

Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Carter Street TIPS Initiative (August 2015)

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Christina Burnett
Research Assistant
ccb4268@rit.edu

Jamie Dougherty
Research Associate
(585) 475-5591
jmdgcj1@rit.edu

John Klofas, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Public Safety Initiatives
Rochester Institute of Technology
(585) 475-2432
jmkgcj@rit.edu

On August 20, 2015, the TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) initiative was implemented around Carter and Norton Streets in Rochester, NY. The purpose of this initiative is to improve relations between the community and law enforcement as well as to investigate the community's feelings towards their neighborhood and local law enforcement. This report will analyze and discuss the findings of the collected surveys. In 2015, we made changes to the TIPS survey. In addition to asking residents about their concerns, satisfaction with local law enforcement, and perceptions of the community, we also asked questions relating to collective efficacy and involvement in neighborhood events or activities. We hope that adding these questions will give us a better insight into the surveyed neighborhoods and are piloting these survey changes.

Methodology

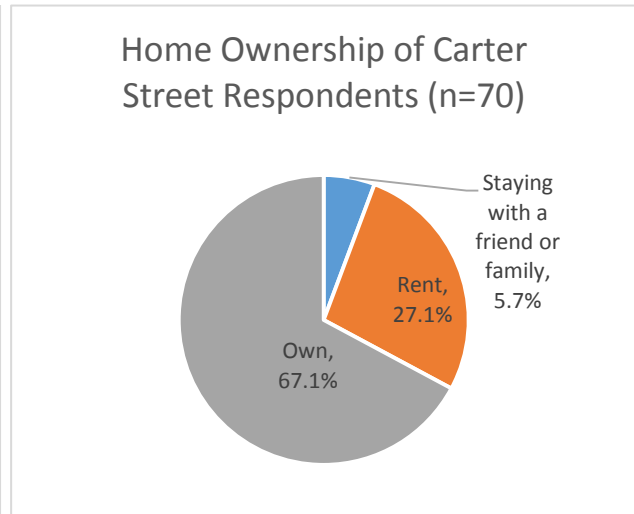
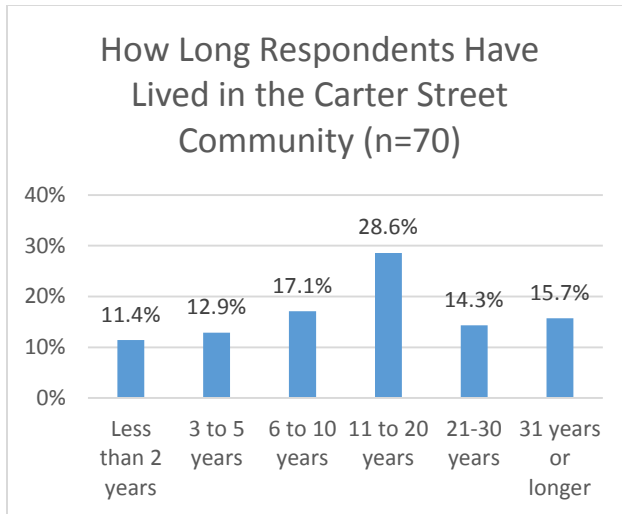
Groups of two or three volunteers are sent out with a law enforcement officer to administer the survey to preselected streets in the neighborhood. Each group was instructed to travel down one side of the street and then return on the other side, knocking on every door. When residents answered, the volunteers were to read a readymade script to the participant, obtain consent, and then verbally conduct the survey. Some respondents were also stopped on the street and asked to participate if they lived in the area. Only surveys of adults who lived in the area and agreed to take the survey are included in the sample.

Because of this door-by-door sampling method, the resulting sample is not a random sample of the Carter and Norton community; therefore, the results should be interpreted cautiously. Despite this, the resulting analysis should give valuable insight into the various issues and overall feelings of the community.

Results

Volunteers surveyed 21 streets in the Carter Street community located around the Carter Street Recreation Center. Due to the small number of surveys collected on each street, it is difficult to accurately compare among them. Therefore, the surveys collected from the streets mentioned above will be pooled together for analysis. This group will be referred to as "the Carter Street community." A total of 70 surveys were collected.

Over half (58.6%) of respondents have lived in the area 11 years or longer, which suggests that there may be less mobility in this area as compared to other areas we have surveyed. Well over half (67.1%) are also homeowners.



The next question asked respondents to list one thing that they liked most about living in the Carter Street community. Because this was an open-ended question, responses were categorized for analysis. Over half (56.5%) liked that it was quiet and peaceful most of the time. Other respondents felt that the people and the community were “nice,” and a few mentioned the convenient location as something they liked about the community. Responses are listed in the table to the right.

Carter and Norton Community Values (n=62)

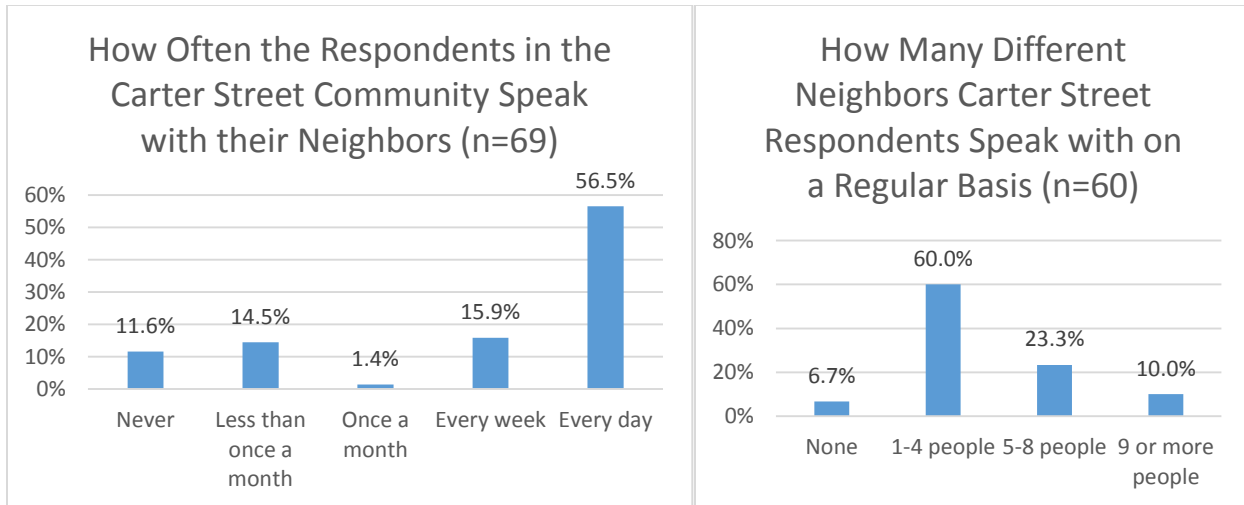
		Frequency	Percent
Valid	Quiet/Peaceful Most of the Time	35	56.5
	Nice People/Community	15	24.2
	Location	3	4.8
	Safe	2	3.2
	Kids	2	3.2
	House/Property	1	1.6
	Nature (Trees, etc.)	1	1.6
	Affordable	1	1.6
	Lots of Homeowners	1	1.6
	Neighborhood Watch	1	1.6
	Total	62	100.0
Missing	-99.00	8	
Total		70	

Involvement in the Community

By adding questions about how involved people are in their community to the survey in 2015, we gauged residents’ knowledge of services in their area as well as how willing they were to be involved in activities. We gauged how involved residents are with their neighbors.

Only 10% of people in the Carter Street community are involved in some kind of neighborhood group or organization. Those who were involved mentioned churches, block clubs, and neighborhood watch as groups that they were a part of. Those who are not involved expressed that they are too busy or have not seen any opportunities to become involved. Many people (about 75%) neglected to give an answer as to why they were not involved, so it is hard to know if these answers are representative of survey respondents or other residents in the area.

Having strong relationships among neighbors can promote collective efficacy and informal social control in a community. A little over half of respondents (56.5%) said they speak with their neighbors every day. Over half (60%) of respondents said they regularly speak with 1-4 of their neighbors.



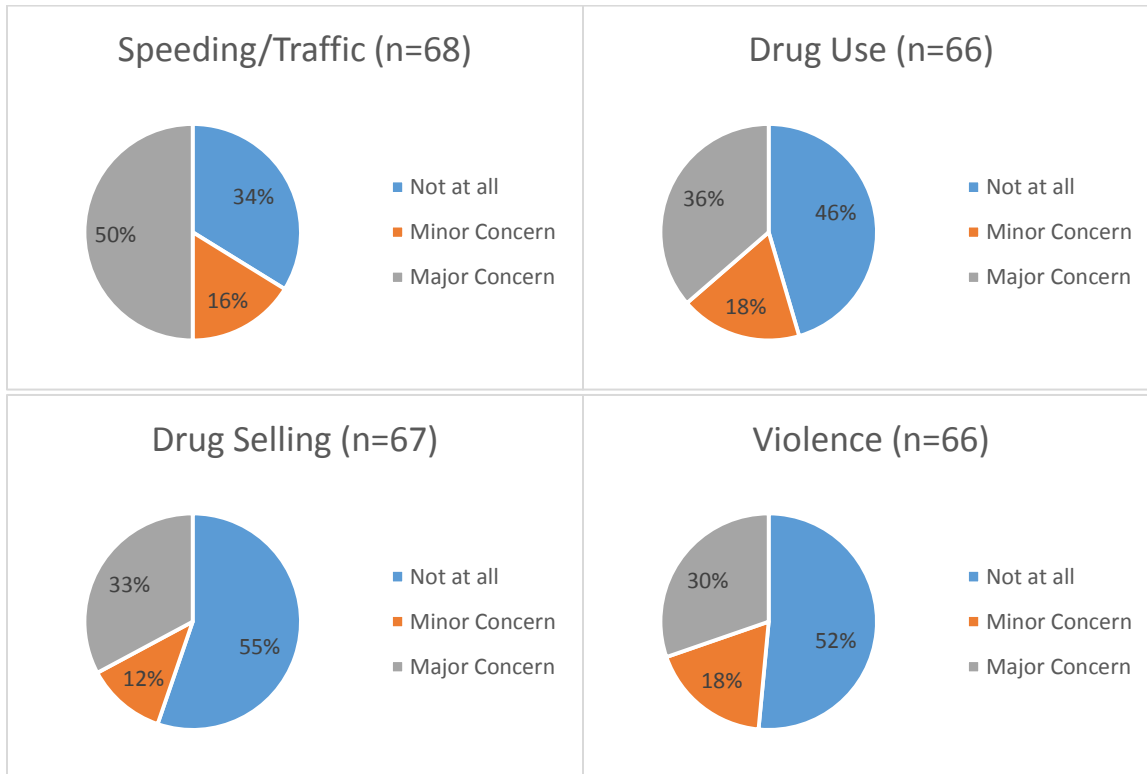
Community Concerns

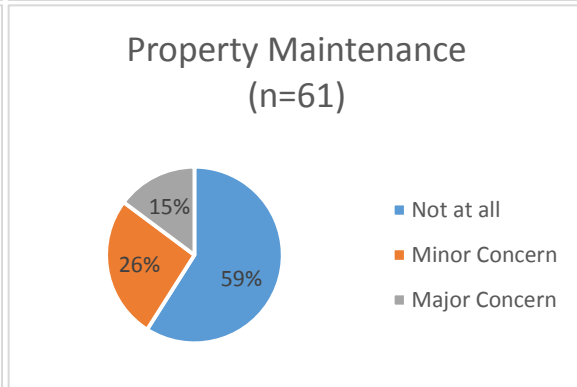
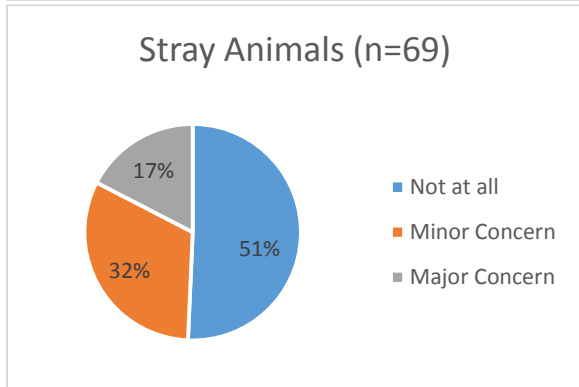
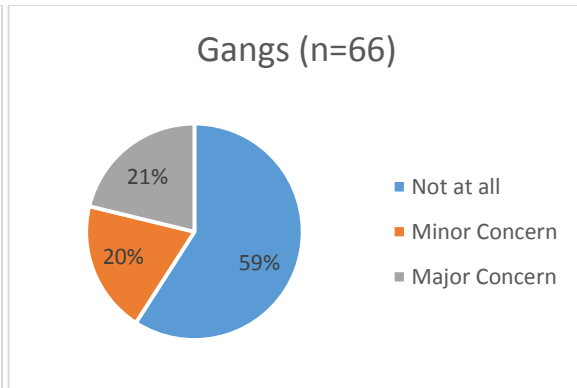
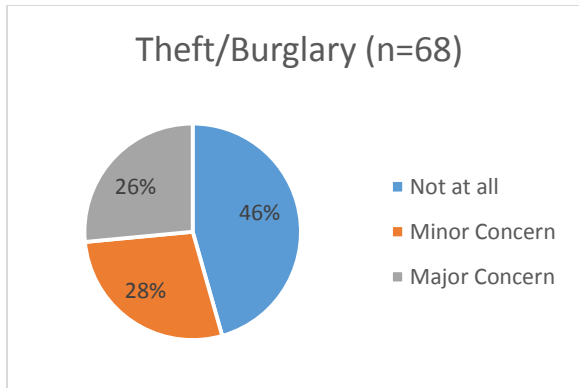
Next, we asked residents to rate areas of concern as not at all a concern, a minor concern, or a major concern. We chose potential concerns to ask about based on several prior years' worth of open-ended responses. We felt that by having residents evaluate the degree of their concerns for each topic, we would get more valuable data. We could also provide more useful comparisons across communities.

Respondents felt that speeding and other traffic concerns were the biggest issues in the Carter Street community. Drug selling and drug use were both common concerns as well, though there was not a huge distinction made between drug use and selling.

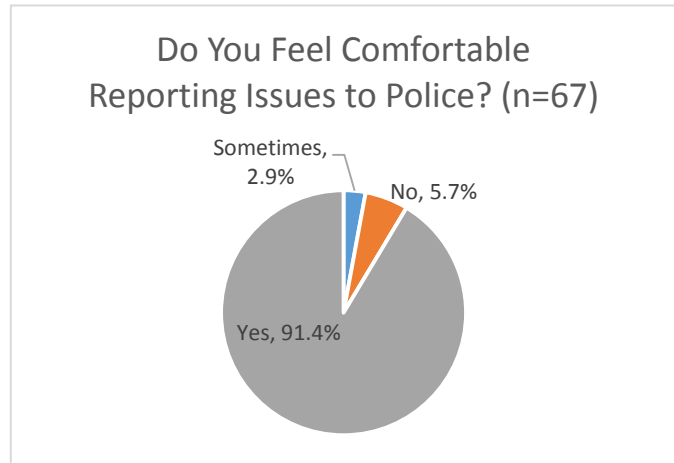
As we have in past, we asked residents if there was anything they would like to share with law enforcement. Only about 25% of respondents left a response but no responses had to do

with specific crimes or criminal behavior. Overall, respondents reiterated the same concerns as above. Only one respondent listed the annual summer Puerto Rican Festival as a concern.

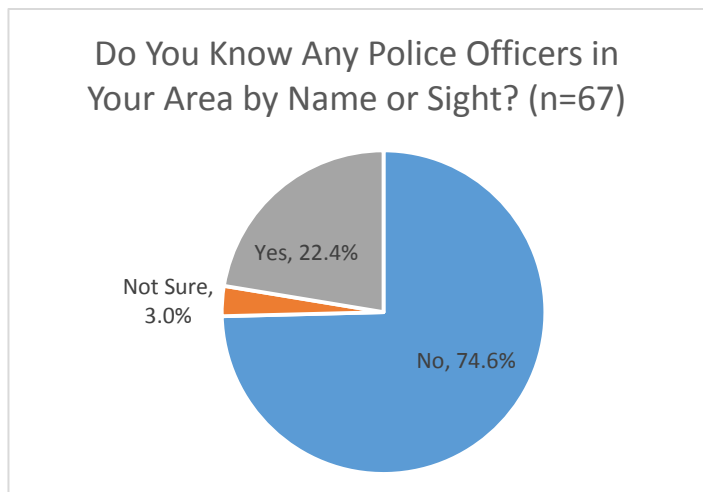




We asked residents if they felt comfortable reporting issues or suspicious behavior to police. The majority (91.4%) did feel comfortable reporting issues. A very small number of respondents (5.7%) felt uncomfortable. Most of those who were uncomfortable did not explain why.

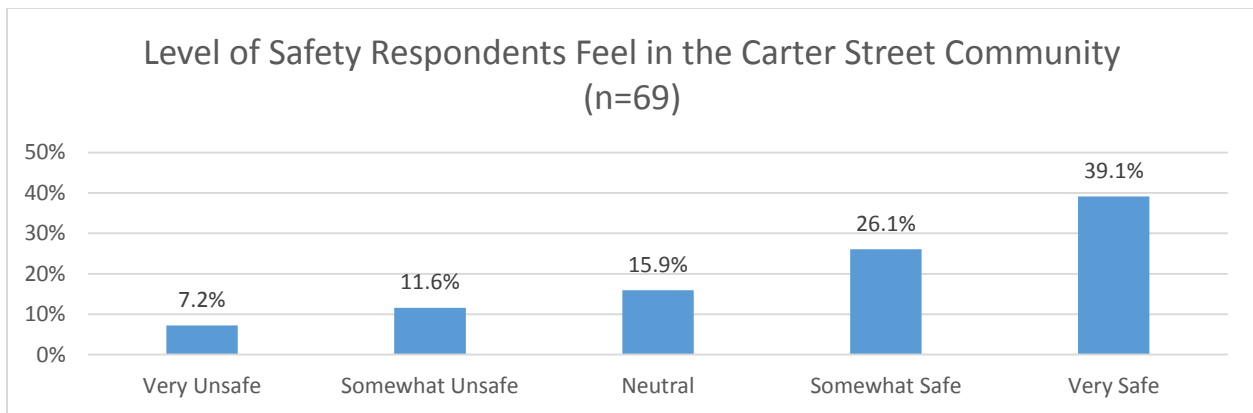


Earlier in 2015, Mayor Lovely Warren implemented a reorganization of the Rochester Police Department. Previously, the city was split into two law enforcement patrol sections (east and west). With the reorganization of the local police department into “five quadrants,” one goal is to have increased officer presence and knowledge of the communities they patrol as well as improved relationships with residents. Because of this, we asked respondents if



they knew any officers who worked in the area. As the years go by, it will be interesting to see if these numbers change and if this change could be attributed to the reorganization. In the Carter Street community, a majority (74.6%) of respondents said that they did not know any police officers in their area.

We asked respondents to rate how safe they feel living in their community overall. About 65% of respondents said that they feel somewhat safe or very safe living in the Carter Street community. We also asked where and in what situations people feel the least safe in their community. Many people who left a response said that they feel the least safe at night, and one respondent mentioned that the street lights should be brighter. No one left a response in regards to specific places where they feel the least safe.



Collective Efficacy

Many of the questions added to this revised pilot survey are based on the concept of collective efficacy. Collective efficacy is the ability of members in the community to control the behaviors of other people in the same community. According to Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997)¹ and Bandura (2000)², higher perceived collective efficacy is related to decreased neighborhood violence, motivational commitment to group missions, and resilience to adversity. We measure the perceived collective efficacy in communities in order to see if there is a correlation between it and the responses to the other survey questions. We also will compare the levels of perceived collective efficacy across communities by collecting data over time through

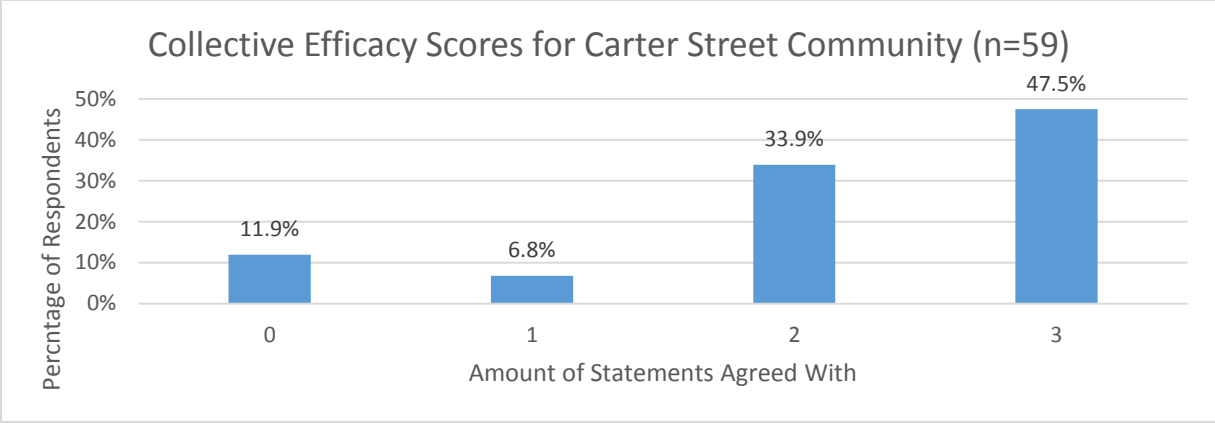
¹ Sampson J. R., Raudenbush W. S., Earls F. (1997). Neighborhoods and violent crime: A multilevel study of collective efficacy. *Science*, 277, 918-924

² Bandura A. (2000). Exercise of human agency through collective efficacy. *Current Directions in Psychological Science*, 9(3), 75-78

TIPS in order to understand the degree to which communities may differ in their levels of ability to control behavior in their neighborhoods. This is an important consideration for police.

In order to measure the perceived collective efficacy in a community, we decided to use the scale used by Sampson, Raudenbush, and Earls (1997) in their study of Chicago neighborhoods. Unfortunately, the scale that they used was rather long, and because of the spontaneous and verbal nature of T.I.P.S., we need to keep the survey relatively short. In May of this year, we tested the entire scale at a T.I.P.S. event by having those who were willing to spend a little more time with us respond to the statements on the collective efficacy scale by either agreeing or disagreeing with each statement. We analyzed those responses and found that six of the statements on the scale (out of the original ten used by Sampson et al. (1997)) seemed to be predictive enough to safely use them alone while still getting an acceptable measure. Then, we used these six statements from the collective efficacy scale on the T.I.P.S. survey in June 2015. After analyzing the results, we felt we were able to cut three more statements from this scale in order to keep the T.I.P.S. survey short. The three statements that we are going to move forward with are “People around here are willing to help their neighbors,” “People in this neighborhood share the same values,” and “I could count on my neighbors to intervene if a fight broke out in front of my house.” We plan to keep the collective efficacy scale at this length.

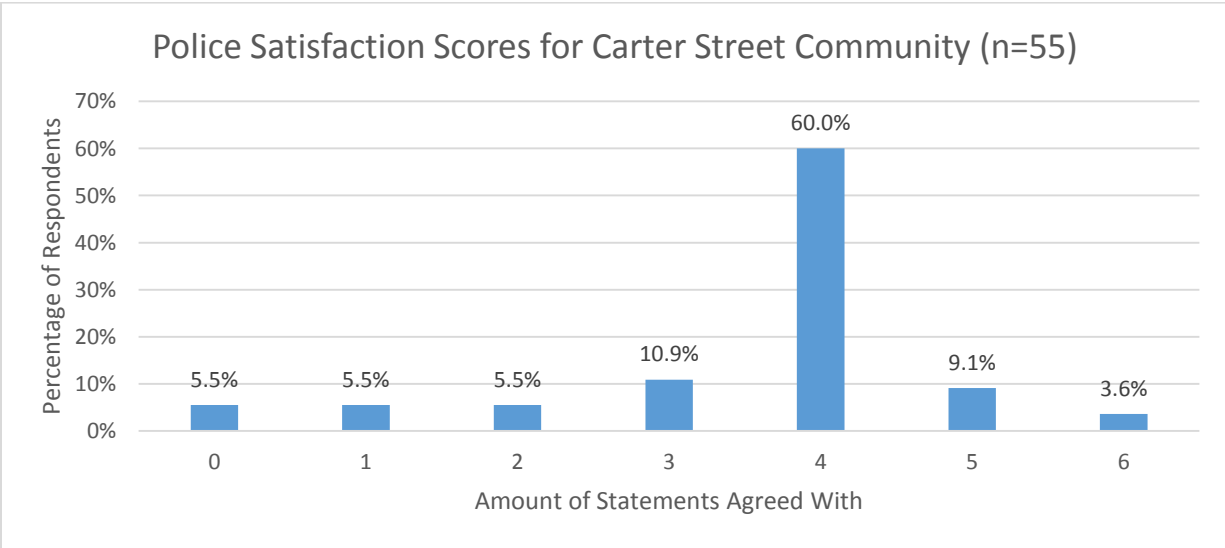
We calculate a collective efficacy mean “score” for the Carter and Norton community for each survey respondent. The highest score from any one respondent would be a “3,” meaning that the respondent agreed with all three statements and that they perceived a high level of collective efficacy. The lowest score would be a “0,” meaning that the person perceived little to no collective efficacy in the area and agreed with none of the statements. The mean score in the Carter Street community is 2.2, meaning that out of 3 statements, the average number of statements that respondents agreed with was 2.2. The chart below shows the distribution of individual respondents’ scores. Close to 50% of respondents agreed with all three statements and felt there was a high level of collective efficacy in the neighborhood.



Satisfaction with Law Enforcement

We added a table of statements regarding resident’s feelings about the Rochester Police Department (RPD). By asking people how much they agree or disagree with specific statements, as opposed to asking about their general satisfaction, we are able to more accurately measure satisfaction with police. These responses should also inform the RPD about specific aspects of their performance and suggest ways to improve that are of most concern to residents.

As with the collective efficacy scale, we were able to come up with a mean score for satisfaction with police. The highest possible score is a “6,” meaning that there is very high satisfaction with police based on how many statements in the scale respondents agreed with. The lowest score would be a “0,” meaning that there is little to no satisfaction with police in the area, and no respondents agreed with any statements. The mean score in the Carter Street community was 3.6 out of 6. As you can see from the chart below, 60% of respondents agreed with four of the six police satisfaction statements.

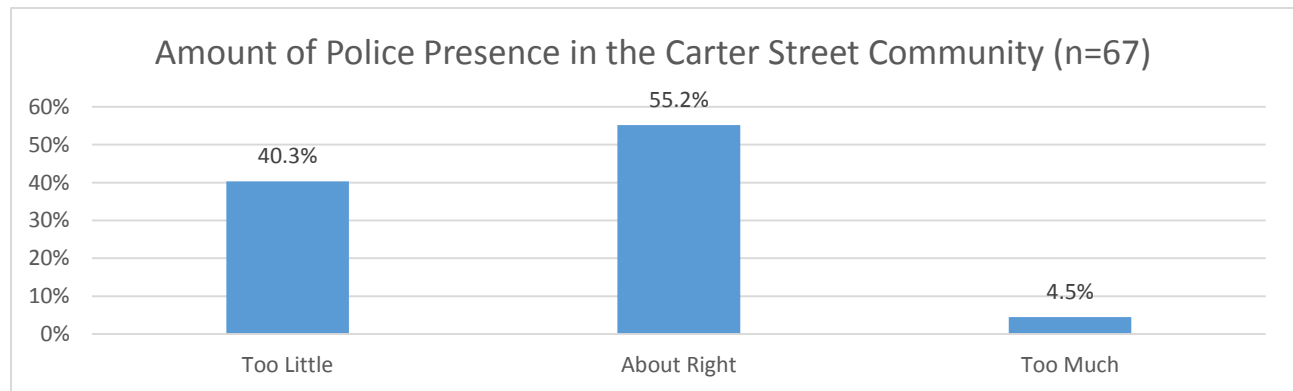


The table below shows the six statements that were used to create the overall police satisfaction score. A large majority (87%) of respondents felt that police use of excessive force is **not** an issue in their community, and 81% felt that police stopping people without good reason is **not** a problem in the Carter Street community. Most respondents (86%) agreed that the RPD works with the Carter Street community to solve problems that really matter to residents. Most (86%) also agreed that the RPD officers in this area listen to what they have to say. Close to 80% also feel that the RPD does a good job preventing crime in their community. A majority (76%) of respondents feel that RPD response time is appropriate.

Percentage of Respondents who Agree With Police Satisfaction Statements	
Statement	Agree
The police work with the community to solve problems that really matter to people in my neighborhood (n=63)	86%
RPD officers listen to what you have to say(n=66)	86%
The RPD does a good job preventing crime (n=68)	81%
RPD response time is appropriate (n=67)	76%
Police use of excessive force (verbal or physical) is an issue in my neighborhood* (n=67)	19%
Police stopping people without good reason is a problem in my neighborhood* (n=63)	13%

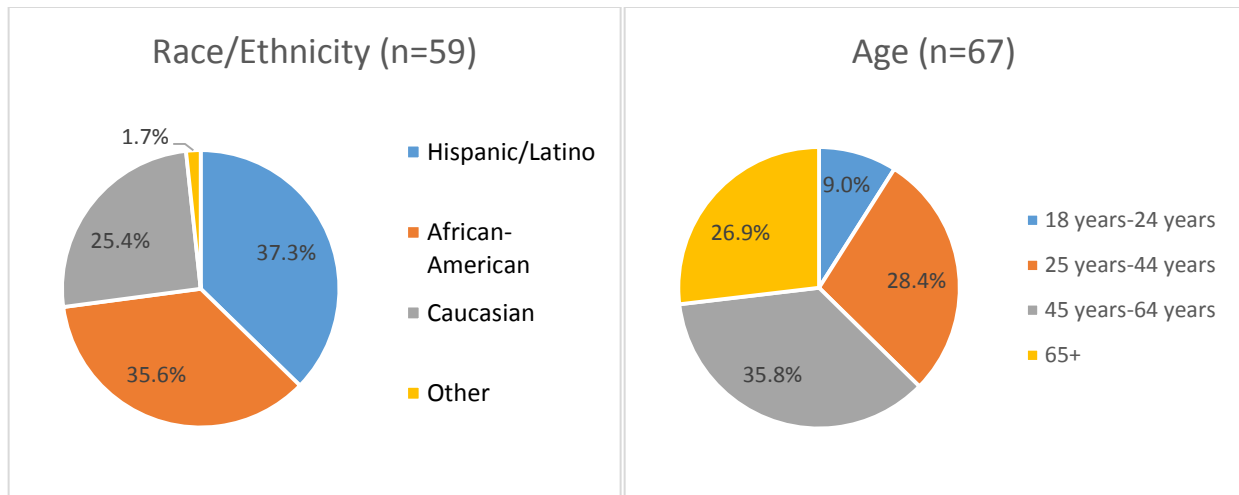
* These statements were reverse coded since agreement to these statements would imply dissatisfaction with the police

Very few respondents (4.5%) felt that there was too much police presence; a small majority felt that the amount of police presence was about right. Some respondents mentioned that they would really like more foot patrol in the neighborhood.



Demographics

Most survey respondents were female (76.5%). About a third (35.6%) identified as African-American, and a third (37.3%) identified as Hispanic or Latino (with race/ethnicity being one open-ended question so respondents could self-identify as appropriate). We were able to obtain responses from a wide age range of residents.



Correlations

Bivariate analysis is the analysis of the relationship between two variables. Correlations make it possible to examine subsets of the population surveyed. It is important to mention that even if two variables are highly correlated, it does not mean that one is caused by the other.

We looked at whether the collective efficacy scores were related to certain variables. For example, are homeowners in the area more likely to have a higher perceived collective efficacy than those who rent? When we ran the correlation to answer this question, we found that they did not have any significant relationship to each other. We also found no significant relationship between residents who were involved in their neighborhood association and their perceived collective efficacy. We did find a moderate positive correlation between the frequency residents spoke to their neighbors and their perceived collective efficacy ($r(58) = .37, p < 0.01$). Respondents who spoke to their neighbors (whether one neighbor or many) regularly tended to have a higher perceived collective efficacy. We also found a moderate positive correlation between how safe respondents feel in their neighborhood and their perceived collective efficacy ($r(59) = .39, p < 0.01$). Residents who feel safer have a higher perceived collective efficacy than those who feel unsafe. Another moderate positive correlation was found between those residents who have lived in the area longer and their perceived collective efficacy ($r(59) = .34, p < 0.01$). Those who live in the area may have higher perceived collective efficacy, which is a logical conclusion though not true for all areas.

We also looked at whether the police satisfaction scores were related to certain variables. We found that feelings of safety had a moderate positive correlation with police satisfaction ($r(55) = .48, p < 0.01$) such that those who feel safer have a higher satisfaction with the Rochester

Police Department. We can guess that they have a higher satisfaction because they feel safe and vice versa; however, with a correlation we need to remember that we cannot say whether one causes the other, and more tests would need to be run to determine the nature of this relationship.

Policy Implications

We hope that some of this information can be of use to police and neighborhood groups working in the Carter street community. We specifically note the concerns regarding speeding and traffic issues, pests and stray animals (such as rats, cats, and loose dogs), and concerns with break-ins in the area. Neighborhood groups may wish to plan efforts to get more people in the community involved in their efforts. Residents in the Carter Street community seem to be very satisfied with police, though only a small portion of the community was surveyed.

Conclusion

In the Carter street community, over half of the people surveyed are homeowners. This is different than what we have seen in other areas. Many respondents enjoyed that the neighborhood was quiet and/or peaceful. The major concern seemed to be speeding and other traffic issues, though concerns were also brought up about break-ins, drug use/selling, and pests.

It seemed that people in the Carter Street area interacting regularly with their neighbors; many of them spoke with a neighbor every day. However, only 10% were involved with community organizations. We would like to know more reasons why those who were not involved choose not to be. Most people (91%) in this area feel comfortable reporting issues to police, and many also expressed high satisfaction with police in the area. The least amount of people agreed that “RPD response time is appropriate,” but still 76% of respondents agreed with this. A majority (75%) of those surveyed did not know any police officers in the area by name or sight. We hope that this number will decrease as the years go on now that RPD has switched to the five-section model.

Close to half (48%) of those surveyed agreed with all three collective efficacy statements. We will compare these scores across communities as we collect data over the next few years. Three variables we tested were moderately positively correlated to perceived collective efficacy: the frequency with which respondents spoke to their neighbors, level of safety they felt living in the area, and length of time living in the area. More discussions would need to be had with Carter Street residents to understand the data from this survey more thoroughly.