

Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Flint Street TIPS Initiative (June 2018)

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Survey

On Thursday June 28th, 2018, Project TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) was held in the neighborhood surrounding the Flint Street Recreation Center (R-Center) 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 share the results of the analyzed surveys and to describe the various aspects of the neighborhood that the Flint Street community liked, the assessment the community makes of their neighborhood, perceptions of police and law enforcement, and the initiatives or activities the residents would like implemented within the neighborhood.

Methodology

One component of Project TIPS is a neighborhood survey of residents. The survey asked residents of the community questions about their perceptions of their community, crime, and the police. Starting at approximately 2:00 pm, groups of three volunteers were sent out to administer the survey and divided among 16 street segments in the neighborhood. Each group was partnered with only one law enforcement officer due to a disparity in the number of volunteers and officers. 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-to-door sampling method, the resulting sample is not a random sample of the Flint Street 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 56 surveys were collected from the neighborhood from a total of 16 streets¹, including one resident who filled out the survey at the TIPS location. It is possible that this low response rate was due to the fact that the survey was administered at approximately 2 pm on a traditional workday, meaning those at work would not be represented in the sample. The presence of a law enforcement officer may also affect the response rate due to the possibility that the officer's physical presence may cause residents to be cautious and/or not take the survey.

Demographics

Out of the 56 residents who participated in the TIPS survey, the majority of participants were African American (80.4%). Approximately 11% reported being of mixed race or ethnicity. Overall, 93.5% of respondents identified as an ethnic or racial minority.

In terms of age, most respondents reported being 25-44 years old (37.3%). This was followed by respondents who stated they were 65 and older (27.5%). The mean age of respondents was approximately 49 years old.

Most respondents identified as being female (64.7%). A complete list of sample demographics can be found in Figure 1. The top percentages in each category are highlighted in bold.

¹Some respondents did not answer some questions

Figure 1: Sample Demographics of the 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents

Race & Ethnicity (n=46)	Percentage	Age (n=51)	Percentage	Gender (n=51)	Percentage
African American	80.4%	18-24	9.80%	Female	64.70%
Mixed	10.9%	25-44	37.30%	Male	35.30%
Caucasian	6.5%	45-64	25.50%		
Hispanic/Latino	2.2%	65+	27.50%		

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 and traffic issues, and property maintenance issues.

The chief concern expressed by respondents was speeding, with 37% of residents regarding it as a major concern. Concerns of drug sales (29.1%) and violence (29.6%) within the community were also seen as major concerns by respondents. For a full list of the major, minor, and no concerns, see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Neighborhood Concerns of the 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents

Concerns	Not At All	Minor	Major
Drug use (n=55)	49.1%	21.8%	29.1%
Theft/Burglary (n=54)	61.1%	24.1%	14.8%
Violence (n=54)	46.3%	24.1%	29.6%
Gangs (n=54)	68.5%	11.1%	20.4%
Drugs Selling (n=54)	61.1%	16.7%	22.2%
Stray Animals/Pests (n=54)	50.0%	31.5%	18.5%
Speeding (n=54)	38.9%	24.1%	37.0%
Property Maintenance (n=54)	63.0%	20.4%	16.7%

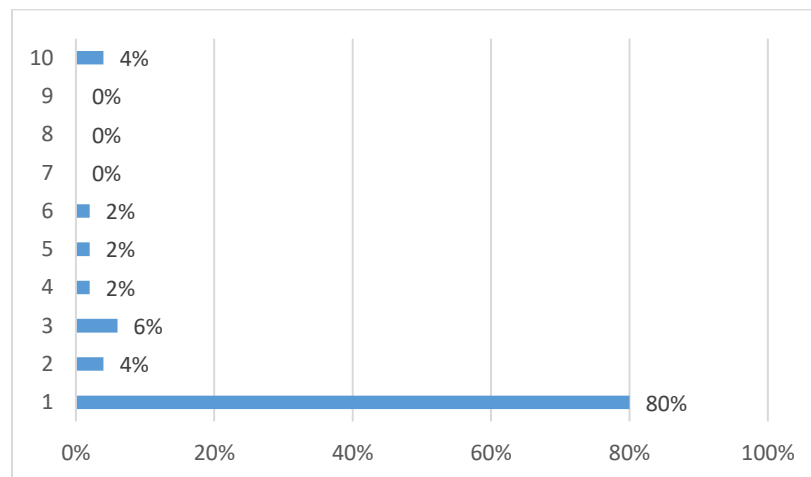
Heroin and Opioids

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 this neighborhood. The overwhelming majority of respondents (80%) rated the problem as a 1. The next largest group was respondents would rate the problem as a 3 (6%). A follow-up question asked why respondents chose the number they selected. Popular responses included “little such activity” and “no evidence of such activity.” The majority of responses followed these perceptions.

An additional question asked residents if they knew anyone who had problems with heroin or other opioids. Of the 53 who responded, 47 respondents (88.7%) responded no, while 6 (11.3%) responded yes.

Figure 3: Rating of Heroin Problem for 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents

(n=53)

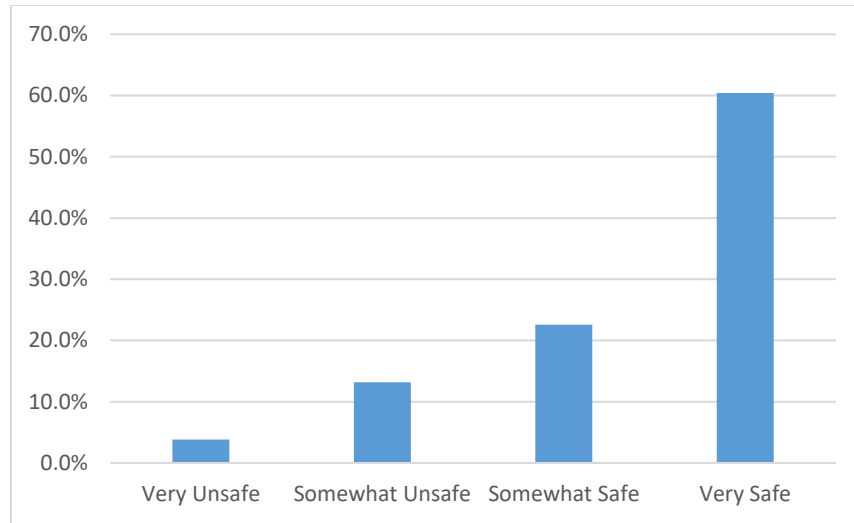


Safety

Residents were also asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood. 83% of respondents stated they either felt somewhat safe (22.6%) or very safe (60.4%). Only 17% of respondents felt

somewhat unsafe (13.2%) or unsafe (3.8%). 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 “at night,” closely followed by “not at all/never.”

Figure 4: Perceived Safety of the 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents (n=53)



Relationship with Law Enforcement

The TIPS survey also included a section related to residents and their feelings towards and relationship with the Rochester Police Department (RPD). Residents were asked to respond to 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. As a result of the survey being conducted, a significant number of respondents stated that they neither agreed nor disagreed with some of the statements so such responses were included as well. Statements asked included “RPD works hard to address issues of crime in their neighborhood” and “Police are generally fair in the way the enforce the law.” When asked if they believe RPD works hard to address issues of crime in their neighborhood, approximately 68% of respondents answered

with either agree (53.7%) or strongly agree (14.6%) while only 18% responded with either disagree (13.3%) or strongly disagree (2.2%). 11.1% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement. For a full list of responses from this section, see Figure 5.

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

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
BWC has improved relationship with RPD (n=42)	7.1%	28.6%	14.3%	35.7%	14.3%
BWC will be used fairly (n=41)	4.9%	14.6%	12.2%	53.7%	14.6%
RPD works hard to address issues of crime (n=45)	2.2%	13.3%	11.1%	57.8%	15.6%
RPD officers listen to what I have to say (n=44)	2.3%	9.1%	11.4%	61.4%	15.9%
I trust the police to do what's best for my community (n=46)	8.7%	8.7%	4.3%	56.5%	21.7%
Police are generally fair in the way they enforce the law (n=46)	6.5%	17.4%	6.5%	56.5%	13.0%
Police generally treat people with dignity and respect (n=47)	2.1%	8.5%	12.8%	55.3%	21.3%
Police work with community to solve problems that matter (n=46)	4.3%	23.9%	8.7%	52.2%	10.9%

It is important to note that the rate of response for this section was the lowest out of all the sections in the survey. This could be a result of the presence of a law enforcement in each survey group during the administering of the surveys. It is possible that residents were uncomfortable answering questions related to law enforcement in the presence of the officer.

In addition to this section, two questions were asked to gauge how comfortable residents felt with the police. When asked if they felt comfortable reporting issues or suspicious behavior to police, approximately 87% of respondents answered yes or sometimes while only 13%

answered no. Residents were also asked if they knew any officers who worked in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents (70.4%) answered that they did not.

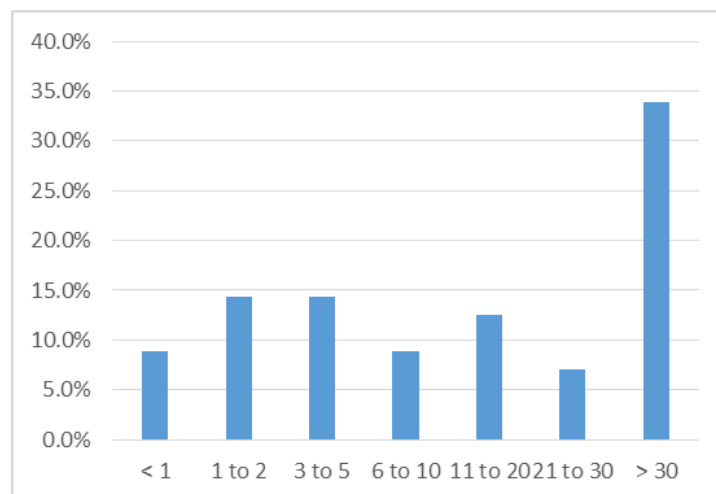
Collective Efficacy

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 22 years. The majority of respondents (53.6%) reported having lived in the neighborhood for 11 or more years. Approximately 34% of respondents stated that they had been living in the neighborhood for 31 years or longer (See Figure 6).

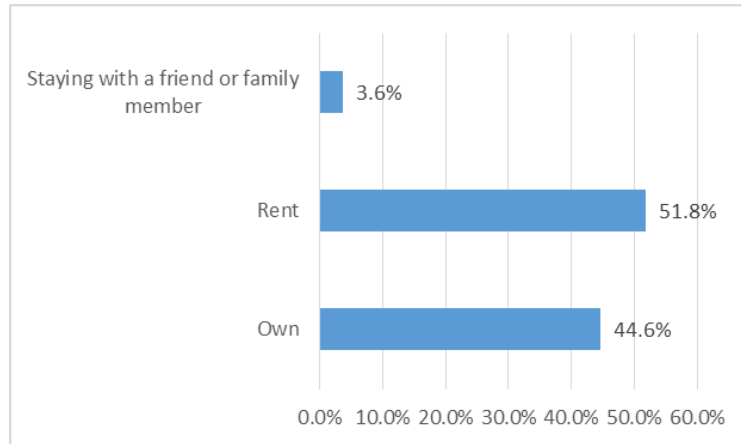
Figure 6: 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents’ Years in the Neighborhood

(n=56)



Of the 56 people who completed the survey, 25 stated that they own their home (44.6%), 29 rented their home (51.8%), and 2 (3.6%) were staying with a friend or family member (See Figure 7).

Figure 7: 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Respondents' Homeownership (n=56)



Studies have shown that homeowners are much less likely to move from a community, which can lead to greater neighborhood stability (Rohe 1996). A crosstabs analysis of these two questions was run to determine if this was true in the Flint Street Rec Center neighborhood. The analysis found that 32% of respondents who stated that they own their home have also lived in the neighborhood for more than 20 years. Those who rented their homes tended to be those who had not lived in the neighborhood for long. 30% of respondents rented their homes and also had been living in the area for 5 or less years (See Figure 8 for full chart). This analysis suggests that homeowners are providing some means of stabilization to the Flint Street community as they have been living in the community for a longer period than those who rent.

Figure 8: 2018 Flint Street Rec Center TIPS Crosstabs: Housing status and Neighborhood

Tenure (n=56)

Housing Status	Length of Time Living in the Neighborhood (years)							Total
	< 1	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 30	> 30	
Own	0%	0%	5%	0%	7%	4%	28%	44%
Rent	9%	14%	7%	9%	5%	4%	4%	52%
Staying with friend or family	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	0%	2%	4%
Total	n=5	n=8	n=8	n=5	n=7	n=4	n=19	56

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 Flint Street community by asking residents a series of three questions related to this concept (See Figure 9 for full list). Overall, the majority of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that people in their community are willing to help their neighbors (84.3%) and that they could count on their neighbors if a fight broke out (77.6%) indicating a strong sense of social cohesion within the community. However, when it came to whether or not people in the neighborhood shared the same values, 35% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement, offering a possible limit to the social cohesion in the neighborhood.

Figure 9: 2018 Flint Street Recreational Center Respondents' Social Cohesion

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
People are willing to help their neighbors	5.9%	9.8%	0.0%	45.1%	39.2%
People in this neighborhood share the same values	6.3%	29.2%	6.3%	41.7%	16.7%
I could count on my neighbors if a fight broke out	8.2%	12.2%	2.0%	44.9%	32.7%

Conclusion

The Flint Street Recreational Center residents listed speeding, drug use, and violence as their primary concerns for their neighborhood. In contrast, when asked what they liked most about the neighborhood, most respondents answered that they either liked the people in their neighborhood (31.4%) or how quiet or peaceful the neighborhood was (33.3%). When put together, these qualities can contribute to feelings of comfort and ease within the community and with neighbors. With this in mind, it makes sense that most residents stated that they spoke with their neighbors either every day (58.2%) or every week (14.5%). After analyzing the Flint Street Recreational Center TIPS survey, it may be useful for future neighborhood interventions to address such issues as drug use and violence through social and community-based crime prevention. These types of interventions would utilize the strong sense of community/social cohesion and collective efficacy to help better the community. As for the respondents' chief concern of speeding, the addition of speed bumps into the community as a form of crime prevention through environmental design (CPTED) can help address this issue and continue to make the residents feel safe and secure in their community.