



College of Liberal Arts

**Center for Public Safety Initiatives**

# Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS Initiative 2023

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## Introduction

On Thursday August 24, 2023, Project TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) was held outside the Lewis Street YMCA in Rochester, NY.<sup>1</sup> These events are designed to show support for the neighborhood; investigate community members' concerns and desires for their neighborhood, and to build community police relationships. The objective of this report is to analyze the collected surveys and discuss what individuals living in the surrounding neighborhoods are concerned about, their overall assessment of their community, and their feelings towards police.

## Methodology

One component of Project TIPS is neighborhood surveys of residents. The survey asked residents of the community questions about their perceptions of their community, crime, and the police. Starting at 2:00 pm, groups of two or three volunteers, accompanied by law enforcement,<sup>2</sup> were sent out to administer the survey. Out of 8 pre-selected street segments, 6 were surveyed. The other 2 were not surveyed due to them being streets that ran along the back of homes not the front. Groups were given a clipboard with 8 copies of the survey along with a map that indicated which street they would be surveying. Only adult residents were able to take the survey. While this sampling method is limited in that any findings cannot be generalized, it still offers insight as to how some members of the neighborhood are feeling.

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<sup>1</sup> Lewis Street runs perpendicular to Scio Street.

<sup>2</sup> At this particular event State Troopers, and members of the Monroe County Probation Department accompanied volunteers

## Key Findings

The survey that was administered included a list of 17 questions that, in addition to questions on demographics, collected data regarding community perceptions of the police, satisfaction with the police, collective efficacy, and community concerns of crime. A total of 29 surveys were collected from the Scio Street neighborhood from a total of 6 streets. Many surveys were incorrectly filled out and/or sporadically missing data; one could not be used at all.<sup>3</sup> The findings of this survey are further impeded by the fact that response rate was already low; likely due to the fact that the survey was administered between 2-4 pm on a traditional workday.

### Demographics

Of those respondents who shared their race/ethnicity (n=27), most were Black (59%). 15% were Asian, 11% were Other, and the categories of White and Hispanic each consisted of 7% of respondents. Respondents ranged in age, with the youngest being 18 and the oldest being 88. The average age of all respondents was approximately 45 years old. The majority of respondents identified as female (81%). For a complete list of sample demographics see Table 1, Figure 1, and Figure 2.

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<sup>3</sup> Volunteers were briefed on how to conduct the survey and implored to review the survey in its entirety before going out to conduct surveys to help mitigate these issues.

Table 1. Sample Demographics of the 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents

Race & Ethnicity (n=26)	Percentage
Black	59%
White	7%
Hispanic	7%
American Indian/Alaska Native	0%
Asian	15%
Other	11%

Figure 1. Breakdown of respondents gender

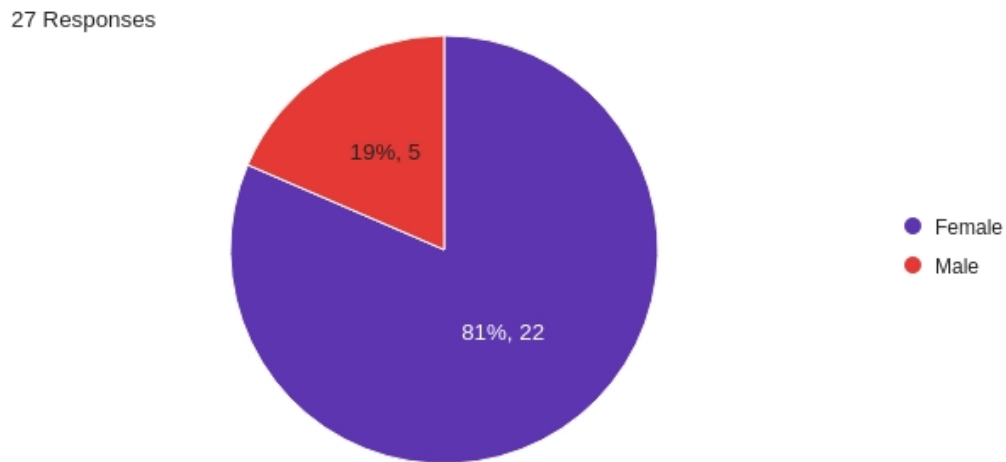
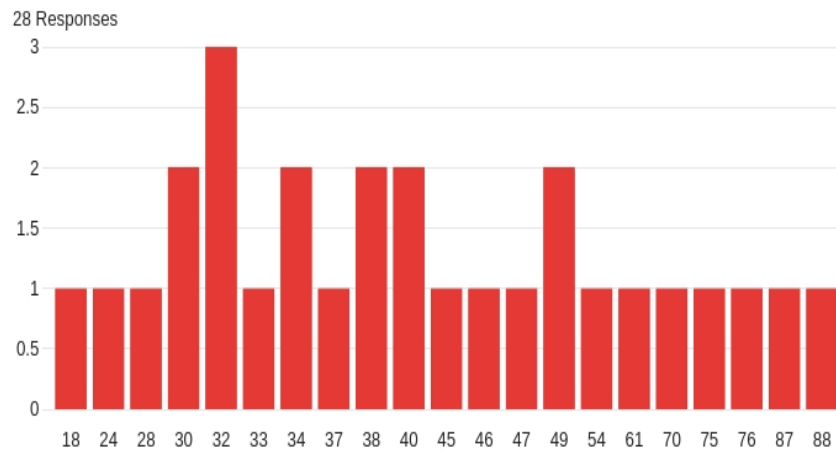


Figure 2. Age distribution of respondents



## Survey Results

### Community Concerns

The TIPS survey asked residents whether they believed several types of crime and/or quality of life problems were either a major concern, minor concern, or not a concern at all within their neighborhood. These problems included drug use, theft and burglary, violence, gangs, drug selling, stray animals or pests, speeding/traffic issues, and property maintenance issues. It is important to note that some surveys were missing information in this section. Drug use (50%), violence (50%) and speeding/traffic issues (51.85%) were identified as key concerns of residents. For a detailed breakdown of all concerns, see Table 2.

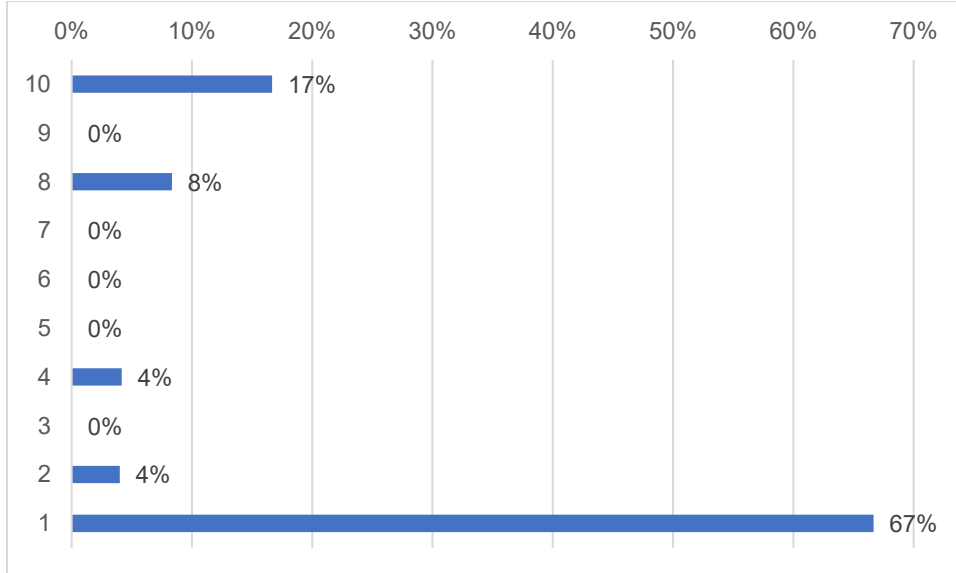
Table 2. Concerns of the 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents

Concerns	Not at all	Minor	Major
Drug use (n=28)	39.29%	10.71%	<b>50%</b>
Theft/Burglary (n=28)	46.43%	25%	28.57%
Violence (n=28)	32.14%	17.86%	<b>50%</b>
Gangs (n=28)	46.43%	21.43%	32.14%
Drug selling (n=27)	40.74%	18.52%	40.74%
Stray animals/pests (n=26)	46.15%	30.77%	23.08%
Speeding/traffic issues (n=27)	25.93%	22.22%	<b>51.85%</b>
Property maintenance issues (n=26)	53.85%	23.08%	23.08%

### Heroin and Opioids

To further explore questions about drug use and drug sales, residents were asked to rate, on a scale from 1 to 10, how much of a problem the sale and use of heroin was for them in their neighborhood. Of the 24 respondents who were asked this question, (67%) of them rated the problem as a 1. See Figure 3 for the full data set.

Figure 3. Rating of Heroin Problem for 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood Respondents (n=25)



A follow-up question asking why respondents chose that number was supposed to be asked, however only 11 surveys had information available. Of those, many stated that they simply don't see drugs in the neighborhood or have "never heard of it". Others still said "it doesn't happen here" or that they mind their business. Those that expressed concern over a heroin problem generally pointed to the fact that people come into the neighborhood "high". An additional question asked residents if they knew anyone who had problems with heroin or other opioids. 26 respondents had their response to this question recorded. 23% of respondents responded yes, while (77%) responded no.

### Safety

When asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood, (71%) of respondents stated that they either felt somewhat safe or very safe. 28% of respondents felt somewhat or very unsafe in their neighborhood (See Figure 4).

Figure 4. Perceived Safety of the 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents



A follow-up question asked for a specific time of day or place that the respondent felt the least safe. The most common response was “at night” and two respondents specifically mentioned the Union St./Weld St. area.

### Relationship with the Police

Among other questions in the survey, the survey included a section related to residents and their feelings towards and relationship with the Rochester Police Department. Residents were asked to share how much they agreed or disagreed with statements related to this theme. Residents were asked to respond with either strongly disagree, disagree, agree, or strongly agree. Statements asked included “I trust the police to do what is best for the community” and “Body worn cameras (BWC) have improved the community’s relationship with RPD.”

When asked if they trust the police to do what’s best for the community (80%) of respondents answered with either agree (64%) or strongly agree (16%) while (16%) disagreed and (4%) strongly disagreed. For a full list of responses from this section, see Figure 5.

Figure 5. Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS Respondents feelings about RPD

Body-worn cameras have improved my community's relationship with RPD.

24 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [17%, 4] ● Agree [67%, 16] ● Strongly agree [13%, 3]

RPD will use body worn cameras and the footage fairly and impartially.

24 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [21%, 5] ● Agree [71%, 17] ● Strongly agree [4%, 1]

The RPD works hard to address issues of crime in my neighborhood.

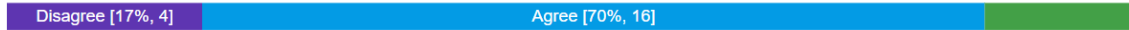
24 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [13%, 3] ● Agree [63%, 15] ● Strongly agree [21%, 5]

RPD officers listen to what you have to say.

23 Responses



● Strongly disagree [0%, 0] ● Disagree [17%, 4] ● Agree [70%, 16] ● Strongly agree [13%, 3]

I trust the police to do what is best for the community.

25 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [16%, 4] ● Agree [64%, 16] ● Strongly agree [16%, 4]

Police officers in my community are generally fair in the way they enforce the law.

25 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [20%, 5] ● Agree [68%, 17] ● Strongly agree [8%, 2]

The police here generally treat people with dignity and respect.

23 Responses



● Strongly disagree [0%, 0] ● Disagree [22%, 5] ● Agree [70%, 16] ● Strongly agree [9%, 2]

The police work with the community to solve problems that *really* matter to people in my neighborhood.

24 Responses



● Strongly disagree [4%, 1] ● Disagree [25%, 6] ● Agree [63%, 15] ● Strongly agree [8%, 2]



It should be noted that many respondents either did not have responses recorded in this section or, when they did, they were filled out incorrectly.<sup>4</sup>

In addition to this section, two questions were asked to gauge residents' level of comfort interacting with the police. When asked if they felt comfortable reporting issues or suspicious behavior to police (90%) of respondents (n=28) answered yes or sometimes while (11%) answered no. Residents were also asked if they knew any officers who worked in their neighborhood. A significant majority (86%) responded that they did not. Many (n=25) also reported feeling the amount of police presence in the area is too little (64%).

### **Collective Efficacy**

Collective Efficacy is defined as social cohesion between neighbors and a willingness to intervene on behalf of the common good. This has been linked to increased levels of informal social control and reductions in neighborhood violence (Sampson, Raudenbush, & Earls, 1997). Residential stability, indicated by high rates of homeownership has also been shown to help maintain social networks and informal social control as people's investment in their homes carries over into investment into the larger community.

The survey asked the following two questions in order to measure residential stability and homeownership. These questions were "How many years have you lived in this neighborhood?" and "Do you own or rent your home?" Time living in the neighborhood ranged broadly amongst respondents. One individual reported only living in the area for a month while another reported 57 years spent living in the neighborhood. Amongst the respondents, the average time spent in the

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<sup>4</sup> Many surveys had an X in between categories.

neighborhood was approximately 13 years. The vast majority of respondents (61%) reported that they rented their home while (39%) reported owning their home. No respondents reported staying with a friend or family member.

Figure 6. 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents' years in the neighborhood

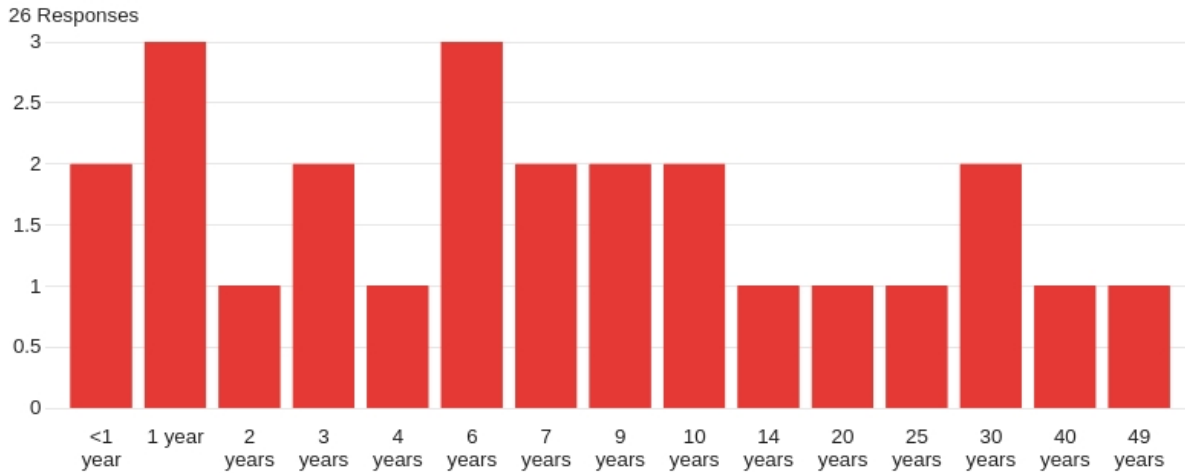
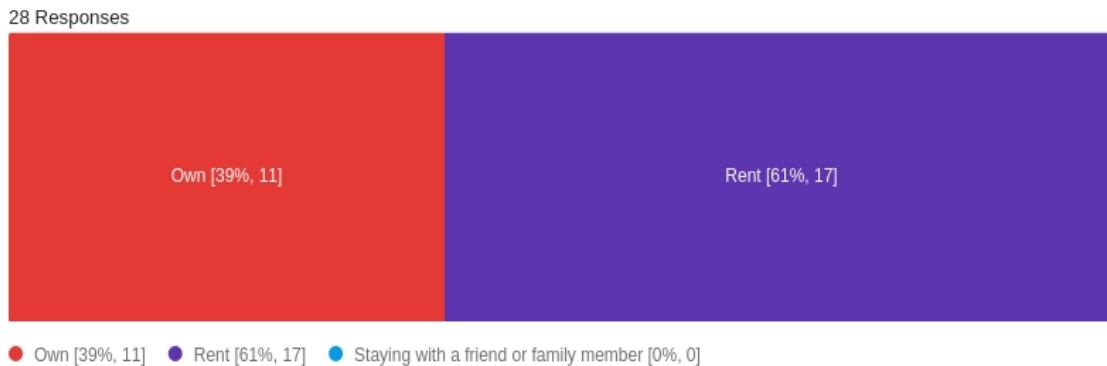


Figure 7. 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents housing situations



Studies have shown that homeowners are much less likely to move from a community which leads to greater neighborhood stability (Rohe 1996). A crosstabs analysis of these two questions was run to determine if this was true in this neighborhood. Many respondents had lived in the area for 6-10 years. 39% of the sample reported owning their home, and all but one reported living in the area

more than 6 years (See Figure 8 for full chart). This suggests that, while most residents rent their property, those that do own their homes are more likely to stay in the neighborhood for longer periods of time, thus contributing to the stability of the neighborhood.

*Figure 8. 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS Crosstabs: Housing situation & time in neighborhood*

	Length of time living in neighborhood							
Housing Status	< 1 year	1-2 years	3-5 years	6-10 years	11-20 years	21-30 years	> 30 years	Total
Own	4%	0%	0%	18%	4%	7%	7%	39%
Rent	11%	14%	11%	14%	4%	4%	4%	61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>n=4</b>	<b>n=4</b>	<b>n=3</b>	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=2</b>	<b>n=3</b>	<b>n=3</b>	<b>28</b>

While there is evidence to suggest that the presence of homeowners can provide greater stability to the neighborhood, it is worth noting that (37%) of renters in the Scio Street neighborhood have lived in the area for 3 or more years. These renters may also provide some means of stability as they have invested considerable time in their community. This serves as a limitation to Rohe’s work and suggests that there might be such things as stable renters. Social cohesion is an important part of collective efficacy in a neighborhood as it can influence the community members to intervene and assist their neighborhoods.

Many respondents reported feeling that people in their community are willing to help their neighbors (86%). Many also felt that people in the neighborhood shared the same values (71%). While only 40% agreed or strongly agreed their neighbors would intervene if a fight broke out in front of their home, these figures still bode well for social cohesion within the neighborhood. While our findings cannot be generalized due to our sampling method and the time of day of the event, they should still be taken into consideration as it seems there is a room to further build upon the successful relationships between neighbors in this community.

Figure 9. 2023 Scio Street Neighborhood TIPS respondents’ social cohesion scores

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
People around here are willing to help their neighbors	0%	14.2%	61%	25%
People in this neighborhood share the same values	7%	21%	64%	7%
I could count on my neighbors if a fight broke out in front of my house	14%	46%	29%	11%

## Conclusion

Primary concerns for respondents in the Scio Street neighborhood included drug use, speeding/traffic issues and violence. Despite these concerns, many respondents did not rate heroin/opioid use in their neighborhood a significant issue. This may seem paradoxical; however, it should be considered alongside the obviously high level of social cohesion amongst neighbors. It may be that concern is for “outside” drug users who come into the neighborhood high. Based on our limited sample it seems neighbors of the Scio St. community are well connected to one another, and believe they share the same values for the most part. Additionally, many members of this community expressed trust in RPD, and believed that they do have the interests of their community in mind. Future community intervention research might look to the Scio St. neighborhood to understand the role social connection plays in helping people feel more safe and secure in their neighborhood.

## References

- Rohe, W., & Stewart, L. (1996). Homeownership and neighborhood stability. *Housing Policy Debate*, 7(1), 37–81. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10511482.1996.9521213>
- Sampson, R. J., Raudenbush, S. W., & Earls, F. (1997). Neighborhoods and Violent Crime: A Multilevel Study of Collective Efficacy. *Science (American Association for the Advancement of Science)*, 277(5328), 918–924. <https://doi.org/10.1126/science.277.5328.918>

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