innovations in Community Safety (Georgetown University) created ABLE to prepare officers to intervene to prevent harm and create a police culture that supports peer intervention.	Yes
		Implement procedural justice (bldr.fyi/rp-procedural-justice) training with an emphasis on four pillars: Fairness, Transparency, Impartiality, and Community Voice.	Yes

Continued on next page

GOALS	THEMES COVERED IN THIS TOPIC	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	LINKED DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OR IDEA
Foster evidence-based officer/staff well-being and emotional health to support employees and improve interactions with community members	Trauma Informed Compassion & Empathy	Expand innovative and evidence-based Post-Traumatic Stress therapies to officers and civilian staff. For example: Eye movement desensitization and reprocessing (EMDR) therapy is founded on the basis that emotional well-being is interwoven with physical (somatic) state. EMDR employs a body-based technique called bilateral simulation during which a therapist will guide the employee through eye movements, tones, or taps to move a memory that is incorrectly stored to a more functional part of the brain.	N/A
		The department will contract with organizations, like Beyond the Badge, that provide resources and support to officers and their families. These organizations strive to address a growing epidemic of police officer suicides. The goal is to break stigma surrounding officers coming forward for mental health treatment.	Yes

Reimagining Policing & Holistic Governance of Community Problems



While community feedback supported the concept of officers being well-trained and ready to respond to emergencies, it is also clear that any discussion of readiness must be accompanied by consideration of appropriateness. This includes the department demonstrating its commitment to holistic governance and supporting alternative public safety responses.

The Boulder Police Department has been a partner in this work already with the implementation of mental health clinician co-responders (Crisis Intervention Response Team or CIRT). There are also regular problem-solving partnerships with other emerging alternative models, including Urban Park Rangers; Safe and Managed Public Spaces (SAMPS), which focuses on unsanctioned camping; Downtown and University Hill Ambassadors; Nurse Navigators; the Boulder Targeted Homelessness Engagement and Referral Effort (BTHERE) team, and the development of a new approach (Community Assistance Response and Engagement or CARE) that will result in clinicians and paramedics addressing some calls to dispatch without being accompanied by officers.

While some of these programs are not within the purview of the department by itself, and therefore, not listed as a police action item, there is significant interest within the department in understanding more about complex societal issues and collaborating on non-traditional solutions. In 2021, the Boulder Police Department secured a $500,000 Bureau of Justice Assistance Smart Policing Initiative grant that resulted in analysis of the ways in which officers interact with unhoused community members. This learning has informed cross-departmental work that has occurred since then. The grant will conclude in 2024. Data associated with the efforts have already generated presentations and peer-reviewed research to inform local and national problem solving. The conclusion of the grant will bring recommendations around other actionable strategies that could be leveraged in Boulder. This Reimagine Policing Plan rests on an enthusiastic recognition that creative and holistic responses are both necessary and desirable.

Enhanced Engagement / Relationships

As was clear in almost every phase of engagement leading to this plan, Boulder community members and police both want something different from their relationship. In addition to more opportunities to engage and tackle challenges together, all participants want these interactions to build trust and mutual respect. They want to work together to identify the instances when officer response is necessary and broaden the options for other kinds of solutions. And whenever possible, Boulder community members want to be part of the solution.

To support enhanced engagement and relationships, the department will take the following actions:

Figure 27

Strategic Actions to Improve Enhanced Engagement/Relationships

GOALS	THEMES COVERED IN THIS TOPIC	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	LINKED DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OR IDEA
Launch a phased-in approach of neighborhood or place-based problem solving with an equity focus	Rapport & Relationships	Starting in first quarter 2024, implement relationship-building and monthly meetings with three neighborhoods a year (with an additional three added each subsequent year)	Yes
	Communication	With community, identify a problem to be evaluated and addressed in each neighborhood	Yes
		Share problem-solving results with impacted community and broader city audience upon completion	Yes
Build trusted relationships with communities that have been impacted negatively by policing	Rapport & Relationships Dignity & Respect	Collaborate with established organizations and connectors to address at least one problem a year that affects an underrepresented population. (This could be place-based or identity-based)	Yes
	Compassion & Empathy	Co-create and implement a youth engagement program that encourages dialogue, active listening, shared learning, and problem solving	Yes
Invite more diverse community perspectives in key decisions	Dignity & Respect	Identify key decision points around technology, training, and staff promotional opportunities and invite three community members from partner organizations to provide feedback each time	N/A
	Communication	Leverage the Police Oversight Panel to provide feedback on training needs and policy updates, as called for in city code	Yes

Improved Accountability & Transparency

It is important to the Boulder community – and to the members of the Boulder Police Department – that the department be trusted as a credible, effective organization that acts with integrity. Accountability and transparency are key to ensuring that this is the case.

To support improved accountability and transparency, the department will take the following actions:

Figure 28

Strategic Actions to Improve Accountability & Transparency

GOALS	THEMES COVERED IN THIS TOPIC	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	LINKED DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OR IDEA
Enhance ability for supervisors to evaluate officer performance	 Dignity & Respect	Develop performance metrics system that details problems solved, community interactions, and community meetings attended	Yes
	 Care & Concern	Adopt a technology platform capable of monitoring and tracking officer activities to ensure early interventions for officer conduct that requires additional training, coaching, and corrective action, allowing supervisors and police leadership to monitor officer pattern behavior in real-time	Yes
		Train supervisors in expectations around the performance metric system	No
Give community members a voice and method to rank interactions	 Rapport & Relationships	Purchase and implement software that allows community members to provide feedback in real time after every interaction with a Boulder Police Department employee via a phone app	No
	 Communication	Ensure that community feedback data are integrated into performance metric system by 2024	No
		Publish aggregated results and learnings from the feedback collected through this software annually	No

Continued on next page

Community Voice in Department Decisions

Some civil rights experts and community members told us they have concerns about how technology might be used in policing. People also expressed an interest in ensuring quality staff are serving them. To respond to these concerns, the department plans to give community members a voice in key technology and promotional decisions.

GOALS	THEMES COVERED IN THIS TOPIC	SPECIFIC ACTIONS	LINKED DIRECTLY TO COMMUNITY FEEDBACK OR IDEA
Augment current dashboard with information about actions officers initiate on their own; and maximize ease of access to data of public interest	 Compassion & Empathy  Communication	Complete and publish traffic stop and use of force data analyses in fourth quarter 2023 and add this information, broken down by demographics, to the dashboard in first quarter 2024	Yes
		Add updated data sets for this information to the dashboard annually	Yes
		Align available data with independent public accountability standards such as the Vera Institute Police Data Transparency Index (bldr.fyi/rp-vera-pd-transparency-index).	Yes

These action items, along with a shift to problem-solving policing, will lead to a new emphasis on prevention, de-escalation, solid community relationships, equity, creativity, and alternative response. Transformation as bold as this is both exciting and critical to support public confidence in this important profession.

Maintaining Safety Through Wellness

The department is committed to maintaining, improving and legitimizing the need for employee wellness, especially mental health. On duty police officers with untreated mental illness can present a threat to public safety because added mental stressors can limit an officer's ability to problem solve and think critically under pressure."

CHAPTER 5

HOW WILL WE KNOW THE PLAN IS WORKING?

Indicators of Success

The Boulder Police Department is committed to data-driven solutions and measuring progress. Several indicators to track change are provided here to understand whether police-involved circumstances are getting better, staying the same, or getting worse. If circumstances are not getting better, or not getting better fast enough, more detailed information and nuanced data will be collected to address specific questions.

The following indicators will guide the department – and the community – in tracking progress. They are organized around concepts that relate to what community members said they wanted from the Police Department, specifically: effectiveness; appropriate use of resources; ethics/transparency; equity, and the ability to sustain meaningful engagement.





Effectiveness / Improving Public Safety

Themes Covered in this Topic

Compassion & Empathy

Communication

To measure public safety throughout the city over time, the Boulder Police Department will:

- Present deeper analyses of crimes associated with problem-solving policing efforts in areas with focused interventions
- Continue to contribute to the Benchmark Cities Survey (bldr.fyi/rp-benchmark-cities-survey) and analyze that information to understand how Boulder is improving in safety compared to the more than two dozen Benchmark jurisdictions
- Leverage the city's communitywide survey every two to three years to evaluate perceptions of crime and safety

For all data points related to crime, the goal is to see year-over-year reductions in crime hot spot areas. For the data point about perception of crime and safety, the goal is to see community confidence in their safety from crime increase.

Appropriate Use of Resources / Alternative Response

Themes Covered in this Topic

Care & Concern

Dignity & Respect

Trauma Informed

As noted by the Boulder community and recognized by the city, some circumstances do not require a police response. The police department is dedicated to working with partners through holistic governance to assess the most efficient and appropriate response for public safety issues.

To evaluate how calls are being handled, the Boulder Police Department will collect and report annually:

- The percentage of calls that result in utilization of CIRT co-response
- The percentage of calls that result in a CARE team being dispatched, instead of officers

BPD is also part of holistic governance partnerships that include evaluation of

alternative response efforts. External evaluators have been hired to do initial assessment of the Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) and new Community Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) programs. This evaluation will allow deeper analysis of the city's programs including:

- Trends associated with CIRT and CARE team calls
- Opportunities for adjustment in these new programs

The goal over time is for the Boulder Police Department to work holistically with other citywide partners, so that the totality of behavioral and mental health crises in the community are handled collaboratively. It is worth noting that some results will be based on factors beyond the department's control, such as the level of behavioral health crisis and treatment resources in the community.

Ethics / Improving Trust & Transparency, Equity or Reducing Disparities

Themes Covered in this Topic



Trust and transparency are key to maintaining and improving credibility, as well as ensuring equity and reducing disparities in policing. Development of sustainable and systematic methods of gathering and implementing regular community feedback also align with the department's process toward national accreditation with the CALEA: Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies (bldr.fyi/rp-calea), a gold standard among local police departments across the county[10].

Though some improvements in this area can be challenging to measure, starting metrics would include:

- Publish pedestrian/traffic stop data bi-annually. Evaluating variations among police-pedestrian contacts to identify any disparities based on demographics or other community characteristics; and making recommendations for change
- Work with body-worn camera vendor to understand Boulder's use of force encounters compared to other agencies also using this vendor across the country. This provides benchmarking in addition to comparing department force events to other benchmark city agencies
- Continue to measure use of force encounters to evaluate whether current training efforts are effective or need to be revised; analysis of use of force incidents will be displayed and updated bi-annually
- Continue regular public information updates about violent crimes, arrests, traffic crashes, department research, special initiatives and other information of interest to community members
- Analyze and publish Police Department service interaction ratings via technology platforms that allow users of police services to rate their interaction with law enforcement after the encounter ends
- Assess opportunities for broader feedback about trust and transparency from the whole community utilizing the city's communitywide survey or other collaborative options, including designing feedback opportunities to build on baseline information collected as part of Reimagine Policing community engagement surveys conducted in 2022[11]
- Track percentage of officers completing evidence-based training that support de-escalation, including ICAT, ABLE and Procedural Justice training
- Increase number/percentage staff of color and Spanish-speaking officers, and achieve 30x30 initiative goal of female officers comprising at least 30% of academy classes by 2030

Sustained Meaningful Engagement

Themes Covered in this Topic


Rapport & Relationships


Communication

- Report annually the number of problem-solving projects completed with neighborhoods/communities with historically disproportionate policing impacts; and stakeholder satisfaction with those processes
- Participate in ongoing partnership projects developed in collaboration with the YOAB: Youth Opportunities Advisory Board (bldr.fyi/rp-yoab) and assessments of satisfaction of partners (BPD and YOAB) with collaborative projects
- Consult with Boulder's Police Oversight Panel on training needs and policy updates, and implement their recommendations

Achieving Equity & Safety Together

Resolving problems equitably requires working closely with impacted communities. This is why the Boulder Police Department is committed to partnering on public safety with local neighborhoods, businesses, and individuals.

The department needs neighborhoods to help identify circumstances to be addressed and discuss desired solutions. The regularity of neighborhood meetings, the level of engagement, and the most effective communication method will vary between neighborhoods and should be established by the neighborhoods themselves.

Recent community engagements echoed these sentiments. Some members of the community would like to see the assignment of neighborhood police liaisons, transition to regularly scheduled neighborhood meetings, and receive public safety updates in different ways.

CHAPTER 6

FUNDING

Reimagine Policing & the Shift to a Problem-Solving Model

The Boulder Police Department is leveraging existing resources to advance many of the key problem-solving action items in this plan. However, some new costs will be necessary to fully realize plan goals.

As discussed in previous chapters, a key concept in reimagining policing is holistic governance – the idea that most public safety matters do not rely entirely on the Police Department for solutions. Rather, complex safety problems require partnership among multiple city departments, community entities or external partners; and police may not always be the lead in these matters. As such, the resources behind holistic efforts are not necessarily reflected in the Police Department budget, and associated expenses may be incurred by other departments or outside agencies. However, as non-police programs (example – behavioral health response) were some of the issues of greatest interest in Reimagine Policing community engagement, expenses for policing and holistic governance projects must be considered in that context. Examples of holistic governance partnership project budgets residing outside the Police Department are the Crisis Intervention Response Team (CIRT) and the Community Assistance Response and Engagement (CARE) team – alternative responses to 911 calls with an annual combined budget of approximately $2.6M that is included in the Housing and Human Services and Fire Departments.



The shifts proposed in Reimagine Policing represent significant changes in the city's approach to public safety, with many elements that will evolve as the Police Department and internal/external partners implement holistic governance projects. Therefore, detailed budget analysis and proposals will need to be developed and incorporated into the annual city budget process as the plan progresses. However, given the goals and key strategic focus areas, the department would anticipate increased costs over several years in the following areas.

BPD has worked to prioritize implementation of effective interventions within its existing budget whenever possible. For example, due to the immense de-escalation safety benefits offered by the ICAT training model, the department has already implemented this intervention, resulting in reductions of 30-86% in five of six use of force measures between 2020 and 2021.

Department / Officer Readiness

- **Staffing for Problem-Solving Partnerships** – In alignment with holistic governance and the Rule of 60 best practices discussed in Chapter 3, additional police officers will be required in order for the department to allocate 40 percent of officer time to work with community groups on problems identified by community. This enhanced staffing would also help the department build longer term relationships with community. BPD will work with the Human Resources and Finance departments on an ongoing basis to develop the best path forward to achieve the Rule of 60 standard in the future.
- **Training** – The department hopes to implement a joint training academy with the University of Colorado (CU), along with updated trainings such as ABLE and procedural justice that address community concerns. The department is awaiting Colorado Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) approval for the academy, and will work with CU to refine funding needs after approval is received. Currently academy costs are estimated at approximately $50,000 for start-up, and $145,000 in annual operating costs.
- **Recruitment** – Recruiting for diversity will involve going beyond traditional methods and include strategies associated with some cost; for example, recruiting at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs). The department will work with the Human Resources Department Talent Acquisition team to maximize this specialized recruitment strategy in alignment with broader city goals in workforce diversity.

Enhanced Engagement / Relationships

- At this time, these strategies are not anticipated to have significant additional costs that are not captured in other focus areas. For example, many potential costs associated with the phased-in neighborhood or place-based problem-solving strategies are embedded under *Staffing for Problem-Solving Partnerships and Recruitment* items above.
- The department will also partner with the city's Communication and Engagement Department to amplify these efforts through citywide activities and ongoing partnerships such as Community Connectors (bldr.fyi/rp-community-connectors).

Improved Accountability & Transparency

- **Technology Associated with Early Intervention & Community Feedback** – Costs are associated with technology platforms to assist the department in enhancing officer evaluation, including flags for early intervention; as well as offering community members easy ways to offer real-time feedback on their interactions with police. BPD is working with the city's Innovation & Technology Department to assess these needs and leverage resources for the best solution.

This chapter does not reference all department resources, such as fleet and facility costs, or citywide training costs that are also critical to operations and relevant to implementation of other plans including the city's Climate Action Plan, Facilities Master Plan, and Racial Equity Action Plan.

During the course of Reimagine Policing community engagement, many of the hopes expressed also involved broader social supports such as healthcare, affordable housing, etc. to improve the well-being of community members; acknowledging that sometimes police are asked to intervene in situations that stem from more fundamental system failures and inequities. With these in mind, it is relevant to note that the City of Boulder is relatively unique among municipalities of its size in supporting a robust Housing and Human Services Department (HHS) funded at nearly $41 million annually, a similar level to the Police Department, which is funded at nearly $42 million annually. HHS offers direct services, as well as funding support to community organizations, to provide health, housing and other social supports. The success of this plan rests on continued partnerships like this one to address deep and complex societal issues.

Endnotes

1 Figures may present different time periods as a reflection of research commissioned by the Boulder Police Department in 2021, 2022, and 2023.

2 Data for Figures 4, 5, 7, 8 and 11 is for the time period 2020 through the first quarter of 2023. However, these data patterns have been stable over time, so map concentrations would look nearly identical if data used were from earlier years.

3 Lee, Y., Eck, J. E., O, S., & Martinez, N. N. (2017). How concentrated is crime at places? A systematic review from 1970 to 2015. Crime Science, 6(1). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-017-0069-x

4 O, S., Martinez, N. N., Lee, Y., & Eck, J. E. (2017). How concentrated is crime among victims? A systematic review from 1970 to 2014. Crime Science, 6(6). https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-017-0071-3

5 Martinez, N. N., Lee, Y., Eck, J. E., & O, S. (2017). Ravenous wolves revisited: a systematic review of offending concentration. Crime Science, 6(1), 10. https://doi.org/10.1186/s40163-017-0072-2

6 The Reimagine Policing Process Subcommittee included councilmembers Junie Joseph and Bob Yates during the first half of the project, and councilmembers Rachel Friend and Tara Winer during the second half. Community members Mallory Kates and Marina LaGrave served on the subcommittee during the entire process.

7 Groups initially contacted as part of the CAG are listed in the National Policing Institute Report (https://bldr.fyi/rp-npi-boulder-community-assessment) on the Reimagine Policing project website.

8 While the report addressed the need for additional officers, it did not address the need for additional supervisors, command officers or support personnel as the department grows. To maintain the appropriate span of control, one sergeant is needed for every six to seven officers.

9 Currently academy seats are at a premium, often requiring BPD to split hiring classes between academies. Both BPD and the CU Police department want to improve the basic training new officers receive. The university is also exploring the option to confer an associate degree at completion of this new academy, which could improve recruiting and diversity by building in the department's education requirement, paid by BPD."

10 A 2020 US Department of Justice report found that only 5% of all law enforcement agencies in the US are CALEA accredited. This accreditation ensures nationally standardized policies and reporting occur.

11 These were conducted by an external researcher and by the National Policing Institute. The results of these were discussed and summarized elsewhere in the Reimagine Policing plan.