

Brooklyn Park: Improving Safety and Policing

Evaluation Report

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Prepared for:

Brooklyn Park 

S E P T E M B E R 2 0 2 1

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Key findings

When Minneapolis police officers killed George Floyd in May 2020, the nearby city of Brooklyn Park began urgent work, including convening listening sessions and tasking city commissions with creating a work plan to improve the Brooklyn Park Police Department (BPPD). The city hired Wilder Research in December 2020 to uncover the likely root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park, understand community perceptions of BPPD, and make data-driven recommendations to improve safety and policing in Brooklyn Park. Here, we present key findings.

Finding:

There are risks of violence when people are not economically secure or connected to their community.

- ✓ There are social conditions that contribute to violence, as well as protect against it, including:
 - Economic instability, including low wages, high housing costs, and economic disparities, which all contribute to community violence.
 - Weak social connections, including high neighborhood turnover, and lack of access to positive programming, that contribute to community violence.
- ✓ Systemic marginalization and racism contribute to unequal presence of risk factors, in other words, when people are struggling economically, are not well-served by systems including education and health care, lack positive connections to their communities, and experience family trauma, communities are at greater risk of violence and disorder.

Sources: Lazarus et al., 2017; Armstead et al., 2018; Pearl, 2019; Turner, 2020b

Finding:

There are disparities in Brooklyn Park that likely contribute to violence and disorder.

- ✓ In Brooklyn Park, White residents, as well as residents living on the north side of the city, are more likely than other people to be economically stable. For example:
 - The homeownership rate of White residents (87%) is more than two times that of Black residents (41%).
 - The median annual household income for Black residents (\$48,539) is just over half of the median annual household income of White residents (\$84,665).
- ✓ With regard to social connections, residents on the south side, and African American residents, are less likely to report feeling comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with neighbors than residents on the north side, and residents of other races.

Sources: Minnesota Compass, (n.d.); Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019

Finding:

Improving traditional policing may not improve safety.

- ✓ Crime rates are not related to the number of officers on a force or to strict policing of low-level crime such as property damage or illegal substance use. Also, this strict policing may cause harm that contributes to future violence and disorder.
- ✓ Arrests, detention, and criminal charges can be less effective at addressing the root causes of violence and disorder than alternatives, including community-based crisis response, pre-charge diversion, and treatment and restorative justice interventions.

Finding:

Improving traditional policing may not improve safety.

(continued)

- ✓ Arrests, detention, criminal charging, and incarceration can cause harm that contributes to future violence and disorder.
- ✓ While changes that result in police using less force against community members and police being more accountable to community members can reduce violence, other changes to traditional policing may have limited or no effects on community safety.

Sources: Franco-Paredes et al., 2021; Fox & Fournier, 2019; Levin & Haugen, 2018; Eck, et al., 2017

Finding:

BPPD policies and interviewee themes support that procedural justice is a key strength; even so, some BPPD policies and MN laws conflict with best practices.

- ✓ Research shows that when police officers treat people with dignity and respect, it is related to improved community trust. The BPPD policy manual includes many provisions affirming the need to treat community members with dignity and respect, and more interviewees with close experience with BPPD reported that BPPD treated them well than reported that BPPD should improve in this area.
- ✓ Research shows that requiring informed consent for consent-based searches, requiring officers to proactively identify themselves, and having laws and union contract provisions that promote officer accountability are linked to decreased racial disparities, decreased police use of force and mistreatment, and increased community safety, respectively. At this time, the BPPD policy manual (and Minnesota law) allow for officer conduct that does not align with these best practices.

Sources: International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2017; Campaign Zero, n.d.a; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015

Recommendations

Recommendations and considerations for future work

- **Focus on prevention.** To improve safety, the city should address inequities, and ensure that the social conditions where safety thrives are equally distributed across races and places in Brooklyn Park.
- **Improve interventions.** The city should explore using community-based mental health and substance use responses, school-based safety workers, and other efforts to reimagine police responsibilities. The city should also partner with community stakeholders to expand focused deterrence initiatives, and interventions including treatment and restorative justice.
- **Assess BPPD for improvements.** We developed a scorecard to measure BPPD performance. We recommend the city, BPPD, and community members impacted by systemic marginalization and police contact partner to assess and recommend changes to BPPD.

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Project background

Research consensus backs up community wisdom: we cannot arrest our way to safety. Large-scale studies have found that crime rates are largely unaffected by different sizes of police forces and different types of policing, and that arrests, criminal charges, and imprisonment are often destabilizing and harmful to a community, and can increase the risk of future criminal behavior (International Association of Chiefs of Police & UC Center for Police Research and Policy, n.d., Franco-Paredes et al., 2021; Fox & Fournier, 2019; Levin & Haugen, 2018; Austin et al., 2016).

There can be no greater illustration of police as drivers of *unsafety* than when police kill people; this happens roughly three times every day across the United States (Mapping Police Violence, n.d.). When Minneapolis police officers killed George Floyd in May 2020, it sparked urgent work in Brooklyn Park, Minnesota.

Brooklyn Park is a second-ring suburb of Minneapolis. It is around 10 miles north of Minneapolis, its population is majority people of color, and it is the 6th most populous city in the state. During summer 2020, the Brooklyn Park City Council directed the city's Human Rights Commission (HRC), in partnership with the Brooklyn Park Police Department's Multicultural Advisory Committee (MAC), to create a plan for improving the Brooklyn Park Police Department. The city also convened four listening sessions on police reform and racial justice throughout the summer. At these listening sessions, community members shared their opinions about safety and policing in Brooklyn Park. The HRC and MAC refined their work plan based on themes from these listening sessions and City Council feedback. In October 2020, the city issued a request for proposals for researchers to build on this work and investigate four main questions:

- What can community data show about the likely root causes of community violence in Brooklyn Park?
- Where are areas that the Brooklyn Park Police Department (BPPD) is performing well, and areas for improvement?
- What research-backed evaluation tool could be used for further improving BPPD?
- What are research-driven methods to improve safety and policing in Brooklyn Park?

The city hired Wilder Research in December 2020. Researchers began working with key stakeholders from Brooklyn Park, including the Assistant City Manager, the Deputy Chief of Police, and members of the HRC and MAC to convene a group which would receive updates and ask questions about evaluation activities (the Advisory Committee), and a smaller subset of this group which would provide input into key decisions (the Evaluation Subcommittee). Of course, this project took on even more urgency when a police officer

from the neighboring suburb of Brooklyn Center, Minnesota, killed Daunte Wright in April 2021.

This report is a summary of findings from the following evaluation activities, which took place from December 2020 – June 2021, and includes a scorecard for further assessing BPPD’s performance.

It is important to recognize that the conversation around reimagining policing and safety expanded greatly during summer 2020. However, research describing the processes and impacts of initiatives to shift responsibilities and resources from police departments to community-based organizations will not start emerging until a year or two after the changes are made. This report is based on research describing current policing practices but will not reflect practices that are emerging from current initiatives to reimagine policing.

Overview of evaluation

In order to answer the research questions and develop the scorecard, researchers undertook the following data collection and analysis activities (Figure 1). For more details on evaluation activities, including why these activities were selected to answer the research questions, and interviewee demographics, see Appendix A.

1. Overview of evaluation activities

Evaluation activity	Number	Purpose
Review reports and relevant literature	66 sources	Understand social conditions where safety thrives Understand likely root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park Understand which community indicators are related to safety Understand policing best practices Understand which policing practices are related to desirable outcomes Develop police scorecard Develop interview questions
Analyze relevant, available, and reliable community indicators	18 indicators drawn from Brooklyn Park census and residential survey results	Illuminate inequities that likely impact safety in Brooklyn Park

Evaluation activity	Number	Purpose
Conduct interviews of residents and employees of Brooklyn Park	56 participants	<p>Understand perceptions of key contributors to safety in Brooklyn Park, including economic stability, neighborhood connections, and positive connections for youth</p> <p>Understand experiences with services and supports to increase economic stability, neighborhood connections, and positive connections for youth in Brooklyn Park</p> <p>Understand experiences with Brooklyn Park Police Department</p> <p>Understand perceptions of BPPD</p> <p>Understand perceptions of violence intervention opportunities</p>
Meet with Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee	8 meetings	<p>Prioritize interview questions</p> <p>Develop process to invite interview participation</p> <p>Review the research</p> <p>Prioritize police scorecard indicators</p>
Meet with key stakeholders in BPPD	5 meetings	<p>Understand current police policies, practices, and data collection and analysis protocols</p>

Overview of limitations

Key limitations are important to contextualize the information we present in this report. We summarize those here. For a more thorough discussion of limitations, see Appendix B.

- **Themes from interviews do not reflect the perspectives of all city residents or employees.** This report is limited by the time and scope of the contract, and, while interview themes presented in this report are an accurate reflection of what we heard in interviews, the scope of the project prevented us from interviewing a representative sample of people. Therefore, we caution against overgeneralization; different themes could supersede those presented here were more interviews able to be conducted.
- **Available demographic data may not reflect the diversity of Brooklyn Park.** This report includes key Brooklyn Park census data, and the race categories available through the census limit the analysis. For instance, there are many African Americans and African immigrants in Brooklyn Park, and there may be key differences between these communities. However, the census race categories do not distinguish between African American and African immigrant.

- **Not all available metrics were analyzed.** This report is also limited by the data available. Key data sources, including indicators of educational achievement, could be relevant to the study, but could not be included or considered due to the time parameters of this particular study.
- **Due to gaps in the research, it is not always possible to connect key police practices to desired outcomes.** Evidence for the effectiveness of practices such as body-worn cameras, de-escalation training, implicit bias training, early intervention systems, and civilian oversight of police departments, is often absent or inconclusive, which means that the relationship between these police practices and key outcomes, such as improved de-escalation or reduced police violence, is not clear.
- **The scorecard is not exhaustive.** The project scope and timeframe limited the research review and development of the BPPD scorecard. There may be additional or alternative indicators for measuring BPPD performance and driving department improvements.

Root causes of community violence in Brooklyn Park

This section briefly summarizes what we learned from literature, analysis of Brooklyn Park community data, and relevant themes from interviews to answer the first research question:

What can community data show about the likely root causes of community violence in Brooklyn Park?

To answer this question, we first reviewed research for consensus on what social conditions risk or protect against violence. Then, we reviewed research to understand what community data can show where risk and protective factors are present. Next, we analyzed Brooklyn Park community data to show the distribution of risk and protective factors across races and places. Finally, we analyzed information from interviewees to understand community perceptions of the distribution of social conditions for community safety across Brooklyn Park. For detailed information, including our research review, analysis of specific risk and protective factors, and discussion of interview themes, see Appendix C.

Root causes of community violence

From our review of the research, we found the following root causes of violence in communities in the United States:

- **There are risks of violence when people are not economically secure, and positively connected to their community.** A robust body of research exists on community-level factors that decrease (protective factors) or increase (risk factors) violence in a community (Lazarus et al., 2017; Armstead et al., 2018; Pearl, 2019; Turner, 2020b). Based on our review of the research, Wilder Research created the following graphic to show the root drivers of violence in communities.

2. Root causes of community violence

Lack of positive youth development opportunities

- Few opportunities for youth workforce development
- Lack of positive engagement opportunities (arts, recreation, volunteering) outside of school

Lack of neighborhood cohesion

- Low civic engagement
- Poor neighbor relations (distrust, not knowing neighbors, overt and implicit personal bias)
- High housing turnover and instability

Built environment

- Lack of clean and vibrant public spaces
- High alcohol outlet density

Economic inequality

- Large income gaps between rich and poor
- Lack of access to effective poverty reduction programs

Economic instability

- High unemployment
- Lack of access to living wage jobs
- High cost of living
- High poverty

Education insufficiencies

- Lack of access to high-quality early childhood education
- High truancy rates
- Low grade readiness and high school graduation
- High suspension rates



Health care insufficiencies

- Low insurance coverage
- Lack of access to mental and physical health care
- Lack of access to substance use treatment

Family trauma and lack of support

- High rates of family trauma
- High rates of child abuse and neglect
- Low access to effective social service providers

Broadly speaking, when people are struggling economically, are not well-served by systems including education and health care, lack positive connections to their communities, and experience family trauma, communities are at greater risk of violence and disorder. Research shows the opposite to be true, as well. In communities where people have what they need, there are lower risks of violence and disorder (Lazarus et al., 2017; Armstead et al., 2018; Pearl, 2019; Turner, 2020b).

- **Community-level data show which groups of people have what they need.** Wilder reviewed dozens of articles to understand which factors have the strongest evidence-base for creating conditions of public safety. It is important to recognize that every community is different, with unique conditions that contribute to safety. However, research supports that the following community-level data can help understand where the social conditions for safety are present, or lacking (Armstead et al., 2018; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016):
 - **Economic stability indicators**, including cost of living, employment, homeownership, income, and health insurance.
 - **Neighborhood connection indicators**, including civic engagement, public spaces, and neighbor relations.
 - **Education indicators**, including education level achieved, availability of high-quality early childhood education, truancy rates, college readiness, and rates of school suspensions.
 - **Family indicators**, including family trauma, child abuse and neglect, and single-caregiver families.

Brooklyn Park community data show unequal distribution of the conditions where safety thrives

Broadly speaking, Brooklyn Park community data show that the likely root causes of community violence are more prevalent in southern Brooklyn Park than northern Brooklyn Park. Brooklyn Park community data also show that the likely root causes of community violence are more frequently experienced by Black, Latino, and Native residents than White residents. In Figure 3, we present where community data analyzed by place and race, and/or interview themes supported the idea that a particular root cause of community violence is more concentrated in some communities in Brooklyn Park than in others.

3. Brooklyn Park data show unequal distribution of root causes of violence across place and/or race.

Root cause of violence	Place disparities?	Race disparities?	Interview theme?
Physical environment	Data not available	Data not available	Not asked
Economic inequality	Yes. For example, median household income in the northeast corner of the city is \$114,479, compared to \$36,201 in the south central area. ^a	Yes. For example, median household income for Asian residents is \$94,986, compared to \$48,539 for Black residents. ^a	Yes. Interviewees reported economic disparities in Brooklyn Park.
Economic instability	Yes. For example, the unemployment rate of working-age adults is nearly twice as high in south central Brooklyn Park (27%) as it is in the northeast (14%). ^a	Yes. For example, 18% of White working-age adult residents are unemployed, compared to 25% of Black working-age adult residents. ^a	Yes. Interviewees reported unequal distribution of economic stability across the city.
Educational insufficiencies	Yes. For example, 13% of adults age 25 or older in south central Brooklyn Park have a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 44% of adults 25 or older in northeast Brooklyn Park. ^a	Yes. For example 16% of Native residents age 25 or older have a bachelor's degree, compared to 37% of White residents, and 39% of residents of two or more races. ^a	Not asked
Family trauma and lack of support	Data not available	Data not available	Not asked
Health care insufficiencies	Yes. 16% of residents age 65 and under have no health insurance in south central Brooklyn Park, compared to 3% in northeast Brooklyn Park. ^a	Yes. 20% of Latino residents age 65 and under have no health insurance coverage, compared to 4% of White residents. ^a	Not asked

Root cause of violence	Place disparities?	Race disparities?	Interview theme?
Lack of neighborhood cohesion	Yes. For example, 78% of survey respondents said they feel comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with neighbors in southern Brooklyn Park, compared to 85% of respondents in the north. ^b	Yes. For example, 91% of Asian survey respondents reported feeling comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with neighbors, compared with 74% of African respondents. ^b	Yes. Interviewees reported that not everyone in Brooklyn Park feels a sense of community.
Lack of positive youth development opportunities	Data not available	Data not available	Yes. Interviewees reported that youth development initiatives are not equally available across place and/or race.

^a Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

^b Source: Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019.

Analysis of available and reliable community data in Brooklyn Park, as well as themes from interviews, support the idea that the conditions that risk community violence are present in Brooklyn Park. Further, these risk conditions appear to be unequally concentrated so that residents on the south side of the city and Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) residents experience relative disadvantage.

It is important to note that systemic racism contributes to these disparities, largely driving conditions and outcomes that are more positive for White people and conditions and outcomes that are more negative for people of color. For example, community data show that rates of homeownership vary across race and place in Brooklyn Park. Relevant to homeownership disparities is the unconstitutional practice of redlining, which was common for generations. Redlining allowed White people access to and excluded BIPOC people from higher-value homes and neighborhoods with more amenities (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). This practice, while no longer legal today, has generational ripple effects. It allowed for accumulation of wealth by White people and unfair exclusion from wealth for BIPOC people. It contributes to racial segregation within communities, likely within Brooklyn Park. It continues to affect public school quality and outcomes, as public school funding is still greatly impacted by the property taxes raised in a community.

Additionally relevant to economic inequality, property tax revenue, and public school funding are regional policies directing the amount of affordable housing units to be built in a community. At one point, a regional authority tasked the city of Brooklyn Park with building nearly 1,500 new affordable housing units in the city between 2011 and 2020, while setting a target of 212 units for the majority-White, more affluent, and slightly less populated Minneapolis suburb of Edina (Kolson Hurley, 2016). A lawsuit challenged these targets, arguing that this policy unfairly limits “the development of affordable housing in high-opportunity, majority-white communities and steer[s] such units to low-opportunity, high-poverty communities” (Kolson Hurley, 2016).

We note that current and historical policies and practices contribute to race and place disparities in order to maintain attention on the systems that produce inequitable outcomes, rather than to focus attention on the people struggling within those systems.

Policing in Brooklyn Park

This section briefly summarizes what we learned from literature, analysis of publicly available Brooklyn Park police policies and data, and relevant themes from interviews to answer the second research question:

What are areas where the Brooklyn Park Police Department is performing well, and areas for improvement?

To answer this question, we first reviewed research to understand common policing practices, with a special focus on those practices that research shows are related to desirable outcomes, including decreased police use of force, increased police accountability, and decreased crime rates. Next, we reviewed publicly available data about BPPD and its practices, including the policy manual, union contract, and open data website. Finally, we coded and analyzed information from interviews to understand experiences with and perceptions of BPPD.

An additional research question about policing in Brooklyn Park was:

What research-backed evaluation tool could be used for further improving BPPD?

To review the scorecard we developed, and how we developed it, see Appendix G.

In the remainder of this section, we report a summary of the research on policing best practices, BPPD open data, and relevant interview themes. For a full reporting of interview themes relevant to BPPD, see Appendix D. For further details on other police performance measures, see Appendix G.

Policing has limited effects on safety

The wisdom of some community members who have been personally impacted by traditional policing and incarceration is: we do not and cannot arrest or incarcerate our way to safety. The overarching model of traditional policing involves responding to a breach of criminal law with an investigation, culminating in arrest(s) and referral(s) to prosecutors for charging and criminal sanctions, including incarceration. Research tends to bolster community wisdom and shows traditional policing to have the following limitations:

Most policing has little to do with serious safety threats

National analysis show that fewer than 5% of all arrests are for serious violent offenses (Neusteter & O’Toole, 2019). In Brooklyn Park, researchers estimate that more than half of arrests by BPPD (57%) are for low-level offenses (Campaign Zero, n.d.a).

More police, and more incarceration, may not reduce crime

A team of researchers, experts, economists, criminologists, and law enforcement experts and officers conducted a “comprehensive study of the drop in the crime rate from 1990 to 2013” (Roeder et al., 2015, p. 12). After years of research and analysis, and review by a team of experts including judges, police presidents and commissioners, and criminologists, the study concluded that **increased police numbers contributed to between 0-10% of the reduction in crime in the 1990s, and contributed nothing to the crime decline from 2000 through 2013** (the most recent year studied). The study further concluded that increased rates of incarceration caused between 0-7% of the crime decline in the 90s, and no more than 1% of the crime decline from 2000 through 2013.

A subsequent meta-analysis of the relationship between the number of police officers in a city and crime rates reviewed 62 studies between 1972 and 2013. It found that “the effect on crime of adding or subtracting police is miniscule and not statistically significant,” and, further, that there is “no consensus among the studies and findings about the usefulness of adding more police.” (Eck, et al., 2017, p. 14) Some studies reviewed suggested that adding police can reduce crime, others did not, and still others found that adding police was associated with more crime (Eck, et al., 2017).

Another team of researchers and experts analyzed public and FBI data for cities across the U.S. from 1981 through 2018. This team concluded that increasing a city’s police force by between 10 and 17 officers may prevent one murder annually, with reductions to some other serious crimes. However, this team of experts also found that **cities in the South and Midwest with the largest populations of Black people do not experience fewer homicides with more police, rather, they experience “even more arrests of Black people for low-level crimes”** (Rosalsky, 2021). Brooklyn Park is a Midwestern city with a large Black population; meaning it is likely this finding applies to Brooklyn Park.

Arrests, jailings, and incarceration risk police violence and future crime in the community

A robust body of research connects enforcement-heavy policing with police violence and increased risk for crime in community. Researchers have found:

- **Police kill around 1,000 people across the United States every year.** This rate of police violence held true in 2020 during major declines to public movement because of COVID-19 lockdown orders and other cautions. In 2020, most killings by police began with suspected non-violent offenses or where no crime was reported (Mapping Police Violence, n.d.).
- **Arrests, even absent convictions, can increase risk of future system involvement.** Summarizing research on police, incarceration, and crime rates, the International Association of Chiefs of Police and UC Center for Police Research and Policy concluded that “arrest can have adverse consequences – with or without a conviction – that perpetuate criminal activity” (International Association of Chiefs of Police & UC Center for Police Research and Policy, n.d., p. 1).
- **Jailing and prosecution, including pretrial incarceration, can risk more crime than alternatives, including, in some instances, doing nothing.** Research demonstrates the harms and criminogenic effect of jail, connecting the length of pre-trial detention to increased risks of lasting trauma, ruptured connections with the factors that prevent crime (for example, close connections with family and loved ones, and employment), and increased recidivism risks (Franco-Paredes et al., 2021; Fox & Fournier, 2019; Levin & Haugen, 2018). An additional team of researchers who tracked 420,000 people for two years concluded “there was no net public safety benefit of pretrial incarceration” (Levin & Haugen, 2018, p. 19). Another team of researchers analyzed data generated by the random assignment of nonviolent misdemeanor cases in Suffolk County, MA (Boston). Some prosecutors declined to prosecute, but others did not. Researchers concluded that not prosecuting was associated with large reductions in an individual’s likelihood of getting a new criminal charge in the subsequent two years (Agan et al., 2021). Another team of researchers and experts conducted a comprehensive review of the literature describing the criminogenic impacts of imprisonment and the situation of people incarcerated in state and federal prisons. They found that alternatives to prison including treatment (relevant for approximately 64% of those experiencing incarceration) or release (relevant for approximately 14% of those incarcerated) would achieve greater public safety results for less money (Austin et al., 2016).

In sum, research indicates that increasing the number of BPPD officers or improving BPPD’s performance along traditional measures may be unrelated to, or not the most efficient way, to promote the goal of improving safety in Brooklyn Park.

Policing best practices

From our review of the research, we found that the following police practices are related to desirable outcomes:

- **Bans or informed consent restrictions on consent-based searches.** These searches occur when police ask a person for permission to search them and/or their belongings, and people are frequently unaware of the fact that they have the right to refuse. Research shows the anti-BIPOC impacts of these types of searches, as officers are more likely to request a search of BIPOC people than White people, but are less likely to find contraband or evidence of criminal behavior when they do searches (Stahly-Butts, & Subramanian, 2015). Even so, officers execute enough searches against BIPOC people that it contributes to anti-BIPOC arrest and prosecution disparities for low-level, non-violent offenses such as marijuana possession. A research-driven recommendation is to either eliminate consent-based searches or impose clear restrictions to protect informed consent. These restrictions include verbal and written reminders that an individual can refuse consent with no negative consequences, and requirements that officers collect written consent from individuals documenting that the individual understands their right to refuse and is granting consent to the search.
- **De-escalation.** Many sources mentioned skills in de-escalation as a policing best practice (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a; Police Executive Research Forum, 2015) By definition de-escalation is related to desirable outcomes, as the more frequently officers are able to de-escalate a situation, the less frequently an officer will use force.
- **Officer identification.** When officers are required to share information identifying themselves with the people with whom they are interacting, officers are less likely to engage in disrespect and use of force (Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015).
- **Procedural justice.** Procedural justice includes processes where individuals feel like they are treated with dignity and respect, like they had an opportunity to say what was important to them during interactions, where people in power are neutral and transparent in decision-making, and people in power display trustworthy motives (President's Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Studies show that procedural justice is related to community trust in police (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2017).

- Police union contract provisions, and other relevant laws, support accountability for misconduct.** Some common union contract provisions or state laws are associated with higher levels of police using force against, and/or killing community members (Campaign Zero, n.d.b; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). These provisions include restrictions on oversight and discipline, erasing or obscuring misconduct records, and others (see Appendix G, “Discussion of specific indicators”). A research-driven recommendation is that union contracts and other laws governing hiring, discipline, and dismissal practices promote, instead of block, officer accountability for misconduct, overuse of force, and killing.

Our review of the research also showed many other police practices that sources tended to describe as “best practices.” However, evidence connecting these practices to desirable outcomes such as increased community safety and decreased police use of force is either missing or inconsistent. Therefore, for the purposes of this report, we focus on the five concepts described above as best practices.

Brooklyn Park police data show that best practices may not consistently be in place

Broadly speaking, Brooklyn Park police data show that BPPD is governed by rules that allow for practices that are related to undesirable outcomes (Figure 4). Additionally, BPPD reports crime statistics and traffic stop data on its open data portals (City of Brooklyn Park, n.d.). However, there are no open data available through this website that are relevant to any of the five best practices reviewed here. Finally, interviewees reported negative and positive experiences with BPPD officers that had to do with (de-)escalation and procedural justice.

4. Brooklyn Park police data show that best practices may not consistently be in place

Police best practice, per research	Which rules govern BPPD?	What does publicly available data say?	Interview theme?
Consent-based searches are restricted or banned	Consent-based searches are allowed, p. 121 ^d	Not reported by BPPD ^a	No
De-escalation is required	De-escalation mandated “whenever possible and appropriate,” p. 44 ^d	Not reported by BPPD ^a	Yes. More people with experience with said BPPD should improve de-escalation than reported BPPD de-escalated a situation well.
Officers are required to identify themselves to all	Officers required to present official identification card only upon request, p. 550 ^d	Not reported by BPPD ^a	No

Police best practice, per research	Which rules govern BPPD?	What does publicly available data say?	Interview theme?
Procedural justice is promoted	Policy manual includes many provisions affirming need to treat community members with dignity and respect, pp. 122, 246, and more. ^d	Not reported by BPPD ^a	Yes. More people with experience said BPPD treated people with dignity and respect than reported BPPD should improve in this area
Union contracts and other laws do not impose key limits on oversight or discipline	BPPD policy manual ^d , at least one union contract ^b , and Minnesota law Minn. Stat. §626.89 all impose restrictions on oversight and discipline related with higher levels of police use of force.	Not reported by BPPD ^a	No

^aSource: City of Brooklyn Park, n.d.

^bSource: City of Brooklyn Park and Minnesota Teamsters Public and Law Enforcement Employees' Union, 2017.

^cSource: Peace Office Discipline Procedures Act, Minn. Stat. §626.89, 2020.

^dSource: Brooklyn Park Police Department, 2021.

Based on the above, it appears that there are several key areas where BPPD could improve, including by changing policies and practices to align with the five best practices identified.

Assessment of BPPD

Wilder staff asked interviewees several open- and close-ended questions designed to understand interviewees' experiences with and perceptions of BPPD. Researchers developed these questions by drawing on the research review and relevant themes from the city's listening sessions.

Open-ended questions asked interviewees to share whether they had close experience with BPPD officers. By "close experience," we mean Brooklyn Park residents and/or someone they are close with had experience with BPPD, either because they called for service or were otherwise contacted by police within the last five years. There were 29 Brooklyn Park residents with such experience. Researchers asked interviewees to tell us about the experience, including the reason for the police contact (for example, responding to an emergency call, BPPD stopping the interviewee), what, if anything, they thought went well with the interaction, and anything they thought could have gone better. Interviewees were free to raise as many ideas as they could think of, and researchers reviewed interview transcripts for common themes, including themes about accountability, de-escalation, effectiveness, and procedural justice.

In close-ended questions, researchers asked interviewees to rate their level of agreement with the following four statements about policing practices:

- The Brooklyn Park Police Department listens to diverse community concerns, and makes changes to address those concerns. (We asked this question to understand what interviewees thought about *accountability*).
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence. (We asked this question to understand what interviewees thought about *de-escalation*).
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that interrupt criminal behavior to create safety. (We asked this question to understand what interviewees thought about *effectiveness*).
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that treat people with dignity and respect. (We asked this question to understand what interviewees thought about *procedural justice*).

Interviewees were also asked to explain why they agreed or disagreed with the four statements. Researchers coded interviewee responses as positive, negative, or neutral.

Here, we summarize relevant themes from the interviews (Figure 5).

5. Interviewees' experiences with and perceptions of BPPD

Themes from...	Accountability	De-escalation	Effectiveness	Procedural justice
Resident interviewees with close experience with BPPD	Not a theme from interviews.	More interviewees said BPPD should improve de-escalation than reported BPPD de-escalated a situation well.	Not a theme from interviews.	More interviewees said BPPD treated people with dignity and respect than reported BPPD should improve in this area.
Resident interviewees' perceptions, regardless of close experience with BPPD	More interviewees had positive perceptions of BPPD accountability than negative.	An equal number of interviewees had positive and negative perceptions of BPPD's de-escalation skills.	More interviewees had negative perceptions of BPPD effectiveness than positive.	An equal number of interviewees had positive and negative perceptions of BPPD's procedural justice skills.
BPPD police officer interviewees	Officers agreed that BPPD listens to concerns and cited challenges to making changes.	Officers agreed that de-escalation is a high priority.	Officers agreed that there are limits to their effectiveness.	Officers understand that people do not feel equally well-treated across races and places.

Information from the interviews indicates that some Brooklyn Park residents and police officers share common ideas about strengths and areas for improvement for BPPD. According to the literature, BPPD data, and themes from the interviewees with close experience with BPPD and BPPD officers, a key strength could be:

- **Procedural justice.** Research connects procedural justice to increased community trust, the BPPD policy manual makes many references to treating community members with dignity and respect, and interviewees with close experience with BPPD more frequently reported being treated according to procedural justice than reporting procedural justice as an area for improvement. BPPD officers also reflected on how the community sees them, and reported that it was likely that some people may feel they are treated better by BPPD than others.

Also, according to the literature, BPPD data, and themes from the interviewees with close experience with BPPD and BPPD officers, a key area for improvement could be:

- **De-escalation.** De-escalation reduces police use of force. The BPPD policy manual mandates de-escalation where “possible and appropriate.” While the Brooklyn Park Police Open Data website does not, as of September 2021, include any reporting about BPPD use of force, BPPD data show that officers pointed a gun at someone 550 times in 2018 and 754 times in 2019, and used a Taser on someone between 15 and 22 times per year between 2016 – 2019 (Campaign Zero, 2020). Further, more people with experience with BPPD said that BPPD should improve de-escalation than reported de-escalation as something BPPD did well. Finally, BPPD officers agreed that de-escalation is a high priority for the department, and expressed interest in learning more about what de-escalation strategies the community would like to see them use.

Next, according to the literature and BPPD data, though not reported by interviewees with close experience with BPPD or BPPD officers, an additional area for improvement could be:

- **Mandating officers perform according to five best practices.** Our research review showed that banning consent-based searches, requiring officers to always identify themselves to the people with whom they are interacting, eliminating common limits to oversight and discipline, de-escalation, and procedural justice are related to desirable outcomes. However, BPPD policies and, in one case, union contract and Minnesota law, allow practices that are related with undesirable outcomes.

There is a final area of alignment between the research and themes from the interviews: the limits of BPPD effectiveness. More interviewees than not reported that BPPD does not intervene in crime in ways that interrupt criminal behavior to create safety. Further, BPPD officers agreed that there are limits to their effectiveness. Because research shows that policing and safety are largely unrelated, we do not list effectiveness as a key area for improvement for BPPD.

Addressing violence in Brooklyn Park

A final question we sought to answer is:

What are research-driven methods to improve safety and policing in Brooklyn Park?

To answer this question, Wilder staff reviewed relevant research to uncover effective interventions and asked all interviewees about two specific interventions that were mentioned in the literature. We summarize relevant research and themes from Brooklyn Park interviews here.

Effective interventions

We found evidence that restorative justice and focused deterrence interventions are associated with community violence prevention, and researchers asked interviewees to share their thoughts about these interventions. Here, we summarize the research and themes from the interviews. To find themes, researchers read transcripts from all interviews and noted where common ideas arose. A theme is an idea raised by five or more interviewees.

Restorative justice

Research shows that restorative justice interventions can be effective in instances of community violence and disorder (Sered, 2019). Restorative justice interventions involve community-based workers working with the person who caused harm, as well as the person or people harmed. Where survivors of harm consent, workers build relationships with the parties involved and impacted, with the ultimate goal of the responsible party understanding the impact of their behavior, and co-creating a plan to ensure accountability and repair harm. Evidence shows that restorative interventions, even in instances of serious violence and physical injury, are effective mechanisms to promote accountability and reduce the risk of future harm by the responsible party (Umbreit et al., 2004; National Council on Crime & Delinquency, 2015) and that they reduce symptoms of post-traumatic stress disorder in those that were harmed (Angel et al., 2014).

Interviewees identify strengths of restorative interventions

Researchers asked interviewees to share their thoughts about the strengths, if any, of restorative interventions. Interviewees were free to list as many strengths as they could think of. In order from most to least frequently mentioned, interviewees said they thought restorative interventions:

- Promote positive growth
- Support those harmed in addition to focusing on the responsible party

- Address root causes of violence and harm
- Strengthen relationships and/or a sense of community
- Promote accountability
- Promote healing
- Promote second chances

Interviewees identify concerns with restorative interventions

Researchers also asked interviewees to share their thoughts about the challenges or concerns, if any, of restorative interventions. Interviewees could list as many as they wished. We note that these concerns may or may not align with research about restorative interventions, and report these concerns to aid stakeholders in understanding where there may be challenges to community buy-in to implement or expand restorative interventions in Brooklyn Park.

Overall, interviewees more frequently identified strengths of restorative justice rather than concerns with the concept. In order from most to least frequently mentioned, themes were:

- Restorative interventions may not be effective for more serious or violent incidents
- Harmed parties may not want to participate in restorative interventions
- The responsible party may not want to change, repair, or follow through with accountability
- Restorative interventions may not have necessary community or government support to be implemented at scale
- Restorative interventions may require too many resources to be cost-effective

Focused deterrence

Research shows that focused deterrence initiatives can prevent some types of community violence. Focused deterrence “involves the identification of specific offenders and offending groups, the mobilization of a diverse group of law enforcement, social services, and community stakeholders, the framing of a response using both sanctions and rewards, and direct, repeated communication with the individuals and groups in order to stop their violent behavior” (Abt, 2017, p. 276). Studies have shown that focused deterrence is related to reduced community violence and homicides (Braga & Weisburd, 2015).

Interviewees identify strengths of focused deterrence

Researchers asked interviewees to share their thoughts about the strengths, if any, of focused deterrence. Interviewees were free to list as many strengths as they could think of. Interviewees identified the following as potential strengths to focused deterrence in Brooklyn Park, in order from most to least frequently mentioned:

- Focused deterrence may address root causes of violence and harm
- The partnerships involved in focused deterrence could build relationships and community accountability
- A focus on prevention is better than a focus on punishment

Interviewees identify concerns with focused deterrence

Researchers asked interviewees to share their thoughts about their concerns, if any, with focused deterrence. Interviewees were free to list as many concerns as they could think of. Overall, interviewees more frequently reported concerns with focused deterrence than its strengths. Again, we note that these concerns may or may not align with research about focused deterrence, and report these concerns to aid stakeholders in understanding where there may be challenges to community buy-in to implement or expand focused deterrence in Brooklyn Park.

Interviewees identified the following as potential concerns with focused deterrence in Brooklyn Park:

- Bias, racism, stigma, or unfair blame could all lead to inappropriately identifying individuals to receive the focused deterrence intervention
- Concerns about which agencies or people would lead focused deterrence, including concerns about BPPD involvement, and recommendations that leadership should be people who are widely trusted, and who have diverse skill sets
- The resource-intensive nature of focused deterrence
- Initiatives may not have buy-in from the individuals who could benefit from it

Reducing reliance on policing

Research shows that the size of a police department, and many police activities, including most arrests, detentions, and investigations culminating in criminal charges, have little to do with safety in a community (see “Policing has limited effects on safety,” above). Here, we summarize evidence that shifting resources from police-based responses to community-based responses contributes to improved community outcomes. Shifting resources in this

way also reduces the risk of police use of force and misconduct, which can be an additional driver of safety, as concentrated pockets of disadvantage combined with perceptions of police mistreatment (both of which this project found are present in Brooklyn Park) are related to increased risks of community violence (Turner, 2020b).

Behavioral health interventions

One method to shift responsibility from police to community-based alternatives that is gaining traction is the idea of community-first or community-partnered responses to behavioral health crises. Crisis Assistance Helping out on the Streets (CAHOOTS) is a decades-old program in Eugene, Oregon that involves a crisis team of a mental health worker and medical professional (usually a nurse or EMT) being dispatched to mental health calls. CAHOOTS teams were the first responders to around 24,000 calls in 2019, and requested police assistance 311 times (Beck et al., 2020). Other models of behavioral health crisis responses partner mental health professionals with police officers. Such initiatives have saved thousands of hours of police work and result in very few arrests or citations (Police Executive Research Forum, 2020). The Brooklyn Park Police Department currently has a mental health unit that embeds county social workers in the police department, in a co-responder model.

School-based interventions

Additionally, school districts across the country are cutting ties with police departments and removing police officers (sometimes called “School Resource Officers”) from schools. Intermediate School District 287 is a Twin Cities-area school district that replaced SROs with school-based Student Safety Coaches after several years of intentional focus on social emotional supports and restorative practices in the district. This change was made for a variety of reasons, and supported by research that shows that police presence in schools is not related to increased safety but is related to negative outcomes, including arrest and suspension rates, and also racial disparities in arrests and suspensions that are not explained by student behavior (Turner, 2020a).

Emerging methods to reduce reliance on policing

Recent resolutions in Brooklyn Park’s neighboring suburb, Brooklyn Center, provide another example of a jurisdiction beginning to shift resources and responsibilities from police to other entities. In the wake of Officer Kimberley Potter killing Daunte Wright in April 2020, the Brooklyn Center mayor and City Council resolved to make sweeping changes (Brooklyn Center at the Center, 2021), including:

- Creating an unarmed, non-police Crisis Response Department to respond first to behavioral health crises

- Creating an unarmed, non-police Traffic Enforcement Department to enforce non-moving traffic violations
- Creating a Department of Community Safety and Violence Prevention, using a public health approach to violence and disorder
- Creating a Community Safety and Violence Prevention Committee, with a majority of members who have direct experience being arrested or similar by Brooklyn Center Police, to create recommendations for protest response, collective bargaining, and civilian oversight
- Prohibiting Brooklyn Center Police officers from arresting or searching people in a wide variety of circumstances

While research into the effectiveness of initiatives like those above will lag behind the changes described, these and other changes to the resources and responsibilities of police departments warrant study for possible application to the Brooklyn Park Police Department. To improve safety and other outcomes, and to prevent community contact with and possible harm by police, we recommend that the City undertake a community engagement process like that described above to identify and plan for other avenues to shift responsibilities and resources from the Brooklyn Park Police Department to the community.

Recommendations: Improving safety and policing in Brooklyn Park

Focus on prevention

An overarching recommendation is to focus attention and resources on *preventing* violence. We recommend the following strategies to enhance prevention efforts in Brooklyn Park.

Start with engaging community

We recommend that the City of Brooklyn Park partner with those who live in communities most impacted by violence in focused efforts to address these issues. We make this recommendation for two reasons:

- **Places that engage community in preventing violence are the places that are most effective at reducing violence** (Turner, 2020b).
- **Neighborhood cohesion and informal social control (where neighbors know one another and share similar norms) positively relate to safety** (Soska & Ohmer, 2018). Bringing together community members who live in the same area to work on a common problem will likely foster the sorts of neighborhood connections that are positively associated with safety.

Engaging impacted people in violence prevention work can be most effective when meetings are held in community spaces, convenings meet participants' needs (including providing food, child care, transportation, and being held at varied hours), and participants have meaningful opportunities to influence policies (Pearl, 2019; Turner, 2018).

Address inequities in Brooklyn Park

We recommend addressing inequities found in our analysis of Brooklyn Park community data for two reasons.

- **First, targeted supports to improve outcomes will likely improve safety.** For example, as research indicates that homeownership is a protective factor against violence and disorder (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016), we recommend that the City target supports to increase rates of homeownership among Black, Latino, and Native people in Brooklyn Park (as well as other races, not captured by the census, where homeownership rates are lower than average). The City should also target support to address other race and place disparities.

- **Second, communities with greater equity tend to have less violence and disorder than communities with greater inequity.** Economic inequality in and of itself contributes to unsafety (Turner, 2020b), as does local segregation of low-income from high-income households (Barrington-Leigh, 2017). Addressing economic inequality in Brooklyn Park should help to improve community safety.

Increase the availability of social and emotional supports

Research found that mental health supports including family-based therapy and Cognitive Behavior Therapy, as well as programming with a focus on participants' mental and behavioral health, such as the Perry Preschool program and the Nurse Family Partnership, are all significantly related to reductions in community violence (Abt, 2017). Therefore, we recommend that the city administer equity-building and existing programs in ways that boost participants' mental health, as this would likely increase violence prevention efforts.

Improve the physical environment

Research demonstrates moderate and/or mixed results with place-based strategies to prevent community violence (Abt, 2017). We recommend that the city integrate public spaces to achieve the following:

- Well-maintained and lit public places, including streets, parks, and vacant lots (Turner, 2020b)
- Vegetation-dense public places (Wolfe & Mennis, 2012)
- Parks with “activity generators” such as rec centers, playgrounds, pools, dog parks, or organized sports (Groff & McCord, 2012)
- Neighborhoods with coffee shops, voluntary organizations, and other places for community to convene (Turner, 2020b)

Improve interventions

No person or community is perfect, and people will, mistakenly or intentionally, harm one another. When this occurs, we recommend that Brooklyn Park ensure that interventions focus on addressing the root causes of behavior, and help harmed parties feel safe and heal. We recommend the city implement interventions with evidence of effectiveness including:

- **Focused deterrence**, which research shows has significant impacts on crime and violence (Abt, 2017). Key to focused deterrence is robust community partnerships and involvement, which could help prevent the concerns raised by interviewees from becoming reality.

- **Restorative justice**, which is related to reduced recidivism where all parties consent to the intervention (Abt, 2017). More than half of survivors of violence never report the crime to police (Langton et al., 2012). However, where restorative interventions are offered, the vast majority of harmed parties chose restorative interventions over routes to incarceration (Sered, 2019). Even when restorative interventions in violence are not offered, a majority of survivors prefer rehabilitation, treatment, probation, or community service to prison (69%; Alliance for Safety and Justice, 2016). There could be a great deal more survivor buy-in to restorative interventions than police work that leads to incarceration or other punishment, even in behaviors involving interpersonal violence. In order to avoid the criminogenic impacts of arrests, jailings, criminal charges, and incarceration, we recommend that restorative interventions be implemented pre-arrest or pre-charge.

Key to improving interventions is choosing not to pursue what does not have evidence of effectiveness. A meta-analysis of research about different police-related interventions found that heavy drug enforcement, youth surveillance, youth curfews, gun buybacks, gang prevention initiatives, community policing, boot camps, and “scared straight” interventions have not been consistently and/or significantly related with reductions in violence (Abt, 2017).

Finally, we recommend:

- **Careful prioritization of improvements to BPPD.** The scorecard developed for this project includes robust indicators to measure BPPD’s policies and practices. These indicators are based in research of traditional policing performance measures, yet there are research gaps that mean that only some indicators are associated with outcomes such as decreased police use of force. Once initial scores are assessed, we recommend that next steps include careful prioritization of improvement. Research into the social conditions for public safety, including our analysis of community indicators in Brooklyn Park and interviews with some Brooklyn Park residents, points to many avenues to improve safety in Brooklyn Park outside of the police department. This scorecard is not intended to, and cannot, assess the myriad impactful avenues that exist to improve safety before the police are involved.

Appendix

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A. Project methods

The design of the evaluation was framed around the following questions:

- What can community data show about the likely root causes of community violence and disorder in Brooklyn Park?
- Where are areas that the Brooklyn Park Police Department (BPPD) is performing well, and areas for improvement?
- What research-backed evaluation tool could be used for further improving BPPD?
- What are research-driven methods to improve safety and policing in Brooklyn Park?

In order to gain input and insights from key stakeholders in Brooklyn Park, Wilder first worked with key city staff to convene the study's Advisory Committee, which included a smaller group of the same people who participated in the Evaluation Subcommittee. Committee and subcommittee members were invited by city staff, and included Brooklyn Park city council members, the deputy chief of BPPD, the community engagement officer from BPPD, members of the city's Human Rights Commission, members of the Multicultural Advisory Committee, and other leaders from BIPOC communities in Brooklyn Park.

The Advisory Committee met monthly from January through June 2021, and the Evaluation Subcommittee met nearly every other week through the same timeframe. At Advisory Committee meetings, Wilder researchers presented updates from the project activities, reviewed the progress reports (see Appendix I), and addressed emerging questions and concerns. At Evaluation Subcommittee meetings, Wilder researchers and Evaluation Subcommittee members worked together to refine the interview questions, develop the process to invite interview participation, and refine and prioritize BPPD scorecard indicators.

Wilder researchers and Advisory Committee members worked together to create the following meeting norms, which we read at the beginning of every meeting:

- Honor the agenda and time limits
- Assume positive intentions and take responsibility for impact
- Speak one at a time
- Make sure everyone's voice is heard
- Stay engaged
- Balance participation – speak and listen
- Ask questions for clarification to help avoid making assumptions.

Throughout the project, Wilder researchers also met with key city staff. Key staff members included the assistant city manager/staff liaison to the HRC, who was involved with the HRC through their work in 2020 and charged with managing the RFP process and project; the community engagement manager, who gave expertise around engaging the community to develop the Advisory Committee and recruit interviewees; the deputy chief of police and community engagement officer, and communications staff. Based on meetings with city staff, researchers developed a project FAQ page, (which can be found here: <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/brooklyn-park-equity-in-public-safety>), refined the interview invitation process, and developed the results dissemination process. Based on meetings with BPPD officers, Wilder researchers refined the BPPD scorecard so that indicators align, to the extent possible, with current BPPD data collection methods.

Incorporating feedback from the Advisory Committee, Evaluation Subcommittee, and key city staff throughout, Wilder researchers used the following methods to answer the four guiding questions.

Research review

Wilder Research librarians searched for relevant literature and reports to understand the social conditions for public safety, community data that can describe where these social conditions are present and lacking, policing best practices, research-backed interventions in violence, and indicators to measure police performance. Researchers then reviewed the literature, which informed our analysis of Brooklyn Park community data, interview questions, and the development of the BPPD scorecard.

Analysis of relevant Brooklyn Park data

Wilder Research staff analyzed key data from Brooklyn Park to understand where the root conditions for safety are present and absent across races and places, and to understand where BPPD policies and other rules governing police conduct promote conduct that leads to desirable outcomes.

Staff first analyzed 18 indicators related to community safety found in census data and Brooklyn Park Residential Survey data. Where available and reliable, we analyzed these data disaggregated by race and geographic area. Wilder Research analyzed relevant American Community Survey data, which is collected by the U.S. Census Bureau and presented on Minnesota Compass. Relevant data included responses from 5,073 Brooklyn Park residents collected between 2015 through 2019 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2019). Wilder staff also analyzed relevant results of a recent residential study, which included survey results from 800 residents (Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019). This analysis

allows for reporting where the root conditions for violence and safety are concentrated in Brooklyn Park.

Staff also reviewed Brooklyn Park Police Department policy and procedure manual, data available on Brooklyn Park police open data portals, and relevant Minnesota law governing police conduct. This review informed reporting on where BPPD policies, and Minnesota law, conform to or conflict with police practices that research shows are related to desirable outcomes such as decreased police use of force and increased community safety.

Interviews

To gain initial insights into three areas of focus of this project, Wilder Research staff conducted 50 telephone interviews from March through May 2021. The interviewees represented 14 city staff, including law enforcement, and 36 Brooklyn Park residents. The residents who completed an interview received a \$25 gift card to compensate them for their time. The interview questions focused on:

- Perceptions of and experiences with key community safety conditions, including economic stability, neighborhood connections, and positive connections for youth, to understand successes and opportunities for the city to improve these social conditions
- Perceptions of and experiences with the Brooklyn Park Police Department, to understand key strengths and opportunities for improvement
- Feedback about focused deterrence and restorative interventions, to understand community strengths and concerns that the city might address if implementing or expanding these research-backed interventions

(For definitions of focused deterrence and restorative interventions, see “Focused deterrence” and “Restorative justice,” above.)

Interview selection process

For the community member group, Wilder staff worked with Advisory Committee members to develop an interviewee invitation plan. Advisory Committee members agreed that invitations should prioritize hearing from people in communities who were not well-reached by 2020’s listening session, including BIPOC residents and residents who have experience calling BPPD for service, or being stopped by BPPD.

To invite resident interview participation, Brooklyn Park city staff created communications including emails, social media posts, and flyers, all of which included a link to a short online questionnaire and a telephone number where people could leave a message

indicating interest in being interviewed. Wilder staff were the only ones with access to the answers to the online questionnaire and voicemails and protected interested parties' confidentiality. Advisory Committee members, who included leaders from BIPOC communities in Brooklyn Park, were also encouraged to share the interview invitation with their networks. With a focus on communities not as well reached by the 2020 listening sessions, flyers were posted in buildings and shared with community leaders, faith leaders, property managers, outreach staff and others with connections to BIPOC communities. Outreach materials were available in English and Spanish.

Wilder Research used the answers to the short questionnaire in the selection of interviewees to ensure we invited participation from those who were not well-represented in the four listening sessions the city hosted in summer 2020. Priorities for interview invitation included residents of color and people with experience (outside of work or volunteerism) with the Brooklyn Park Police Department in recent years.

Wilder staff asked community interviewees to identify their racial and ethnic background. Of the 36 community interviewees:

- 13 identified as Black or African American
- 10 identified as Asian
- 7 identified as White
- 5 identified as African
- 5 identified as Latino or Hispanic

Further, the above counts include 8 individuals who identified with more than one race or ethnicity (some people are counted in more than one of the aforementioned categories). (Note: One person's racial or ethnic background is suppressed, to protect confidentiality, or missing.)

Lastly, of the community interviewees, 21 identified as female and 14 as male. (Note: One person's identity is suppressed, to protect confidentiality, or missing.)

Participation was voluntary and participants were reminded that all of their responses were confidential at the time they were interviewed, in addition to when they submitted their name to be considered to be part of the study. Wilder used qualitative data analysis software (Atlas.ti) to analyze responses from the interviews. Any concept mentioned by five or more respondents is considered a theme.

For the city staff interviews, the team of key city staff described above provided a list of possible interviewees for Wilder to contact.

In addition to the interviews with 50 adults in Brooklyn Park, Wilder researchers conducted a group interview with six youth who live and/or attend school in Brooklyn Park. Youth interviewed were all members of Cities United, a public health initiative that started in 2018 to address the disproportionate impact of community violence on Black, male-identified youth. Wilder researchers modified the adult interview questions so that they would be appropriate for youth, and for a group interview session. Youth participants received consent from a primary caregiver and received a \$25 gift card. The group interview session was held over Zoom. Youth were not asked to share their race(s) or gender identity(ies) during the interview.

See Appendix F for a summary of findings from the youth interview, and Appendix E for the adult interview protocol.

B. Limitations

The scope of this project, and what research does and does not demonstrate about the relationship between safety and policing form key limitations for this project. Limitations are:

Themes from the interviews do not reflect the perspectives of all city employees or residents

The scope of this project did not allow for interviews to be conducted with a representative sample of Brooklyn Park residents and city employees. Interview recruitment timeframes and methods may have further limited interview participation. The invitations and sign-up questionnaires were in English and Spanish only.

Additionally, as the city and Evaluation Subcommittee members were interested in hearing from people missed during the listening sessions from summer 2020, Wilder researchers prioritized inviting interview participation from people with diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds, and people who indicated they had experience with BPPD.

Taken together, not everyone who lives or works in Brooklyn Park may have known about the opportunity to sign up and be part of the study. For instance, they may have not seen the flyers or emails that were sent out by the city, or may have faced language barriers.

Finally, as interviews were semi-structured and time-limited, interviewees did not always comment on the same topics or themes. This means that it is possible that a higher proportion of interviewees may have commented on a specific theme if they had the opportunity.

Available demographic data may not reflect the diversity of Brooklyn Park

To understand how the social conditions for community safety differ across race and place in Brooklyn Park, Wilder researchers analyzed community data collected through the U.S. Census Bureau (among other sources). These data include race categories that may hide key insights about Brooklyn Park. For instance, one race category in the census is “Black.” Survey respondents who identify as Black may include African American people as well as African immigrants, and there are many African Americans and African immigrants who reside in Brooklyn Park. Due to the lack of distinction in the census data, we are not able to show whether there are differences in the distribution of the social conditions for community safety across African Americans and African immigrants. Another race category in the census is “Asian.” There are many people with Asian heritage in Brooklyn Park, including those with Chinese, Hmong, Indian, Japanese, Karen, Lao, and Vietnamese identity(ies). There may be key differences across these communities that are obscured because census categories aggregate all those with Asian racial identities.

Not all available metrics were analyzed

This report is limited by the time and scope of the contract, as well as the data available. Researchers analyzed many key metrics that were readily available and reliable. However, key indicators of educational achievement could be relevant to the study but were not included because many of these indicators include data about students from neighboring suburbs. Accessing and analyzing only those data describing Brooklyn Park students was not always possible within the parameters of this study. Data around family trauma may also contribute to greater understanding of the root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park, but were similarly inaccessible due to the parameters of this study.

Due to gaps in the research, it is not always possible to connect key police practices to desired outcomes

There is limited empirical evidence describing the relationship between different police practices and key outcomes, such as improved de-escalation or reduced police violence. A 2020 meta-analysis of the scholarship around five common “reforms” (body worn cameras, de-escalation training, implicit bias training, early intervention systems, and civilian oversight) concluded that “the body of evidence supporting the effectiveness of most of these initiatives is generally thin, and, in some cases, nearly nonexistent” (Engel et al., 2020, p. 152). Reasons for the evidence gaps are mixed. Some reforms, such as body worn cameras, involve relatively new technology, and studies of their impacts are just beginning to emerge. Other reforms, such as de-escalation training, implicit bias training, and early intervention systems, are implemented in different ways in different departments, making it difficult to get uniform information on the reform and its impact. Similarly, civilian oversight is implemented differently in different jurisdictions, and additionally constrained by laws limiting oversight, access to police data, or civilian discipline that vary by jurisdiction.

Therefore, while Wilder researchers can endorse that the goals and indicators present in our scorecard align with a body of literature describing police practices and how to measure them, as well as what we heard was important during engagement with key stakeholders in Brooklyn Park, we largely are unable to predict whether and how improving BPPD’s score on the scorecard will relate to desired outcomes such as reduced risk of police and community violence.

There are some exceptions to the lack of evidence. Where indicators in the scorecard are based on literature that connects those indicators to outcomes like police violence and community safety, we summarize those connections in “Policing best practices,” above. Additional details about indicators can be found in Appendix G, “Discussion of specific indicators.”

The scorecard is not exhaustive

The project scope and timeframe limited the research review and development of the BPPD scorecard. There may be additional or alternative indicators for measuring BPPD performance and driving department improvements. Further, some indicators included in the scorecard may not be cost effective to measure or use. The city and key stakeholders, including police officers and people who live in communities lacking the social conditions where safety thrives, could consider streamlining or otherwise changing the scorecard indicators over time as new evidence emerges and community needs evolve.

C. Brooklyn Park community safety indicators

Wilder researchers reviewed dozens of articles to understand what factors have the strongest evidence base for creating conditions of community safety. *It is important to recognize that every community is different with unique conditions that contribute to safety.* Wilder’s literature review therefore focused on identifying factors that have the strongest evidence base across multiple diverse communities. Two communities that have developed high-quality, evidence-based community safety scorecards from which many parts of this report are drawn are Santa Rosa, CA and Los Angeles, CA. Santa Rosa’s scorecard focuses on domains known to impact community safety and gang crime (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Los Angeles’s scorecard focuses on domains known to impact youth and gang violence (Meza, 2011). This analysis of community data in Brooklyn Park is therefore a first step in identifying inequities that risk violence and disorder.

Communities that have engaged deeply in public safety work have learned that “traditional” indicators of crime and safety, such as arrest rate or crime victimization, have limited value (Meza, 2011; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). These measures can point to where reported crime happens and describe the police response. However, these measures do not illuminate how to improve safety in a community, which research shows is done through improving social, economic, and environmental conditions in a community (Lazarus et al., 2017; Pearl, 2019; Turner, 2020b).

Conceptualizing public safety as a condition created upstream of law enforcement correctly de-centers the police as uniquely responsible for public safety. Police have responsibility for responding to breaches of public safety, but are not directly responsible for creating the social, economic, and environmental conditions where safety thrives (Pearl, 2019). At the systems level, other government agencies, social service agencies, education systems, and health care agencies are all integral in creating public safety (Pearl, 2019). This framework also recognizes that over-policing BIPOC communities, and direct police violence against BIPOC community members, can be a driver of violence in a community.

“Protective factors are the conditions that help increase communities’ resilience and lower the likelihood of violence” (Armstead et al., 2018, p. S42).

Key protective factors include:

- Living wage jobs
- High-quality education
- High-quality social services and health care
- Neighborhood cohesion

- Positive youth connections
- Clean and vibrant public spaces such as parks and business districts
- Civic engagement (e.g., voting, volunteerism)

"Risk factors are the conditions that increase the likelihood that a community will experience violence" (Armstead et al., 2018, p. S42).

Key risk factors include:

- Economic instability
 - Neighborhood poverty
 - Income inequality
- Neighborhood deterioration
- Housing instability
- High density of alcohol outlets

Research indicates that risk and protective factors above are often inextricably linked in a community, with advantage and disadvantage often being concentrated geographically (Meza, 2011). For example, in Los Angeles, a high number of risk factors such as poverty and unemployment are correlated strongly to low levels of protective factors and ultimately low levels of safety. As the disaggregation of community indicators in this report by census tract indicate the same is largely true in Brooklyn Park, with disadvantage across domains concentrated geographically.

This Appendix explains more fully those Brooklyn Park community metrics that are related to safety. Because there is strong evidence in communities across the U.S. that systemic inequities drive crime, a specific focus of this section is to understand where there are inequities in Brooklyn Park geographically and across racial/ethnic groups (Armstead et al., 2018; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Turner, 2020b). We present here our analysis of relevant, available, and reliable community data in Brooklyn Park, as well as a summary of what the research says about how such data are related to safety. Finally, we synthesize this analysis with relevant information from our interviews with 50 adults who live in and/or work for Brooklyn Park.

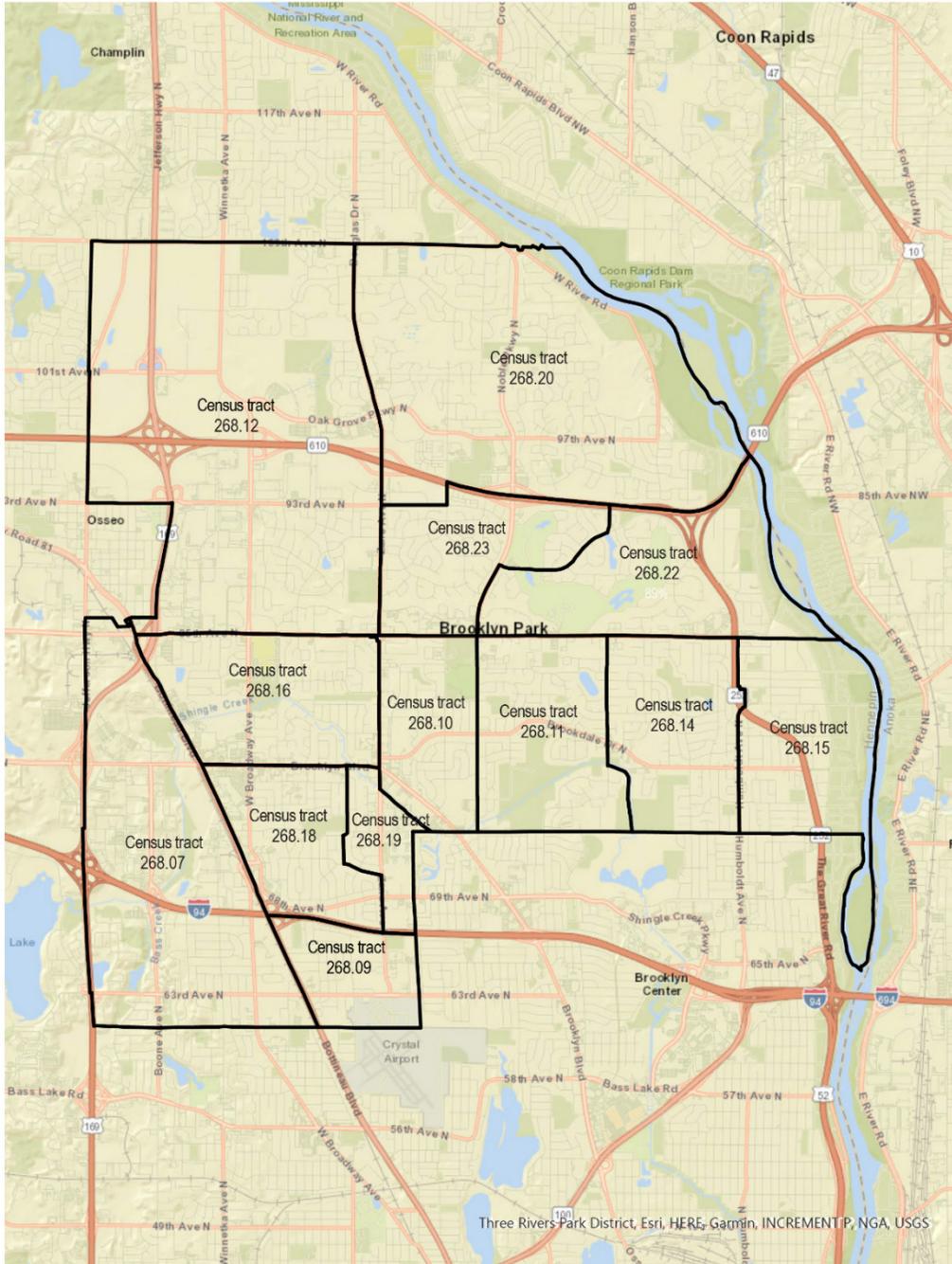
We present information from interviews as a first step to understanding relevant strengths and opportunities for improvement of the social conditions where safety thrives. Interviews were limited in time and number and do not present exhaustive information to describe or assess the services and supports in Brooklyn Park that may improve these social conditions. Further, when presenting Brooklyn Park community data, we are limited in our discussion to the racial and ethnic groups that are defined by the census or the Brooklyn Park

Residential Study. These racial and ethnic groupings may be overly broad. See Appendix B for more detail on this limitation.

The City of Brooklyn Park is also interested in learning how these metrics and inequities impact the legitimacy and relevance of law enforcement in Brooklyn Park. Generally, there are no standardized, publicly available community indicators (e.g. census questions) that tell us much about people's attitudes on the legitimacy and relevance of law enforcement. Additionally, research shows that citizen satisfaction with police is not closely related to police service delivery (Tiwana et al., 2015). As such, we do not attempt to relate community indicators to attitudes toward law enforcement.

Map of Brooklyn Park census tracts

Wilder staff analyzed Brooklyn Park community data across census tracts. The image below is a map of census tracts in Brooklyn Park. In tables below, presenting indicators disaggregated by census tract, the northern census tracts are on the left side of the tables, and the southern census tracts to the right.



Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, Topologically Integrated Geographic Encoding and Referencing (TIGER)

Note: Census tracts are statistical subdivisions of a county and do not necessarily coincide with city boundaries.

Economic conditions related to safety in Brooklyn Park

What economic conditions are related to public safety?

Lack of community resources and family economic challenges are root conditions of community violence (Armstead et al., 2018; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Turner, 2020b; Weiss et al., 2012). Well-established indicators of a community's economic conditions include protective factors like living-wage incomes and high rates of homeownership and risk factors like high community unemployment and high cost of living (Armstead et al., 2018).

Why do economic conditions matter?

A high cost of living makes it challenging for families to improve their circumstances and accumulate wealth, including having the choice to attend a quality school or participate in pro-social activities (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). In communities with high levels of unemployment, youth struggle to enter the job market, making underground economies more attractive (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Homeownership is a primary way to build wealth in America, and homeownership is tied to a host of conditions that increase neighborhood stability, key among them being homeowners live in the same location longer than renters which builds neighborhood cohesion (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Income matters because poverty causes individuals and families to struggle to meet their daily household needs, which leads to adults working longer hours or multiple jobs creating situations where children are left unattended (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Armstead et al., 2018). Income also impacts one's ability to afford quality child care. Access to health care means access to both health insurance coverage and culturally relevant health services. Preventive health care is crucial to long-term health and safety outcomes; people with health insurance have better access to preventive care (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Children with insurance are more likely to access screening for developmental problems that, if left unidentified, can negatively impact social-emotional and academic development (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). We include health care and health insurance as an economic indicator because health insurance is a frequent benefit of employment in the U.S.

How are economic conditions related to violence prevention?

A high cost of living makes improving circumstances difficult and threatens individual self-sufficiency, and both of these things are protective factors against violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Communities with high levels of unemployment also tend to have high rates of gang and violent crime, but access to legal employment can reduce crime. Diminished economic opportunities is also tied to increases in youth violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). High homeownership

rates are associated with lower crime rates, as homeowners are more likely to be engaged in the community and remain in the same location longer than renters (Armstead et al., 2018; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Concentrated poverty increases the risk of youth and gang violence. Poor access to preventative physical and mental health services is a known root cause of violence in communities (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Turner, 2020b).

What indicators can we use to measure economic conditions?

- **Cost of living** - When a family spends more than 30% of their household income on housing costs, they are considered a “cost burdened household.” A well-established indicator for cost of living is the percentage of households spending more than 30% of household income on housing costs.
- **Employment** - While not a perfect measure of the true state of employment in a community, the unemployment rate is a well-established indicator to assess employment.
- **Homeownership** - The percentage of housing units in a community that are owner-occupied among all housing units is a well-established measure of housing ownership.
- **Income** - The percentage of families with incomes below or above certain poverty thresholds is a well-established measure of income.
- **Health insurance** - The percentage of the population with health insurance is a key indicator in measuring access to health care in a community.

Are there disparities in economic conditions in Brooklyn Park by census tract and race?

There are wide variations in Brooklyn Park economic indicators by both census tract and race. Renters in Brooklyn Park are more than twice as likely to be cost-burdened than home owners, and across census tracts the percentage of owner-occupied housing and median household income vary widely. On average, Asian and White families have a much higher median household income, are less likely to live in poverty, and are more likely to own their home when compared to American Indian, Black, and Hispanic families. These economic indicators support interviewees’ reporting that there are “two Brooklyn Parks.”

An important note about economic indicators is that research shows that high levels of economic inequity is a risk factor for violence (Turner, 2020b). This means, the greater the range of disparities in economic conditions, the greater the risk for violence in marginalized communities in Brooklyn Park.

Cost-burdened households. There are wide disparities in cost-burdened households by census tract in Brooklyn Park. As Figure C1 illustrates, the percentage of cost-burdened households range from **13%** in census tract 268.14 to **53%** in census tract 268.12.

Not surprisingly, in Brooklyn Park a higher percentage of households that rent their housing (55% cost burdened) are cost burdened compared to the percentage of households that own their housing (23% cost burdened). Disaggregating cost-burdened households by homeowners and renters within census tracts is important in realizing the differences in the two groups. For example, while as stated above, census tract 268.14 has the lowest overall percentage of cost-burdened households (13%), they have one of the highest percentages renter cost-burdened households (75%). In census tract 268.23, 100% of renters are cost burdened.

C1. Cost-burdened household indicators by census tract in Brooklyn Park

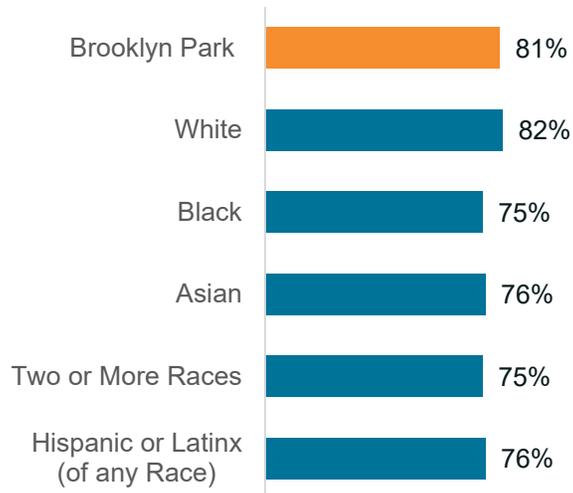
Indicator	Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.09	Tract 268.19
% cost-burdened households	32%	53%	47%	45%	24%	21%	38%	29%	18%	13%	45%	38%	41%	23%
% renter cost-burdened households	55%	56%	50%	100%	39%	54%	47%	64%	55%	75%	31%	63%	46%	58%
% owner cost-burdened households	23%	26%	20%	24%	28%	50%	37%	28%	20%	24%	31%	23%	26%	30%

Note. Data are not available to analyze cost-burdened households by race in Brooklyn Park.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Employment. Generally, low-income people have reduced access to employment because of a constrained ability to achieve higher education and access transportation to work (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership; 2016). White adults in Brooklyn Park are more likely to be employed compared to other races in Brooklyn Park (Figure C2).

C2. Percentage of working-age adults who are employed



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

The percentage of working-age adults who are employed varies across census tracts (Figure C3). Census tract 268.19 has nearly twice as many unemployed adults (27%) as census tract 268.20 (14%).

C3. Percentage of working-age adults who are employed by census tract in Brooklyn Park

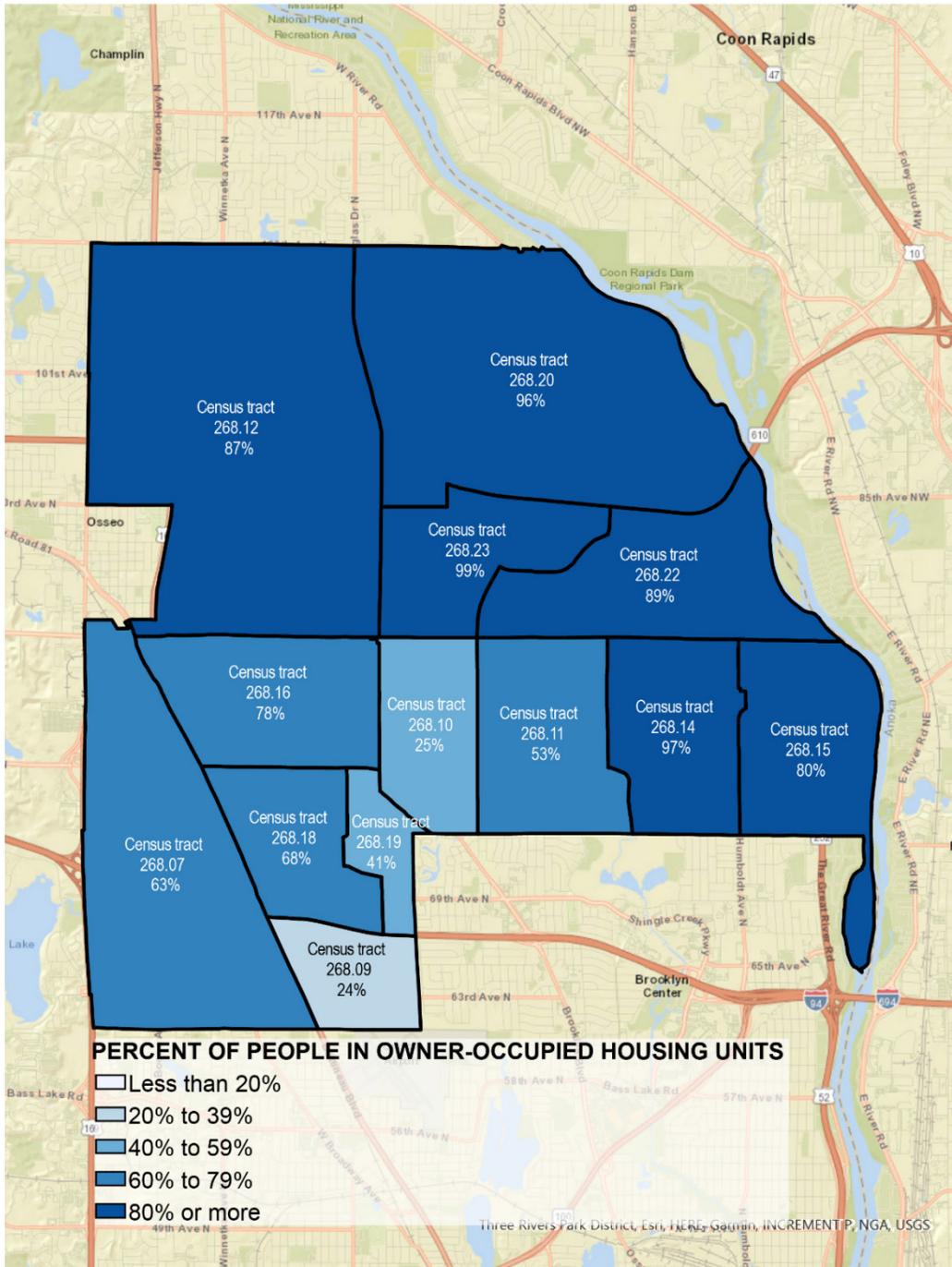
Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
81%	82%	86%	79%	84%	81%	82%	79%	77%	84%	80%	76%	73%	77%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Homeownership. Broadly speaking, people in the north part of the city, and White people, are more likely than others to live in homes they own (Figure C4).

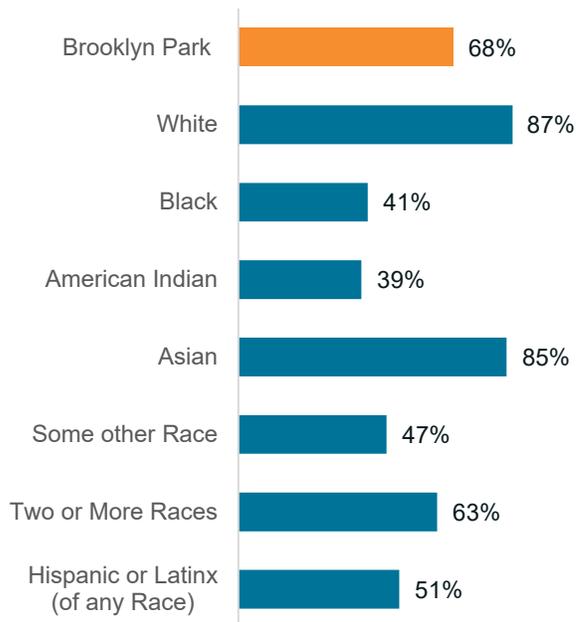
C4. Overall homeownership rate

Percentage of population in housing units that are owner-occupied



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

C5. Percentage of people who live in homes they own, by race



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

Median household income. On average, Asian households (\$94,986) have nearly double the household incomes of Black households (\$48,539; Figure C6). Additionally, median income understates the true wealth gap between people of different races in America, as wealth is largely generational and tied to the ability to own housing and land (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). As Figure C5 indicates, there are disparities by race in home ownership in Brooklyn Park.

C6. Median household income



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

Across census tracts in Brooklyn Park the median household income also varies widely – in the census tract with the highest median income (tract 268.20, \$114,479) the median income is more than three times that in the lowest median income census tract (268.19, \$36,201; Figure C7). Two other tracts (268.23 and 268.12) have median incomes near \$100,000; while two (268.10 and 268.11) have median incomes below \$50,000.

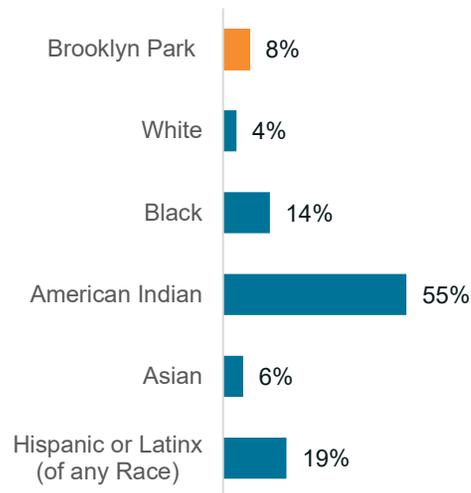
C7. Median household income by census tract in Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
\$73,940	\$96,577	\$114,479	\$107,989	\$88,137	\$60,486	\$66,530	\$48,667	\$45,700	\$88,656	\$82,422	\$62,540	\$36,201	\$48,667

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

People experiencing poverty. There are large disparities in the proportion of individuals who experience poverty by race. Compared to Brooklyn Park overall, White people are half as likely to experience poverty, Black people are nearly twice as likely to experience poverty, and American Indians are six times as likely to experience poverty (Figure C8).

C8. Percentage of people with income below poverty level



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

Higher percentages of Hispanic youth (27%) and Black youth (16%) in Brooklyn Park live in poverty compared to White (4%) or Asian (5%) youth (Minnesota Compass, n.d.).

In census tract 268.19 (with \$36,201 median income) 27% of people have incomes below poverty. For most other census tracts in Brooklyn Park for which data are available this percentage is less than 10%. Young people are particularly impacted by poverty in some census tracts in Brooklyn Park. While 19% of people of all ages in census tract 268.09 are impacted by incomes below the poverty line, 29% of youth age 18 or younger in the same census tract live in poverty. There are also large disparities, with just 3% of youth in census tract 268.22 living in poverty. (Figure C9).

C9. Percentage of Brooklyn Park residents living in poverty by census tract

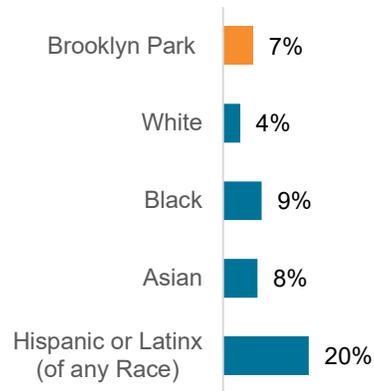
Indicator	Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
% of people with income below poverty	8%			8%	3%	7%	9%	19%	8%	4%	5%	20%	27%	19%
% of households with incomes >200% poverty	76%	79%	91%	88%	86%	78%	71%	51%	63%	85%	74%	61%	56%	51%
% people under the age of 18 living in poverty	11%			8%	3%	7%	9%	19%	8%	4%	5%	32%	27%	29%

Note. Blank spaces indicate that data are suppressed because estimates are unreliable (for example, because of large margins of error or small counts).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Health insurance. Black and Asian residents of Brooklyn Park are twice as likely to be uninsured than White residents. Additionally, 20% of Hispanic residents (of any race) are uninsured, which is five times the proportion of White residents who are uninsured (Figure C10).

C10. Percentage of residents age 65 and under with no health insurance coverage



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

Census tracts 268.10 and 268.23 have a high percentage (16% and 15% respectively) of uninsured community members under age 65 when compared to the city average of 7%. Three census tracts have especially low percentages (3% each) of uninsured adults under age 65(268.14, 268.15, and 268.20; Figure C11).

C11. Percentage of people 65 and under with no health insurance coverage by census tract in Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
7%	7%	3%	15%		6%	8%	16%	7%	3%	3%	8%	9%	16%

Note. Blank spaces indicate that data are suppressed because estimates are unreliable (for example, because of large margins of error or small counts).

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Interviewees report economic disparities in Brooklyn Park

Themes from interviews with community members bolster our analysis of economic conditions in Brooklyn Park. Researchers asked all interviewees about their perceptions of economic stability in Brooklyn Park, and, in order from most to least frequently mentioned, themes were:

- **Economic stability is unequally distributed across Brooklyn Park.** Interviewees reported “two Brooklyn Parks,” saying that the neighborhoods north of 85th Avenue North tend to be more affluent than the neighborhoods to the south.

Before I even moved here, I heard there's quite a range of economic backgrounds in Brooklyn Park. Especially when you go towards more of the southern side of Brooklyn Park versus the northern side. So I know there's discrepancies there. There's cheaper housing towards the southern end of Brooklyn Park versus the northern end of Brooklyn Park. You can see, definitely more affluent houses and suburbia in the north. And then after living here for this long as you drive through the city, you'll see the differences. So there's definitely differences in what kind of housing there is. And I'm guessing what kind of incomes there are, you know, for the people that live around. – Community interviewee

- **There are not sufficient services or supports in Brooklyn Park to build economic stability for all who need it.** Interviewees reported that services or supports to improve economic stability tend to favor homebuyers and exclude renters, and do not have the capacity to serve all who could benefit.

I know people in the community that need help but there's very few that actually have gotten some help. I know a neighbor of mine who went through a home rehabilitation program, but there were many more that just weren't able to get the loans or the grants for first-time home buyers. There's a lot of people asking for resources but there's few that actually get any. – Community interviewee

Researchers also asked interviewees if they had experience getting services and supports aimed at improving economic stability. While five or more interviewees had experience accessing such programs, including first-time homeowner services, no more detailed themes emerged. City employees did describe some economic stability programs available in Brooklyn Park, including home rehabilitation programs, workforce centers, and housing and rental assistance. For greater detail on city employees' themes about economic stability services and supports, see below, “City staff reported various programming, resources, and activities in Brooklyn Park related to safety.”

Education conditions related to safety in Brooklyn Park

What education conditions are related to public safety?

Early childhood education, attendance, college readiness, and discipline are all school conditions that correlate to public safety outcomes (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Meza, 2011; Turner, 2020b). Students who are engaged and successful in school have lower levels of contact with the criminal justice system (Meza, 2011; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Conversely, early academic failure and lack of school connection is a known root cause of violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Therefore, safe, effective schools that support the academic success of all students across childhood are foundational for violence prevention in a community.

Why do education conditions matter?

High-quality early childhood education lays the foundation for academic success across the lifespan. People who attend high-quality early childhood education programs are more likely to graduate from high school, have a job, and have higher incomes (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Students with higher attendance rates are more likely to stay in school and graduate (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Students who graduate and continue on in postsecondary education have better employment opportunities and higher incomes. Schools that consistently and fairly enforce codes of conduct create environments where all children are safe and able to learn. School discipline that is doled out unequally (e.g. disproportionately to BIPOC students) or that is unduly harsh is known to have a negative impact on students' education (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). In communities with high concentrations of poverty and violence, students are more likely to have mental health conditions that increase the challenges that schools face in effective discipline (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016).

How are education conditions related to violence prevention?

Early childhood education is a protective factor against violence victimization and perpetration later in life (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Research shows that adolescents and adults who attended high-quality early childhood education programs are less likely to get arrested or commit a crime. In fact, one study found that “the cumulative effects of early childhood education have been estimated to save communities \$7.10 per every dollar invested, in large part through a savings in needed criminal justice and crime victimization investments” (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016, p.64 citing Reynolds et al., 2001). Truancy is a risk factor for delinquency, gang involvement, violence, and other criminal activity (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention

Partnership, 2016). College readiness is a protective factor as people with a college education are less likely to be involved in the criminal justice system or recidivate if they do enter the system (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Unduly harsh school discipline has negative effects on students' educational and employment opportunities which increases the likelihood of future criminal activity (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Inappropriate discipline also severs positive connections to peer and teacher role models, which are protective factors against violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016).

What indicators can we use to measure education conditions?

- **High-quality early childhood education** - The number of licensed child care center seats per children age zero to five in a community is an indicator of the availability of high-quality early childhood education.
- **Truancy** - Truancy rates at different grade levels (elementary, middle, and high school) are all well-established indicators of school attendance and connectedness.
- **College readiness** - Most often the indicator of college readiness is the high school graduation rate.
- **Educational attainment** - As measured by the percentage of adults 25 or older who have a bachelor's degree or higher.
- **School discipline** - Suspension rate is a common indicator of school discipline.

Unfortunately, most of the established academic indicators are not available for the city of Brooklyn Park. Although many of these academic indicators are publicly available or available by request at the county, school district, or individual school level, the majority of these indicators are not available at the city level. The city of Brooklyn Park does not overlap neatly with any of the geographies for which indicators are available.

- Brooklyn Park is part of Hennepin County, which is a large county encompassing multiple other cities.
- Three school districts serve Brooklyn Park. The majority of Brooklyn Park schools are in the Osseo school district (ISD 279) which also serves the city of Maple Grove. Anoka-Hennepin (ISD 11), and Robbinsdale (ISD 281) are two other school districts that overlap with the Brooklyn Park city limits.
- Brooklyn Park has multiple schools at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, therefore making it impossible to report data on one school as an accurate measure for the city of Brooklyn Park as a whole.

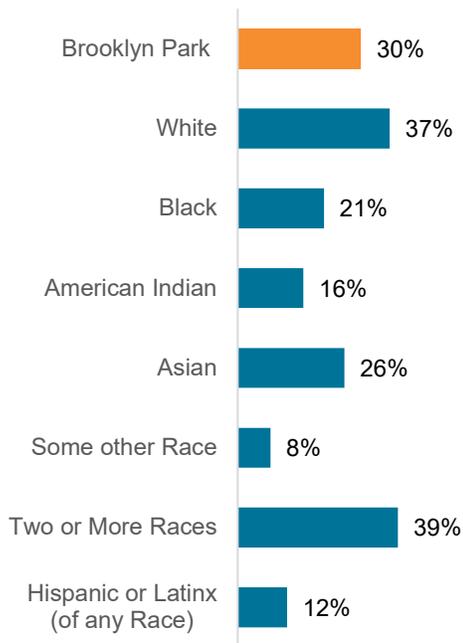
Because neither county, school district, nor school level data are good proxies for Brooklyn Park city-level data, we are not able to report accurate academic indicators beyond educational achievement by race, and graduation rate by census tract.

Are there disparities in education conditions in Brooklyn Park by census tract and race?

Yes, people experience differences in education conditions across place and race in Brooklyn Park.

Educational achievement. Adults with multi-racial backgrounds and White adults have similarly high levels of academic achievement (39% and 37% have bachelor’s degrees or higher) compared with Asian, Black, Latino, and American Indian adults in Brooklyn Park (Figure C12).

C12. Percentage of adults age 25 and older with a bachelor’s degree or higher



Source: Minnesota Compass, n.d.

Further, there are disparities in educational attainment by census tract. People over age 25 living in census tracts 268.20, 268.22, and 268.23 are more than three times as likely as people age 25 or older living in census tract 268.19 to have a bachelor’s degree or higher (Figure C13).

C13. Percentage of adults age 25 or older with a bachelor’s degree or higher by census tract in Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
30%	43%	44%	44%	44%	25%	22%	23%	27%	24%	31%	17%	13%	18%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

High school graduation. In 2019, White students (93%) and Asian students (93%) had higher high school graduation rates, whereas Black students (82%) and Hispanic students (78%) were less likely to graduate (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019).

We did not ask interviewees about their thoughts on educational achievement or school conditions in Brooklyn Park for two main reasons. First, to respect interviewees’ time, we could not ask for perceptions and experiences with all of the social conditions where safety thrives. Second, many overlapping governments and systems are responsible for the public education available to Brooklyn Park students. This could limit the city of Brooklyn Park’s ability to implement any recommendations about improving education for Brooklyn Park, which led researchers to deprioritize interviewing residents about education.

Neighborhood conditions related to safety in Brooklyn Park

What neighborhood conditions are related to public safety?

Lack of community cohesion, including lack of trust and communication among residents and few organized social institutions and civic engagement events, is a known root cause of violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Armstead et al., 2018). Civic engagement, vibrant public spaces, and positive connections to neighbors are known protective factors against community violence (Armstead et al., 2018; Meza, 2011).

Why do neighborhood conditions matter?

Civic engagement allows people to voice their concerns, participate in decision-making, and hold elected officials responsible. Youth who are civically engaged have better academic outcomes and hopefulness about their future (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Neighborhood connections and safety are fostered when there are clean and vibrant public spaces, and when residents know their neighbors and feel trust and connection to them (Turner, 2020b). Deterioration of shared public spaces (such as parks, commercial areas, and city streets) as well as deterioration of residential properties is a risk factor for community violence (Dassopoulos et al., 2012; Lazarus et al., 2017; Turner, 2020b).

How are neighborhood conditions related to violence prevention?

Civic engagement is correlated with lower violent crime rates, including reduced juvenile and adult homicide rates (Armstead et al., 2018; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). The “built environment” of parks, community-gathering locations (such as coffee shops), street lighting, business districts, and maintained vacant lots contributes to both perceptions of safety and actual crime in a community (Turner, 2020b; Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016).

What indicators can we use to measure neighborhood conditions?

- **Civic engagement** - While civic engagement encompasses more than just voting, including volunteerism and interaction with government institutions, the percentage of the voting age population that votes is a key indicator of civic engagement. However, it is important to note that voting rates in BIPOC communities have been suppressed by multiple tactics, including high imprisonment rates, and barriers to voting such as transportation and language (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Voter ID laws also disproportionately suppress voting rates in BIPOC communities, but are not currently in place in Minnesota (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016).

- **Vibrant public spaces** - Satisfaction with and feelings of safety while in public spaces are ways to measure the vibrancy of public spaces. Two questions from the 2019 Brooklyn Park Resident survey are used here as indicators for vibrant public spaces. One question asked residents about their satisfaction with shared public spaces (sidewalks and trails) and the second asked residents to report their feelings of safety when using city parks (Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019).
- **Neighborhood relations** - Two questions from the 2019 Brooklyn Park Resident survey are used as indicators for neighbor relations and connections to their neighborhood. One question asked residents if they feel comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with their neighbors and the second asked residents how often they have contact with their neighbors (Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019).

Are there disparities in neighborhood conditions in Brooklyn Park by census tract and race?

Yes, analysis shows some disparities in neighborhood indicators across race and place in Brooklyn Park. Data are not available to disaggregate voter participation rates across race or census tracts.

Vibrant public spaces. Data to describe residents’ perceptions of public spaces in Brooklyn Park are sparse. One indicator we found showed that the majority of Brooklyn Park residents across races and places are satisfied with the sidewalks and trails in their neighborhood (Figures C14 and C15). The other indicator we found showed that the majority of residents across races and places feel safe using city parks.

C14. Public space indicators disaggregated by race

Indicator	African	African American	Asian	Hispanic/Latino	White
% who reported “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the sidewalks and trails in their neighborhood	97%	92%	92%	93%	92%
% who answered “yes” when asked “do you and members of your household feel safe using city parks?”	99%	85%	93%	83%	92%

Source: Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019

C15. Public space indicators disaggregated by region of the city

Indicator	East/ South	Central South	West/ South	East/ North	Central North	West/ North
% who reported “very satisfied” or “satisfied” with the sidewalks and trails in their neighborhood	97%	98%	97%	85%	96%	79%
% who answered “yes” when asked “do you and members of your household feel safe using city parks?”	93%	93%	91%	87%	95%	83%

Source: Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019

Neighborhood relations. Neighborhood connection initiatives do less for African American residents of Brooklyn Park than residents of other races (Figure C16). Further, residents in the northwest part of the city are much more likely than other residents to report at least weekly contact with their neighbors, and more likely than other residents to report comfort discussing neighborhood problems with their neighbors (Figure C17).

C16. Neighborhood relations indicators disaggregated by race

Indicator	African	African American	Asian	Hispanic/ Latino	White
% of residents that feel comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with neighbors	74%	76%	91%	87%	83%
% of residents that have contact with neighbors at least once per week	69%	40%	65%	61%	62%

Source: Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019

C17. Neighborhood relations indicators disaggregated by region of the city

Indicator	East/ South	Central South	West/ South	East/ North	Central North	West/ North
% of residents that feel comfortable discussing neighborhood problems with neighbors	77%	76%	80%	81%	87%	91%
% of residents that have contact with neighbors at least once per week	54%	55%	63%	52%	55%	82%

Source: Brooklyn Park 2019 Residential Study, 2019

Interviewees more frequently report poor neighborhood conditions than positive neighborhood conditions in Brooklyn Park

Researchers asked all interviewees about their perceptions of neighborhood conditions, including clean and vibrant public spaces, community-building organizations, neighborhood turnover, and to what extent neighbors trust and feel connected to one another. Interviewees were free to share what they thought was important about neighborhood conditions in Brooklyn Park. Many interviewees cited problems with neighborhood conditions in Brooklyn Park, but others described positive neighborhood conditions. This indicates that interviewees have different experiences with neighborhood conditions across the city and is evidence of conditions that can support safety in Brooklyn Park.

- **Interviewees who live south of 85th Avenue North report negative perceptions, while interviewees who live north of 85th Avenue North did not.** Researchers analyzed interview themes by where interviewees lived and by interviewees' reported racial identities. Feelings of neighborhood connectedness varied according to geography, though not across race. Most interviewees who live south of 85th Avenue North reported negative perceptions of stability and neighborhood connections; most interviewees who live north of 85th Avenue North did not. Further, when asked about their perceptions of neighborhood connections in Brooklyn Park, residents from the south of Brooklyn Park raised the theme that neighborhood connection initiatives in Brooklyn Park are limited by inequities in access or outreach. This was not a theme for residents from the north of Brooklyn Park.

Of the remaining ideas reported by interviewees, there were no significant differences across Brooklyn Park neighborhoods. In order from most to least frequent, interviewees raised the following themes.

- **Not everyone in Brooklyn Park feels a sense of community.** Here, again, interviewees reported the idea of “two Brooklyn Parks,” where some residents seem positively connected to their neighborhood and others do not.

[In my neighborhood] some of us know our neighbors, some don't at all. We can pick up the trash, but some of the neighbors and businesses couldn't care less so it stays dirty. At the end of the street there's a business where people leave their trash. – Community interviewee

So, it depends on what neighborhood you're in. I would say Brooklyn Park, if you went up and down the corridor where all the apartments are, there's a lot of turnover over there. And so there's not a lot of deep rooted families that have lived in those areas for a long time. And so, yeah, they don't have as much connection to their neighbors as we do over here, and that's three blocks away. – Community interviewee

- **There are positive neighborhood connections in Brooklyn Park.** Interviewees reported a sense of positive connection to their Brooklyn Park neighborhood.

I think a lot of people feel connected to their neighborhood because I see the level of freedom that people kind of let their kids have in the neighborhood, so they obviously trust that their kids are safe and that the people around the neighborhood are going to speak up or whatever the case is. And then on top of that there's a lot of little community events like movies in the park, so that's always nice for kids to be able to go and feel safe to go and just that whole community involvement thing. So I think that we have good places to go and visit and we feel pretty good about those spaces. – Community interviewee

- **Community engagement initiatives do less for BIPOC residents.** Interviewees identified gaps in culturally specific outreach, and culturally appropriate community-building activities.

I know they have a community outreach person who does different things. They I think tried, I'm not quite sure what it's called, some sort of Next Door app to try and connect families together. Again, I guess they try to promote the National Night Out. So there's different things that I think the city has tried, but again, like I said, especially with the target populations of BIPOC and immigrant populations, I really do feel like unless you are really connected within those communities, just posting the information is not going to get a whole lot of buy-in from communities of color. – Community interviewee

- **Outreach for neighborhood connection initiatives is an area for improvement.**

The city needs to put a lot of things into effect, and go out there and reach out to all our communities. We have so many people that's growing the population of residents from Liberia and Somalia, a strong Muslim community. We need to help. So the city of Brooklyn Park has to reach out. It's got to be ongoing, not a one time deal, but doing this on a consistent basis. – City employee

Interviewees also report positive experiences with neighborhood connection initiatives in Brooklyn Park

Researchers asked all interviewees if they had experiences with neighborhood connection initiatives in Brooklyn Park. Among residents with such experience, the theme that emerged was a positive experience with initiatives including block parties, Rec on the Go, and National Night Out.

We've done Rec on the Go, and essentially, it's a free program. It's a free program for these kids, and they do them at all sorts of different parks scattered throughout the city. And you sign up to go to have your child participate in these activities, supervised by park and rec staff at a local park. So every week when we would go there, our daughter got to meet neighborhood kids around, or kids in the neighborhood, and got to play, and that automatically makes you feel more connected to your neighborhood right then and there. So, I mean, for us, it was kind of a neat deal. – Community interviewee

Family conditions related to safety in Brooklyn Park

What family conditions are related to public safety?

Family isolation and lack of access to community resources and supports are known root cause of community-level violence (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Isolation, poverty, and lack of supports for families are correlated with higher rates of domestic violence and child abuse and neglect.

Why do family conditions matter?

Experiences of childhood trauma have lasting impacts on the developmental processes of stress and emotional regulation. Children who witness domestic violence in their household are more likely to use alcohol and drugs later in life (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Children who experience abuse or neglect have worse mental health outcomes and are more likely to have delayed cognitive and emotional development (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). Single family households, most often led by mothers, are more likely to live in poverty (Armstead et al., 2018; Meza, 2011).

How are family conditions related to violence prevention?

Domestic violence and child abuse and neglect are in themselves forms of violence, but they are also associated with other forms of criminal activity (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016; Armstead et al., 2018). One study suggests that the majority of men (76%) who engage in domestic violence also engage in other crimes, and domestic violence situations can escalate to homicides (Norwood et al., 2004). A strong correlation exists between high rates of child abuse and high rates of gang and violent crime in a community, with individuals who experienced abuse and neglect having increased risk of criminal activity, including being 30% more likely to be arrested for violent crime (Santa Rosa Violence Prevention Partnership, 2016). In Los Angeles, there is a strong correlation between high poverty rates, high rates of single parent families, and high rates of gang crime (Meza, 2011).

What indicators can we use to measure family conditions?

- **Family trauma** - The number of domestic violence incidents reported to law enforcement is one way to measure family trauma. This indicator has well-known limitations, as a majority of domestic violence incidents are not reported to law enforcement, so it is a proxy measure for true rates of domestic violence in a community (Meza, 2011).
- **Child abuse and neglect** - Reported incidents of child abuse and neglect incidents per 1,000 children is the established community indicator for child abuse and neglect.
- **Single-parent families** - The percentage of single-parent family households with children under age 18 is a direct indicator of single parent families in a community.

Are there disparities in family conditions in Brooklyn Park by race and by census tract?

There are differences in the percentage of single families in Brooklyn Park by census tract, ranging from 7% in census tract 268.20 to 23% in census tract 268.19. Data by census tract are not available for the other family condition indicators listed above, and data are not available for any of the family conditions listed above by race (Figure C18).

C18. Percentage of single-parent households with children under 18 by census tract in Brooklyn Park

Brooklyn Park	Tract 268.12	Tract 268.20	Tract 268.23	Tract 268.22	Tract 268.07	Tract 268.16	Tract 268.10	Tract 268.11	Tract 268.14	Tract 268.15	Tract 268.18	Tract 268.19	Tract 268.09
15%	13%	7%	10%	9%	14%	22%	22%	17%	11%	12%	19%	23%	22%

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2019

Wilder researchers did not ask interviewees about family conditions related to safety. First, interviewers were aiming to take up no more than 75 minutes of the interviewees' time, which limited the number of questions included in the interview. Second, interview questions about safety conditions such as economic stability or neighborhood connections were designed to add nuance to available community-wide data on economic stability or neighborhood connections. As community-wide data on family conditions are sparse, researchers did not prioritize interview questions about family conditions.

Youth development initiatives in Brooklyn Park

While our review of the research did not generate specific community indicators that can show different rates of youth development across races and places, research does show that youth development opportunities can protect against community violence and disorder. Youth development initiatives include extracurricular arts, recreation, and volunteering programs. Researchers asked all interviewees about their perceptions of initiatives aimed at cultivating positive connections for youth in Brooklyn Park, outside of the school environment. In order from most to least frequent, the following themes emerged.

- **There are numerous and high-quality parks and recreation centers in Brooklyn Park.**

One of the things I think I've noticed over the years living here, now being a parent, just there are lots of opportunities for youth engagement, whether it's sports. Zanewood is a really amazing resource I think. Yeah, I think that there's just a lot of different opportunities for youth engagement around the city. We have an amazing library that we spent a lot of time at before COVID. That was also built to also meet the needs I think of more of a teenage audience, like having the recording studio equipment available in there and computers that they can play games at, dedicated space for them. And I see it all the time. There's just a lot of offerings I think for youth to be involved in in the city of Brooklyn Park. – Community interviewee

- **Zanewood Recreation Center helps foster youth engagement.**

And if you live near to the Rec Center up there some things are going to be more easily available. But I also know that the Zanewood Rec Center is incredibly important to my teenage little brother. And I think that some of the way they do stuff there is really, really good. I wasn't aware of that until we bought this house and my brother started to go to things there, but that I think is one of the more positive things that the city does for the youth. It's like the thing with Zanewood Rec I just wish that there were more of them. – Community interviewee

- **Brooklyn Park youth engagement opportunities don't reach all who are interested.**

Interviewees explained that age requirements, cost, other barriers to access, and gaps in culturally specific programs leave some youth unserved.

I think that those programs exist, but everyone doesn't have access. And I think that the programs do cost quite a bit of money as well. I know that's been kind of my experience, like getting my kids into these programs, they cost more money, you know what I mean? And if people don't have the money, then guess what, they don't have access to those programs. – Community interviewee

There's also that accessibility gap for youth in terms of wherever the event is held and being able to get there, or transportation, if there's fees attached to it, also who's running the event and if youth feel safe in that environment in terms of, for example, if it's an event targeted for our youth of color but it's run by a mostly white-centric staff, it's not going to be an event that youth are going to feel safe in attending. – Community interviewee

- **Many people are unaware of youth engagement initiatives in Brooklyn Park.**

Interviewees explained that outreach for youth programs may not be culturally appropriate, and/or miss many people may be interested.

For outreach, another thing is through churches and mosques. The city could connect there, too, but I'm not sure they do. Say, okay, these are programs that are available. In a park, the city have a lot of good parks and recreation center, and some other programs. But people may not be aware.
– Community interviewee

Interviewees have positive experiences with youth engagement initiatives in Brooklyn Park

Researchers asked all interviewees if they had experience with youth engagement initiatives in Brooklyn Park. Of the residents (not including employees) with such experience, the following themes emerged, in order from most to least frequently reported.

- **Positive experience with miscellaneous youth programming.**

My kids have participated a lot in the community ed stuff. I think that they have a really good program of activities for the kids to do. And we have been doing programs since they were in kindergarten. So I think that the programs that the city offers is extensive and diverse enough that it appeals to everyone that would be interested in it. Whether or not everyone does, I don't know. But of course, I think they have a good variety of things that would interest most, if not everybody in the city. – Community interviewee

- **Positive experience with youth sports and/or summer camps.**

So, my kids have been involved in sports and other activities available through the city. It's been affordable for us to plug into those options that are available through the community center. Sometimes they offer free activities too. And also with our, we have older daughters as well who they don't live with us anymore, but when they were teenagers were involved in various activities and things in the city. As well as some younger cousins who spend a lot of time at Zanewood. – Community interviewee

City staff reported various programming, resources, and activities in Brooklyn Park related to safety

Researchers interviewed a total of 14 adults who work for the city, including five officers or staff of the Brooklyn Park Police Department. City staff were asked about their perceptions of and experience with efforts to promote the social conditions for public safety in Brooklyn Park. While the 36 community members interviewed presented themes about their experiences being served by programs and initiatives to increase economic stability, youth connections, and neighborhood connections, city staff tended to describe the city's efforts that they are aware of, including efforts that they help with (Figure C19). This list is limited to what city staff interviewees mentioned, and may not reflect all relevant city programming, resources, or activities. We did not include city staff's experiences in the report body in order to center residents' experiences with these services and supports.

C19. Brooklyn Park’s programming, resources, and activities reported by city staff

Economic stability efforts	Positive connections for youth efforts	Neighborhood connections efforts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Home rehabilitation program - Forgivable loans, low-interest loans - Workforce center - Housing and rental assistance - Scholarships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Zanewood Recreation Center - Community drum line - Kids fishing with police - Park within 6 blocks of every resident - Activities: dance, sports, music, art, swimming - Rec-on-the-go - Brooklyn Park Athletic Association - BrookLynk - City internship program - Brooklyn Youth Council - Hip Hop group - MAD DADS Youth Outreach - Cities United program - Partnership with Big Brothers and Big Sisters - Comprehensive safety plan includes youth input 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Night Out - Defining and naming neighborhoods - Crime Watch Captains - Blue Blocks - Tater Daze - Volunteer program to deliver welcome bags to new residents - Open house at the police department - Night to Unite

- City’s efforts are not reaching enough residents in need, particularly youth in need.

In describing the city’s efforts around programming, resources, and activities in Brooklyn Park, city staff, like residents, also described limitations of these efforts. In general, city staff agree with residents who felt that efforts are not reaching enough people. City staff pointed to reasons including that the outreach may not be vigorous enough and that the city’s existing capacity is not large enough to serve all Brooklyn Park youth in need.

If you ask me questions about positive youth connections, and I share with you we got 7,000, 8,000, 10,000 youth in our community, and you're only reaching 200, is that well? That's not well, but you can't dismiss the fact that they are servicing some youth, but they're not meeting most youth. It's a good effort. Maybe well intended also, but it's not successful. – City of Brooklyn Park employee

I think that's a lot and there is a disconnect of information and communication. If you're not tapped into the main stream or the main sources of communication from the city, you don't get that information. I think there's a lot of people that do not feel that connection. – City of Brooklyn Park employee

D. Interviewees' experiences with and perceptions of BPPD

Here, we report fully on what we learned from interviews with adults who live and/or work in Brooklyn Park about their experiences with and/or perceptions of BPPD.

Interviewees report varied experiences with BPPD

In interviews with community members and city staff (though not with police officers), Wilder researchers asked interviewees if they had close experience with the Brooklyn Park Police Department. By this, we mean that, in the last five years, interviewees either had called BPPD to respond to a situation, had been stopped by BPPD, or were close with a loved one who had called or been stopped by BPPD. Thirty-one people had this close experience.

Researchers asked interviewees to tell us about the experience, including the reason for the police contact (for example, responding to an emergency call, BPPD stopping the interviewee), what, if anything, they thought went well with the interaction, and anything they thought could have gone better.

Researchers then read all interview transcripts and noted where interviewees raised common ideas, or themes. We analyzed themes by interviewees' racial identities, and whether they reported living north or south of 85th Avenue North. Themes were similar, and arose at similar rates, across race and place.

Overall, some residents have had experiences in which police treated them with respect and dignity, and effectively de-escalated stressful situations, but others have had the opposite experience and have been threatened or intimidated by police. Themes also emerged about racial profiling and wrongful arrest that point to concerns of racism in the department.

Here, we report the themes that emerged from the 31 interviewees with close experience with BPPD, in order from most to least frequently raised.

Interviewees reported slightly more incidents of negative experiences with BPPD than positive.

When talking to the 31 people who had close experience with BPPD, a slim majority of incidents that interviewees reported were negative experiences (and these incidents were reported by more than half of the 31 interviewees). Interviewees reported negative experiences when calling for service, when being investigated or stopped, and during more casual interactions. These casual interactions included times when BPPD officers exited cars they were driving and rushed up to interviewees (including motorists and pedestrians), yelling and behaving aggressively. In order of prevalence, the negative experiences interviewees reported had the following subthemes:

- **Racial profiling.** Residents reported experiences where police officers treated BIPOC people worse than White people who were engaging in similar behavior.

Well, I can tell you right now, the people in my community, the Africans in the community, Brooklyn Park, we are scared of the police officer. But our kids that are born here, we're scared for them. My kids are teenagers but I worry that they're seen as adults because of their race. One has been put in handcuffs for questioning while kids of other races weren't. – Community interviewee

- **Verbal intimidation or aggression.** These experiences included times that interviewees thought BPPD officers were unnecessarily rude, yelled, or otherwise verbally escalated a situation.

I think it was awful. The officer was just really rude to me, not empathetic to the fact that I was a woman by myself driving in a vehicle late at night and that he was in an unmarked car following me. And he demanded to know what was going on. I was like, "Well, I didn't know that you were a cop and you're following me so I was trying to let you go around me and you just were tailing me." But he was not polite at all. Yeah, it was pretty traumatic at the time. He was extremely aggressive for what I felt like was no reason. – Community interviewee

- **Wrongful arrest or suspicion.** Interviewees had experiences where officers stopped, handcuffed, or questioned people who were not close matches for a person of suspicion.

It was Brooklyn Park police officers and I don't know the circumstances in which they were called to the house. But essentially, there was just a few police officers at the door and they pushed their way in and immediately handcuffed my sibling. And it ended up being that they were looking for somebody that was nobody that lived at our house and we didn't know that person. But it was really traumatic because my brother at the time, he was a teenager. You have a young black kid, he's been seeing a lot of other young black kids get just killed. And I think that was really problematic for our family because other than the police just being like, "Oh, gosh, okay, well, sorry. We looked at your IDs and it wasn't..." And we live in a quiet area. So it was really weird to have this outsized approach to an environment that was just not... They were like, "Oh, we're looking for somebody who has a warrant." Okay, "Well, what did they do? Why are you treating us like this?" And yeah, that was problematic because of course, we have neighbors and relationships. And there is this humiliation component of even if we tell our neighbors, "Oh, it was a mistake." It's just weird to have to go and check your mail every day and feel like people are looking at you differently. – Community interviewee

- **Physical intimidation or aggression.** Interviewees recalled times that BPPD officers unnecessarily or roughly handcuffed people, unclipped their firearm, or otherwise postured in a way that made people afraid that the officer was about to physically hurt them.

I'm just waiting to file a report and the cop comes out; he's already aggressive as hell. I'm just like, "Sir, I don't think you understand. I called you here to make a report right? I'm just here to make a report. There's no issue." Then he starts stabbing at me. He's very aggressive. I'm talking to him, I'm like, "Look dude, you don't need to talk to me this way. You can calm down. All right? I'm here to file a report. Now if I need to find another officer I'll find another officer." At which point I can't remember which words were exchanged but he literally goes and puts his hand on his gun, pops the thing over, has his hand on his gun now while he's talking to me walking forward to me, as I'm here to make a police report. I immediately put my hands in the air and I keep them up. – Community interviewee

Some interviewees reported positive experiences with BPPD.

When talking to the 31 people who had close experience with BPPD, slightly less than half of the incidents reported were positive experiences (and these incidents were reported by slightly more than half of relevant interviewees, indicating that some interviewees had both negative and positive experiences with BPPD). While no single type of positive experience rose to the level of a subtheme, the types of situations that BPPD handled well ranged from being pulled over for having a broken taillight, to having the police show up to a party they were hosting that was too loud, to investigating more serious allegations involving firearms and burglaries.

Some interviewees identified procedural justice as something BPPD does well.

Researchers asked interviewees to identify what, if anything, BPPD officers did well in handling a situation and what, if anything, the interviewee would like BPPD to do differently. The most frequent theme that emerged was that BPPD officers handled the situation in accordance with the principles of procedural justice. We note that procedural justice is a policing best practice (Jannetta et al., 2019; Tiwana et al., 2015; Oglesby-Neal et al., 2020; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015b; President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015. See also “Policing best practices,” above.) In order of prevalence, interviewees raised the following subthemes:

- **BPPD officers treated people with dignity and respect.** This included situations where officers listened to what people thought was important, and appeared to care about the people involved.

I saw a lady one day who was clearly high or something and she started taking off all of her clothes. And I debated on calling it in or not, but she was really getting naked. I called and the officer who responded – he was very calm and friendly toward her and gentle and he handled it really, really well. And that was something really positive. – Community interviewee

- **BPPD officers communicated well about the situation, what they were doing, and what was likely to happen next.** We do not provide an example quote because all interviewees who provided illustrative quotes requested strict confidentiality.

Some interviewees identified procedural justice as an area for BPPD to improve.

When asked to identify what went well and what could have gone better, the next most frequent theme that emerged is that interviewees would like BPPD to improve their skills in procedural justice. In order from most to least frequent, interviewees raised the following subthemes:

- **Treat individuals with greater dignity and respect.** Interviewees suggested that officers listen to understand, and change their demeanor to appear more caring.

He could have treated me with respect, for one, and just the way in which he talked to me and asserted his white male dominance, was what was concerning for me in terms of how I felt the interaction went poorly. – Community interviewee

- **Improve communication.** Interviewees said officers should pass on more information, and/or follow up to address questions and concerns.

I called because of a man behaving weird in front of my business. They showed up and he ended up leaving, but they didn't really update us, afterwards. So I think it would have been nice to kind of know what happened. It just would have been nice to know that he wasn't a perceived threat and stuff like that. It was just kind of like they left, and then so did the guy, and they parted ways. But we still were just kind of left in the dark. So, I mean, yes, it was nice that the police officers got him to leave the premises, but at the same time, just a nice two-second update would be good. – Community interviewee

Some interviewees identified de-escalation as an area for BPPD to improve.

As reported in the body of the report (see “Policing best practices”), de-escalation is a policing best practice (Campaign Zero, n.d.b; President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015; Police Executive Research Forum, 2015; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015b). When asked to identify what went well and/or what could be improved, the next most frequent theme that emerged is that BPPD officers should improve their de-escalation skills. Specific subthemes, from most to least prevalent, were:

- **Officers should reduce their intensity, listen in order to defuse conflicts, and use less physical force or intimidation.**

I want to say what they could have done differently, which is what I kind of communicated to them is that number one, when they're engaging, especially the community of color, and especially Black people in this world that we live in today, I think the last thing they want to do is like pull their guns out first. – Community interviewee

- **Improve demeanor or attitude to be more calm, patient, and/or disarming.**

So when you talk, the tone, you kind of set the interaction with your tone because you can increase the stress of the situation or you decrease the stress based on the situation. If you disarm everyone, you can use your tone or your voice or your words to disarm folks, versus kind of an edge, right, you know what I'm kind of saying? Something like may I please see your license and registration, please, something like that. Or, hey, how's it going? So why are you in the rush? So I think kind of talking in a different tone kind of sets that mood. It helps changes the attitude and then at that very initial encounter, and then that sets the tone for future encounters with police officers or law enforcement. – Community interviewee

Some interviewees identify de-escalation as something BPPD does well.

In response to questions about what went well and/or what could be improved, the least frequent theme that emerged was that BPPD de-escalated situations well. Interviewees reported instances where BPPD officers de-escalated high stress situations such as police investigating the interviewee or those close to them for allegations involving firearms and burglaries. One subtheme emerged:

■ BPPD maintained a calm, patient, and/or disarming demeanor, which helped de-escalate the situation.

We called 911 because my sibling was having a crisis and the people that we got, I don't remember their names, but they were amazing. The guy said, "Hey, my partner's trained, so I'm going to let her handle this." The female officer, she did a wonderful job of just handling the whole situation, and actually talking and making everything the way it should have been. I told him that my sibling was going through a crisis, and then the male officer, he was just very gentle and said, "My partner here, she's been trained in this, so she's going to talk to him if that's okay." So they approached very gently, and they showed respect. She wasn't treating them like they were someone who's having a mental crisis. So it was a really pleasant conversation, and she asked, "Do you want to go to the hospital to get checked out?" She asked instead of just assuming things. It didn't come off degrading. She didn't come off questioning what they were saying. – Community interviewee

Residents' perceptions of the Brooklyn Park Police Department

Beyond asking interviewees about their experiences with BPPD, researchers asked all interviewees about their perceptions of BPPD. Questions about perceptions were both close- and open-ended. Here, we report a summary of resident interviewees' perceptions of BPPD, even where such perceptions are not necessarily based in the experience of contact with BPPD. We exclude city staff perceptions from this analysis as a key focus of this project is to understand community perceptions of BPPD.

In close-ended questions, researchers asked interviewees to rate their level of agreement with the following four statements about policing practices:

- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that interrupt criminal behavior to create safety.
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence.
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that treat people with dignity and respect.
- The Brooklyn Park Police Department listens to diverse community concerns, and makes changes to address those concerns.

Interviewees were also asked to explain why they agreed or disagreed with the four statements. Researchers coded interviewee responses as positive, negative, or neutral. Interviewees who answered “I don’t know” (including that they have not seen or heard about negative or positive experiences) were coded as “neutral perceptions” and are not presented in the tables below. The following table represents most common perceptions (darker) to least common perceptions (lighter). Only interviewees who are residents of Brooklyn Park are represented in the heat map regardless of whether or not they had an encounter with BPPD. In Figure D1:

- Dark blue saturation means 20 interviewees or more shared this perception.
- Medium blue means 15-19 interviewees shared this perception.
- Light blue means 10-14 interviewees shared this perception.

We report a specific range because questions were close-ended so answers are more comparable across interviewees.

D1. Residents’ positive and negative perceptions of the Brooklyn Park Police Department

Statement	Number of positive perceptions	Number of negative perceptions
The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that interrupt criminal behavior to create safety.		
The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence.		
The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that treat people with dignity and respect.		
The Brooklyn Park Police Department listens to diverse community concerns, and makes changes to address those concerns.		

In order from most to least frequently reported perceptions of BPPD, the following themes emerged:

- **Police are more reactive than proactive, and do not address the root causes of violence and disorder.**

There's been more of a reactive approach than a proactive approach to the situations. It just seems like things happen and then they respond instead of taking a step back and saying, "This keeps happening on a consistent basis, we should get in front of it and do some proactive work within the community." – Community interviewee

- **Residents appreciated last summers' listening sessions.**

I strongly agree that they're trying to figure out what everybody's thinking and that they want to make change. So that is definitely a positive step. – Community interviewee

- **Residents think that BPPD treats people better or worse depending on race or place.**

As a person of color, and someone who grew up in maybe a little bit rougher neighborhood, just seeing things . . . Even to this day, when I interact with a police officer, even though I haven't done anything wrong, I always have this thought in the back of my mind that I have to be on my best behavior, because some of my experience seeing police officers when I was growing up was not ideal. That stigma sticks with me. – Community interviewee

- **Residents are aware of listening sessions, but are unsure or disagree that BPPD is making changes.**

They'll have the conversation to say they had the conversation. It looks good. "No, we've listened to the people; we've talked to them." Okay, well what did you guys do? What came from that? What actions did you take? There's a slew of actions that you could've taken, so what did you do? The bare minimum? – Community interviewee

- **Residents think that BPPD does a better or worse job of de-escalating situations depending on where they are in Brooklyn Park.**

*I live in an area that doesn't have much police activity outside of somebody calling them. But in other parts of Brooklyn Park, I feel like not only do they not de-escalate, I see so many officers literally just looking for people to f*** with. I'm just like, "okay, I'm not actually witnessing a robbery in progress. That's just people outside, just existing." And it's a problem, and then it becomes a bigger problem when police get involved. – Community interviewee*

- **Residents report recent situations where BPPD de-escalated difficult situations.**

There's been a few incidents out here. There's been hostage situations or barricaded subjects in houses, and they've been able to resolve them a few times in the last month without any issue and nobody getting hurt. So clearly they're making every attempt to de-escalate when it's feasible and they're trying to do stuff the right way and keeping everybody safe at the same time. – Community interviewee

- **Residents have examples of times when BPPD treated people with dignity and respect.**

The instances where I have had contact with them, I've been treated with nothing but respect, myself and my neighbors... I think the level of respect that they show people out here, it's just a level of respect that they have for the city that they work in. It's a big city with a lot of problems, and it's not easy to please everybody, you're never going to please everybody. But I think they make every attempt that they can to make sure that everyone's treated the way they should be. – Community interviewee

- **Residents feel positively about how BPPD handles calls for service.**

At the end of the day, I think that Brooklyn Park has evolved. and I think a lot of people are moving in and out of this space. But, for the most part, I think that the police show up and they do what they're supposed to do. – Community interviewee

Community ideas to improve the Brooklyn Park Police Department

Researchers asked all interviewees what, if any, ideas they have to improve the Brooklyn Park Police Department. Interviewees could list as many ideas as they wished. Where those ideas were aligned with the data-driven indicators in the scorecard, we noted that in the scorecard (see Appendix G). In order from most to least frequently cited, ideas from residents and non-police city staff follow here, and could form the basis for additional avenues for changing BPPD policies and practices:

- **Improve community engagement.**

This is something that has been said at the national level too, that the police has to look like the communities, and maybe this is going to help reduce the apprehension between the police and the communities. But I think it should be a regular dialogue, a regular forum where people can come together. The police can come there and let the police hear people, how we feel and let people also hear from the police. – Community interviewee

- **Consider stopping some police activities, and/or examining areas where responsibilities and resources can be shifted out of BPPD.**

One other thing I think that is around traffic stops, and how do we reduce traffic stops that are maybe not necessary or I don't know how much Brooklyn Park police engage in pretext stops and things like that. But how do we really maybe take a closer look at traffic stops and the racial disparities in traffic stops? Who are we pulling over? Why? What are the outcomes? How can we do things differently? I think that is the number one way that we as people in the Black community have contact with law enforcement. And are they always necessary? – Community interviewee

- **Promote officer mental health.**

If this officer's seen multiple incidents like that, of death and trauma, and those type of things, it's going to take a toll on anybody. I believe giving them a psychological evaluation every year would just let us know early on if they're still mentally sound, stable, or competent to be a police officer, to serve our community. If not, we can stop them. Say, "Listen, there's too many challenges for you. Change your profession before you injure yourself, your family, and/or our community. We don't want no part of it." – City employee

Brooklyn Park Human Rights Commission statement on improving BPPD

Finally, the Brooklyn Park Human Rights Commission released a statement in April 2021. The HRC endorsed the following changes to BPPD (Brooklyn Center Human Rights Commission, 2021):

- Requiring an emotional health certification for BPPD officers
- Anti-racism training for officers
- Requiring anti-violence methods in use of force policies
- Shifting TASERS to the dominant hand
- Investing in relational healing programs

Law enforcement perceptions of the Brooklyn Park Police Department

Interviews were completed with five BPPD officers, at varying levels of leadership in the department. They were asked to rate their level of agreement with the four statements about BPPD in the interviews. In general, police officers did not describe the four areas in either positive or negative ways. Instead, officers described the efforts that they are aware of or are participating in. However, the officers interviewed do feel that BPPD is doing well at working to improve practices compared to other police departments. The following is a summary of the interviews with BPPD officers about the four statements and their ideas for improving BPPD. Note that the number of interviews with BPPD officers is small and the perceptions and ideas should not be considered as representative of all BPPD officers and staff. Furthermore, the following perceptions and ideas may not represent all five of the police officers interviewed.

BPPD officer interviewees agree that there are limits to their effectiveness.

When asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement “The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that interrupt criminal behavior to create safety,” BPPD officers most frequently agreed.

However, in response to open-ended questions to elaborate on their thinking, BPPD officers most frequently pointed to limited effectiveness. Officers said that they are doing what they can to interrupt crime, while stating that there is always more that can be done. Officer interviewees also felt that efforts to intervene in crime are hindered under increased public scrutiny of policing. Officers explained that previous approaches to intervening in crime, such as stopping low-level crimes to prevent more serious crimes, does not appear to be supported by the community (we note that research also shows that approaches such as “zero tolerance,” “broken windows,” and strict drug enforcement are not related to reductions in crime or violence; see “Improve interventions” the recommendation to improve interventions and Appendix A for more information). Officers also explained that they hesitate to intervene in low-level crimes due to worry that they could be perceived as using unnecessary force and become publicized and disreputable. However, interviewees also reported that most BPPD officers are excited about trying new approaches and strategies to promote diversion efforts, specifically for youth.

BPPD officer interviewees agree that intervening in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence is a high priority.

When asked to rate their level of agreement with the statement, “the Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence, officers agreed.

In response to open-ended questions to share more about their reasoning, officers said that there is a great deal of pressure from leadership to work on improving de-escalation, and that it is a high priority for the department.

Officer interviewees also reported that they are making progress in adopting new approaches and strategies. They shared that they embrace a “self-correcting” organizational culture that is forwardly detecting needed changes. For example, there is increased recognition that the “ask-tell-show” philosophy of policing is archaic, and sound communication strategies would be preferable and more effective. Officers explained that they are now more inclined to undertake strategies that do not have the same sense of urgency as the “ask-tell-show” philosophy of immediately trying to resolve an issue. Officers reported that they are now asking “Do we need to take someone to jail right now? If we don't, what will happen? And if they go to jail, then what?” Another new approach is how BPPD apprehend dangerous individuals. This has changed from the “breach and hold” approach to a “risk assessment” approach where BPPD works to determine if there are kids, dogs, or guns in the house, and considers the need for additional support, such as having a crisis negotiator on the scene.

Police interviewees also reported that BPPD engage in numerous de-escalation and communication trainings, including the Crisis Intervention Training (CIT). Additionally, officers reported that they are required to activate body cameras which may encourage officers to take more time, and be more patient and understanding. Officers also reported that having a supervisor who is a more experienced officer at the scene also helps to de-escalate situations.

BPPD interviewees reported that they are concerned with and interested in the approaches and strategies that the community would like to see BPPD use.

BPPD officer interviewees understand that people from different races and places do not feel well-treated by police.

Researchers asked BPPD officers for their level of agreement with the statement “The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime in ways that treat people with dignity and respect.” Officer interviewees agreed with this statement.

Researchers followed up with open-ended questions asking officers to share more about their thoughts. Officers shared that they hold themselves to high standards and are treating everyone equitably. However, interviewees recognize that some segments of the community feel over-policed and distrusting of the police. Officers shared that it is challenging and deflating to all be perceived as racially inequitable because of the actions of individual cops. Officers also shared that despite the movement to defund the police, officers are continuing to respond to calls for duty in communities of color, specifically calls made by members of communities of color.

In other responses to the statement of the BPPD treating everyone with dignity and respect, officers reported that there are limitations to meeting the needs of all individuals due to a lack of resources or limited capacity around supports such as the mobile crisis team and behavioral health centers. BPPD interviewees felt that it would be helpful for officers to have other options beyond jail.

BPPD officer interviewees agree that BPPD listens to community concerns, and cites challenges to making changes.

Researchers asked BPPD officers their level of agreement with the statement “The Brooklyn Park Police Department listens to diverse community concerns, and makes changes to address those concerns.” Officers agreed with this statement.

In response to open-ended questions asking for elaboration, BPPD officers reported that they have made extensive efforts to gather feedback from the community. They reported holding over 20 community listening sessions, including listening to community concerns that are anti-police and anti-law enforcement. For example, one listening session involved community concerns after President Donald Trump issued an immigration ban that negatively impacted Brooklyn Park residents and their families. In that session, officers reported that they worked to calm and assure the community that the BPPD was not working with Immigration and Custom Enforcement (ICE). Additionally, officers pointed to the BLUE (Blocks Learning to Unite and Engage) Blocks program as an example of police officers’ efforts to develop relationships with the community during their discretionary time and interact with the community in positive ways.

Police interviewees also reported challenges with listening to and addressing community concerns. Officers described hearing conflicting views and concerns between activists who do not live in Brooklyn Park and the residents of Brooklyn Park.

BPPD interviewees reported that BPPD is striving for complete transparency and have publicized data around race/ethnicity and gender. They are also looking to release use-of-force data. Officers felt that they have had helpful dialogues with the community and continue to be interested in community concerns.

Police officers’ ideas to improve the Brooklyn Park Police Department:

In the interviews with the five police officers, they were asked what ideas they have for improving the Brooklyn Park Police Department. The following is a summary of the ideas shared in the interviews. Again, these ideas may not represent the ideas of all BPPD officers nor all five police interviewees.

- **Expand the mental health unit.** Ideas for expansion included recruiting and hiring more staff to help with referrals to the mental health unit, increasing wraparound services from the BPPD by increasing the number of county social workers embedded in the department, and conducting research and evaluation to demonstrate what impact the mental health unit has on crime prevention.

- **Expand pre-arrest diversion opportunities.** Ideas for expansion included increasing and improving programs for youth in the juvenile unit that are alternatives to jail time (e.g. community service programs, program engagement), increasing and improving resources by having a designated person or department maintain a list of resources that is shared with both city residents and the BPPD, and conducting research and evaluation to demonstrate what impact diversion programs have on crime prevention.
- **Develop partnerships to address non-law enforcement needs.** Ideas included increasing and improving capacity to better identify youth who are consistently having problems and connect them with needed resources, including providing referrals, and increasing capacity to provide follow-up services for needs that are not related to criminal issues, e.g. the ability to give out bus tokens.

And then, just working patrol and being out in the community, there are definitely times when we're called to do the work that isn't typical of law enforcement. Like, "Okay, this isn't a criminal justice issue. This isn't a law enforcement thing that I can solve, but I don't want to just leave you hanging either. Wish I could hook you up." And I think we have several officers here that will go into their own pockets and pay for things, I've heard that happening, like people paying for hotels and getting around by bus or cab. But it's like, geez. Yeah. I mean, there's obviously an issue there, so it'd be nice to have access to that. – BPPD officer

- **Improve internal relations and communications between administration and "boots on the ground."** One idea to achieve this included support so staff better understand roles, including the chief's role. Another idea was to set clear expectations for police officers. For example, clear communication about whether the expectation is to intervene or not in low-level crime would be helpful. Finally, officers suggested providing leadership support and validation to police officers by communicating to communities and clarifying public misconceptions of policing practices.
- **Build relationships with community.** Officers suggested creating a position for an officer to be a community liaison between communities and the BPPD, a focus on relationships with youth, and partnerships with athletic teams (Vikings, U of M, Timberwolves, etc.) to talk to youth that are frequently involved in the juvenile crime unit.
- **Increase capacity for robust alternatives to use-of-force.** Officers suggested developing and implementing a robust less lethal force program, and providing rigorous trainings on how to resolve issues without using force.
- **Address organizational staffing needs,** including through determining needs for new roles and departments within BPPD and shifting BPPD staffing to align with these roles.

E. Brooklyn Park interview introduction and protocol

Wilder researchers emailed the following as an introduction to the interviews to those invited to participate.

Project background: As you may know, in response to the racial justice uprising last summer, the City of Brooklyn Park City Council directed the Human Rights Commission and Multicultural Advisory Committee to work to understand issues around safety and policing in Brooklyn Park. The city hosted four listening sessions in the summer of 2020, and has been moving forward with a plan to improve safety, policing, and violence prevention in Brooklyn Park. As part of that, the City of Brooklyn Park contracted with Wilder Research to help them gather more information, including community feedback and experiences, and present recommendations for improvement. The interviews are part of that project.

Interview background: Wilder Research is conducting 50 interviews with people who live in Brooklyn Park, or who work for the City of Brooklyn Park. Interview questions will cover three main topics:

1. Your perceptions of whether people in Brooklyn Park have equal access to the services, supports, and conditions that help prevent crime and violence
2. Your experiences with and perceptions of the Brooklyn Park Police Department
3. Your ideas for violence prevention and intervention

What can you expect from the interview?

1. **The information you share is important.** We will take the feedback you provide during this interview and combine it with those from the other interviews. Interview themes, information from other surveys and listening sessions, and studies from other cities will help us make recommendations to improve equity, policing, and violence prevention in Brooklyn Park.
2. **The information you share is confidential.** Wilder Research will not share your interest in the interview with anybody. Nothing you say in the interview will be shared with others in a way that people could tell who you are, including your name. Anything you share in the interview will not impact any services you may receive through the City.
3. **Responding to questions is voluntary.** You can choose to decline the interview, skip any question, or stop the interview at any time, and that's ok.
4. **Some interview questions may cause you stress.** There are questions about your experiences with police, and, depending on what those are, you may experience some distress. Whatever feelings you have are real, and you don't have to answer any question that you don't want to answer.

If you need support at any time

- **Call or text 1-800-985-5990** (SAMHSA distress helpline, answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)
- **Text "MN" to 741741** (Crisis Text Line, answered 24 hours a day, 7 days a week)

If you have questions about this information or this project. Respond to this email, or call Alex at Wilder Research: 651-280-2800

Thank you for your time and interest!

Interview protocol

Wilder researchers used the following protocol for interviews.

Introduction

Hi, I'm [name] from Wilder Research. We're talking today to hear your perspectives about safety, policing, and violence prevention in Brooklyn Park. I expect the interview to take about an hour. Is now still an ok time to talk?

IF NO, is there a better time that we could call you back?

IF YES: Great!

As you may know, in response to the racial justice uprising last summer, the City of Brooklyn Park City Council directed the Human Rights Commission and Multicultural Advisory Committee to undertake some work to understand issues around safety and policing in Brooklyn Park.

Our interview today will ask you about your perceptions of whether residents of Brooklyn Park have equal access to the services, supports, and conditions that help prevent crime and violence. We will also ask you about your perceptions of the Brooklyn Park Police Department, and finally about your ideas for violence prevention and intervention in the future.

I wanted to emphasize that this interview is confidential. We will combine your answers with others and will report a summary of what we hear. We will talk again about confidentiality at the end of the interview, but I wanted to emphasize that nothing we discuss today will be shared with others in a way that people could tell who you are, including your name.

(Note to data collection, if this is a community interviewee, please state the following): Wilder Research will not share the list of people who participated in the interviews with anybody who works for the city, including with the Brooklyn Park Police Department. This means that outside of the Wilder team, nobody will know you participated in this interview. It is also important that you know anything you say will not impact any services you may receive through the City.

Second, know this interview is voluntary, meaning you can choose to skip any question, or end the conversation at any time, and that's ok. Also **there are no right or wrong answers** to any of the questions I have. It is just about you and your experience and perspective, and we appreciate as much as you feel comfortable sharing.

Also, I will be asking you about your experiences with police, and, depending on what those are, you may experience some distress. Whatever feelings you have are real, and you don't have to answer any question that you don't want to answer. In the email scheduling the interview, you'll find an attachment with mental health resources that are available to help you process anything that may come up.

The last piece of the introduction is this: is it ok with you if I record the conversation to help make sure my notes are accurate? We will delete the recording after we clean up notes.

IF YES: Ok, thank you. I'm going to begin recording now.

IF NO: Thank you for letting me know. I won't record.

Background

Interviewer to note here:

City employee (including police)?

If so, which department?

City resident?

If so, which neighborhood (if indicated)?

If so, how long resided (if indicated)?

1. If employee: I see that you work [in this City department].
 - a. What is your position title?
 - b. How long have you worked for the City, in any role?
2. If resident: When you signed up for the interview, you said that you live in Brooklyn Park.
 - a. [Even if known]: What neighborhood do you live in?
 - b. [Even if known]: How long have you lived in Brooklyn Park?
3. Do you serve on any boards or commissions connected with the City? If so, which one(s), and please briefly describe your role.
4. What do you like about [working and/or living] in Brooklyn Park?

Equity in safety

We would like to understand your thoughts on equity and inequity for people living in Brooklyn Park. We are especially interested in hearing what you think about whether everyone in Brooklyn Park has equal access to services, supports, and conditions that would lower crime and violence in the community. We have questions about three different factors that safe communities have in common.

5. In communities where residents are **economically stable**, there are lower levels of violence and crime. **Economic stability** means living wage jobs, or jobs that pay enough to make ends meet working 40 hours a week. **Economic stability** also means that people can afford housing, that there's no huge income gaps between rich and poor, and that there are helpful poverty reduction programs for people when they're struggling.
 - a. With all of that, what is your level of agreement or disagreement with the following statement:
 - i. People in Brooklyn Park are economically stable.
 - ii. Would you say that's true for all people in Brooklyn Park / most people in Brooklyn Park / some, but not most people in Brooklyn Park / no people in Brooklyn Park?
(*Don't know*)
 - b. Would you say more?
 - c. Do you have experience with the City of Brooklyn Park helping you or someone you know with finding living wage work or affordable housing, or otherwise helping with economic stability?
 - i. If YES:
 1. Can you say more? (If needed, PROBE: How did the City help?)
 2. Is there anything you think the City could have done differently to help even more?
 - d. What could the City do to help you or someone you know achieve economic stability? (If needed: living wage jobs, affordable housing, and economic help when they're struggling)

6. Next, in communities where there are **positive connections for youth outside of the school environment**, there is also less violence and crime. **Positive connections for youth outside of school** mean being engaged in arts, recreation, volunteering or community-building organizations like YouthLink, and feeling hopeful about their future.
 - a. What is your level of agreement with the following statement:
 - i. Brooklyn Park youth have these positive connections.
 - ii. Would you say that's true for all youth in Brooklyn Park / most youth in Brooklyn Park / some, but not most youth in Brooklyn Park / no youth in Brooklyn Park / or you're not sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
 - c. Do you have experience with the City of Brooklyn Park helping you or youth you know make these positive connections? (NOTE: school system is not part of City government.)
 - i. If YES:
 1. Can you say more? (If needed, PROBE: How did the City help?)
 2. Is there anything you think the City could have done differently to help even more?
 - d. What could the City do to help you or youth you know engage with positive programs, or otherwise feel hopeful about their future?
-
7. We also see that communities with strong **neighborhood connections** have less violence and crime. **Neighborhood connections** usually happen where there are clean and vibrant public spaces, volunteer and community-building organizations in the neighborhood, residents who live in the neighborhood for a long time, and neighbors trust and feel connected to each other.
 - a. What is your level of agreement with the following statement:
 - i. People in Brooklyn Park feel connected to their neighborhood.
 - ii. Would you say you all people in Brooklyn Park feel connected to their neighborhood / most people in Brooklyn Park feel connected to their neighborhood / some people in Brooklyn Park feel connected to their neighborhood / nobody in Brooklyn Park fees connected to their neighborhood / or aren't sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
 - c. Do you have experience with the City of Brooklyn Park helping you or someone you know feel connected in their neighborhoods?
 - i. If YES:
 1. Can you say more? (If needed, PROBE: How did the City help?)
 2. Is there anything you think the City could have done differently to help even more?
 - d. What could the City do to help you or people you know feel connected to their neighborhood?

Brooklyn Park Police Department

We'd like to learn more about your experiences and thoughts about the Brooklyn Park Police Department.

8. **SKIP FOR POLICE RESPONDENTS. ONLY FOR COMMUNITY MEMBER / NON-POLICE CITY STAFF:** In the last 5 years have you or someone you're close with had contact with the Brooklyn Park Police Department either in response to a 911 call, or because they stopped you or your loved one?
- a. If YES:
 - i. Can you say more?
 - ii. [If needed] Were the police called to respond to something, or did they stop you / someone you know?
 - iii. How do you feel about how the Brooklyn Park Police Department handled that situation?
 - iv. What, if anything, did the Brooklyn Park Police do well?
 - v. What, if anything, should the Brooklyn Park Police have done differently?

Thank you. Next, I have a few statements I'm going to read, and I'd like you to tell me your level of agreement.

9. The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that interrupt community violence or criminal behavior, and that create safety.
- a. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
10. The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that de-escalate situations and without violence.
- a. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
11. The Brooklyn Park Police Department intervenes in crime and community violence in ways that treat all people with dignity and respect.
- a. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
12. The Brooklyn Park Police Department listens to diverse community concerns, and makes changes to address those concerns.
- a. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?
 - b. Would you say more?
13. What, if any, ideas do you have to improve the Brooklyn Park Police Department?
- a. PROBE: Are there changes you think the Police Department could make to better intervene in crime and community violence, or de-escalate situations?
14. Is there information you'd like to see that would help you understand what's going on with crime, community violence, police violence, and policing practices in Brooklyn Park?

Violence intervention

Thank you so much for your time so far. We have a couple more big questions, and then will wrap up. This last section is about your perceptions about violence prevention and intervention opportunities in Brooklyn Park.

15. Communities that use a strategy called “**focused deterrence**” have less violence and crime. **Focused deterrence** is the identification of specific people who cause violence, and then mobilizing a diverse group of law enforcement, social services, and community stakeholders to respond. Responses include a mix of sanctions, like community service, and rewards, and direct, repeated communication with the people or groups of people to stop their violent behavior. (If needed, an example: Sometimes focused deterrence is police and community workers reaching out to people who have a criminal record that prevents them from possessing firearms, and meeting with them regularly to counsel them on opportunities for jobs, housing, and community resources, as well as on what would happen if they illegally possessed firearms.)
- a. Do you have experience with focused deterrence in Brooklyn Park?
 - i. Can you tell me more?
 - b. What is your level of agreement with the following: The City should pursue focused deterrence to interrupt violence and crime.
 - i. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?
16. Communities that use **restorative justice** interventions also succeed at interrupting violence and crime. **Restorative justice** interventions involve community-based workers working with the person who caused harm, as well as the person or people harmed, to have the responsible party understand the impact of their actions, and to develop a plan to make repairs, and make changes so they don't do the same thing in the future. (If needed: An example could be that someone stole a bike. A community worker would work with the person who stole the bike and the person whose bike it was. The person who stole the bike would listen to the impact they had, and explain why they did it. And everybody would craft a plan so that the person who stole the bike would repair that harm, and get help or make changes to not steal again.)
- a. Do you have experience with restorative justice in Brooklyn Park?
 - i. Can you tell me more?
 - b. What is your level of agreement with the following: The City should pursue restorative to interrupt violence and crime.
 - i. Would you say you strongly agree / agree a little / disagree a little / strongly disagree / or aren't sure?

Thank you so much for your time, and all that you've shared with me today. I appreciate your contribution! We're almost done with the interview. My last question is:

17. Is there anything else you think we should know about safety, policing, reducing police violence, or dealing with crime or community violence, in Brooklyn Park?

Great, thank you. I want to circle back to confidentiality, and understand the level of confidentiality that you want to have.

Do you prefer that I only share your responses grouped with other responses? For example, I would say that half of interviewees said that everybody in Brooklyn Park is economically stable, and your answer would be grouped in there. Or, is it ok if I quote something you said, as long as there's nothing in the quote that could identify you as you? For example, if you said, "I think the Brooklyn Park Police Department should hire more LGBT staff to better relate with me," I'd report, "one interviewee said 'I think the Brooklyn Park Police Department should hire more LGBT staff to better relate with the community.'"

_____ strict confidentiality _____ de-identified quote ok

[Gift cards are ONLY for community members – skip for city staff]

Finally, I have a \$25 gift card to thank you for your time. Do you prefer a gift card to:

_____ Amazon (email only)

_____ Target(email or mailed plastic card)

_____ Walmart (email or mailed plastic card)

NOTE: Ask for best email address/mailling address and enter all gift card information into the tracking file.

You should receive your card within two weeks. If not, please email Julia at julia.miller@wilder.org.

Great, thank you again for your time and all that you've shared. I appreciate it, and I hope you have a great day!

F. Youth interview

In April 2021, Wilder Research interviewed six youth who live and/or attend school in Brooklyn Park. (For information about why these six youth were invited to participate in this interview, see Appendix A). During a group interview session via Zoom, researchers asked youth questions about:

- Youth programs and schools in Brooklyn Park
- Experiences with the Brooklyn Park Police Department
- How adults can best respond to mistakes and harm

Interviewers did not ask youth to share their race, ethnicity, or gender identities, so we do not report those here.

We reviewed a transcript of the Zoom session to understand where two or more youth raised similar ideas. Here, we report a summary of those ideas raised by two or more youth during this group interview.

We caution against overgeneralizing the themes summarized here. Thousands of young people live and/or attend school in Brooklyn Park; we do not know to what extent the views expressed during this interview reflect the views of young people across Brooklyn Park.

Youth programs and schools in Brooklyn Park

Safe communities usually have many opportunities for youth to make positive connections with other youth and supportive adults, as well as high-quality schools where students feel connected, safe, and supported to succeed (see Root causes of community violence and disorder in Brooklyn Park, above). Researchers asked youth open-ended questions about their experiences with youth programming in Brooklyn Park, parks and youth centers, and schools in Brooklyn Park. Two or more youth raised the following themes (in random order; many themes were raised by two youth):

- Parks and/or community centers in their Brooklyn Park neighborhood are outdated
- Teachers and adults at their Brooklyn Park school should slow down in order to understand students and meet their needs, which would help students feel more connected and supported at school
- Youth would like to see more youth-oriented community centers across Brooklyn Park
- They would like to see more youth-focused events, including 3 on 3 basketball tournaments and field days, which would draw youth from across Brooklyn Park and foster positive connections
- They feel safe in the neighborhoods where they live and/or go to school in Brooklyn Park.

One youth said,

I feel safe in my neighborhood because there's a park, a basketball court, lake, which is good for the kids and I see a lot of kids up there. It's usually quiet, and there's not too much going on. It's like people jogging or doing yard work, and it's like people are around and friendly, but kinda keeping to themselves.

Experiences with the Brooklyn Park Police Department

Policing best practices include procedural justice and de-escalation (see Policing best practices, above). Researchers asked youth open-ended questions about their experiences with the Brooklyn Park Police Department, and what, if anything, they would like to see Brooklyn Park police officers do differently. Two or more youth raised the following themes (in random order; many themes were raised by two youth):

- They had close experience with the BPPD, including being a passenger when their caregiver was pulled over or their caregiver(s) calling BPPD to respond to gunshots in their neighborhood.
- BPPD responded quickly to serious situations.
- BPPD should improve their ability to calm down situations, including getting out of squad cars appearing calm, and increasing the amount of time they spend listening instead of shouting over people.
- BPPD officers should interact more regularly with people in a neighborhood, to build positive relationships and trust.
- BPPD should focus on holding individual officers accountable for abuse and misconduct.
- BPPD should distribute surveys to people that they stop. One youth said,

The main reason why there's conflict is because there's no communication between the community and the police force. A survey would help [them] understand how the community feels.

Responding to harm

Prison-backed policing can cause harm and fail to address the root causes of violence and disorder in a community (see Policing has limited effects on safety, above). Researchers asked youth open-ended questions about how they think adults should respond when people make mistakes and/or cause harm. Two or more youth raised the following themes (in random order; many themes were raised by two youth):

- The response to harm should include ample time to understand what happened, and what the harmed party wants to see happen next
- Adults tend to act quickly to control a situation, even if they don't know what happened, why, or what next steps would be most effective to calm things down and address the problem
- Adults, including teachers, parents/caregivers, and police should take time to listen to understand what happened, and what the people impacted want to see happen next. One youth said,

You don't see a lot of people listening. They're quick to react, not to hear everybody's point of view. We need to pause, so we're not just hearing our own way of thinking. We can't keep getting stuck on our own views.

G. Brooklyn Park Police Department Scorecard background

Wilder researchers developed a research-driven tool to evaluate the Brooklyn Park Police Department, located here: <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/brooklyn-park-equity-in-public-safety>.

To develop the Brooklyn Park Police Department Scorecard, Wilder researchers:

- Reviewed, coded, and analyzed literature on policing best practices and police scorecard development, as well as literature describing the relationship between police policies and practices with outcomes in the community
- Worked in consultation with this project's Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee to align the scorecard and scoring process with strengths, needs, and current police practices in Brooklyn Park

In this Appendix we describe the process of developing the police scorecard and include details about key indicators. We first contextualize this information with limitations.

Scorecard limitations

Improving policing may not go as far as other changes to improve safety

Wilder Research was contracted to build a tool to assess performance of BPPD. However, based on research into the social conditions for public safety (see Appendix C) and the limits of traditional policing (see Policing has limited effects on safety, above), it is very likely that other agencies and organizations contribute more to those conditions – to building a safe community – than traditional police work.

While the scorecard includes some indicators to describe Brooklyn Park crime rates as well as community perceptions of safety and the Brooklyn Park Police Department, we do not intend to limit the crime prevention work of Brooklyn Park to improving the score of the Brooklyn Park Police Department on other indicators. Research into the social conditions for public safety, including our analysis of community indicators in Brooklyn Park and interviews with some Brooklyn Park residents, points to many avenues to improve safety in Brooklyn Park outside of the police department. This scorecard is not intended to, and cannot, assess the myriad impactful avenues that exist to improve safety before the police are involved.

A tool to describe the status quo, not to reimagine

Wilder Research began this work in December 2020, and reviewed research available at that time. However, research describing changes and their impacts must always lag behind the actual changes themselves. And, a Minneapolis police officer murdering George Floyd in May 2020 sparked the largest mass demonstrations in American history, one result of which was a rapidly

expanding scope of police reform. Current changes to police departments across the country could be described as “reimagining” policing, and include shifting responsibilities and resources from police departments to other agencies and community-based organizations.

The leading research describing the processes, impacts, and how to measure these reforms will not start emerging until a year or two after the changes are made. As such, the Brooklyn Park Police scorecard is best thought of as a tool to assess BPPD’s performance toward goals that describe status quo policing. Because the research on reimagining policing is not available at this time, this scorecard cannot be a tool to assess BPPD’s performance toward goals that reimagine the role and scope of police work.

We state this to make explicit this important limitation, not to limit the overall conversation around the role and scope of policing in Brooklyn Park.

Foundational considerations guiding police scorecard development

Wilder researchers developed the police scorecard with some overarching considerations from the literature and guidance from the Advisory Committee, Evaluation Subcommittee, and HRC work plan (City of Brooklyn Park, 2020). These foundational considerations were:

- **Develop the scorecard in partnership with police and community.** There are many police measurement tools and reform recommendations, created with a mix of consultation with or buy-in from police and community. On one end of the spectrum, police departments sometimes develop their own reform recommendations and measurement tools, with little to no input from community. An example of this is the “New Approaches to Training,” described in “Re-Engineering Training on Police Use of Force” (Police Executive Research Forum, 2015). On the other end of the spectrum, researchers and activists developed a police scorecard that is available online and includes publicly available data about hundreds of police departments nationwide (Campaign Zero, n.d.b). Wilder Research developed this scorecard in consultation with Brooklyn Park community members and police officers through Advisory Committee meetings, Evaluation Subcommittee meetings, confidential feedback surveys, and meetings with Deputy Chief Mark Bruley and Officer Matthew Rabe.
- **Identify goals for the scorecard first,** and use those goals to identify specific indicators (Tiwana et al., 2015). There is a robust body of research describing different measurement tools and single metrics, or indicators that can be tracked to understand police activities and performance. However, a meta-analysis of police performance measurement best practices recommended identifying the goals to be advanced by the scorecard ahead of indicator selection, and Evaluation Subcommittee and Advisory Committee members agreed with this principle.

- **Include qualitative and quantitative indicators.** A meta-analysis of police performance measurement best practices made this recommendation (Tiwana et al., 2015), and Evaluation Subcommittee and Advisory Committee members agreed with this principle, especially as it applied to capturing community perceptions of police.
- **Use data-driven management,** or ensure that all indicators measured are used to inform overall management of the police department. This recommendation was based on literature describing data-driven management of police departments (Morgan et al., 2017), and Evaluation Subcommittee and advisory committee members agreed with this recommendation. Rather than limit data-driven management to a discrete section of the police scorecard, Wilder researchers developed a scoring matrix where highest scores are dependent on tracking the indicator and using results to drive improvements. Evaluation Subcommittee and advisory committee members agreed with this scoring.

Establishing the goals

In order to establish the overarching goals of the BPPD scorecard, Wilder researchers first reviewed research on police scorecards, measuring police activities, and current policing best practices. Research sources included peer-reviewed research reports, and government and task force reports and recommendations. When sources mentioned overarching goals advanced by tracking or improving police performance in a specific way, researchers noted those goals, and the sources in which they were mentioned. Finally, researchers tallied the number of times that these goals were mentioned in the literature we reviewed. In order from most to least frequent, we reviewed sources that recommended measuring or improving a police department's:

- Policies
- Commitment to standards
- Training
- Transparency
- Community oversight
- Crime reduction
- Quality of services
- Impact on fear, safety, and order
- Trust by community
- Use of technology or social media
- Community-oriented policing practices
- Officer wellness and safety

Next, we presented these goals to the Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee for feedback. Committee and Subcommittee members, including community members, city officials, and police officers, were supportive of these goals.

Finally, during a review of the same sources to code and analyze the specific indicators that can be tracked to advance those goals, researchers noted that some indicator groups advanced the same goals. We updated the list of goals to reflect that, and presented the following as goal areas for improving the Brooklyn Park Police Department:

- Policies
- Training and education
- Transparency
- Community oversight
- Commitment to standards
- Community policing
- Officer wellness and safety
- Data-driven management
- Quality services
- Safety

Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee members supported this final set of goals.

Establishing the indicators

To establish the particular measures, or indicators, that are present under each of the goals in the scorecard, Wilder researchers reviewed the same set of literature and reports. When sources mentioned specific indicators that can measure police performance, researchers noted those indicators and the sources in which they were mentioned. Researchers also organized these indicators according to which goal each would advance.

Next, researchers presented a draft scorecard at Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee meetings, and answered initial questions that committee members posed. This draft included a full list of the indicators present in the literature, organized under the relevant goal, and a draft scoring matrix. Researchers also emailed a draft for committee members to review, and asked committee members to provide feedback and ask questions about the draft. Committee members could provide confidential feedback over email or through an online survey.

Wilder received the feedback and included notes about specific indicators identified as high priority in the scorecard.

Finally, Wilder researchers met with Deputy Chief Bruley and Officer Rabe to understand the current practices and data collected by the Brooklyn Park Police Department. Researchers also suggested that the scorecard assessment process take place in partnership between police officers who have access to more data collected than members of the public, and community members, including members of the Human Rights Commission, the Multicultural Advisory Committee, and, if and when established, a community oversight board. The officers were in agreement with this partnership.

Discussion of specific indicators

Union contract (Policies goal)

Proponents of best police practices sometimes run up against union contract items that erect barriers to improving police departments, especially accountability. Research shows that some common union contract provisions are associated with higher levels of police abusing and killing community members (Campaign Zero, n.d.b; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). Those contract provisions include:

1. Restricting the timelines for investigating civilian complaints or the type of civilian complaint that can be considered, leaving civilian concerns about police abuse unresolved
2. Restricting or delaying interrogations of police officers when they use force
3. Giving officers under investigation access to information that members of the public would not have
4. Limiting oversight and/or discipline
5. Requiring the city or another entity outside the department to pay for misconduct
6. Erasing or obscuring misconduct records

To the extent that these provisions are codified in Minnesota's Peace Officer Discipline Procedures Act (Minn. Stat. §626.89), or stem from data privacy statutes and case law, we recommend that the Brooklyn Park Police Department engage community in a plan to identify and advocate for legislation that removes barriers to police accountability and reduces police abusing and killing community members.

Protest response (Policies goal) and Community Oversight Board consultation (Community oversight goal)

Since Officer Darren Wilson killed Michael Brown in 2014, protests for Black Lives Matter and against police brutality and violence have been met with disproportionate, militarized police response. Common responses to protests of police violence include mass deployment of officers in riot gear, the use of chemical weapons, rubber bullets, marking rounds, deployment of armored trucks to enforce curfews and face off with crowds, and aerial and electronic surveillance.

This is in contrast with police response to protests against public health measures taken to contain the COVID-19 pandemic, or demonstrations in support of easy access to firearms, often involving groups of heavily armed individuals. Where law enforcement is present at all, it has been in fewer numbers without riot gear, chemical weapons, armored vehicles, or aerial and electronic surveillance.

The militarized police response to Black Lives Matter protests further harms communities already angry at and grieving police violence, and can and should be avoided (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). In 2014, 1,400 community leaders, members of congress, faith leaders, artists, and activists signed an open letter to President Obama, endorsing many ideas to curb these harms, including a principle of demilitarizing police (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a). It is likely, given that the 2020 racial justice protests comprised the largest mass movement in American history, that this idea is endorsed by even more people in the community today.

Sources (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015) recommend that police departments:

1. Reject equipment transfers from the military, especially if such equipment will be used against people protesting police violence, or to surveil the community
2. Require robust public engagement and leadership where the department is considering acquiring military equipment, especially if such equipment will be used against people protesting, or to surveil the community
3. Return existing military equipment, especially that equipment used against people protesting, or to surveil the community

If the Brooklyn Park Police Department already has military-grade equipment described above, an intermediary recommendation may be to undertake a community-engaged study of how that equipment has been used in the past – in response to calls for service versus in response to protests, for example – and work with community leadership to determine an appropriate course of action for use or return of such equipment.

Consent to search (Policies goal)

Research shows that, while the Fourth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution protects against unreasonable searches, people frequently are unaware of the fact that they have a right to refuse officer requests to be searched where the officer lacks cause. Research further demonstrates the anti-BIPOC impacts of consent-based searches (Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). Officers are more likely to request a search of BIPOC people or their vehicles than of White people and their vehicles, but are less likely to find contraband or evidence of criminal behavior when they do.

Even so, officers execute enough searches against BIPOC people that it contributes to anti-BIPOC arrest and prosecution disparities for low-level non-violent offenses such as marijuana possession.

To protect individuals' Fourth Amendment rights and to ameliorate anti-BIPOC impacts, best practice Consent to Search policies include:

1. Application to all police contact, including calls for service, vehicle, and pedestrian stops
2. Requirements that police officers obtain and document proof of voluntary and informed consent in either written, video, or audio taped form, including information that there are no negative consequences for individuals who choose not to be searched, and documentation of the officer's reason(s) for requesting the search
3. Banning requests for searches on the basis of justifications that correlate with implicit or overt bias such as nervousness, presence in high-crime area, or prior criminal record
4. Distribution of a tear-off sheet with the informing officer's name, rank, command, and phone number for filing complaints (especially important as research shows that where officers are required to share identifying information, they are less likely to behave disrespectfully or abusively)
5. Training that discourages officers from coercing individuals to consent
6. Ongoing evaluation of officer adherence to policy and outcomes, with planning in place to further limit or eliminate consent-based searches if data show continued disparities based on factors like race, gender, or class

Procedural justice (Training and education goals; Officer wellness and safety goals; Quality services goals)

Studies show that procedural justice is related to community trust in police, though evidence is mixed on how police departments can best implement a practice of procedural justice (International Association of Chiefs of Police, 2017). With this, we recommend that BPPD officers are trained in procedural justice and surveyed on their perceptions of procedural justice in the department, and that community assessment of BPPD's performance includes procedural justice indicators.

Cultural sensitivity (Training and education goals)

Police officers often have identities and backgrounds distinct from the people with whom they regularly interact. Effective communication across differences is a key aspect of police work, and training in cultural sensitivity is a research-based recommendation (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014; President’s Task Force on 21st Century Policing, 2015). Key aspects of such training could include:

1. Training on interactions with the LGBTQ population, including requiring that officers interact with others in a manner that is consistent with their gender identity, regardless of anatomy or the officer’s perception of gender
2. Training on African American, Latino, Muslim, African, South Asian cultures and communication, and/or on other immigrant or non-English speaking groups with communities in Brooklyn Park
3. Training on preventing officer sexual misconduct, harassment, or other gender-based abuse

Adolescent brain development (Training and education goal)

Similar to the above, police officers are frequently older than the individuals with whom they interact. Adolescents, or people in their teens through mid-20s, make up a large portion of the population with whom police officers interact. Those in their teens and mid-20s are in a distinct phase of brain development, with neurochemical responses to risk, reward, and consequences that contribute to greater impulsivity and risk-taking behavior than exhibited by adults. It is a research-based recommendation to regularly train officers on adolescent brain development, and skills and communication styles that can be used to de-escalate situations with adolescents (Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014).

Arrests (Transparency goal)

We recommend reporting overall arrests made, with an overarching caution: that BPPD officers fully understand these data to be reported for the community’s benefit, and not tied to assessment of BPPD officer “performance.” BPPD officers should not face undue pressure to arrest, as this can unnecessarily escalate situations, leading to police violence, including killing or murdering the person arrested. Additionally, arrests are destabilizing events that rupture the individual’s connections with the conditions for safety (for example, people arrested can face barriers to contacting loved ones for emotional support, lose work, and miss treatment and other appointments), and they can be traumatizing for the person arrested, their family, and their community. Research summarized by The International Association of Chiefs of Police (2017) recognizes that arrests “can have adverse consequences – with or without a conviction – that perpetuate criminal activity.”

However, reporting arrests (including custodial arrests, citations, referrals for charges, etc.) by type of crime, can help illuminate whether the Brooklyn Park Police Department may be engaged in enforcement of less serious behavior at levels not preferred by the Brooklyn Park community. Currently, crime definitions for the Brooklyn Park Police Department's data dashboard include crimes against persons, society, and property. It may be that different definitions, including drug crimes and/or violent assaults, would better fit the community's needs. We recommend working with community to define crime categories that fit the community's needs.

Response time (Transparency goal)

For the response time indicator, we mean to capture information that describes any lag time between when a person calls for an emergency situation and when police arrive on the scene. We recognize a concern that this may be opposed to a goal that police slow down and focus on de-escalating crisis situations, which may take more time than attempting to control a situation through force (Police Executive Research Forum, 2015). We do not intend for BPPD to be evaluated in a way that leads officers to feel rushed or like they cannot take the time to calm down a situation and resolve it in a way that promotes safety. Evaluating the response time should be done with an eye toward this unintended consequence.

Community oversight goal

Several sources recommend robust civilian oversight of police as a way to improve accountability and decrease misconduct, abuse, and violence (Davis, 2012; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2014; Policy Link & Advancement Project, 2015a; Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). However, as stated above, there is a lack of empirical research connecting community oversight to reduced police or community violence. These sources identify the following best practices for community oversight:

1. Boards have full investigative powers, including the power to compel testimony and document production, and may accept complaints anonymously or from third parties
2. Boards have full access to internal affairs and relevant police data and files
3. Boards have full funding and staffing levels, including their own independent investigators
4. Board membership reflects the communities most impacted by police activity, abuse, and violence; membership includes no law enforcement or former law enforcement to avoid conflicts of interest, actual or apparent
5. Boards are driven by mandates to investigate discrete incidents and systemic issues, including review and guidance of police policy and practice manuals
6. Boards have the power to have meaningful input in officer discipline
7. Boards have mandates to publicize recommendations and findings

Minnesota law is likely a barrier to many of these best practices. To the extent that this is the case, an intermediary recommendation would be for the Brooklyn Park Police Department to partner with other departments and community stakeholders to advocate for those changes that would bring police community oversight in line with best practices. In order to bridge an evidence gap, Wilder Research also recommends research to illuminate whether and how any community oversight board impacts police and community violence in Brooklyn Park.

Prohibit officer affiliation with groups with animosity towards others (Commitment to standards goal)

Since 2006, the FBI has found that “the presence of white supremacists among law enforcement personnel is a significant concern,” and, in 2015, further found that domestic extremist groups including white supremacists “have active links to law enforcement at ‘epidemic levels’” (German, 2020). Of additional concern is that people have committed hate crimes of many types at increasing rates in recent years, and political polarization and politically motivated violence is increasingly common (German, 2020; Remington Cunningham, 2021).

Taking these concerns together, we recommend that the Brooklyn Park Police Department dismiss any officers who associate with hate groups, groups advocating for violent suppression of political opposition, or who spend any amount of their free time contributing to their ideologies (including posting hate speech on social media, etc.). For the purpose of this indicator, we recommend adopting definitions similar to that used by experts at the Southern Poverty Law Center, which is aligned with the FBI’s definition of a hate crime (Southern Poverty Law Center, 2020), and propose the following:

Brooklyn Park Police Officers are prohibited from affiliating with hate groups and groups that advocate for violent suppression of political opposition, and are further prohibited from contributing to these groups’ ideologies, including expressing hate speech, calling for violence against those with different political views, and actually engaging in violence. Hate groups include those organizations that vilify others because of their race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender identity, and/or disability status.

Survey of people stopped by police, including identification of the officer to the person stopped (Quality services goal)

As described above, in the Consent to search indicator, research shows that when officers have to share identifying information with the individuals with whom they are interacting, officers are less likely to engage in disrespect and abuse (Stahly-Butts & Subramanian, 2015). We recommend a survey of people stopped by BPPD officers in order to understand perceptions of BPPD by people most impacted by their work. We also recommend that BPPD officers are required to identify themselves to the person stopped. This identification will both allow for understanding of any patterns of issues with particular officers, as well as increase the likelihood that the officer treats individuals well.

H. Infographic

City of Brooklyn Park, Minnesota Improving Safety and Policing

In December 2020, the City of Brooklyn Park hired Wilder Research to study safety and policing in Brooklyn Park. Find the full results of this study at <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/brooklyn-park-equity-in-public-safety>.

Purpose of the study



Understand root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park



Develop recommendations for improving community safety



Create a scorecard to assess Brooklyn Park Police Department

Study methods



Review 66 research reports



Analyze 18 Brooklyn Park community indicators



Interview 56 people who live in and/or work for Brooklyn Park

Key findings

There are risks of violence when people are not economically secure, or do not feel connected to their community.

Community data about:

- Living wage work
- Affordable housing/homeownership
- Positive connections for youth
- Neighborhood connections

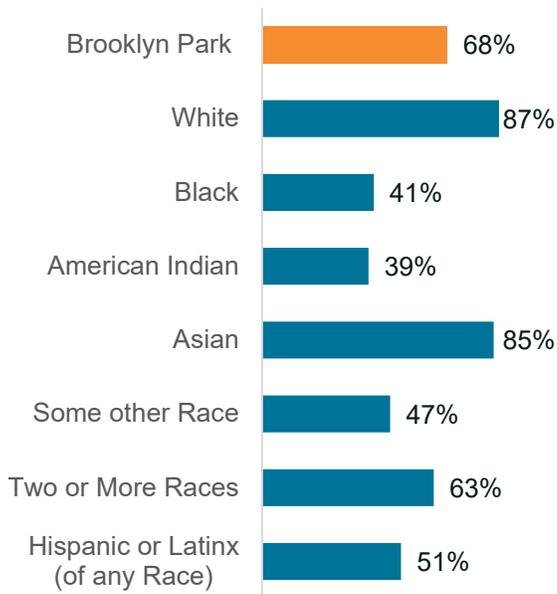
and more can show where risk factors are. Systemic racism contributes to the unequal presences of risk factors.

Before I even moved here, I heard there's quite a range of economic backgrounds in Brooklyn Park. Especially when you go towards more of the southern side versus the northern side.
– Community interviewee

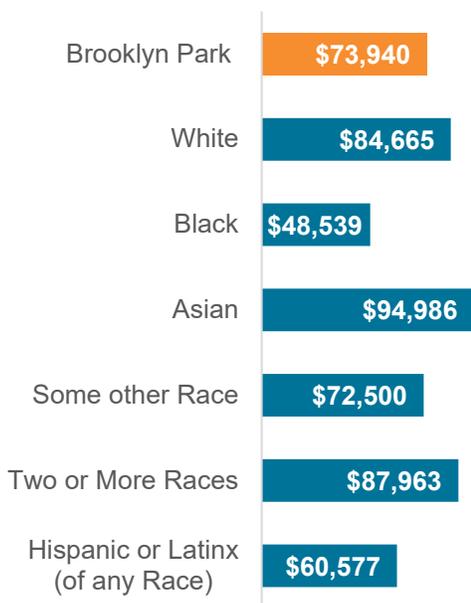


Data show disparities in Brooklyn Park that likely contribute to violence (see Figures 1 and 2).

1. Homeownership rate by race



2. Median household income by race



Homeownership and income data source: Minnesota Compass. (n.d.). *Location profiles: Brooklyn Park data.* <https://www.mncompass.org/profiles/city/brooklyn-park>

Improving policing may have limited effects on community safety

- Community safety happens before the police are called. Research shows that police, prosecution, and incarceration have little to do with crime rates in a community.
- Community-based crisis response, pre-charge diversion, and treatment and restorative justice can be more effective than police and jail at increasing safety.
- Changes that result in police using less force against community, or police being more accountable to community, can reduce violence. Other changes to policing may have limited or no effect on community safety.

There is definitely times when we're called to do work that just isn't typical of law enforcement. Like, "this isn't a law enforcement thing that I can solve, but I don't want to just leave you hanging either." – BPPD officer

Recommendations

- Focus on prevention.** The City of Brooklyn Park should take steps to ensure that all residents, regardless of race or place, are immersed in the social conditions where safety thrives.
- Improve the interventions.** The city should consider expanding restorative interventions, and exploring community-based mental health and substance use response, school-based safety workers, and other ways to reimagine policing. Additionally, BPPD, in partnership with community and City staff, should use the scorecard to illuminate and prioritize areas for improving BPPD
- Assess BPPD for improvements.** Wilder developed a scorecard to measure BPPD performance. We recommend the city, BPPD, and community members impacted by systemic marginalization and police contact partner to assess and recommend changes to BPPD. Find the scorecard at <https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/brooklyn-park-equity-in-public-safety>.

I. Progress reports

Evaluation of Brooklyn Park Police Community Metrics and Outcomes

Progress report summary

Submitted – March 1, 2021

Project overview

Wilder Research is working with the City of Brooklyn Park to conduct an evaluation with three areas focus:

- A qualitative analysis of the Brooklyn Park Police Department
- An analysis of City of Brooklyn Park community metrics and outcomes related to systemic inequities, public safety, and attitudes for law enforcement
- An analysis of likely root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park

Project updates

Below is an overview of the work completed or process of completion from December 2020 – February 2021.

Task	Date
Completed literature review; over 50 sources reviewed that will inform development of the police scorecard, the KIIs, the root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park, and the community metrics for public safety.	December - January
Conducted the evaluation/project kickoff meeting with Brooklyn Park core team, Advisory Committee, and Evaluation Subcommittee	January 28, 2021
Facilitated two subcommittee meetings	February 4, 2021 February 19, 2021
Began developing police scorecard (based on literature review)	January – February
Developed communications materials, including interviewee recruitment tools, PowerPoint presentations, and project timeline.	December - February
Began developing community metrics for public safety section of the report. This included identifying indicators from the literature review, researching what indicators are publicly available (with help from our MN Compass Team).	January – February
Developed community/city interview protocol (based on literature review). Approach included drafting multiple iterations internally with Wilder Research team and data collection staff, as well as incorporating feedback from the evaluation subcommittee.	January – February
Trained Wilder Research staff on data collection tool.	February 15th and 24th
Began planning for youth focus group (new task, see Next Steps section below)	February

Summary of work with Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee

- **Kickoff meeting: January 28, 2021** - Wilder Research co-facilitated a project kickoff meeting with the Brooklyn Park core team, Advisory Committee, and Evaluation Subcommittee. At that meeting, Wilder staff provided a project overview, including areas of focus, data collection methods, deliverables, and timeline. Wilder staff also summarized the work completed to date and helped clarify the role of the Advisory Committee and Evaluation Subcommittee.
- **Evaluation Subcommittee: February 4, 2021** - Wilder Research co-facilitated the first meeting with the Evaluation Subcommittee, comprised of community members (including a community member who is also a member of the Brooklyn Park Human Rights Commission), a city council member, police officers, and city staff. Several key decisions were made at this meeting.
 - **Develop methods to promote the interview opportunity to community.** The group declined to offer names of people who may be interested, and instead decided that the City and Wilder Research should widely promote the interview opportunity through city communications and social media channels, and through distributing fliers in communities missed by the listening sessions. The group was also interested in protecting the anonymity of those interested in the interview. Wilder Research agreed to create, maintain, and anonymize the interview sign up list.
 - **Determine eligibility for interviews.** The group decided to limit participation to Brooklyn Park residents, and exclude those who own rental property or businesses in Brooklyn Park but do not reside there. The group imposed this limit because of the limited number of community interviews (30-40) and because they highly prioritize interviewing people missed by the listening sessions, including young people, BIPOC people, and people who live in neighborhoods with greater police presence.
 - **Develop method for Evaluation Subcommittee feedback on interview questions.** The group agreed to read through the interview questions on a shared drive and provide feedback within a week.
- **Evaluation Subcommittee: February 19, 2021** - Wilder Research co-facilitated the second meeting with the Evaluation Subcommittee. The key action was:
 - **Refine the interview protocol.** To shorten the duration of the interview, the group was asked to prioritize three “equity in safety” questions. The group prioritized asking interviewees about economic stability, positive connections for youth, and neighborhood connections and not education, health care, or community engagement. Reasons given included areas where the City is positioned to have an impact, and this group’s perceptions of where there may be equity or inequities.

Next steps

- **Conduct interviews.** Wilder Research will begin scheduling interviews the first week of March, aiming to have all community and city employee interviews completed by the submission of the next progress report.
- **Conduct focus group (new task).** In February, Wilder Research committed to facilitating a youth focus group as an additional method of data collection. Staff will refine the interview questions so that they are appropriate for young people, develop caregiver consent forms and track responses, and facilitate and record answers from the focus group by submission of the next progress report.
- **Draft police scorecard.** Wilder Research will continue to analyze and synthesize the literature on indicators of adherence to policing best practices and present a draft of the police scorecard to the Evaluation Subcommittee by the submission of the next progress report.
- **Analyze community indicators.** Wilder Research will continue to analyze and synthesize the literature on community indicators, and analyze Brooklyn Park community metrics and outcomes related to systemic inequities, public safety, and attitudes for law enforcement.
- **Begin analysis of interviews.** In late March, Wilder Research will begin analysis of the interviews, including identifying emerging themes, and tracking close-ended responses.

Evaluation contact information

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For more information

For more information about this evaluation, contact Julie Atella (julie.atella@wilder.org).

March 2021

Evaluation of Brooklyn Park Police Community Metrics and Outcomes

Progress report summary

Submitted – April 28, 2021

Project overview

Wilder Research is working with the City of Brooklyn Park to conduct an evaluation with three areas focus:

- A qualitative analysis of the Brooklyn Park Police Department
- An analysis of City of Brooklyn Park community metrics and outcomes related to systemic inequities, public safety, and attitudes for law enforcement
- An analysis of likely root causes of violence in Brooklyn Park

Project updates

Below is an overview of the work completed or process of completion from March 1 – April 30, 2021.

1. WORK COMPLETED

Task	Date
Facilitated 4 Advisory and Evaluation subcommittee meetings	March – April
Drafted police scorecard (based on literature review)	In process
Created a webpage with communications materials.	April
Drafted community metrics for public safety section of the report.	In process
Conducted 46 telephone interviews	In process
Facilitated youth group interview	April

Summary of work

- Created a webpage with frequently asked questions for the evaluation – See <https://www.wilder.org/city-brooklyn-park-police-reform-project>.
- Conducted youth group interview. In April, Wilder Research facilitated group interview with six youth who reside and/or attend school in Brooklyn Park.
- Drafted policing scorecard.
- Continued analysis of community indicators and drafting of that report section.
- Began analysis of interviews.
- Facilitated the following Evaluation Advisory and Subcommittee meetings.
 - March 4, 2021 – Advisory Committee meeting
 - Interview protocol discussion
 - Highlight from literature review: the social conditions where community safety thrives
 - Progress report review

- March 16, 2021 – Evaluation Subcommittee meeting
 - Youth group interview discussion
 - Interview update
 - Introduction to policing scorecard
- April 1, 2021 – Advisory Committee meeting
 - Interview update
 - Update about youth group interview
 - Highlight from literature review: police scorecard considerations and development
 - Introduction to policing scorecard
- April 21, 2021 – Evaluation Subcommittee meeting
 - Interview update
 - Policing scorecard: presenting the first draft in detail

■ **Conducted 46 interviews.** As of April 26, 2021, 46 in-depth phone interviews were conducted with key stakeholders representing diverse perspectives and experiences in the Brooklyn Park community. The final four interviews are scheduled to occur the first week of May. The interviews were conducted with Brooklyn Park residents, as well as city employees, including law enforcement (Figure 2).

2. INTERVIEWS COMPLETED

Interviewee type	Number interviewed
City employees (not Law Enforcement)	9
City employees (Law Enforcement)	5
Brooklyn Park residents	32
Total	46

Next steps

- **Analyze interviews, including the youth group interview.** Wilder Research complete the analysis of the interviews, gathering common themes, experiences, and perceptions, including, where possible, whether there are differences in themes across geography or race.
- **Facilitate Advisory and Evaluation Subcommittee meetings.** Wilder Research will facilitate the meetings with the Advisory and Evaluation Subcommittee.
- **Finalize police scorecard.** Wilder Research will work with Brooklyn Park stakeholders and the Evaluation Subcommittee to define and prioritize indicators of the scorecard, including the implementation logistics.
- **Finalize community indicators analysis.** Wilder Research will analyze and synthesize the literature on community indicators, including Brooklyn Park’s community metrics and outcomes related to systemic inequities and community safety. The analysis will include comparing indicators across Census tracts and race in Brooklyn Park.
- **Complete final report.** Wilder Research has begun writing the final report, which will include some of aforementioned components. It will be completed in June 2021.
- **Present findings.** Wilder Research will present findings, including the scorecard.

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