

Community Concerns and Desires: Analysis of Jones Park TIPS Initiative (May 2018)

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Survey

On Thursday May 31st, 2018, Project TIPS (Trust, Information, Programs, and Services) was held in the neighborhood surrounding Jones Park 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 and police relationships. This report summarizes the findings from the analysis of the collected surveys and includes the various aspects of the neighborhood that the Jones Park 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 Jones Park 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 2:00 pm, groups of two or three volunteers were sent out to administer the survey and divided among 14 street segments in the neighborhood. Each group was partnered with at least one law enforcement officer. 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 Jones Park 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 51 surveys were collected from the neighborhood from a total of 14 streets¹. It is possible that this low response rate was due to the fact that the survey was administered at 2 pm on a traditional workday, meaning those at work would not be represented in the sample.

Demographics

Of the 51 respondents who took the TIPS survey, African Americans represented the largest group (43.5%), while approximately 13% reported Hispanic/Latino ethnicity. Overall, approximately 70% of respondents identified as an ethnic minority. Most participants reported being 25-44 years old (36.2%). This was closely followed by individuals 45-54 years old (34%). Most survey respondents identified as being female (62.5%). For a complete list of sample demographics see Figure 1. The top percentages in each category are highlighted in bold.

Figure 1: Sample Demographics of the 2018 Jones Park TIPS Respondents

Race & Ethnicity (n=46)	Percentage	Age (n=47)	
African American	43.5%	18-24	21.3%
Caucasian	32.6%	25-44	36.2%
Hispanic/Latino	13.0%	45-64	34.0%
Puerto Rican	2.2%	65+	8.5%
Mixed	2.2%		
Other	6.5%	Gender (n=48)	
		Male	37.5%
		Female	62.5%

¹Some respondents did not answer some questions

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 main concern expressed by residents was drug use with almost half of residents regarding it as a major concern (49%). Concerns of drug sales within the community were also seen as a major concern by residents (46.8%). For a full list of the major, minor, and no concerns, see Figure 2.

Figure 2: Neighborhood Concerns of the 2018 Jones Park TIPS Respondents

Concerns	Not at All	Minor	Major
Drug use (n=51)	25.5%	25.5%	49.0%
Theft/Burglary (n=49)	44.9%	32.7%	22.4%
Violence (n=50)	44.0%	34.0%	22.0%
Gangs (n=47)	70.2%	21.3%	8.5%
Drug Selling (n=47)	36.2%	17.0%	46.8%
Stray Animals (n=49)	59.2%	14.3%	26.5%
Speeding (n=50)	38.0%	22.0%	40.0%
Property Maintenance (n=46)	58.7%	23.9%	17.4%

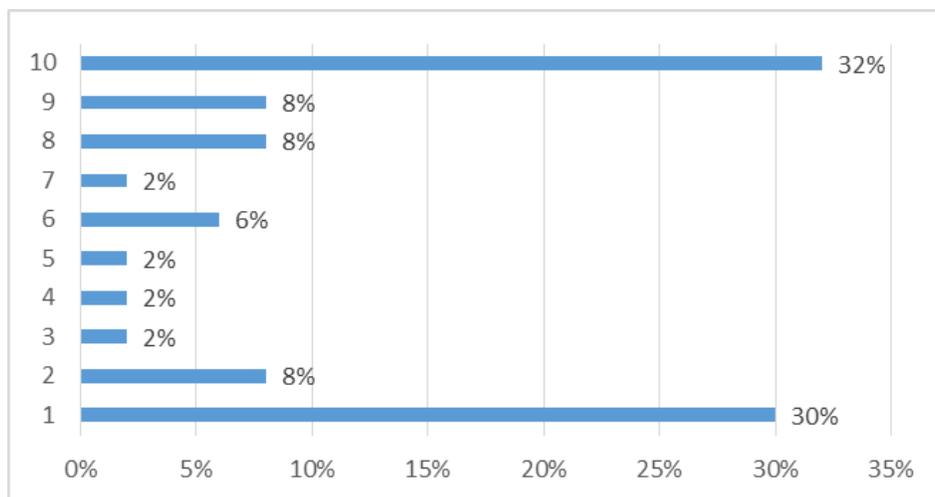
Heroin and Opioids

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 largest group of respondents (40%) rated the problem as either a 9 or a 10. This group was followed closely by those respondents who rated the problem as either a 1 or a 2

(38%). See Figure 3 for a full data set. A follow-up question asked why respondents chose the number they selected. Popular responses included visual signs of such activity, such as needles and people using heroin, and, conversely, residents stating they were unaware that such activity happened within their neighborhood.

An additional question asked residents if they knew anyone who had problems with heroin or other opioids. Of the 48 who responded, 18.7% of respondents responded yes, while 81.3% responded no.

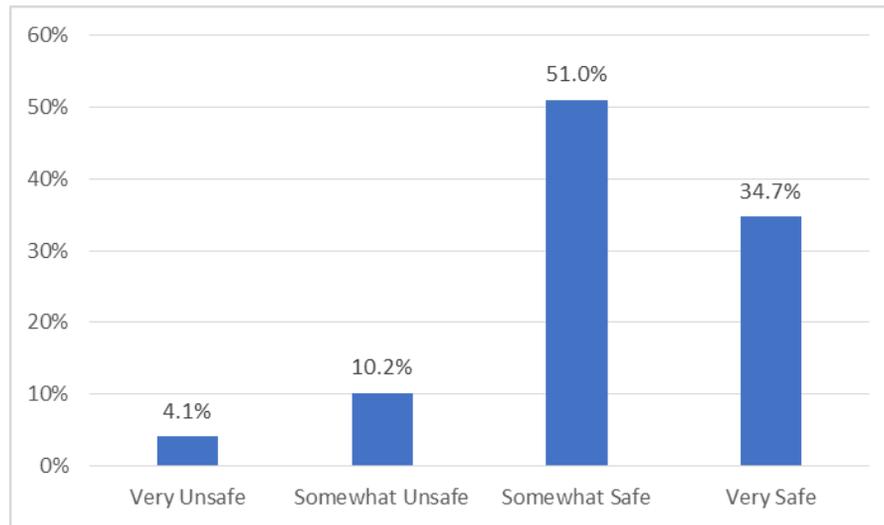
Figure 3: Rating of Heroin Problem for 2018 Jones Park Respondents (n=50)



Safety

When asked how safe they felt in their neighborhood, approximately 85% of respondents stated that they either felt somewhat safe or very safe. Only 14.3% of respondents felt somewhat or very unsafe in their neighborhood (See Figure 4). A follow-up question asked for a specific time of day that the respondent felt the least safe. The most common response was “at night.”

Figure 4: Perceived Safety of the 2018 Jones Park TIPS Respondents (n=49)



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 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 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, approximately 80% of respondents answered with either agree (59.1%) or strongly agree (22.7%) while only 18% disagreed. For this question, no respondents answered with strongly disagree. 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	Agree	Strongly Agree
BWC has improved relationship with RPD	2.2%	22.2%	62.2%	13.3%
BWC will be used fairly	2.4%	28.6%	45.2%	23.8%
RPD works hard to address issues of crime	4.7%	11.6%	60.5%	23.3%
RPD officers listen to what I have to say	2.3%	14.0%	67.4%	16.3%
I trust the police to do what's best for my community	0.0%	18.2%	59.1%	22.7%
Police are generally fair in the way they enforce the law	0.0%	23.3%	55.8%	20.9%
Police generally treat people with dignity and respect	0.0%	14.0%	62.8%	23.3%
Police work with community to solve problems that matter	4.8%	11.9%	64.3%	19.0%

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, 84% of respondents answered yes or sometimes while only 16% answered no.

Residents were also asked if they knew any officers who worked in their neighborhood. The majority of respondents (76%) 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 8 and a half years. More than 47% of respondents reported having lived in the neighborhood for 6 or more years. The vast majority of respondents (76%) answered that they rent their home while only 12% stated that they own their property. An additional 12% reported staying with a friend or family member.

Figure 6: 2018 Jones Park’s Respondents Years in the Neighborhood (n=51)

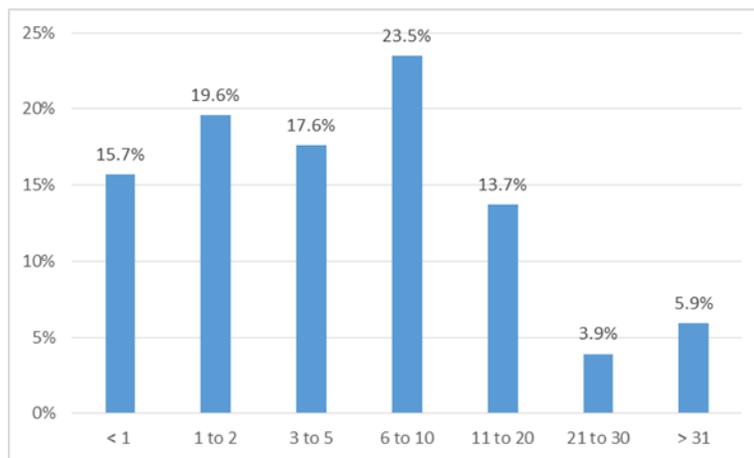
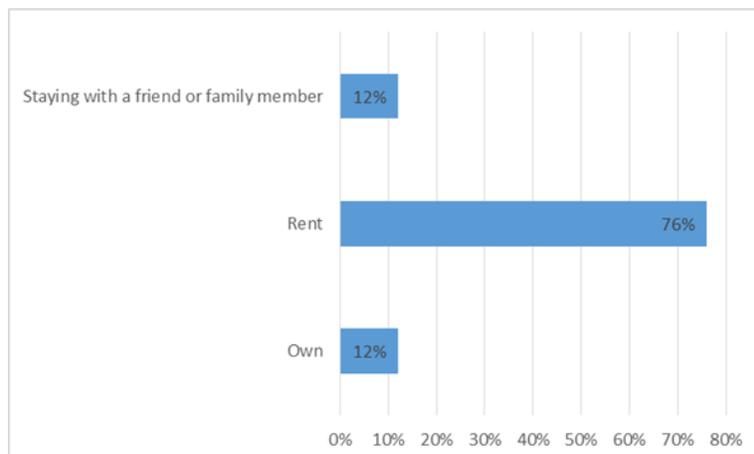


Figure 7: 2018 Jones Park’s Respondents’ Homeownership (n=50)



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 this neighborhood. The analysis found that 36% of respondents who reported that the length of time they rented their home was split between two ranges: 3 to 5 years and 6 to 10 years. Additionally, of the small population that reported that they owned their property, 75% of residents had lived in the community for at least 11 years (See Figure 8 for full chart). This suggest 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: 2018 Jones Park TIPS Crosstabs: Housing status and Neighborhood Tenure

Housing Status	Length of Time Living in Neighborhood (years)							Total
	< 1	1 to 2	3 to 5	6 to 10	11 to 20	21 to 30	> 30	
Own	0%	0%	0%	4%	2%	4%	2%	12%
Rent	12%	14%	18%	18%	10%	2%	2%	76%
Other	4%	6%	0%	0%	2%	0%	0%	12%
Total	n=8	n=10	n=9	n=11	n=7	n=2	n=3	50

While there is evidence to suggest that the presence of homeowners can provide greater stability to the neighborhood, it is important to note that almost a third (32%) of renters in the Jones Park community have lived in the area for 6 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 neighbors. The TIPS survey measured social cohesion in the Jones Park Community by asking residents a series of three questions related to this concept (See Figure 9 for full list). Overall, most residents agreed that people in their community are willing to help their neighbors (56.5%) and that people in the neighborhood share the same values (56.5%) indicating some form of strong social cohesion within the community. However, a majority of residents (61.7%) did not think that they could count on their neighbors in the event of a fight, suggesting that there are limits to the power of collective efficacy in the neighborhood.

Figure 9: 2018 Jones Park’s Respondents’ Social Cohesion

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
People are willing to help their neighbors	8.7%	21.7%	56.5%	13.0%
People in this neighborhood share the same values	8.7%	32.6%	56.5%	2.2%
I could count on my neighbors if a fight broke out	27.7%	34.0%	29.8%	8.5%

Conclusion

The Jones Park residents listed drug use and drug selling as their primary concerns for their neighborhood. Many residents linked these concerns with the problem of prostitution with some stating that the prostitutes represent the majority of drug users in the community. In contrast, when asked what they liked most about the neighborhood, most respondents (46.7%) answered that they liked how quiet or peaceful the neighborhood was. These qualities could help explain why most residents stated that they spoke with their neighbors either every day (43.8%) or every week (16.7%). A peaceful neighborhood can contribute to feelings of comfort in the

community among residents, leading to more instances of inter-resident interaction.

Additionally, these results suggest that the drug problem may be an external threat to the community, rather than an internal one, as the prostitutes are not identified as residents by many of the survey respondents. It is important to note that the overwhelming majority of respondents (79.6%) stated that they are not involved in any groups or organization in their neighborhood.

From these findings, it may be helpful for future community interventions to promote homeownership and involvement in neighborhood organizations. These types of interventions would serve as a means of organizing the community and building collective efficacy. These actions have been shown to increase levels of informal social control and reduce neighborhood violence and can be helpful in empowering the community to better address such problems of prostitution and drug use in their neighborhood.