

# **Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Clinton Avenue TIPS Initiative (August 2018)**

**Working Paper #2018-07**



August 2018

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## **Survey**

On Thursday August 23, 2018, Project TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) was held in the neighborhood surrounding Clinton Avenue in Rochester, New York. These events are designed to show support for the neighborhood, to investigate community members' concerns and desires for their neighborhood, and to build community police relationships. This report is designed to analyze the collected surveys and will discuss the various aspects of the neighborhood that the Clinton Avenue community liked, the assessment the community made of their neighborhood, and the initiatives or activities the residents would like implemented within the neighborhood. Finally, this paper will provide multiple anecdotes that the Clinton Avenue community wishes to share with law enforcement and community members in the neighborhood.

## **Methodology**

One component of Project TIPS is a neighborhood surveys of residents. The survey asked residents of the community questions about their perceptions of their community, crime, and the police. Starting at approximately 2pm, groups of two or three volunteers were sent out to administer the survey and divided among 20 street segments in the neighborhood. Each group was partnered with one law enforcement officer with them. Groups were 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 instructed to read a readymade script and then conduct the survey. Only those houses where adult residents responded 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 Clinton Avenue community. Despite this, the resulting analysis should give valuable insight into the residents who live there.

## **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 97 surveys were collected from the neighborhood from a total of 18 streets<sup>1</sup>. It is possible that this response rate was due to the fact that the survey was administered at 2pm on a traditional workday, meaning those at work would not be represented in the sample. A language barrier also may have affected the number of surveys filled out due to the surveyed neighborhood being a high-proportionate Spanish-speaking neighborhood. This, in combination with a lack of Spanish-speaking volunteers and officers may have caused some residents to be unwilling or unable to fill out the survey. This should be noted and addressed if this location is to be utilized for further TIPS events.

## **Demographics**

Out of the 97 residents who participated in the TIPS survey, the majority of participants reported as being either African American (44.4%) or Hispanic/Latino (43.3%) with over 12% of respondents stating that they were Puerto Rican.

In terms of age, most respondents reported being 25-44 years-old (47.7%). This was followed by respondents who stated they were 45-54 years-old (33.0%). The mean age of respondents was approximately 45 years old.

Most respondents identified as being female (59.8%). For a complete list of sample demographics see Figure 1. The top percentages in each category are highlighted in bold.

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<sup>1</sup>Some respondents did not answer some questions

**Figure 1: Sample Demographics of the 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents**

<b>Race &amp; Ethnicity (n=90)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>	<b>Age (n=88)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>African American</b>	<b>44.4%</b>	18-24	5.7%
Caucasian	8.9%	25-44	<b>47.7%</b>
Hispanic/Latino	33.3%	45-54	33.0%
Mixed	1.1%	65+	13.6%
Asian	1.1%	<b>Gender (n=92)</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Other	1.1%	Female	<b>59.8%</b>
		Male	40.2%

## 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/pests, speeding/traffic issues, and property maintenance issues.

The main concern expressed by residents was drug use with over 62% of respondents regarding it as a major concern. Speeding (57.4%) and drug selling (53.8%) were also seen as major concerns by respondents. It should be noted that these three concerns have been major concerns for all four neighborhoods surveyed for TIPS in 2018. For a full list of the major, minor, and no concerns, see Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Neighborhood Concerns of the 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents**

<b>Concerns</b>	<b>Not At All</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Major</b>
Drug use (n=95)	23.2%	14.7%	<b>62.1%</b>
Theft/Burglary (n=94)	47.9%	20.2%	31.9%
Violence (n=95)	43.2%	22.1%	34.7%
Gangs (n=95)	64.2%	15.8%	20.0%
Drug Selling (n=93)	33.3%	12.9%	<b>53.8%</b>
Stray Animals/Pests (n=94)	60.6%	19.1%	20.2%
Speeding (n=94)	25.5%	17.0%	<b>57.4%</b>
Property Maintenance (n=93)	51.6%	18.3%	30.1%

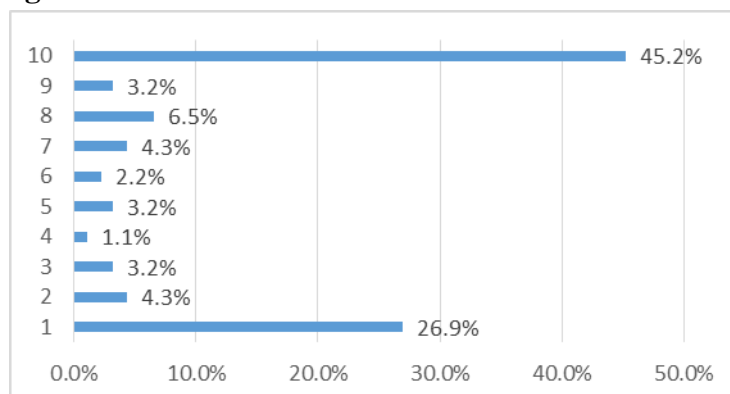
## Heroin and Opioids

As part of the TIPS survey, a section regarding heroin and opioids was included to gauge the extent of the use and sale of such substances in the neighborhood. This section of questions was of significant interest to researchers as the neighborhood surveyed is known for the high use and sale of heroin, especially in recent years. To gauge this problem, 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 this neighborhood. Most participants rated the problem between an 8 and a 10 (54.8%), however there was a significant percentage of respondents (26.9%) that rated the problem as a 1.

A follow-up question asked why respondents chose the number they selected. The responses to this question shed some light on the respondents' reasoning for their rating. Those who rated it higher stated that the use and sale of heroin was everywhere in their neighborhood and was accompanied with visual signs of the problem such as used needles on the ground and people shooting up in parks. For those who rated the problem as a 1, reasons like a lack of visual signs or awareness were commonly given.

An additional question asked residents if they knew anyone who had problems with heroin or other opioids. Of the 94 who responded, 76 respondents (80.9%) responded no, while 18 (19.1%) responded yes.

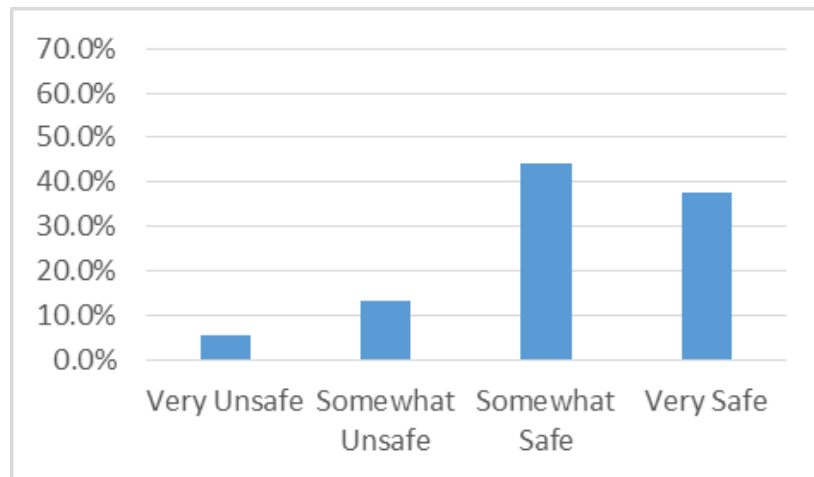
**Figure 3: Rating of Heroin Problem for 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents (n=93)**



## Safety

Residents were also asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood. Approximately 81% of respondents stated they either felt somewhat safe (44.0%) or very safe (37.4%). Less than 19% of respondents felt somewhat unsafe (13.2%) or unsafe (5.75%). A follow-up question asked for a specific place or time of day that the respondent felt the least safe. **The most common response was “never,” closely followed by “at night.”**

**Figure 4: Perceived Safety of the 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents (n=91)**



## Relationship with Law Enforcement

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 respond on 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's best for my community” and “Police work with community to solve problems that really matter.” When asked if they believe the police work with community to solve problems that matter,

approximately 82% of respondents answered with either agree (57.5%) or strongly agree (24.2%) while just over 18% responded with either disagree (13.7%) or strongly disagree (4.6%). For a full list of responses from this section, see Figure 5.

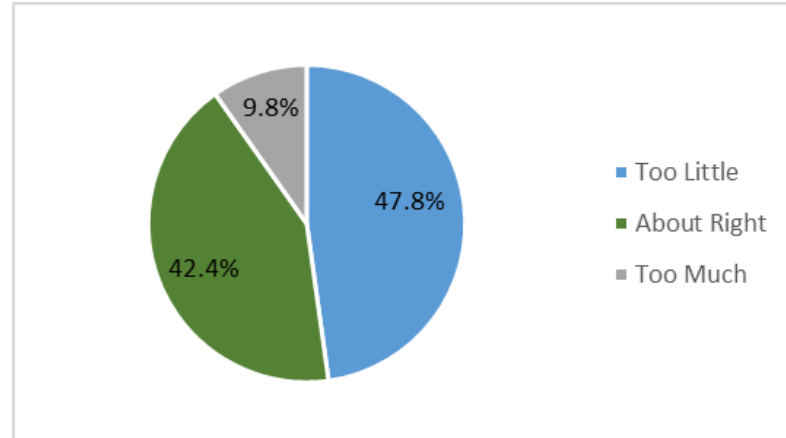
It should be noted that this section had the lowest response rate out of the entire survey. This low response rate could be to the sensitive nature of the questions, in relation to the police, as well as the fact that a law enforcement officer is present when surveyors are asking these questions. As a result, some respondents may be hesitant or unwilling to answer these questions.

**Figure 5: How much do you agree or disagree with these statements?**

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
BWC has improved relationship with RPD (n=85)	4.7%	18.8%	<b>48.2%</b>	28.2%
BWC will be used fairly (n=84)	2.4%	21.4%	<b>56.0%</b>	20.2%
RPD works hard to address issues of crime (n=86)	3.5%	12.8%	<b>57.0%</b>	26.7%
RPD officers listen to what I have to say (n=88)	3.4%	18.1%	<b>53.4%</b>	25.0%
I trust the police to do what's best for my community (n=88)	2.3%	10.2%	<b>55.7%</b>	31.8%
Police are generally fair in the way they enforce the law (n=86)	4.6%	15.2%	<b>60.4%</b>	19.8%
Police generally treat people with dignity and respect (n=88)	4.5%	17.0%	<b>53.5%</b>	25.0%
Police work with community to solve problems that matter (n=87)	4.6%	13.7%	<b>57.5%</b>	24.2%

In addition to this section, three questions were asked to gauge residents' comfortability with the police. The first question asked if they felt comfortable reporting issues or suspicious behavior to police. 86% of respondents answered yes or sometimes (15.1%) while only 14% answered no. The second question asked residents if they knew any police officers, by name or by face, who worked in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents (67%) answered that they did not. Residents were also asked to state whether they believed the police presence in their neighborhood was too much, too little, or about right. Most respondents answered this question with too little (47.8%) or about right (42.4%).

**Figure 6: Perceptions of Police Presence in the Clinton Ave Neighborhood (n=70)**



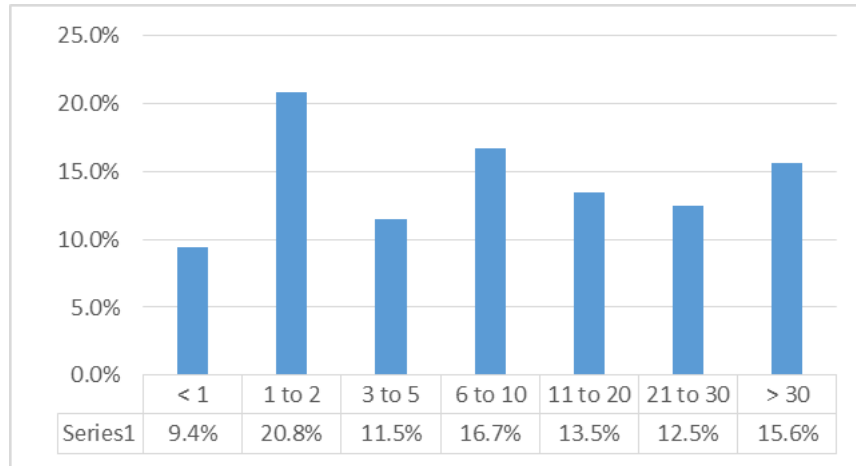
### **Collective Efficacy**

*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?” The average tenure in the neighborhood was roughly 15 years (14.67 years). The majority of respondents (58.3%) reported having lived in the neighborhood for less than 11 years, including over 30% of respondents had been in the neighborhood for less than three years. See Figure 7 for the full response set.

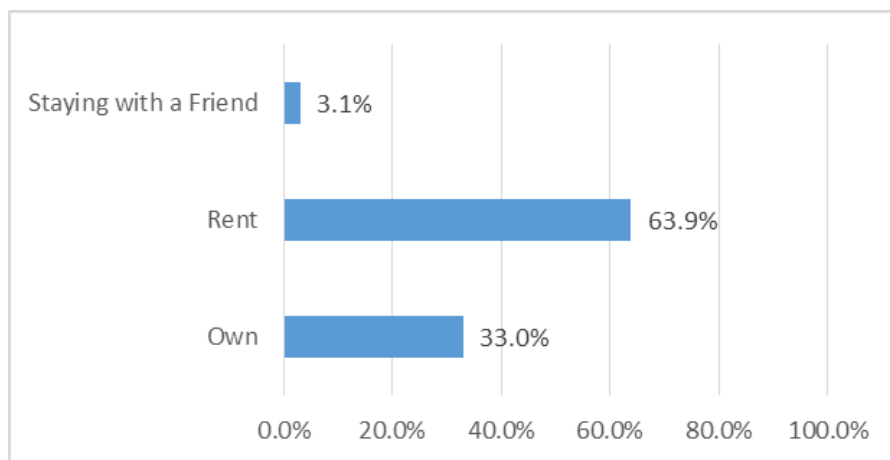


**Figure 7: 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents' Years in the Neighborhood (n=96)**



Of the 97 people who completed the survey, 32 stated that they own their home (33.0%), 62 rented their home (63.9%), and 3 (3.1%) were staying with a friend or family member (See Figure 8).

**Figure 8: 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Respondents' Homeownership (n=97)**



Research regarding collective efficacy suggests that homeowners are much less likely to move from a community and thus can contribute to greater neighborhood stability (Rohe 1996). A crosstabs analysis of these two questions was run to determine if this was true in the Clinton

Ave neighborhood. The analysis found that those who stated that they rented their home tended to also be those who had lived in the neighborhood for a short time (See Figure 9 for full chart<sup>2</sup>). While the opposite is not entirely true for those who stated that they owned their home, over 11% of respondents who stated that they owned their home had also been in the neighborhood for over three decades.

This analysis suggests that homeowners, to an extent, have provided a means of stabilization to the Clinton Ave community as they have invested considerable time into their neighborhood. As for renters, it is unknown how long they plan to be in the neighborhood, but if they plan to stay long-term they can also provide a means of stability in the neighborhood.

**Figure 9: 2018 Clinton Ave TIPS Crosstabs: Housing status and Neighborhood Tenure**

<b>Housing Status</b>	<b>Length of Time Living in Neighborhood (years)</b>							<b>Total</b>
	< 1	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 30	> 30	
Own	0.0%	3.1%	1.1%	5.2%	6.3%	6.3%	11.5%	<b>n=32</b>
Rent	9.5%	17.7%	10.4%	9.5%	7.3%	6.3%	4.2%	<b>n=62</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>n=9</b>	<b>n=20</b>	<b>n=11</b>	<b>n=16</b>	<b>n=13</b>	<b>n=12</b>	<b>n=15</b>	<b>96</b>

Social cohesion is a major factor in the collective efficacy of a neighborhood. High social cohesion can lead to greater instances of community members lending a helping hand to their neighbors and intervening on their behalf. The TIPS survey measured social cohesion in the Clinton Ave community by asking residents to state how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of three statements related to this concept: “people in this neighborhood are willing to help their neighbors,” “people in this neighborhood share the same values,” and “I could count on my neighbors if a fight broke out.” Overall, the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that people in their community are willing to help their neighbors (83.5%), that they

<sup>2</sup> Staying with a Friend/Family Member was not included in Figure 9 due to this category only having 2 respondents

could count on their neighbors if a fight broke out (77.8%), and that people in their neighborhood shared the same values (68.9%) indicating a strong sense of social cohesion within the community.

### **Conclusion**

The Clinton Ave residents listed drug use, speeding, and drug sales as their primary concerns for their neighborhood. These concerns have been voiced as major concerns consistently across the four TIPS locations surveyed this summer. In contrast to these problems, when asked what they liked most about the neighborhood, many respondents answered that they like the people/community (29.1%) or how quiet and peaceful the neighborhood was (20.9). Family/friends in the area (7.0%) and their house/property (7.0%) were as popular answers given by respondents. With all of this in mind, it makes sense that most residents stated that they spoke with their neighbors either every day (49.5%) or every week (25.8%).

After analyzing the responses from the Clinton Ave TIPS survey, future interventions aimed at addressing the concerns laid out by residents should involve such projects as Project CLEAN (Ibero project) and clean-up programs as a means of tackling both the open-air heroin market in the neighborhood and improving the quality of life through beautification. In addition to these such programs, it may be helpful for the Rochester Police Department to hire more Hispanic, Latino, and or Spanish-speaking officers as a means of communicating and working with the community members in a more effective manner. Lastly, the concern of speeding can be address through speed humps on side streets and greater enforcement of traffic laws along main roads such as Clifford Avenue and Clinton Avenue. With these suggestions in mind, steps can be taken to ensure the people in this neighborhood have their voices heard and concerns are thoroughly addressed.