Service-Oriented Policing and Homelessness:

An Evaluation of the Sacramento Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team

About SPI & Authors

Strategies for Policing Innovation

The Strategies for Policing Innovation (SPI) initiative is a collaborative effort among the Bureau of Justice Assistance, national training and technical assistance partners, state and local law enforcement agencies, and researchers. It is designed to assist agencies with identifying innovative and evidence-based solutions to effectively and efficiently tackle chronic crime problems in their jurisdictions.

Authors

Arturo Baiocchi, PhD
Associate Professor and Faculty Fellow
Division of Social Work
Center for Health, Practice, Policy & Research
California State University, Sacramento

Jessica Newham, BA
Research Analyst II
Institute for Social Research
California State University, Sacramento

Angela Hassell, MSW
Research Intern
Institute for Social Research
California State University, Sacramento

Alicia Marie Castaneda, MSW
Research Intern
Institute for Social Research
California State University, Sacramento

Andrew Potter, PhD
Assistant Professor
Department of Political Science & Criminal Justice
California State University, Chico

Keith Hodson, MA
Research Analyst
Institute for Social Research
California State University, Sacramento

Thear Chum, MSW
Research Intern
Institute for Social Research
California State University, Sacramento

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

This report summarizes the implementation and evaluation of a federally funded three-year pilot project in Sacramento County called the Strategies for Policing Innovations-Homeless Outreach Team (SPI-HOT). Faced with a rapid growth in homelessness in the community—an increase of 45% just in the last five years—and increasing community pressure to respond proactively, the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office-North Division received federal funding in 2016 from the Bureau of Justice Administration (BJA) to establish a joint-response outreach team staffed with patrol deputies and local social service providers. In recognition of the limitations of previous strategies – including active enforcement of an anti-camping ordinance—the overall objective of the SPI-HOT pilot was to develop a **new service & community-oriented policing approach** for addressing homelessness that de-emphasizes enforcement strategies.

The SPI-HOT pilot entailed developing a new joint outreach team to be deployed in designated areas of the county where they would operate as an auxiliary street referral source for existing programs (i.e., provide warm hand offs to service providers). Working alongside other existing interventions and initiatives in the community, the outreach team directly engaged with individuals living on the street to help them access various services and supports. The SPI-HOT team also worked to establish new community partnerships in these areas of the county to strategically problem-solve issues related to homelessness as well as build upon Sacramento's collective response to the multilayered issue.

Three part-time deputies collaborated with various social services to provide street outreach services to individuals and families experiencing homelessness in select "hot spots" of the county – areas identified by Sheriff's analysts and the research partner as having high levels of homelessness. The part-time deputies spent approximately 13 days per month engaged in direct service outreach to individuals experiencing homelessness, building community partnerships, and interacting with local business owners. Officers made 2,050 contacts with approximately 1,200 individuals over this time period, and helped a large number connect to services— especially referrals for identification documents via the DMV or Social Security Administration. A smaller number—approximately 200—were permanently housed through the team's efforts, underscoring the difficulty of obtaining permanent housing, especially for people experiencing chronically homelessness.

The SPI-HOT deputies played an evolving role over the 2017-2019 grant period. In 2017, the deputies were deployed to two hot spots, and made nearly two-thirds of their contacts with homeless individuals within those areas. Over time, however, the deputies focused less of their outreach efforts in the designated hot spot areas, and spent more time consulting with regular patrol deputies as subject-matter experts. Moreover, the SPI-HOT deputies became more comfortable choosing their own activities, rather than adhering simply to the hot spot areas to which they were deployed.

Although the data-driven deployment strategy was only partially implemented as planned, there was still some evidence that the intervention achieved its intended effect. Through the SPI-HOT team's efforts in hot spots, the Sacramento Sheriff's Office sought to improve the community's sense of safety as well efficacy around issues related to homelessness, as measured by a reduction in calls for service. There was some evidence that calls for service dropped in response to the SPI-HOT team's work, and that calls for service did not simply increase in adjacent areas. This evidence was strongest in 2017, but data gaps and changes in deployment strategies over time the made it difficult to know if the effect persisted in 2018 and 2019.

The SPI-HOT pilot more clearly achieved another goal of developing stronger relationships between the Sacramento Sheriff's Office and public and non-profit organizations who work with the same homeless

population. SPI-HOT deputies developed extensive relationships with service providers, and the sergeant and lieutenant overseeing the pilot regularly attend regional meetings of organizations who deal with homelessness.

Based partly on some of these preliminary findings, in 2017 the County funded a much larger hybrid patrol/outreach team, which broadly applied the SPI-HOT engagement model of *education, empowerment,* and *enforcement* ["3 E's"] across the county. Although this new countywide patrol team, deployed in early 2018, also deviated from the SPI-HOT model of service & community-oriented policing, it represented a more proactive approach to homelessness; an approach in which enforcement was not necessarily the first option when encountering homeless suspects. This evaluation, however, finds only limited evidence that activities by SPI-HOT, or this new broader outreach team, have resulted in substantial institutional and cultural change across the Sherriff's Office and its other patrols. The use of enforcement tactics in situations involving homeless individuals—and the issuing of citations—have generally increased across other patrols since the start of the grant.

These and other results indicate that more work is still needed to define the best role for the Sheriff's Office within the broader set of service providers who interact with individuals experiencing homelessness—a topic on which many stakeholders remain uncertain. Despite some of the limitations of the SPI-HOT pilot, the initiative has nonetheless resulted in the Sheriff's Office becoming a more regular, active participant and collaborator in other efforts to address homelessness throughout the region. The HOT-SPI activities helped foster new collaborations among community organizations, establish new service linkages between service providers that did not previously exist, and address gaps in the broader system. Notably, the Sheriff's Office has used internal resources to further extend the funding for the SPI-HOT team itself, allowing it to continue its work even after the completion of the SPI grant. Many of the referral linkages and community partnerships developed by SPI-HOT remain intact and functional to this day.

This report concludes by outlining a series of recommendations and lessons learned from the SPI-HOT initiative that may be useful to consider for local stakeholders as well as other policing agencies as they implement similar outreach teams. These include: acknowledging the steep learning curve and required expertise of providing effective referrals in the community; carefully recruiting officers with sufficient experience but also willingness to learn new skills; leveraging the different strengths and perspectives of multidisciplinary teams; managing community expectations; and providing new trainings to officers related to case management and engagement strategies. In Sacramento County, as in other jurisdictions, police are thrust into a role of responding to homelessness. While better policing cannot be *the solution* to the complex reality of homelessness, this project offers insight into how a service-oriented policing approach can be part of, and serve in alliance with, a broader community approach to address it.

Sacramento County: An Overview

Located within the Central Valley of Northern California, Sacramento County covers an area of 994 square miles and has a population of approximately 1.5 million residents. The geography of the county includes both densely populated urban centers within the Greater Sacramento Metropolitan Area but also less populated rural and farm regions. There are seven incorporated cities with Sacramento County, including the City of Sacramento, which is the State Capital of California.

While Sacramento County is informally known as one of the more affordable areas of Northern California, particularly compared to the Bay Area, the county has seen major increases in rental rates in the context of a state-wide housing crisis. From January 2017 to April 2019, the median rent in Sacramento rose 14%, compared to a five percent (5%) increase nationally. And while the median household income in Sacramento County is higher than the national average ($64,000 per year), the county nonetheless reports a relatively high poverty rate of 14%. Currently, nearly 30% of households in the county spend over half of their household income on housing.

Section 1: Targeted Problem & Literature Review

Homelessness is a growing social issue in Sacramento County—as is the case in many communities across the West Coast—which creates challenges for how law enforcement patrols and monitors the use of public spaces. While California regularly reports the largest number of individuals experiencing homelessness in the country,[1] [2] recent estimates indicate particularly sharp growth just in the last five years alone.[3] Between 2013-2017, the number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County increased by an estimated 45% mirroring similar increases across the West Coast.[4] According to more recent estimates (2019), the per capita rate of homelessness of Sacramento County is now twice the national average—36 per 10,000 residents in the county experience homelessness on any given night.[5] Moreover, the proportion of the homeless population sleeping *outside of shelters* throughout the county (i.e., the *unsheltered homeless*) is one of the highest in the country and continues to grow—approximately 70% of the 5,570 individuals experiencing homelessness on any given night in the county are sleeping outside.[6]

Figure 1 | Growth of Homelessness in Sacramento 2013-2019
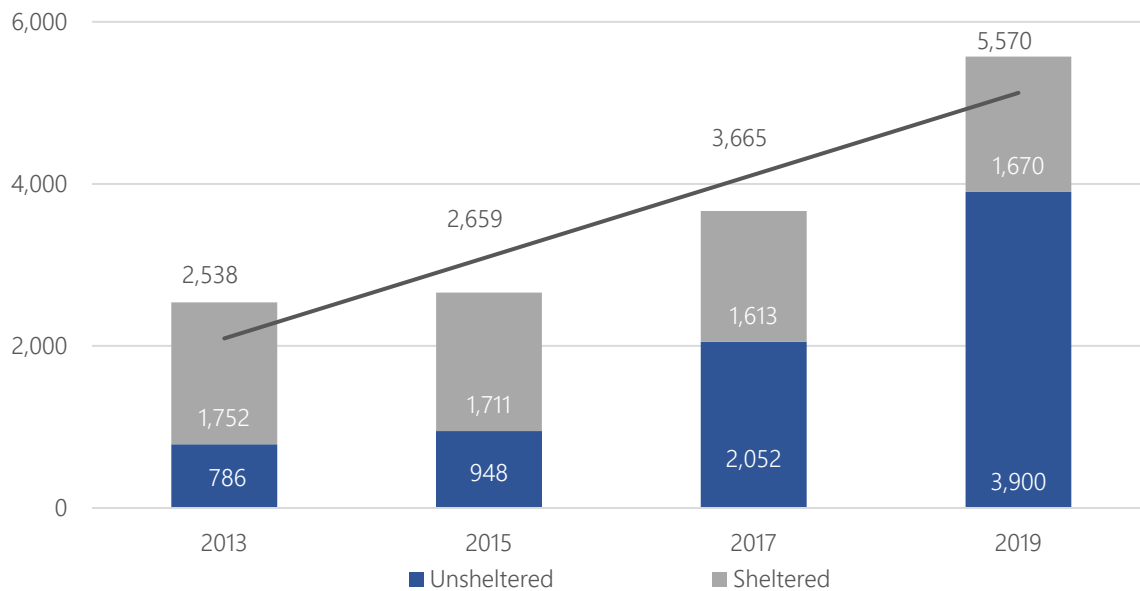
[1] Quigley, J. M., Raphael, S., & Smolensky, E. (2001). Homeless in America, homeless in California. *Review of Economics and Statistics*. 83(1), 37-51

[2] See *Annual Homeless Assessment Reports (AHAR) to Congress* from 2007 to 2020 published by US Dept. of Housing & Urban Development.

[3] According to most recent estimates from the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD), approximately 151,000 Californians experienced homelessness on any given night in 2019—a figure that is 31% higher since 2015.

[4] Baiocchi, A., Wolf, J. P., Hodson, K., Barker, D., & Foy, M. (2017). Homelessness in Sacramento: Results of the 2017 Point-in-Time Count. Institute for Social Research, California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from https//www.saccounty.net/Homelessness/Documents/2017_SacPIT_Final.pdf. Accessed June 2020.

[5] Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Williams, S., Argüello, T., Price Wolf, J., & Morris, J. (2019). *Homelessness in Sacramento County: Results from the 2019 Point-in-Time Count.* Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Final-PIT-Report-1.pdf Accessed June 2020.

[6] See Footnote 5.

For many residents of the county, housing insecurity and homelessness are becoming increasingly difficult to escape. Nearly 30% of households in the county spend over half of their reported household income on housing[7] And between 2017-2018 the City of Sacramento had the highest rent increases among California cities.[8] This continued a broader five-year upward trend in which Sacramento renters experienced some of the highest relative increases in rent among cities in the US.[9]

The majority of individuals who fall into homelessness face either brief periods of temporary or intermittent homelessness (see box on page 10 for a discussion on the different types of homelessness).[10] However, steep rental increases and a dearth of affordable housing options in Sacramento County means that it is becoming more difficult, and takes longer, for individuals and families to recover from homelessness and transition into stable housing. Today, between 30% to 35% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County are chronically homeless; they have been homeless for periods longer than a year (and often much longer) and frequently report multiple health challenges (e.g., mental health, substance use, disability).[11]

Like many communities, Sacramento has a diverse but fragmented array of services and programs addressing homelessness throughout the county (which are siloed across medical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, housing, and social services). While there have been notable initiatives by the county, city and a collection of providers, to more effectively align and integrate these resources, many programs serving people facing homelessness are still undercoordinated and geographically dispersed. Many programs and services also have extensive waiting lists.[12]

As a consequence of these and other factors, **law enforcement frequently encounters individuals experiencing homelessness while on patrols and are often the first responders to the complex personal crises that individuals living on the streets may be facing**. At the start of the SPI grant in 2017, the Sacramento Sheriff's Office North Division received an average of 1,000 community calls for service each month related to homelessness—an increase of 12% from the previous year. Over a seven-month period, these calls accounted for over 7,600 patrol hours.[13] Law enforcement also find themselves at the nexus between humanitarian concerns about the health, safety, and rights of those living on the streets with other community concerns about the impact that homelessness has on the general safety and overall "quality of life" of the surrounding neighborhood.

---

[7] U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). Financial characteristics: Sacramento County, CA. 2013-2017. *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates.* Washington, D.C.

[8] Bizjak, T. (2019, September 6). Sacramento had state's second highest rent increase. But there's good news for tenants, too. *The Sacramento Bee.* Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/business/real-estate- news/article217796560.html

[9] Zillow Research (2019). U.S. Rents Continue to Rise as For-Sale Inventory Dries Up. Retrieved from https://www.zillow.com/research/u-s-rents-continue-to-rise-as-for-sale-inventory-dries-up-october-2019-market-report- 25987.

[10] Kuhn, R., & Culhane, D. P. (1998). Applying cluster analysis to test a typology of homelessness by pattern of shelter utilization: results from the analysis of administrative data. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 26*(2), 207–232.

[11] See Footnote 5.

[12] Melnikow, J., Ritley, D., Evans, E., Baiocchi, A., Ciuffetelli, R., Loureiro, S., & Curry, S. (2020). Integrating care for people experiencing homelessness: A focus on Sacramento County. *University of California, Davis. Center for Healthcare Policy and Research.* Retrieved from https://health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/reports/Files/Integrated-Care-for-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-FINAL.pdf

[13] This was an analysis conducted by the Sacramento Sheriff's Office-North Division of response times logged on the *Computer Assisted Dispatch* (CAD) system associated with homeless calls between September 2016 and March 2017.

What is Homelessness?

Homelessness generally refers to situations in which an individual or family lacks a fixed and adequate nighttime residence. This includes situations in which individuals are living in a place not meant for prolonged human habitation (such as a vehicle) as well as when individuals stay at emergency shelters. While there are various and interconnected reasons why people fall into homelessness (e.g., lack of affordable housing options, substance use, etc.) generally speaking homelessness occurs when a person experiences a severe crisis that exceeds their ability and resources to successfully cope with it.

Though terms vary, researchers typically characterize three distinct homeless *situations:* crisis or transitional homelessness, intermittent homelessness, and chronic homelessness (Kuhn & Culhane 1998).

- *Crisis* or *temporary homelessness* describes situations in which individuals are homeless once or twice in a year, and for a relatively short period of time. This form of temporary homelessness often occurs after an unexpected crisis (i.e., job loss, divorce, eviction), with the majority of these individuals recovering from homelessness and transitioning to stable housing after a short-time.

- *Intermittent* or *episodic homelessness* characterizes individuals and families that cycle in and out of homelessness repeatedly throughout the year—these individuals may have multiple crises throughout a year and are unable to secure stable housing. Some people experiencing episodes of homelessness are cycling through different institutional settings (jails, hospitals, treatment programs).

- *Chronic homelessness* is often defined as a prolonged period of homelessness extending beyond a year—or four episodes of homelessness in the previous two years—and is often associated with disabling condition(s). These individuals often have the most acute needs but may also be 'service-resistant' to engaging with services after living on the streets for several years.

In most communities, the vast majority of individuals experiencing homelessness (80% or more) face either brief periods of temporary or intermittent homelessness. Steep rental increases and a lack of affordable housing options in Sacramento County means that it is becoming more difficult, and takes longer, for individuals and families to recover from homelessness into stable housing. Generally speaking, the longer one is homeless the more difficult it is to transition back to housing (as personal circumstances and resources may worsen on the streets). As these groups experience regular, and longer, bouts of episodic homelessness they face greater risks of becoming chronically homeless over time.

Effects on the Community

A number of studies indicate that homelessness can have negative impacts on both the individuals experiencing homelessness and the broader community. At an individual level, homelessness is associated with a higher prevalence of chronic health conditions, mental health challenges, and substance use disorders compared to the general population.[14] Individuals experiencing homelessness also face specific risks such as hypothermia, sleep deprivation, dehydration, various infectious diseases (e.g., tuberculosis), and even accelerated aging. [15] In 2017 there were over 100,000 hospital admissions of homeless patients to California hospitals, a nearly 30% increase since 2015.[16] In Sacramento County, an estimated 2,000 adults (approximately 53% of service recipients) have co-occurring health and mental health conditions indicative of acute health needs. [17]

Homelessness also impacts communities' overall well-being. Given the high rate of unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County, homeless encampments are common, and families sleeping in cars substantially increased between 2015 and 2017. Between 2014-2017, Sacramento County Park Rangers closed over 3,800 homeless encampments and issued 3,200 citations related to the county's no-camping ordinance, though this ordinance has now been suspended.[18] Homeless encampments can also have negative impact on the environment, particularly in park and river areas of the county.[19] Over time these encampments can create public health and sanitation hazards for the broader community.[20] Homelessness also has a substantial financial impact on public budgets and business revenues if it drives away consumers and tourists from an area.[21]

Homelessness & Crime

Some research suggests that the spatial concentration of homeless encampments is associated with a clustering of prospective crime perpetrators and crime victims.[22] Individuals who are homeless are more susceptible to criminal victimization than housed residents and are more often the victims than perpetrators of crime.[23] A recent meta-analysis of studies assessing victimization suggest that during the course of a year,

---

[14] Fazel, S., Geddes, J. R., & Kushel, M. (2014). The health of homeless people in high-income countries: descriptive epidemiology, health consequences, and clinical and policy recommendations. *The Lancet, 384*(9953), 1529-1540.

[15] Bazari, A., Patanwala, M., Kaplan, L. M., Auerswald, C. L., & Kushel, M. B. (2018). 'The thing that really gets me is the future:' Symptomatology in older homeless adults in the Hope Home study. *Journal of Pain & Symptom Management, 56*(2), 195–204.

[16] Reese P. (2019). California hospitals see massive surge in homeless oatients. *California Healthline*. Retrieved from https://californiahealthline.org/news/california-hospitals-see-massive-surge-in-homeless-patients/ Accessed June 2020.

[17] Melnikow, J., Ritley, D., Evans, E., Baiocchi, A., Ciuffetelli, R., Loureiro, S., & Curry, S. (2020). Integrating care for people experiencing homelessness: A focus on Sacramento County. *University of California, Davis. Center for Healthcare Policy and Research*. Retrieved from https://health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/reports/Files/Integrated-Care-for-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-FINAL.pdf

[18] In late 2018 Sacramento County suspended its no-camping ordinance after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that that such practices are unconstitutional and can amount to cruel and unusual punishment when a community lacks sufficient shelter capacity to meet the number of homeless (Martin vs. City of Boise).

[19] Yoon-Hendricks, A. (2019, September). The American River Parkway is filled with your trash. Help clean it up this Saturday. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article235276022.html. Accessed June 2020.

[20] Sabalow, R., & Moleski, V., (2019, September). 'What diluted sewage looks like.' American River in Sacramento tainted with feces. *Sacramento Bee.* Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/sacramento-tipping-point/article234440612.html. Accessed June 2020.

[21] Garrison, E., (2017, June). Frustration mounts over homeless crisis. County leaders say they need more money. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article160845249.html. Accessed June 2020.

[22] Sampson, R. J., & Lauritsen, J. L. (1990) Deviant lifestyles, proximity to crime, and the offender-victim link in personal violence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, 27*(1), 110-139.

[23] Lee, B. A., & Schreck, C. J. (2005). Danger on the streets: Marginality and victimization among homeless people. *American Behavioral Scientist, 48*(8), 1055–1081.

approximately 20% of the homeless population will experience a physical assault, another 25% will have had items forcibly taken from them, and 46% will be victims of theft.[24] Some researchers attribute this to homeless individuals attracting more *opportunistic crimes* into an area because they embody characteristics that signal them as prime targets for victimization, such as having physical disabilities, mental challenges, diminished health and advanced age.[25]

Studies also show that individuals facing homelessness often take on survival strategies that may include illegal activities such as theft, particularly when other strategies are blocked (e.g., restriction on panhandling).[26] Accordingly, a number of studies find that homelessness can be associated with increased propensity for some property crimes (i.e., theft and burglary).[27] Though research has not established a clear link between homelessness and violent crimes (i.e., assaults etc.), some studies have found that untreated mental illness in the context of homelessness can be associated with more violent behaviors and infractions.[28]

Homelessness can be also accompanied by frequent public displays of "social incivilities" (such as public intoxication, noise disturbance, loitering, littering, and panhandling) that may diminish a community's sense of social order and encourage crime.[29] According to this "broken windows" theory of crime, minor but frequent infractions of these kinds (i.e., misdemeanors) can signal a permissive environment and lenient social controls to would-be criminals, which in turn leads to more serious criminal infractions over time.[30] As we elaborate below, concerns that homelessness perpetuates social disorder and thereby increases crime, have motivated many localities and law enforcement agencies during the last two decades to take a deliberate enforcement approach to regulate minor infractions committed by people experiencing homelessness. Studies corroborate that the vast majority of arrests faced by people experiencing homelessness are for these public order crimes (e.g., open container, littering, loitering, solicitation, trespassing, and disorderly conduct).[31, 32]

Policing Strategies

Until the past 5-10 years, law enforcement took two primary approaches to homelessness, including: (1) containment strategies (compelling the homeless to remain within certain locations, within which social disorder is implicitly tolerated); and (2) deliberate enforcement and policing disorder strategies. Early community studies that examined how law enforcement interacted with individuals experiencing homelessness suggested that patrol officers were prone to ignore and not engage individuals experiencing homelessness unless they were responding to a specific community complaint.[33] Patrol strategies were reactive in nature and focused on responding to calls for services from community members and/or local businesses concerned about the presence of homelessness.[34] More proactive law enforcement strategies during this time centered

[24] Ellsworth, J. T. (2018). Street crime victimization among homeless adults: A review of the literature. *Victims & Offenders, 14*(1), 96-118.
[25] See Footnote 15.
[26] Snow, D. A., & Mulcahy, M. (2001). Space, politics, & the survival strategies of the homeless. American Behavioral Scientist, 45, 149–169.
[27] Snow, D. A., Baker, S. G., & Anderson, L. (1989). Criminality and homeless men: An empirical assessment. *Social Problems 36*(5), 532-549.
[28] Fischer, S. N., Shinn, M., Shrout, P., & Tsemberis, S. (2008). Homelessness, mental illness, and criminal activity: Examining patterns over time. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 42*(3-4), 251-265.
[29] Kelling, G. L., & Bratton, W. (1998). Declining crime rates: Insiders views of the New York City story. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 89*(1), 775-836.
[30] Wilson, J. Q., & Kelling G. L. (1982). Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety. *Atlantic Monthly* 249(3): 29–38.
[31] Vitale, A. S. (2008). City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics. New York: NY University Press.
[32] National Law Center (2009). Housing not handcuffs: Ending criminalization of homelessness in American cities.
Retrieved from www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2009HomesNotHandcuffs1. Pdf. Accessed June 2020.
[33] Bittner, E. (1967). The police on Skid-Row: A study of peacekeeping. *American Sociological Review 32*(5): 699–715.
[34] McNamara, R. H., Crawford, C., & Burns, R. (2013). Policing the homeless: policy, practice, and perceptions. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 36*(2), 357-374.

primarily on containing homelessness to particular neighborhoods (i.e., excluding homeless individual from specific areas of a city).[35]

The second approach toward homelessness became common in the 1990s and early 2000s is drawn from the well-known "broken windows" approach to target the presence of disorder within well-defined geographical locations (see discussion above).[36] Concerns that homelessness is associated with community disorganization and increased crime have motivated many communities to adopt aggressive enforcement policies that target minor "quality of life" violations in areas where homeless are thought to reside (e.g., issuing citations for soliciting, intoxication in public, anti-camping ordinances). A commonly-studied example of this place-based enforcement strategy was the "Safer Cities Initiative," initiated in 2005 by the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) in an area of the city known as Skid Row. LAPD initially placed a small contingent of officers to patrol a specific section of Skid Row with a mandate to target quality of life crimes such as public intoxication and drug use. In the following year, an additional 50 officers were deployed to clear homeless encampments, target prostitution and drug-use, and establish a clear police presence in the neighborhood. An evaluation of the initiative indicated significant decreases in crime reports associated with assaults and property in the following years.[37]

Applying enforcement-only strategies to homelessness is controversial, however, with some advocates arguing that this approach amounts to a de facto criminalization of homelessness itself.[38] Critics have also argued that Safer Cities police actions did little to help people experiencing homelessness with significant health needs but rather shifted these individuals into the criminal justice system.[39] Also, because a singular emphasis on enforcement does not address the root problems associated with homelessness, one consequence of enforcement can be the forced dispersion of these issues to adjacent geographic areas. Although there was little evidence of displacement in the Safer Cities Initiative, other studies suggest displacement can be the consequence of focused enforcement in just one area.[40]

In addition, tactics that focus primarily on increasing patrols and sweeps of specific geographic spaces (cleaning up encampments) can have unintended consequences. These include increasing the risk of lawsuits due to constitutional violations, increased hostility between individuals experiencing homelessness and law enforcement, and temporary displacement of individuals to areas where they have limited access to services. In late 2018 Sacramento County suspended its no-camping ordinance after the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals ruled that that such practices are unconstitutional and can amount to cruel and unusual punishment when a community lacks sufficient shelter capacity to meet the number of homeless.[41]

---

[35] Snow, D. A., & Anderson, L. (1993). *Down on their luck: A study of homeless street people*. Univ of California Press.

[36] Stuart, F. (2015). On the streets, under arrest: Policing homelessness in the 21st century. *Sociology Compass, 9*(11), 940-950.

[37] Berk, R., & MacDonald, J. (2010). Policing the homeless: An evaluation of efforts to reduce homeless-related crime. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(4), 813-8

[38] National Law Center (2009). Housing not handcuffs: Ending criminalization of homelessness in American cities. Retried from www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2009HomesNotHandcuffs1. Pdf. Accessed June 2020.

[39] Culhane, D. (2010). Tackling homelessness in Los Angeles' skid row. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(4), 851-857.

[40] Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. (2014). *Community policing defined*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Retrieved from https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf

[41] Martin vs. City of Boise

Considering these drawbacks, enforcement strategies that also engage community stakeholders and homeless service providers may be more effective in reducing the impacts of homelessness on the community.[42] This is consistent with some researchers' conclusion that some of the positive impacts reported for the Safer Cities evaluation were misattributed to enforcement, given that during the time of the intervention city and county were making substantial investments in the provision and coordination of social services.[43]

These findings suggest that a third approach—Community-Oriented Policing—may be effective in policing homelessness, in combination with prior strategies. Community-Oriented Policing (COP) is an emergent law enforcement philosophy that emphasizes community involvement in proactively addressing social issues related to crime. The orientation has evolved from its origins in the late 1970s and early 1980s and typically includes three key components: community partnerships, organizational transformation, and problem solving.[44] This orientation to policing is sometimes framed as a *problem-solving collaboration* that draws upon the community's expertise in identifying and understanding the particular issues that perpetuate crime, disorder, and fear in a community. From this perspective, community members and the police officers should be 'co-producers' of initiatives that address public safety and disorder in a community. Many COP initiatives also draw upon problem-oriented-policing, which is a step-by-step approach consisting of identifying problems, analyzing the underlying causes, implementing appropriate responses based on this analysis, and assessing the impact.

A recent systematic meta-analysis of 65 COP initiatives addressing a broad range of issues in the last 25 years indicate compelling evidence of improved social outcomes in these communities.[45] These include improved relationships between community members and law enforcement, community satisfaction with police interventions, and perceptions that issues are getting addressed. However, these interventions yielded mixed results on reducing crimes and calls for service; interventions were as likely to be associated with decreased crime as they were with increased crimes over time. Nonetheless, multiple systematic meta-analyses of problem-oriented-policing strategies, which is a complimentary approach included in some community-oriented policing initiatives, indicated significant though modest impacts on reducing reported crimes in treatment areas.[46] [47]

An often-cited example of a successful community-based problem-oriented intervention is a case study in Lowell, Massachusetts. In 2005 the Lowell, Massachusetts Police Department implemented a place-based policing disorder strategy in 17 locations of the city associated with high calls for services. While the intervention included increased enforcement of quality of life crimes in these hot spots, there was also an explicit engagement strategy with local stakeholders and social service providers.[48] An evaluation of the initiative

---

[42] Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., Hinkle, J. C., & Eck, J. E. (2010). Is problem-oriented policing effective in reducing crime and disorder: Findings from Campbell Systemic Review. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(1), 139-172.

[43] Culhane, D. (2010). Tackling homelessness in Los Angeles' skid row. *Criminology and Public Policy*, *9*(4), 851-857.

[44] See footnote 36

[45] Gill, C., Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., Vitter, Z., & Bennett, T. (2014). Community-oriented policing to reduce crime, disorder and fear and increase satisfaction and legitimacy among citizens: A systematic review. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 10*(4), 399-428.

[46] Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., Hinkle, J. C., & Eck, J. E. (2010). Is problem-oriented policing effective in reducing crime and disorder: Findings from Campbell Systemic Review. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(1), 139-172.

[47] Hinkle, J. C., Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., & Petersen, K. (2020). Problem-oriented policing for reducing crime and disorder. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 16*(2), e1089.

[48] While not focused exclusively on homelessness, the intervention implicated a broader "policing disorder" strategy which included increased enforcement but also community engagement to change physical aspects of the neighborhood environment that might deter crime (i.e., cleaning and securing vacant lots, improving street lights, razing abandoned buildings) as well as collaboration with social service providers.

found that the total number of calls for service dropped 20 percent in treatment areas relative to control areas in a six month period after the intervention, with no evidence of crime displacement to nearby areas.[49] The appearance of social and physical disorder was notably improved in 14 of the 17 treatment locations.

While COP has been infrequently used to explicitly address homelessness in particular, the model has demonstrated promising results for addressing a range of related social issues (such as improving law enforcement responses to individuals with acute mental health needs). Some of these community-oriented policing efforts focus on strengthening collaborations and referrals with mental health and social service providers. These collaborations often strive to provide targeted street outreach to 'frequent users' of community emergency resources (e.g., emergency room visits)—individuals who are often insecurely housed— and attempt to preemptively divert them to mental health and housing programs. For example, the *Chronic Consumer Stabilization Initiative* is an ongoing collaboration between the City of Houston Health and Human Services Department, the Houston Police Department, and the Harris County Center for Mental Health and IDD.[50] The intervention brings together licensed case managers with the Houston Police in targeting the chronic users of mental health services and chronic initiators of calls for service. Early reporting indicated participants of the program, who had some of the most extensive arrest records in the city, experienced dramatic decreases in use of emergency services after they were transitioned into supportive housing.

A number of studies have found that diverting frequent users into supportive housing programs can have significant stabilizing effects, particularly for people with extensive arrest histories and criminal justice involvement. People in supportive housing have sometimes experienced dramatic decreases in arrests, jail nights, emergency room visits, and use of shelter after being stably housed.[51] Similar interventions that focus primarily on acute mental health crises on the streets have organized local community mental health clinicians and law enforcement officers into *joint response teams,* sometimes called *Crisis Response Teams* or *Mobile Mental Health Teams*. The theory underlying these interventions is that joint teams leverage the specialties of police and mental health clinicians in addressing complex situations; the police are trained specialists in handling situations that potentially involve violence and injury while mental health professionals are specialists in providing referral and mental health consultation to officers and individuals in crisis. A recent review of these co-responding police-mental health interventions suggest promising results in reducing incarceration, hospitalizations and injury of individuals with significant mental health needs.[52] Moreover, these collaborations have also led to significant institutional change within these communities, including: enhancing referral linkages across systems that are often siloed and fragmented, improving officers' perceptions of people with mental illness, and improving the community relationship with law enforcement.

Despite the optimism about community-oriented policing and ongoing collaborations with social service providers, there is still a lack of knowledge and uncertainty about the specific role that law enforcement should play in addressing the complex issues associated with homelessness. This uncertainty has been explicitly expressed by police administrators.[53] A recent survey of 71 mid-size policing agencies across the US (including

[49] Braga, A. A., & Bond, B. J. (2008). Policing crime and disorder hot spots: A randomized controlled trial. *Criminology, 46*(4), 577-607.

[50] Hipple, N. K. (2016). Policing and homelessness: Using partnerships to address a cross system issue. *Policing, 11*(1), 14-28.

[51] Corporation for Supportive Housing. (2005). *AB 2034 Program Experiences in Housing Homeless People with Serious Mental Illness.* New York. Retrieved from https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Report_AB20341.pdf

[52] Shapiro, G. K., Cusi, A., Kirst, M., O'Campo, P., Nakhost, A., & Stergiopoulos, V. (2015). Co-responding Police-Mental Health Programs: A Review. *Adm Policy Mental Health, 42*(5), 606-620.

[53] McNamara, R. H., Crawford, C., & Burns, R. (2013). Policing the homeless: policy, practice, and perceptions. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 36*(2), 357-374.

both municipal police and county sheriff's departments) found that the majority of jurisdictions (64%) report homelessness as one of the more frequent social issues that their officers address in the community. However, the survey also found that only a small minority of departments (24%) reported having designated teams or staff in place to address homelessness in their community and only 40% of departments reported having formal policies or available trainings associated with homelessness.[54] In follow-up interviews with administrators of these departments, the researchers discovered a recurring theme of uncertainty expressed by many departments about the proper role of police in these types of encounters.

Notably, in 2019 the U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness (USICH) and the Council of State Governments (CSG) Justice Center published a report highlighting ten law enforcement agencies from across the US that are implementing collaborative, community-wide homeless interventions in their communities.[55] Similar to other recent police forums on homelessness (i.e., Police Executive Research Forum, 2018),[56] the conference report highlights a number of agencies experimenting with various forms of homeless outreach teams and joint-social service collaborations—though the context of these interventions vary depending on the existing infrastructure of programs and services already in place in different communities. In some jurisdictions, law enforcement officers play more of an outreach and referral role as they help individuals facing homelessness navigate various service options, while in other communities law enforcement teams provide warm hand-offs to existing outreach workers and navigators in place. Across both situations, these collaborations highlight how law enforcement agencies can help bolster and reinforce the broader system of services in these communities by supporting new linkages across systems as well as by helping change public perception of homelessness. Indeed, many of these interventions identify a new role for law enforcement officers to play as advocates for one of the most marginalized groups in society. Despite these successes, however, the report identifies that knowledge about best practices is still emerging.

---

[54] See Footnote 47

[55] U.S. Interagency Council on Homelessness, Council of State Governments Justice Center (2019). *Strengthening Partnerships Between Law Enforcement and Homelessness Service Systems*. New York. Retrieved from https://csgjusticecenter.org/publications/strengthening-partnerships-between-law-enforcement-and-homelessness-service-systems-2/

[56] Police Executive Research Forum. (2018). *Critical Issues in Policing Series: The Police Response to Homelessness*. Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.policeforum.org/assets/PoliceResponsetoHomelessness.pdf.

Sacramento Sheriff's Office

With 1,595 sworn deputies and 643 professional staff, the Sacramento Sheriff's Office (SSO) is the largest provider of law enforcement in Sacramento County serving approximately 600,000 people mainly within the unincorporated areas of Sacramento County—though SSO also provides contracted services to some city jurisdictions. Currently, SSO is the eleventh (11th) largest law enforcement department in the United States in terms of full-time sworn personnel. In addition to providing services to residents in incorporated areas and some cities, SSO also holds primary jurisdiction over facilities operated by Sacramento County, such as a number of local parks, marinas, and government buildings; provides marshal service for the Sacramento County Superior Court, and operates the Sacramento County Main Jail and the Rio Cosumnes Correctional Center in Elk Grove.

The SSO North Division, where HOT-SPI is housed, represents the most populous service area in the northern portion of the county—serving approximately 365,000 residents across four patrol districts. Accordingly, the North Division has approximately 155 deputies assigned to various patrol and specialized teams, 18 sergeants, eight (8) lieutenants and one captain. The North Division also staffs a number of non-sworn positions including eight (8) community service officers who assist with ongoing community meetings and forums throughout this area of the county. There is also a Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) team consisting of one sergeant and six deputies that focus on on-going and long-term community concerns. Another example of community engagement by the North Division is the *Volunteers in Partnership with the Sheriff* (VIPS) program, which hosts approximately 30 community volunteers each year.

Section 2: Strategies Employed

The overall objective of the SPI-HOT pilot was to develop a **new service & community-oriented policing approach** for addressing homelessness. This was achieved by developing a new joint outreach team with an embedded social service case manager that would operate as an auxiliary street referral source for existing programs in the community (i.e., provide warm hand offs to service providers). Deployed in designated areas of Sacramento County's North Division with a high concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness, the outreach team worked alongside other existing interventions and initiatives in the community to address homelessness. The SPI-HOT team also worked to establish new community partnerships in these areas of the county to strategically problem-solve issues related to homelessness as well as build upon Sacramento's collective response to the multilayered issue.

The pilot project included a number of direct and immediate goals, such as:

- Increasing law enforcement patrol and outreach presence in hot spot areas of the county with a high concentration of individuals experiencing homelessness

- Increasing the familiarity with homeless needs & community resources among sheriff's deputies

- Decreasing barriers to services that homeless individuals may be experiencing

- Increasing data-driven partnerships with local experts

- Decreasing community calls within hot spot areas

As we elaborate below, to pursue these goals the SPI-HOT pilot project drew inspiration from a number of problem-oriented and community-oriented policing strategies, which were categorized into three main components: (1) targeted deployment, (2) service-oriented policing, and (3) community engagement.

Targeted Deployment

Similar to other place-based policing interventions, the initial SPI-HOT strategy was to geographically target the deployment of the outreach team to a small number of "hot spots" identified as having a high volume of calls for service from community members regarding homelessness. Because homelessness is often geographically concentrated within specific areas of the county, it was assumed that deploying outreach teams to confined hot spot areas (defined by proximity to a major intersection) would allow the deputies to quickly and frequently make contact with a large number of individuals experiencing homelessness. [57]

Using knowledge about the distribution of homelessness in the unincorporated parts of the county gained from the 2017 Point-in-Time (PIT) count of homelessness, in combination with calls for service data, the Sheriff's Office and the California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) research team identified a set of 10 hot spots to potentially deploy the outreach team, a process that is fully described in the next section (Data and Intelligence). Using an iterative selection process, a total of four treatment hot spots were selected for deployment (and four corresponding control hot spots were selected) over three phases of the grant period.

---

[57] It was also assumed that by deploying the team to these neighborhoods for an extended period of time, the deputies would more be able to more effectively establish a patrol presence with limited resources.
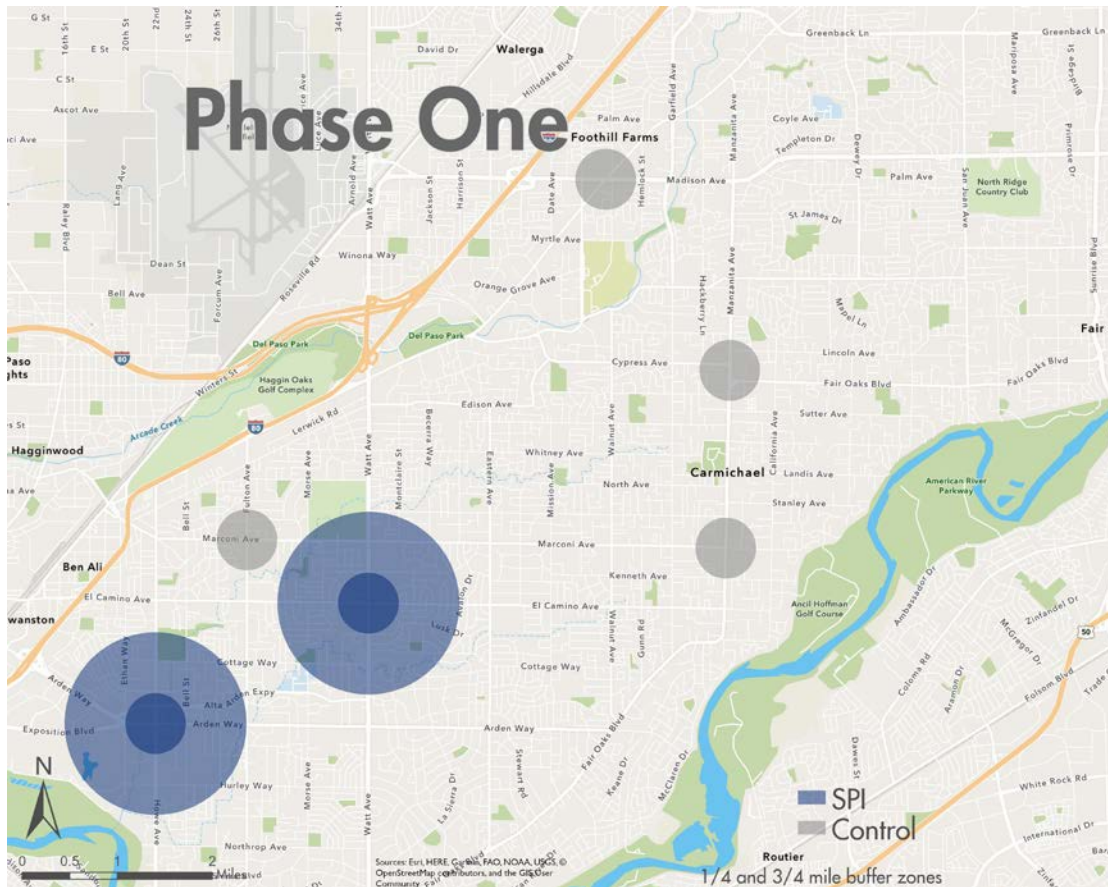
During Phase 1 of the project (i.e., from February through September 2017) SPI-HOT deputies were deployed to two hot spots in the north east area of county that the analysis indicated had the highest number of homelessness-related calls for service in SSO's North Central Division during 2016. The two hot spots areas accounted for 7.2% of all homelessness-related calls for service received in 2016, though they represented less than 0.3% of the total area in the North Central Division overall. The first hot spot was located in the intersection of Howe Avenue and Arden Boulevard within an unincorporated area of the county where regional shopping and retail is the dominant land use. The intersection (aka "Howe 'Bout Arden") is in close proximity to one of the largest shopping mall centers in the county as well as nearby access points to the American River Parkway where many homeless encampments are present. The second hot spot was in the intersection of Watt Avenue and El Camino Boulevard; the intersection of two major arterial roads in an area that consists of low-density, "strip mall"-style consumer-oriented retail uses, with mixed-income residential land uses nearby.

For Phase 2 of the project (i.e., from October 2017 through January 2019) deputies were deployed to two different hot spot areas; the intersection of Auburn Boulevard and Madison Avenue and the intersection of Hazel Avenue and Greenback Lane. These hot spots were selected based on a similar analysis of calls for service conducted by CSUS, though this analysis also incorporated feedback from the SPI-HOT team. Auburn and Madison is near a major interstate (I-80), and the area consists primarily of low-density retail land use, both in "strip malls" and shopping centers anchored by major retailers, with very limited housing in the area. Hazel and Greenback is similar to Watt and El Camino, although the intersection is surrounded by middle-class single-family homes. Unlike the other hot spots, and contrasting with problem-oriented policing principles, Hazel and Greenback was chosen to test the impact of SPI in a location with only moderate levels of homelessness-related calls.
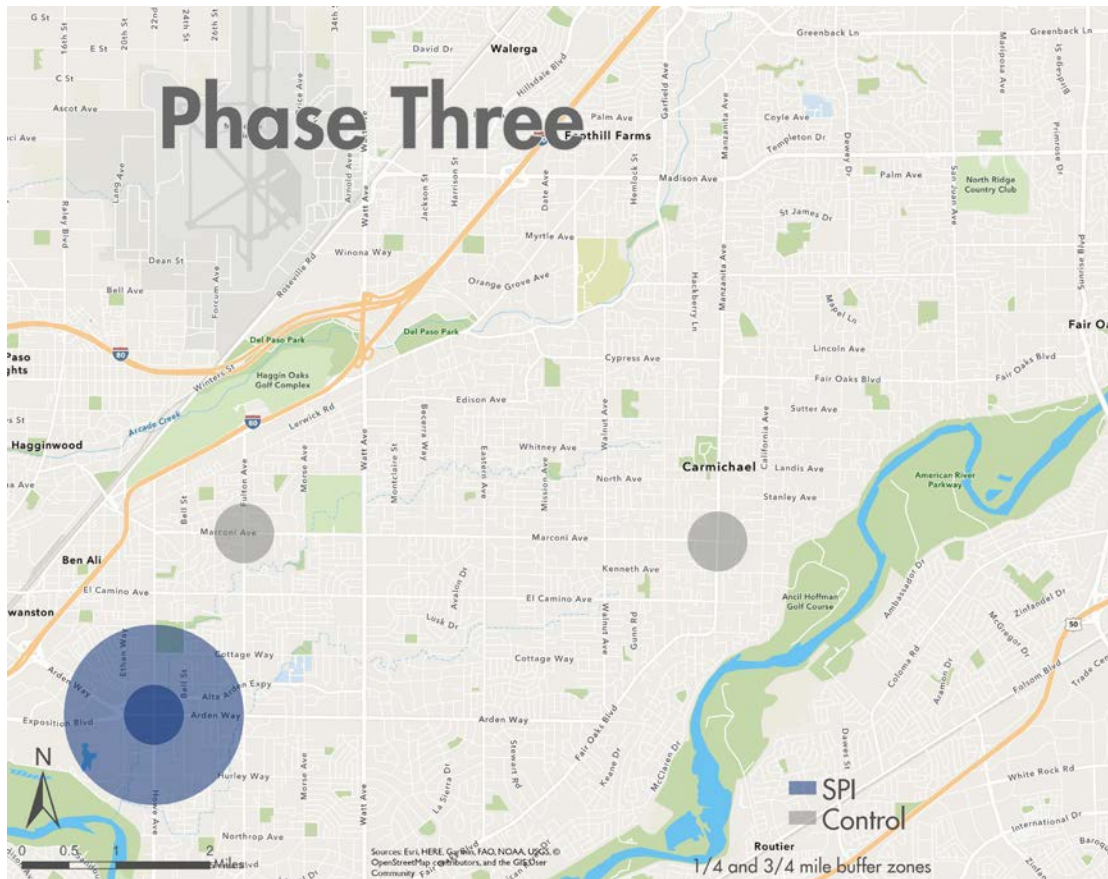
For Phase 3 (from February 2019 through September 2019) deputies were redeployed to the Howe 'Bout Arden area, as in Phase 1. This decision was based on the observation by multiple team members that this area had seen a sharp increase in homelessness and related crime problems after the SPI-HOT team left the area in late 2017. Analysis by SO staff in 2018 revealed notable increases in calls for service related to ongoing trespassing, suspicious persons, and suspicious vehicles in the area. Moreover, the decision was made for the SPI-HOT team to focus on just one hot spot for Phase 3 (as opposed to the two hot spots targeted in the previous phases). Results from the second-year process evaluation of SPI-HOT revealed that the outreach deputies had substantially deviated from the Targeted Deployment strategy and were spending the majority of their patrols outside of the designated hot-spots, particularly during Phase 2. As is elaborated in Section 5 of this report (Analysis and Evaluation), this partly reflected an evolution of the outreach team and its changing role within the SO as an auxiliary referral resource for other patrols throughout the North Division. Nonetheless, to encourage the SPI-HOT deputies to focus their time and energy on a designated area, only one hot spot was selected in Phase 3.

Service Oriented Policing

The SPI joint outreach team consisted of an embedded social service case manager (aka the Navigator from Sacramento Steps Forward) and three part-time retired deputies who staggered their shifts across the days of the week. The team was overseen by a sergeant and lieutenant within the Sacramento Sheriff's Office North Division. The deputies were selected for the outreach team given their extensive law enforcement experience in the community but also their record for establishing rapport and dialogue with resistant individuals. All the deputies had also received Crisis Intervention Training (CIT), which is a model for police interactions in situations involving persons in the community with mental, emotional, or developmental challenges. The deputies along with the Navigator also received additional training on *Motivational Interviewing*—an evidence-based communication engagement technique for fostering long term change.

Per the service-oriented goals of the pilot project, the joint outreach team regularly patrolled the designated hot spots and proactively made contact with individuals experiencing homelessness (as well as responded to calls for service related to homelessness in these areas). During their engagements with individuals and families that they encountered living on the streets or in vehicles, the outreach team often sought to problem solve specific homelessness-related situations through referrals and warm hand-offs to appropriate community service providers. Generally, the SPI deputies attempted to establish rapport and relationships with individuals, assess their needs, and provide encouragement for them access the most appropriate services given their particular situation. Importantly, the SPI deputies did not engage in punitive enforcement for minor "quality of life" infractions that they encountered on their patrols (e.g., loitering, panhandling, intoxication) and issued citations or arrests only as a last resort when encountering illegal activities. Also critical, SPI deputies were not assigned to other policing duties and did not respond to calls for service from the public that were not related to homelessness.

Above photos show SPI-HOT deputies interacting with houseless individuals and providing referrals.

Figure 2 | SPI Homeless Outreach Logic Model

Inputs

Strategic Policing Innovations

CNA Technical Assistance

CSUS ISR

Analytical Services
Presentations

**Sac Co. Sherriff
(North Division)**

POP – HOT Team
Senior Deputies
Strategic Intelligence
Crime Analyst

Sac Steps Forward

Street Outreach

Community Providers

DHA/Elica

Activities

Targeted Deployment

Assess call patterns
Identify high-need hot spots
Deploy/respond to needs

**Service-Oriented
Policing**

First contact/Check-ins
Broker/Navigate linkages
Assist diversion

**Community
Engagement**

Interprofessional
Collaboration
Interfacing with the
public/stakeholders
Educating the public

Outputs

Hot Spots
Deployments
Patrols
Hours in Hot Spots
Calls Responded

Contacts
Referrals
VS-PDATs
Service-connects
Warm handoff

Partnerships
Meetings
Community
Events (HOPE
Events)
Community
Presentations

Outcomes

**Individual-Level:
Increase transitions out of
homelessness**

Increase service engagement
Increase housed by SSD contacts
Improve Interactions SSD with
homeless individuals

**Community/System-Level:
Improve Community
Response**

Increase system integration
Increase system efficiency
Increase diversions
Increase system capacity

**Organizational-Level:
Improve Policing Culture**

Expand deputy tool-kit (new skills)
Improve knowledge & system navigation
Decrease use of enforcement
Improve SSD relationship w/homeless

Impacts

**Improved
Community Safety
and Efficacy**

Decreased calls for
service
Reduced non-violent
crimes

The above SPI-HOT Logic Model highlights the three central components of the intervention (i.e., Targeted Deployment, Service-Oriented Policing, and Community Engagement) as well as outlines their anticipated activities, outputs, and outcomes. Accordingly, the SPI-HOT Logic Model clarifies the intervention's underlying logic and "theory of impact"—the hypothesized sequence of activities and outcomes that will improve the status of homelessness in the community. The logic model also identifies various metrics to assess the interventions implementation and impact—which are elaborated in Section 5 (Analysis and Evaluation).

With respect to the social service provider, the SSF Navigator was deployed to work in the same designated hot spot locations and collaborated closely with the SPI-HOT deputies on a daily basis.[58] Because the Navigator was equipped with a handheld tablet linked to the Coordinated Entry System, they were responsible for conducting housing assessments with individuals encountered on the streets and entering them into the *community queue* for housing. In this way the SPI-HOT intervention was directly linked to an extensive referral system of programs in the community (i.e., the Coordinated Entry System) by which clients could potentially transition into supportive housing. However, given the extended wait list of the Coordinated Entry System, the Navigator and SPI deputies had to often work creatively with individuals to help address and sometimes resolve their housing situations outside of these programs, often relying on other auxiliary services, programs and partnerships.

Community Engagement

As is elaborated in the next section of this report (i.e., Community Outreach and Collaboration), the SPI-HOT intervention emphasized strong collaboration with community organizations, stakeholders, and service providers to improve the community response to homelessness. In addition to building relationships with various service providers, County and other government services, the deputies also spent considerable time to engage various businesses, private citizens and community groups within the hot spot areas. These various partnerships proved to be valuable for the SPI-Hot team over time as they often provided unique opportunities for the team to creatively leverage additional assistance and resources to people experiencing homelessness in the area.

Above photo shows Elica Health mobile medical health unit used to provide healthcare to people living on the street

---

[58] At times the Navigator worked jointly with the SPI-HOT outreach team (working with the same individuals simultaneously), while at other times they also worked independently from the deputies with a specific caseload of more difficult-to-engage individuals. As we discuss in section 5, there was some variation in how the Navigator and the SPI-HOT team worked together and the degree to which they engaged clients jointly or separately. During the second year of the grant, for example, it was decided that the Navigator should engage with some individuals independently of the SPI-HOT team—specifically individuals who had been chronically homeless for several years and were reluctant to engage with services. It is not uncommon for individuals experiencing *chronic homelessness* (see box on page 10 for description) to be wary of interventions, and consequently require multiple and sustained contacts over extend periods of time to build trust and rapport. Given the specialty of the SSF Navigator to engage difficult-to-serve-clients, at the end of the first grant-year the SPI-HOT team decided that the Navigator would prioritize their interactions with these individuals (maintaining a separate caseload of 15-20 individuals each month). This dynamic fluctuated during the second and third grant year as the Navigator also consulted with other individuals working with the SPI-HOT deputies directly.

Section 3: Community Outreach & Collaboration

Because Sacramento County's Homeless Outreach Team (SPI-HOT) drew inspiration from the community-oriented policing model, from its inception the intervention emphasized strong collaboration with community organizations, stakeholders, and service providers to improve the community response to homelessness. According to the SPI-HOT Logic Model (see page 23), the intervention was never intended to operate as a singular intervention to address homelessness in Sacramento County let alone unilaterally solve the complex social issues underpinning its high prevalence in the county. Rather the goal was to deploy the outreach team alongside other existing interventions and initiatives in the community as well as strategically leverage these relationships to build upon and strengthen Sacramento's collective response to homelessness. More specifically, the SPI-HOT Team was envisioned to:

- Operate as an auxiliary street outreach referral source for existing programs (i.e., provide warm hand offs to service providers).

- Help problem-solve issues in the community related to homelessness (whether at the individual level or at the level of neighborhoods and programs).

- Institutionalize new practices at the Sheriff's Office to better align the department's efforts with the broader initiatives addressing homelessness.

- Organize and participate in community events and forums related to homelessness.

Because of this explicit community orientation, the SPI proposal envisioned the SPI-HOT team working closely with one particular social service organization called *Sacramento Steps Forward*—the lead agency that helps coordinate the broader *Sacramento Continuum of Care* (CoC), a formal, federally recognized, collaboration of homeless service providers across Sacramento County.[59] As we elaborate below, the SPI-HOT team did collaborate closely with Sacramento Steps Forward during the first years of the pilot project and consequently became more integrated with coordination efforts of the Sacramento Continuum of Care. But the SPI-HOT intervention also expanded significantly beyond this one strategic partnership during the course of the grant to engage a broader variety of stakeholders and organizations. Indeed, over the three years the SPI-HOT team established working relationships with 36 other organizations and providers within this area of Sacramento County that work on issues either directly or tangentially related to homelessness (e.g., welfare, food insecurity, addiction, civic organizations etc.). These relationships included a wide range of county and state welfare agencies, direct service providers (housing, medical, mental etc.), as well as private businesses, landlords, faith-based and citizen advocacy organizations. Below we elaborate on these different community collaborations, starting first with Sacramento Steps Forward.

---

[59] A Continuum of Care (CoC) is a community board that coordinates local homelessness planning efforts and disperses federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD).

Sacramento Continuum of Care (CoC)-Sacramento Steps Forward

Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) is a non-profit agency that helps facilitate the planning and funding activities of the Sacramento CoC (e.g., hosts regular meetings with service provider, prepares applications for federal funding etc.). The organization also provides other strategic functions to help coordinate the implementation of these services among CoC providers. These include:

- Managing a centralized referral system called the *Coordinated Entry System*, which attempts to efficiently route individuals experiencing homelessness from outreach programs to specific supportive housing programs (i.e., matching individuals to specific programs given eligibility criteria and program models).

- Maintaining the data system that compiles assessment and program data collected through various outreach and supportive housing programs in Sacramento County (i.e., the *Homelessness Management Information System*).

- Staffing its own contingent of street outreach workers—called *Street Navigators*—who conduct housing assessments with individuals living on the street and enter them into the Coordinated Entry System (the community queue for supportive housing).

Because Sacramento Steps Forward plays these and other central functions in the community surrounding homelessness, the agency was described in the SPI-HOT grant as one of the explicit community partnerships that the Sheriff's Office would strategically cultivate as part of its grant funded activities. Accordingly, SSO used SPI funds to contract with Sacramento Steps Forward to staff a part-time outreach Navigator to work directly with the SPI-HOT team for 20 hours per week. Because the Navigator was equipped with a handheld tablet linked to HMIS and the Coordinated Entry System, the SSF staff member was responsible for conducting housing assessments with individuals encountered on the streets and entering them into these systems. In this way the SPI-HOT intervention was directly linked to an extensive referral system of programs in the community by which clients could potentially transition into supportive housing (see schematic of this referral system on the next page). Given some limitations of the referral system, however, the Navigator and SPI deputies often had to work creatively to address and resolve housing situations outside of these programs, often relying on other auxiliary services, programs and partnerships, as we discuss below.

Figure 3 | Coordinated Entry System

Supportive Housing Providers

Outreach + Intake

Street Outreach
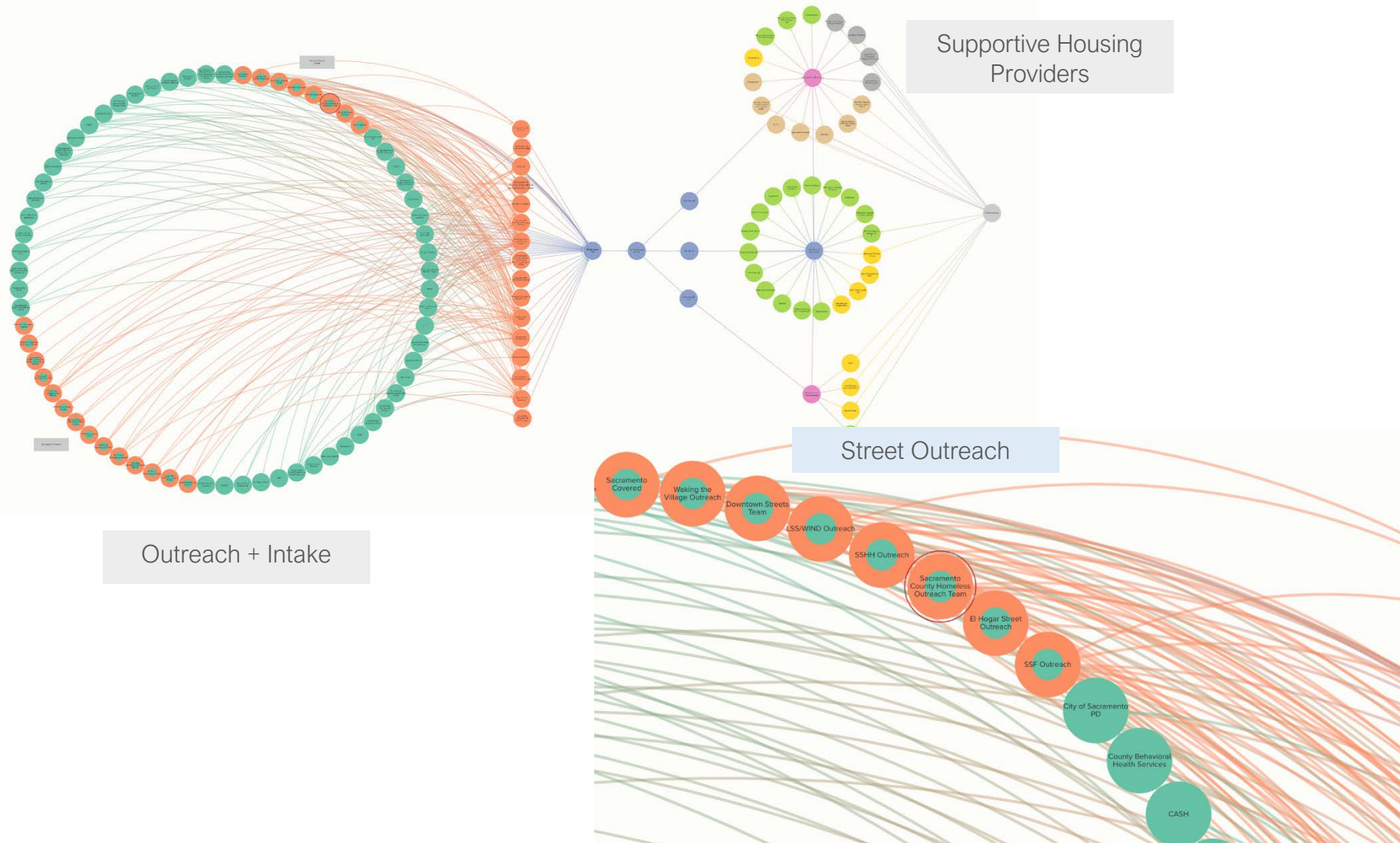
The above figures are a broad schematic of the Sacramento Coordinated Entry System (CES) and its network of entry points and pathways to supportive housing providers. The figure is presented here to illustrate the breadth of stakeholders involved in this community system as well as the integrated role that the Sherriff's Office Homeless Outreach Team plays as one of the entry nodes illustrated above. This schematic was produced by Homebase, a consulting firm that works with the Sacramento Continuum of Care.

Beyond the direct collaboration that occurred in the context of street outreach, the close partnership with Sacramento Steps Forward also contributed to SPI-HOT becoming more integrated with the broader Sacramento CoC. Currently the Lieutenant overseeing SPI-HOT is also a formal voting member of the Advisory Board that governs the Sacramento CoC and consequently participates in regular monthly meetings with homeless service providers and other stakeholders.[60] Through this membership, the Sheriff's Office is regularly updated, and has become well-versed, in the current issues, challenges and opportunities related to homelessness in Sacramento County as well as the various providers and stakeholders concerned about the issue in the community. Moreover, as a voting member of the CoC the Sheriff's Office literally has "a seat at the table" where community discussions and debates about homelessness occur. This has also meant that the Sheriff's Office was able to provide input, suggestions and perspectives on various policies, initiatives and special projects being pursued by the CoC.[61]

Sacramento County Dept. of Human Assistance

Sacramento Steps Forward and the Sacramento CoC are not the only entities coordinating services for people experiencing homelessness in the county. Indeed, most social and safety net resources available in the county (including shelter and emergency housing used by people experiencing homelessness) fall within the jurisdiction of Sacramento County proper, which either directly provides or indirectly funds many of these services. This reflects the complex reality of homelessness/social service systems in many localities across the US—different levels of government and complex funding streams often result in partly overlapping programs operating within the same community. While Sacramento County representatives also participate in leadership roles within the CoC Advisory Board, the County also has its own cadre of programs, separate from the CoC, mostly housed with the County Department of Human Assistance (DHA).

Because both DHA and the Sheriff's Office are under the jurisdiction of Sacramento County, the SPI-HOT intervention created an opportunity for the County to align its broader approach to homelessness. For example, representatives from both departments met several times during the course of the SPI grant to discuss ways to formally collaborate and strategically leverage resources on new initiatives, programs and policies being pursued by the County. One result of these discussions was the integration of the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team as one of the key referral sources for the county's new supportive shelter program for chronically homeless individuals launched in 2018 called the *Full Service Re-Housing Shelter*. To date the Sheriff's Outreach Team has referred approximately 20% of the 300 chronically homeless individuals that have participated in this program. Moreover, in Sacramento County's revamped *2019 County Homeless Plan* (formally adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in December 2018), the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team is identified several times as a strategic partner for key goals that the County established itself for

---

[60] The CoC Advisory Board includes staff from the County, including the County Director of Homeless Initiatives, Public Health and Sheriff's, the cities of Sacramento, Elk Grove, and Rancho Cordova, homeless service providers and other community representatives. Retrieved from https://sacramentostepsforward.org/coc-program-comp/board/

[61] One case in point, the Sheriff's Office provided substantial support and assistance in the 2019 Point-in-Time Count—the broad community effort to conduct a census of every individual experiencing homelessness during a 24-hour period. Specifically, the Sheriff's Office contributed to the 2019 Point-in-Time Count by leveraging its intelligence resources, and specifically analysis of CAD data, to identify specific hot spot areas in the county that warranted careful attention given the high frequency of nighttime crimes. Because the Point-in-Time Count is done at nighttime with hundreds of community volunteers, Sacramento Steps Forward was able to use these intelligence reports to carefully organize its canvassing effort. The Sheriff's Office also made available several deputies to participate as escorts in the Point-in-Time, particularly in secluded areas of the county with little lighting and deemed as potentially unsafe by the CAD analysis.

addressing the recent rise in homelessness.[62] Specifically, the Homeless Outreach Team was integrated in three out of the six goals outlined in the 2019 plan,[63] most notably in the County's second goal to "Improve response to the Street Crisis and Improve Quality of Life."

The SPI-HOT deputies also cultivated strong, day-to-day, working relationships with specific social workers at DHA across various public assistance programs often used by people experiencing homelessness and/or poverty more generally (such as CalFresh, CalWORKS, General Assistance, etc.). The SPI team often transported and provided warm hand-offs of individuals encountered on the streets directly to these county social workers. The team often leveraged these relationships to also access specific support services and resources that they could directly provide to individuals and families living on the street given the specific circumstance, such as motel vouchers, bus passes, and cash assistance.

The SPI-HOT team also developed similar working relationships with a variety of other government field offices and programs that were at times utilized to help individuals obtain a government license (i.e., Department of Motor Vehicles) as well as register for state/federal assistance (e.g., Social Security benefits, Medicaid etc.).

Because of their frequent interactions with these government field offices the SPI-HOT team over time worked to establish expedited processes for people experiencing homelessness to quickly obtain these services (such as establishing a specific time and days in the week when the outreach team had standing appointments to bring in individuals).

Direct Service Providers

The SPI-HOT team established relationships with a broad network of service providers that deputies used for direct referrals or warm hand-offs. As the below table shows, most of these organizations centered on housing and supportive services (such as Sacramento Self-Help Housing). As already discussed, the SPI-HOT team formally referred individuals in need of housing support through centralized systems (such as the CoC Coordinated Entry System or Sacramento County Homeless Services); nonetheless the SPI-HOT deputies found it useful to develop direct relationship with these providers as it was rare for these programs to have current openings at the time of an assessment—and that wait times could be extensive. Consequently, the team learned to keep in regular communication with providers about when "a spot might open up" for one of their clients either through the Coordinated Entry System or other mechanism.

[62] Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Williams, S., Argüello, T., Price Wolf, J., & Morris, J. (2019). *Homelessness in Sacramento County: Results from the 2019 Point-in-Time Count*. Report prepared for the Sacramento Continuum of Care. Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Final-PIT-Report-1.pdf Accessed June 2020.
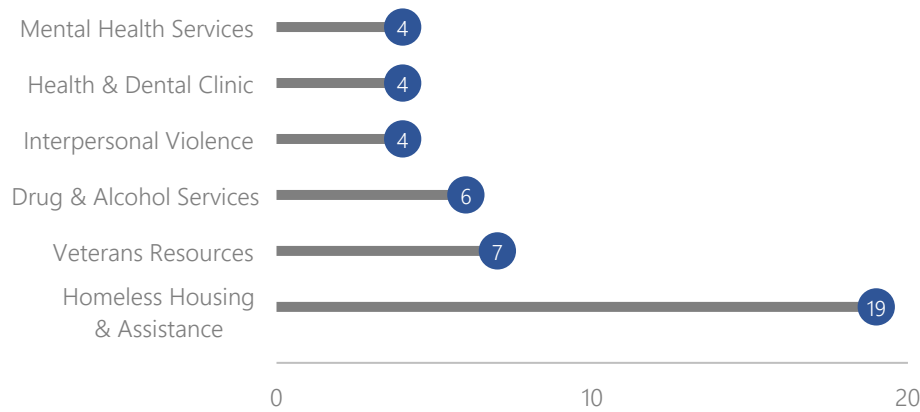
[63] County of Sacramento. (2018). *County of Sacramento NPLH Homeless Plan*. Retrieved from:
https://www.saccounty.net/Homelessness/Documents/20181130%20Sacramento%20NPLH%20Plan%20with%20Appendices.pdf
The county homeless plan outlines six general goals that the county will pursue to address the substantial increase homelessness in Sacramento County and particularly unsheltered homelessness. Within this comprehensive plan the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team is identified several times with respect to the following goals: 1) *Prevent People from Becoming Homeless*—by intensifying diversion efforts for people who can be assisted in other ways and engaging in collaborative discharge planning to reduce the number of people who enter the homeless system; 2) *Improve Response to the Street Crisis and Improve Quality of Life*—by strengthening outreach and engagement efforts that connect people to care, and addressing individual and community health and safety needs to improve the quality of life both for people who are unsheltered and their housed neighbors; and 3) *Expand and Improve Shelter and Interim Housing*—by increasing shelter capacity, removing barriers, expanding the services offered, and linking people directly to housing resources, to decrease the number of people living outside and move people more quickly to permanent housing.

Moreover, because people experiencing homelessness often have complex needs, the SPI-HOT team also became acquainted with a broad array of other direct services, including street medicine and dental programs, mental health and respite centers, and alcohol and drug services. Beyond providing direct referrals and warm-hand-offs to these service providers, the SPI-HOT team also worked with these providers to problem-solve some of the coordination challenges that occur with this population. For example, in the last two years of the grant the SPI-HOT team has started collaborating with two agencies that provide medically-assisted-treatment (MAT) for individuals with opioid and heroin addiction—which can be common challenges for people experiencing chronic homelessness. However, providing this type of intervention in the context of homelessness can be very difficult—as services and resources are geographically dispersed and homeless clients often struggle to make weekly appointments for treatment. The SPI-HOT team has helped these providers identify individuals interested in these treatments and have often provided transportation for treatment appointments. The SPI-HOT team has also recently put together a proposal for these providers to work with DHA to establish a new transitional housing program for individuals who are homeless to access MAT in a more stabilized setting.

A more general example of community collaborations with providers were the HOPE gatherings *(Homeless Outreach Partnership Event)* that the SPI-HOT team and the broader Sheriff's Office organized, consisting of several weekend events in the North Division and other parts of the county in the last two years of the grant (a total of eight). These events billed as a "one shop stop for homeless resources," brought together representatives from many of these organizations into one central location for people experiencing homelessness to have easier access to their services. These organized weekend gatherings were often hosted at a church parking lot and included 15 to 30 providers and agencies offering enrollment and counseling services during a four-hour period. The Sheriff's Office also coordinated with other community partnerships to provide welcome gifts (clothing and hygiene items donated from a nearby Walmart, Goodwill and Salvation Army), food and water (donated by local restaurants) as well as free haircuts (provided by students from a local beautician school) for individuals who came to the event. Mobile medical services (e.g., ELICA's medical unit), veterinarian care (a number of homeless individuals have dogs), and donated eye glasses were also available in most HOPE gatherings. SPI-HOT team members also transported several individuals from nearby encampments as well as made special efforts to locate and help transport individuals with physical disabilities to the gathering. At each of the four-hour HOPE events attended by the researchers, approximately 80 to 100 individuals experiencing homelessness were observed accessing these services.

Above photos were taken at multiple HOPE Fair events in which local community service providers were present, providing veterinary care for those with pets, meals, clothing, prescription glasses, and other resources.

Local Businesses and Private Citizens

The SPI-HOT team made special effort to engage with a variety of businesses located within the long commercial corridors (strip malls and larger retail centers) near the hot spots to which they conducted outreach. During the early phase of deployment at each of the designated hot spots, the SPI-HOT team dedicated some of their first patrol days to introducing themselves to managers at various stores, offices and restaurants. The deputies often started these conversations by introducing the goals of the SPI-HOT initiative in the community, while also encouraging storeowners and managers to share with them their own concerns and challenges regarding homelessness in the area. Deputies often took these conversations as opportunities to educate local residents and businesses about some of the misconceptions about homelessness but also suggested preemptive steps that could be taken to address some of the community disorder or nuisance concerns reported (for instance, encouraging restaurants to lock their trash bins at night, or supermarkets to regularly collect their shopping carts). On a couple of occasions deputies worked to problem-solve some of the issues presented (such as the accumulation of trash) and engaged with individuals who were identified by businesses as challenging for their customers.

Some of these private citizen partnerships proved to be valuable for the SPI-HOT team over time because they also provided unique opportunities for the team to creatively leverage additional assistance and resources to people experiencing homelessness in the area. For example, on multiple occasions the SPI-HOT team was able to refer individuals that they encountered on the street directly to employment opportunities at some of these same businesses. Another novel application of problem-solving, the SPI-HOT team established an arrangement at a local hair salon for individuals going to a job interview to have their hair cleaned and cut for free before meeting a potential employer.

Similarly, the SPI-HOT team established relationships with some of the landlords, as well property management companies, at nearby apartment complexes. On a number of occasions, the SPI-HOT team was able to leverage these relationships to help individuals living on the street identify affordable housing options in the community—some landlords even reduced rent and/or made special accommodations in terms of the security deposit. Interestingly, landlords interviewed by the researchers discussed that they were comfortable "taking a chance" with these atypical accommodations because the Sheriff's Office was acting as a community liaison in these situations. The SPI-HOT team was also able to renegotiate rent and resolve several eviction issues for families/individuals that had recently lost their housing due to a steep rental increase. As these creative community collaborations highlight, many members of these communities want to help with the homeless challenges that they see in the area, but often don't know how they can contribute. A community liaison – in this this case the SPI-HOT team – can establish connections between community resources and individual needs.

Church and Civic Groups

One final community component of the SPI-HOT intervention was its engagement with local churches, as well as civic and advocacy groups of private citizens concerned about homelessness. In the context of community meetings or specific forums about homelessness, SPI-HOT and other sheriff's deputies made presentations and shared information about the initiative, and also answered questions from community members about homelessness. Because the SPI-HOT team was often able to share some of the "success stories" that they had directly observed in their work, these presentations were often opportunities to better educate the public about the reality that many individuals can recover from homelessness. The researchers heard from several participants of these public meetings that the sheriff's deputies are in a unique position to dispel some misconceptions/stigma about homelessness and to raise hope and optimism in the community that these issues can be addressed.

Section 4: Data and Intelligence

Data-driven decisions about the deployment of police resources are central to Problem-Oriented Policing (POP). Accordingly, the SPI-HOT project drew on four sources of data and intelligence to establish the intervention as well as to monitor its implementation and potential impacts over the course of the grant. These included analysis of: Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) data, demographic and geographical trends from the 2017 Point-in-Time (PIT) Count, aggregated social service data (HMIS), and surveys collected by deputies.

Computer Assisted Dispatch (CAD) Data

Law enforcement agencies in the US use CAD data systems to electronically track incidents, responses and communications in the field. CAD systems are rich sources of information that capture several datapoints related to calls for services, location of incidents, dispatching, resource management, and call disposition. Moreover, prior to the SPI grant SSO had instituted a new CAD reporting procedure that required deputies to note whether a call for service involved a person experiencing homelessness, designating whether the call was "transient-related"[64] before it could be cleared. In 2016 SSO conducted an analysis of these transient-related dispatches which indicated that the North Division received an average of 1,000 community calls for service each month related to homelessness—an increase of 12% from the previous year. This high volume of calls represented between 5%-10% of all community requests for service, and accounted for over 1,100 patrol hours, each month. These results informed the initial SPI proposal and motivated the development of the joint outreach team.

Figure 5 | Calls for Service related to Homelessness for September 2017 through January 2018 (CAD)

---
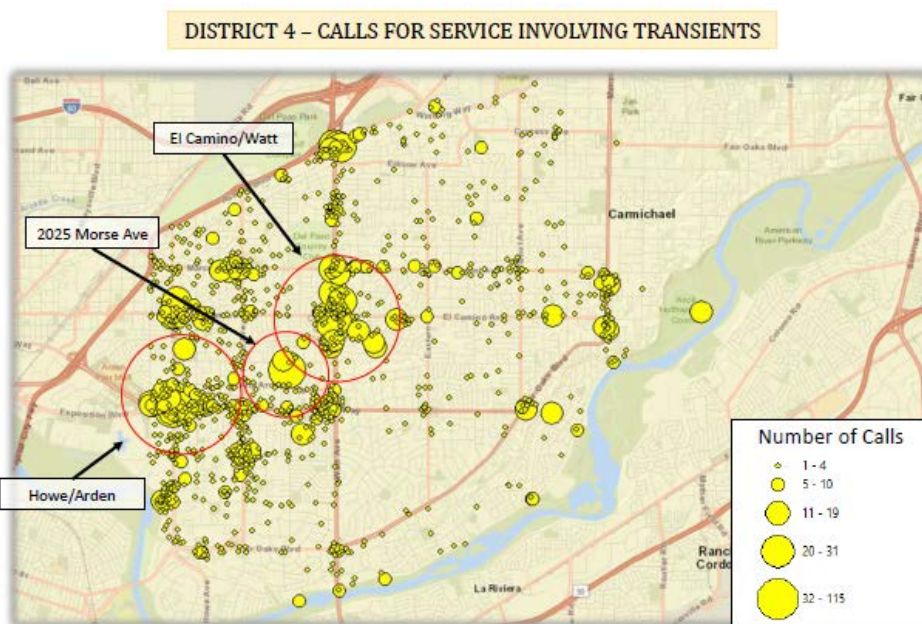
[64] A note on nomenclature; prior to SPI-HOT, SSO staff used the term "transient" interchangeably with homelessness. Because transient implies a transitory person, disconnected and separate from the community, many advocates argue it is a stigmatizing term that perpetuates misconceptions about homelessness. For example, survey results from the 2019 PIT indicate that the vast majority of people experiencing homelessness are not transients but long-term residents of the county. Since SPI-HOT, SSO staff are increasingly using the more accurate phrase "person experiencing homelessness" to describe individuals facing these situations.

Subsequently, during the course of the grant the research team combined CAD data with other information about the geographic distribution of homelessness in the county (elaborated below) to identify the potential hot spot locations to deploy SPI deputies. To establish these hot spots, the CSUS research team first identified general regions of the county associated with higher densities of individuals experiencing homelessness; these regions were derived from estimates from the 2017 Point-in-Time (PIT) count that indicated 15 zones in the North Division with above-average night counts of homelessness.[65] Leveraging this knowledge, CSUS divided each region associated with higher-densities of homelessness into latitudinal and longitudinal grids covering .0125 degrees (approximately 4,000 feet) in each north/south and east/west direction. CSUS then collapsed the grids into single centroid points, and scored each point based on the number of transient-related CAD calls for service indicated within each grid. Identification of hot spots was not based on a strict ranking of calls for service, but also on SSO's overall understanding of homelessness in the area. Once ten hot spots were identified with the greatest number of homeless-related calls and activity, the SPI-team selected two treatment hot spots and the corresponding matched control hot spots for Phase 1 of the initial deployment (February 2017). A similar hot spot process was pursued for the Phase 2 redeployment (October 2017). For Phase 3, the SPI-HOT team was redeployed to one of the hot spots from Phase 1, as it was discovered that homelessness activity had increased substantially after the SPI-HOT team left the area during Phase 2.

In addition to guiding the targeted deployment of the outreach team, CAD data was also analyzed to assess the impact of the intervention for reducing calls for service from the community (see next section). After Phase 1, the research team conducted a preliminary analysis of calls for service originating in the community and found that homelessness-related calls for service were reduced near the designate hot spots. With these results, SSO pursued continuing funding for the outreach team from alternate sources, including the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors, the County Department of Human Services, and SPI.

It should be noted that during Phase 3 of the project the tracking of transient-related calls in the CAD data became less consistent and so researchers relied on other data sources for the final year evaluation.[66]

2017 Point-in-Time Results

Most communities in the US conduct a Homeless Point-in-Time Count every two years, during the last week of January, to fulfill a federal funding requirement from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). These extensive community-wide efforts attempt to document every individual in a jurisdiction (whether a city or entire county) experiencing homelessness during a twenty-four-hour period.[67] The results from the Sacramento Homeless Count depict a "snapshot" of total homelessness in the county, and provide detailed and timely information for local stakeholders and the broader community to assess the state of homelessness in the region. Moreover, hundreds of surveys conducted with individuals not using the shelter system, offer unique insights into the experiences of unsheltered homelessness in Sacramento County.
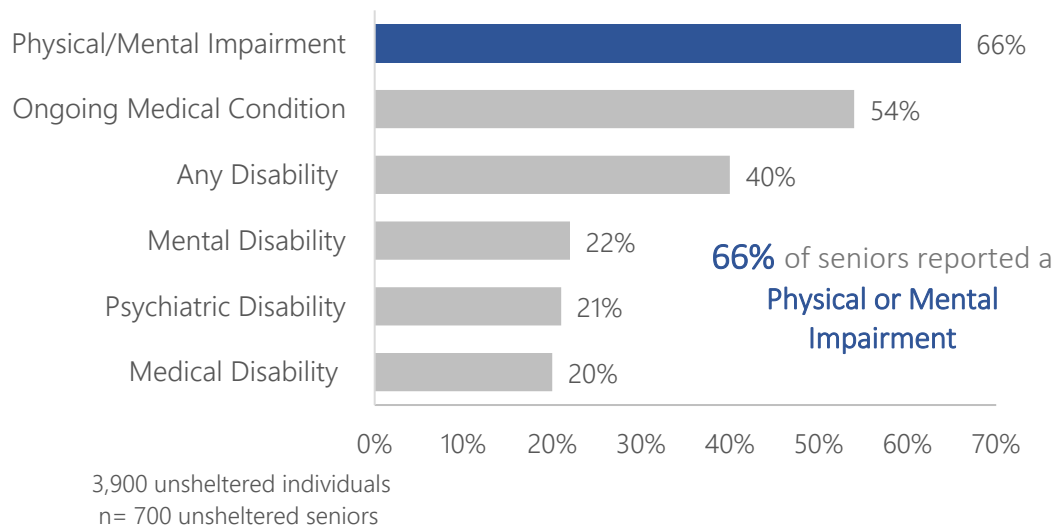
---

[65] The 2017 Point-in-Time Count was conducted in January of 2017 a month before the deployment of the outreach team. Because the count is conducted at night and entails a rigorous canvassing of the region (a sampling frame of 174 pre-identified counting zones throughout the county), it represents a valuable information source about the prevalence and distribution of homelessness. While no specific information about the location of encampments or individual was provided to SSO, the research team did use the results of the 2017 PIT to calculate density estimates of homelessness in general regions of the county. Though the largest proportion of homelessness in the county is estimated to reside within the City of Sacramento (outside the jurisdiction of the Sheriff's Office) the research team did identify 15 areas in the North Division with above average densities of homelessness. Each of these areas are approximately 150 acers and clustered around five general areas.

[66] Near the end of 2018, it became possible for deputies to clear calls without entering the transient-related flag indicating the nature of the call. Although SPI deputies and others working on homeless outreach continued to flag calls as related to homelessness, 2019 data were not sufficiently reliable for use in this report, nor for deployment decisions.

[67] Homeless Point-in-Time Counts are essentially a *census* of all individuals in the county accessing shelters and transitional housing ("sheltered homelessness"). The count also estimates the total number of individuals who, in the same period, are sleeping outdoors in tents, cars, or other locations not suitable for extended human habitation ("unsheltered homelessness").

Figure 6 | 2019 PIT Reported Conditions of Unsheltered Seniors (55+)

Physical/Mental Impairment	66%
Ongoing Medical Condition	54%
Any Disability	40%
Mental Disability	22%
Psychiatric Disability	21%
Medical Disability	20%

66% of seniors reported a **Physical or Mental Impairment**

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70%

3,900 unsheltered individuals
n= 700 unsheltered seniors

Results from the Sacramento 2017 PIT were used in two strategic ways for the SPI-HOT project. First, results from the PIT survey provided the SPI team general intelligence about the demographic composition of the homeless population in the county as well as the prevalence of certain conditions that the SPI team were likely to encounter. For example, the 2017 results indicated a sharp rise in the number of individuals using vehicles as shelter throughout the county—an issue that the outreach team encountered several times during their patrols. The survey results also indicated a substantial rise in the number of chronically homeless individuals with complex health needs—a finding that encouraged the team to make more deliberate efforts to cultivate partnerships with medical and substance-use providers. A second use of the 2017 PIT data was its incorporation in the identification of hot spot deployment sites. While no specific information about the locations of encampments or individuals was provided to SSO, the research team did use the results of the 2017 PIT to calculate density estimates of homelessness in general regions of the county. As discussed above, the research team leveraged knowledge about the density of homelessness within specific regions to construct the spatial grids to track calls for service related to homelessness; essentially triangulating data sources to verify that hot spots were located within areas already identified with above-average homeless activity.

Aggregated Social Service Data (HMIS)

As discussed in the previous section, the SPI social service Navigator used a tablet to conduct housing assessments with individuals encountered during patrols, which automatically entered them into a broader referral system for supportive housing serviced called the Coordinated Entry System. The housing assessment used by the Navigator—called the *Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool* (VI-SPDAT)—is a standardized instrument used to prioritize homeless services by Continuums of Care throughout

the United States.[68] Accordingly, this system matched individuals interviewed by the SPI-HOT team to specific housing programs according to identified needs.

Both the housing assessment and referral data are integrated within a countywide data management system, known as the Homeless Management Information System (HMIS). While the Sheriff's Office was not provided access to this data—due to ethical and confidentiality concerns[69]—the Data Analytics Team at Sacramento Steps Forwards did provide the SPI team regular HMIS aggregated analyses about the group of individuals that had been referred from the team. These updates included trend analyses, aggregated demographics of clients, and housing outcomes over time.

Figure 7 | HMIS Dashboard
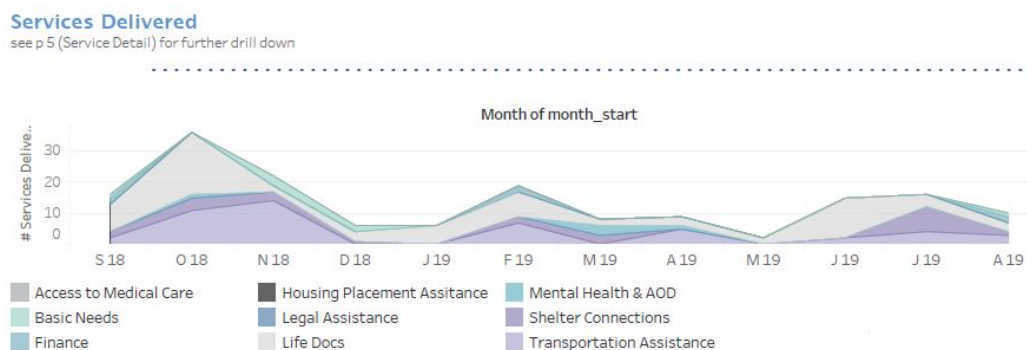
Results from these analyses brought insight into two critical issues faced by the SPI-HOT Team and consequently helped inform key decisions about the intervention. First, these reports revealed that during the first six months of the interventions relatively few individuals were being housed through the Coordinated Entry System because of extended wait times; despite SPI-HOT referring over 30 individuals for supportive housing only two transitioned to these programs during this time. A second, related, data insight was the observation that a significant portion of individuals referred into Coordinated Entry were nonetheless self-resolving their own housing situations over time—that is, they were able to recover from homelessness through other means.

These two insights led the SPI-HOT team to focus on other housing solutions, beyond the Coordinated Entry System, when engaging with individuals they encountered on their patrol. While the SPI-HOT team continued to refer individuals to the Coordinated Entry System, they also attempted to help individuals and families resolve their housing insecurity through other means (e.g., other county program, or informal arrangements with families or local landlords). Another insight revealed by the HMIS data was the fact that the Navigator was making more sustained contacts with individuals experiencing chronic forms of homelessness than the SPI

---

[68] Community Solutions & OrgCode Consulting (2016). *Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) Prescreen Triage Tool for Single Adults Version 2* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from http://pehgc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/VI-SPDAT-v2.01-Single-US-Fillable.pdf

[69] At the start of the project, the SPI team and Sacramento Steps Forward discussed at length the ethical and practical implications of sharing client data entered into HMIS through the SPI-funded Navigator. While Sacramento Steps Forward had clients sign a Release of Information form that would allow for a Data Sharing Agreement between the two parties, it was ultimately decided that sharing client information between a law enforcement agency and social service organization could raise conflicts of interest, particularly between a service provider and their clients. It was also agreed that the Navigator needed to retain some independence from the SPI deputies, so as not to undermine their trust with clients. Given these concerns, the research team encouraged the Sheriff's Office to collect their own surveys with clients, which would be done independently of the Navigator.

deputies—perhaps reflecting the fact that Navigator was able to establish trust and rapport with this group of homeless given their distrust of law enforcement. This insight led to the decision during Phase 2 that the Navigator would focus more of their time engaging with a select group of chronically homeless individuals each month, while deputies would prioritize making contacts with a broad segment of the homeless population.

HOT Survey (TerraGo App)

Despite the challenges of sharing HMIS data, the SPI team recognized that deputies would benefit from a system that tracked their own interactions with individuals experiencing homelessness, and therefore CSUS recommended that the Sheriff's Office collect their own survey data. In the Summer of 2017, the Sheriff's Office contracted with a third-party technology firm (TerraGo) to develop a tablet-based survey to be used with homeless individuals encountered on patrol. The data collected in the HOT survey developed by the Sheriff's Office was similar to those captured on the VI-SPDAT, though the Sheriff's Office also developed their own questions. In the Fall of 2017, the TerraGo survey went live and was made available to a broad range of deputies across the Sheriff's Office that encountered individuals experiencing homelessness. During the first year of operation nearly 1,500 individuals were interviewed using the survey application.

Figure 8 | TerraGo Dashboard
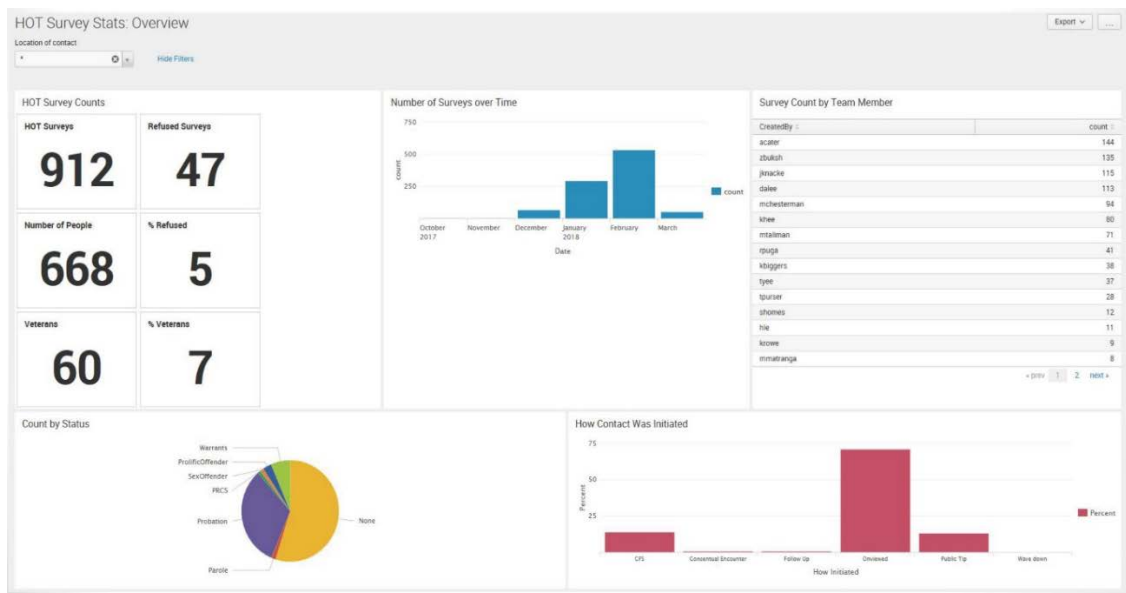
While the survey was used to compile demographics of individuals encountered by law enforcement, a number of technical and user challenges made it difficult to sustain its use for operational purposes. Specifically, in October 2018, the Sheriff's Office stopped receiving data for several months. In response, SPI-HOT deputies stopped entering data, and since that time, the SPI team has not been able to fully integrate the TerraGo app data into operational decision making at this point.[70]

---

[70] The app was first used in September 2017, and was used regularly until April 2018. From May 2018 through March 2019, deputies were using the app only occasionally, a problem identified independently by SSO and the research partner in early 2019. Then, in March 2019, the app itself stopped transferring data to the database used by SSO. Believing that the app did not work at all, the SPI deputies also stopped using the app entirely for several months.

Section 5: Analysis and Evaluation

The Institute for Social Research and affiliated faculty from California State University, Sacramento (CSUS) constitute the *research partners* of the SPI-HOT project, and as such held primary responsibility for developing the research design of the project's overall evaluation (including the Formative Evaluation of its implementation as well as an Outcome Evaluation of its ultimate impacts). In early 2016, the research team met with the Sheriff's Office to develop the initial proposal submitted to SPI. And after the grant was awarded in the Fall 2016, the research team continued to meet in-person with the Sheriff's Office on a monthly basis throughout the first year of the grant to help refine the deployment strategy of the intervention, develop a Logic Model, and draft the SPI Evaluation and Action Plan. Throughout the three years of the SPI grant, the research team has continued to keep regular monthly contact with the Sacramento Sheriff's Office (SSO) and Sacramento Steps Forward (SSF) – either by phone or in-person – and supplied regular deliverables associated with the evaluation. These deliverables included the following:

- Facilitated a Logic Model[71] workshop with project stakeholders in January 2017 to further refine the intervention's components, outputs, theory of change, and impacts. This SPI-HOT Logic Model was later revised in 2019 (see page 23);

- Hosted the initial field site visit by CNA-SPI staff in Fall 2017;

- Conducted analyses to inform Formative Evaluation presentations in 2018 and 2019;

- Drafted and circulated quarterly memos;

- Presented preliminary analyses at the SPI national meeting in 2017 and the American Society of Criminology Annual Meeting in 2018;

- Conducted additional analyses in 2019 to support SSO's efforts to find continuing funding for the activities of SPI-HOT deputies and other initiatives to improve the policing of individuals experiencing homelessness.

More generally, the research team collected and analyzed data from the Sheriff's Office, Sacramento Steps Forward, and other sources to assess the intervention's implementation and short-term, medium-term, and long-term impacts (per the SPI-HOT Logic Model). The research team also conducted community interviews and collected qualitative observational data during scheduled ride-alongs with the outreach teams (approximately 50 hours of observation across the three years).

---

[71] A logic model is a planning and evaluation tool that is often depicted as a one-page schematic of an intervention, which illustrates what an intervention intends to do and what impacts it seeks to achieve. By outlining the basic components of an intervention, a logic model seeks to clarify an intervention's underlying logic and "theory of impact"—the sequence of changes in the community and/or within systems that will lead to long term impact. The research team developed and submitted an initial SPI-HOT Logic Model to CNA-SPI in Summer of 2017 (as part of the Action Plan submitted in 2017). As the evaluation progressed, the research team revised and updated this Logic Model in 2019 given new insights about the outreach team.

Below we review the results of these various research activities and analyses. We begin by briefly reviewing some of the key findings from the previous Formative Evaluations that highlight both the successes and challenges that the SPI team experienced implementing the core components of the intervention (i.e., Targeted Deployment, Service-Oriented Policing, and Community Engagement). While these results have been previously reported on, we update these findings with the most current data available. Next, and for the remainder of this section, we present the results of our Impact Analysis of the Intervention—we present evidence of the intervention's impact on reducing calls for service related to homelessness as well as reducing crime in these areas of the county. We organize the discussion of results by the components, outputs and outcomes depicted by the SPI-HOT Logic Model.

Implementation Evaluation Results

Formative Evaluations, sometimes also called Process Evaluations, typically assess the ongoing implementation of a program. As opposed to a focus on the outcomes or impacts of the intervention, Formative Evaluations assess the extent to which the components of the program were implemented as initially designed as well as whether certain thresholds or benchmarks were met.

Generally speaking, the research team has reported that the SPI-HOT team implemented the core components effectively throughout most of the grant, with some notable examples of creative partnerships and leveraging of resources. Nonetheless, there was also some mixed evidence that the intervention was not always implemented consistently and that the deputies sometimes struggled to define their role working with individuals experiencing homelessness.

Figure 9 | SPI Homeless Outreach Logic Model – Process

Mixed Evidence of Targeted Deployment

Analyses of CAD data indicate that the SPI-HOT team spent considerable time patrolling the targeted hot spots, as intended, during different phases of the project.

- The team patrolled within the targeted hot spots at least 227 days over the course of the grant; an average of seven patrol days per month.[72]

- During the first and third phases of the project, the team patrolled the designated hot spot at least weekly, with the exception of three weeks in each phase. During Phase 2, there were many weeks (19 of 64) in which the deputies did not log any contacts within the targeted hot spot.

- During Phase 1, the vast majority of contacts with individuals experiencing homelessness were made within the proximity of the two designated, treatment, hot spot areas.

While it is clear that the SPI-HOT team spent substantial time patrolling the hot spot areas, the CAD data also indicates that the consistency of these patrols waned over time. As shown in Table 1 below, the SPI-HOT team spent a lower proportion of their total time patrolling the designated areas as time went on, and spent the majority of their time during the last two phases of the project outside the targeted areas. In particular, during Phase 2, only 34% of contacts logged by SPI deputies occurred within ¾ mi from a targeted hot spot; nearly 66% of SPI deputies' contacts occurred further away.

Table 1: SPI Deputies' Contacts in All Phases

	Feb.-Sep. 2017 (Phase 1)	Oct. 2017-Jan. 2019 (Phase 2)	Feb.-Sep. 2019 (Phase 3)
SPI contacts within ¼ mile from hot spots	137 (47%)	118 (14%)	121 (30%)
SPI contacts within ¼ to ¾ mile from SPI hot spots	64 (22%)	169 (20%)	61 (15%)
SPI contacts outside of hot spots	89 (31%)	555 (66%)	221 (55%)
Total SPI Contacts	290	842	403

Interviews conducted with the deputies and other stakeholders shed insight into several factors that may have contributed to the intervention becoming less targeted over time. First, SPI deputies expressed the view that homeless activity within the targeted hot spots ebbed and flowed over time and that patrols after a few months into a deployment could yield few or no contacts. During the end of Phase 1, deputies felt that their presence at Howe and Arden was no longer needed; sometimes just driving from the station to the targeted intersections would yield more individuals experiencing homelessness than within the designated area itself. Consequently, the SPI-HOT team began interacting with individuals to and from the designated hot spots, figuring that these engagements were within the spirit of the intervention, especially when there were few actual individuals at the targeted intersection. During Phase 2 one of the hot spots – the hot spot chosen despite its relatively low levels of homelessness-related calls for service – yielded very few individuals.

A second factor reflects the changing role that the SPI-HOT team found itself performing during the last two years of the grant as the Sheriff's Office invested more resources into a full-time countywide homeless outreach team. In 2017 the Sacramento County Board of Supervisors voted to increase funding for homeless outreach services performed by the Sheriff's Office—creating a new hybrid outreach/patrol team of 10 full-time deputies.

---

[72] It should be noted that the outreach team was staffed by part-time deputies who were on patrol between 10 to 15 days a month overall. As we discuss below, CAD data indicate that the outreach team spent less time in the designated hot spot areas after Phase 1.

While these additional patrols functioned somewhat separately, and differently, from the SPI-HOT deputies, the SPI intervention did change and evolve during this expansion of outreach activities at the Sheriff's Office. Specifically, it became apparent that the SPI-HOT deputies began performing more of an auxiliary referral source for these additional outreach patrols when they confronted particularly challenging situations. Because the SPI-HOT deputies had spent considerable time and effort becoming familiarized with the network of social and medical services in the community, they were often sought after for consultation by other outreach and regular patrol deputies working with individuals with acute housing situations. Over time, SPI-HOT deputies became the Sheriff's Office's own internal and central referral services, which frequently drew the SPI deputies outside of their own targeted deployment.

Both of the above factors highlight the SPI deputies' dedication to the spirit of the intervention and their willingness to help as many individuals as they could. They also highlight how the SPI-HOT program became more integrated into the regular patrols of the Sheriff's Office. Nonetheless, these factors do undermine the intervention's data-driven, place-based focus and its initial intention to divert and sustain resources to a specific geographic area. It is noteworthy to highlight, for example, that the clear improvements achieved in one of the targeted hot spots in Phase 1 (Howe and Arden) deteriorated over time after the SPI-HOT team were reassigned to another area. The SPI-HOT team was reassigned to this same intersection in Phase 3 as homelessness activity dramatically increased in this area during the intervening year—suggesting either that the SPI intervention necessitates a sustained engagement to have lasting impacts, or that the model was not able to address the root causes of homelessness-related calls for service.

Strong Evidence of Service Oriented Policing

According to field reports submitted by the SPI deputies, and other data sources, the SPI outreach team made dozens of contacts every week with individuals experiencing homelessness when they patrolled the designated hot spots. Nearly every one of these interactions were oriented toward either establishing rapport with individuals, encouraging them to engage services, and/or checking in on their progress (visiting individuals placed in treatment or housing). Enforcement tactics (issuing citation or arrests) rarely if ever occurred during these patrols.

- CAD data indicate that the outreach team was on patrol 10 to 15 days a month (average of 13). These reports imply that deputies made approximately 2,050 contacts with individuals over the course of the grant (about 62 contacts per month). These contacts were made with approximately 1,000-1,200 unique individuals. A majority of contacts were one-time interactions, but somewhere between 26%-43% of the SPI team's interactions were with individuals who the team encountered repeatedly (at an average of 3.3 times).[73]

- According to CAD data, SPI deputies logged 1,535 dispatches with individuals, or groups of individuals, experiencing homelessness over the 35 months that they were in the field. The reported length of these interactions varied widely, but on average deputies spent 54 minutes per dispatch, with lengthier dispatches in years two and three than in the first year.

- Narrative notes logged on CAD indicate that the vast majority of these SPI interactions were associated with checking in with individuals, providing referrals, or transporting individuals to specific

---

[73] This estimate is based on a sample of three 3-month periods from the CAD data, using deputies' notes to determine unique contacts with individuals. This method yields similar results to those obtained by extrapolating from several months of data collected via the TerraGo app, which was less consistently used, but was directly designed to capture unique contacts.

programs/services. Only four interactions during the three years indicated an enforcement activity (four citations total were issued by SPI deputies) representing less than 0.5% of the logged dispatches.

SPI deputies also submitted daily reports to their sergeant, which indicate that each month deputies provided a substantial number of direct service referrals to a subset of individuals that they engaged on the streets. Importantly, many of these referrals were direct linkages to services—that is, the deputies provided transportation and/or arranged appointments for individuals to access the service/resource.

- In a typical month, deputies provided approximately: 12 referral vouchers to the DMV or Social Security Administration (expedited process to get Life Documents), 10 general referrals for housing/support services, 3 direct referrals to a substance-abuse treatment (helped individuals get admitted), and 3 motel vouchers for emergency housing.

- The SPI-HOT team also provided transportation to many of these services (either directly or through the 21 bus vouchers given out each month).

- Information on the specific individuals who received referrals, and particularly those that received multiple services, was not consistently documented; nonetheless survey data collected by the deputies suggests that approximately 15%-20% of individuals encountered on the streets each month received some kind of assistance.[74]

The research team also collected substantial qualitative observational data of SPI deputies' interactions with homeless individuals during these patrols. These data highlight that becoming acquainted with the various programs and services in the community—and learning their different eligibility requirements—was a learning curve for the SPI deputies to overcome during the first year of the grant. The outreach team was sometimes unaware of the different referral options available in the community and exhibited some gaps in knowledge in particular about behavioral health and substance-abuse providers. The SPI deputies also had to develop some new engagement tactics to work with some individuals wary of law enforcement—deputies were sometimes unsure of their role when engaging disinterested individuals and occasionally reverted to a mode of "questioning the suspect" when initiating conversations. Nonetheless, observations over time revealed that the SPI deputies learned to effectively establish a presence on their patrols and developed working relationships with a number of chronically homeless individuals. Observations overtime also demonstrated that deputies were creative in problem-solving issues with individuals and helping them access programs and housing (often leveraging new community partnerships).

The SPI outreach team also included an embedded social service worker (i.e., the Housing Navigator from Sacramento Steps Forward). This staff member worked an average of 20 hours per-week in joint coordination with the deputies—either working directly with the team or engaging individuals at nearby locations. The Navigator was responsible for making formal supportive housing referrals through the Coordinated Entry System; essentially conducting a formal housing assessment with individuals (called the VI-SPDAT) and subsequently entering them into the community queue for housing programs. The process to enter someone into these programs requires substantial preparation in terms of documentation and verification (acquiring appropriate identification, verifying an individual's homelessness status, documenting their disability and health

---

[74] SPI deputies also collected data on the TerraGo survey app from December 2017 through August 2018 on the service referrals provided to individuals. Although these data provide only partial information on a wide variety of service referrals, they do indicate that deputies provided some level of assistance to at least 15.1% of the individuals with whom they interacted during this period.

status through a medical provider). Accordingly, the Navigator spent substantial time and effort to help individuals become "document ready" for possible admission into a program in the future (such as getting individuals a new driver's license or reenrolling them into public insurance, etc.) which are beneficial outcomes for individuals more generally as they open access to other programs and services. As Table 2 shows, the Navigator helped over 200 individuals successfully obtain such documents and assisted dozens of others gain access to a medical provider. Nonetheless, as the table below also shows, relatively few of these individuals actually transitioned into housing through the Coordinated Entry System; only 19 of the 50 individuals who formally entered the referral system though the SPI-funded Navigator transitioned into a supportive housing program over the three years.

Table 2: Navigator Contacts (HMIS)

Navigator Activities	2017	2018	2019[75]
Contacts	559	519	213
Unique Individuals	127	107	90
VI-SPDATs administered (Coordinated Entry)	22	23	5
Successful Service Linkages			
Life Docs (License, Social Security)	106	86	18
Medical Care	39	8	0
Mental health or Drug treatment	24	11	4
Transportation	51	94	29
Successful Housing Linkages			
Emergency Shelter	11	24	4
Rapid Rehousing*[76]	1	0	0
Transitional Housing*[77]	0	6	1
Permanent Supportive Housing*[78]	1	8	2
Assisted Resolution (alternative housing)	N/A	11	12

*Coordinated Entry Programs

Despite some of the shortcomings of the Coordinated Entry System and its extended wait times—which reflect in part the dearth of supportive housing units in the community—it should be noted that the Navigator generally engaged with a more vulnerable and difficult-to-serve group of homeless individuals than the general homeless population. Although 30-35% of individuals experiencing homelessness in Sacramento County are chronically homeless,[79] the SSF outreach worker had a caseload ranging from 61-69% chronically

---

[75] It should be noted that HMIS Navigator data for 2019 presented in the chart represents just six months of outreach activity. The SSF Navigator took a medical leave for a number of weeks in 2019. The SSO contract with SSF for these outreach services also ended in September of 2019, as this was the initial end of the SPI grant.

[76] *Rapid re-housing* is a HUD-funded housing intervention designed to quickly transition individuals and families from a state of homelessness into permanent housing. These programs typically provide short-term rental assistance (for 3 to 9 months) coupled with supportive services with the intent of reducing the amount of time spent experiencing homelessness. These services are offered without preconditions (ex: income, sobriety, employment) and tailored to unique household needs.

[77] *Transitional Housing* is a HUD-funded program that provides a supportive, yet temporary, type of accommodation to bridge the gap from homeless to permanent housing by providing structure, supervision, support, life skills, and sometimes education and training. It's an intermediate step between an emergency crisis shelter and permanent housing and may be more long-term and service intensive. While in recent years HUD has de-emphasized the Transitional Housing model (in favor of the Rapid Rehousing model) many of these programs that specifically target high-risk young adults still exist in most communities.

[78] *Permanent Supportive Housing* is a HUD-funded program that combines low-barrier affordable housing, health care, and supportive services to help individuals with disabilities transition to more stable lives.

[79] Baiocchi, A., Wolf, J. P., Hodson, K., Barker, D., & Foy, M. (2017). *Homelessness in Sacramento: Results of the 2017 Point-in-Time Count*. Report prepared for the Sacramento Continuum of Care. Institute for Social Research, California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from https//www.saccounty.net/Homelessness/Documents/ 2017_SacPIT_Final.pdf. Accessed June 2020.

homeless individuals—the majority of whom experiencing comorbid substance addiction with another health or mental health challenge. This suggests that the Navigator had to invest substantial time to establish rapport and trust with individuals, likely over many contacts. These individuals are also likely to be wary and reluctant to transition into a supportive housing program after several years of being homeless. In short, it is unclear if the relatively low number of successful linkages to supportive housing programs falls outside the range of expected performance for this type of outreach program and population. Nonetheless, given the extended wait times of the Coordinated Entry the SPI-HOT team had to search for other housing options, whether through a county program or an informal arrangement with friends/landlords (which the Navigator sometimes indicated in his caseload as Assisted Resolutions to alternative housing).

Strong Evidence of Community Engagement

In addition to the service-oriented outreach conducted by the sheriff's deputies and Sacramento Steps Forward Navigator, the SPI-HOT initiative included a great deal of outreach to service providers and small businesses. Because these collaborative efforts have already been discussed in great detail in the Community Outreach and Collaboration Section of this report, here we just briefly review a few general findings highlighted from the previous Formative Evaluations.

Interviews conducted by the research team with a broad group of stakeholders, service providers, and representatives from different public agencies, all highlighted that that the community engagement component of the intervention was well implemented. Service providers and public agencies that collaborated with the SPI-HOT team all spoke highly of how the sheriff's deputies and lieutenants had been proactive in developing new community partnerships as well as leveraging existing ones.

- Interviews highlighted that the SPI team was not only effective in initiating contact with new partners but they also did well to maintain regular meetings with different providers and stakeholders over time. Several providers discussed that they appreciated the level of energy, creativity, and open mind-ness that the team brought to discussions regarding new ideas and efforts to address homelessness. Though some providers discussed that their own values do not completely align with a "law enforcement perspective," and that some deputies can hold "rigid views about homelessness," they nonetheless appreciated that SPI-HOT were involved in these discussions.

- Various providers spoke highly of the eight HOPE gatherings (*Homeless Outreach Partnership Event*) that the SPI-HOT team, and the broader Sheriff's Office, organized several weekend events in the North Division as well as other parts of the county. These events billed as a "one shop stop for homeless resources," brought together representatives from many of these organization into one central location for people experiencing homelessness to have easier access to their services.

- In total, the SPI-HOT collaborated and formed strategic partnerships with 36 different social service providers operating throughout the North Division.

Representatives from state and county public agencies reported that the SPI-HOT team were strategic partners and that they appreciated the team's efforts to improve the access of their services to marginalized members living on the streets.

- The SPI-HOT deputies cultivated strong, day-to-day, working relationships with specific social workers at the Department of Human Assistance across various public assistance programs often used by people experiencing homelessness and/or poverty more generally. The SPI team developed informal

arrangements for providing warm hand-offs of individuals encountered on the streets directly to these county social workers.

- The SPI-HOT team also developed similar working relationships with a variety of other government field offices that were at times utilized to help individuals obtain a government license and or state/federal assistance (registration for Social Security benefits, Medicaid, etc.).

Community members and business owners spoke highly of the deputies' participation and engagement in public forums and community discussions about homelessness.

- Community members appreciated the SPI-HOT team being present and active in the community. Business owners similarly appreciated the team's regular patrols in the area and their proactive approach to address situations. Civic and advocacy groups appreciated the team's willingness to speak in their forums and workshops.

- Some public members appreciated the individual success stories of the intervention that the Sheriff's Office often shared in public forums, in local news coverage, and in the SSO's social media account, which showcased individuals or families transitioning into housing after their engagement with the SPI team. Some discussed that these success stories challenge misperceptions and stigma of homelessness; however, others were more critical that these stories oversimplified the solutions to homelessness and/or exaggerated the role of SPI-HOT in these situations.

In sum, the Formative Evaluation found substantial evidence that SPI-HOT invested significant effort and time during the grant period to engage a broad collection of community partners and social service providers concerned about the issue of homelessness in Sacramento County. A broad range of community members and stakeholders spoke highly of SPI-HOT efforts of engagement—even those with mixed opinions about law enforcement. The strong implementation of this community-oriented approach to policing likely contributed to the intervention's broad impacts in the community and successful outcomes, issues that we address next.

Outcome Evaluation Results

Having reviewed how SPI-HOT was generally implemented, we now move to review the evidence of the impacts of the interventions itself. According to the social outcomes depicted in the SPI-HOT Logic Model (see below), the intervention was intended to result in a series of staggered short-term and intermediate outcomes that would over time contribute to increase safety and collective efficacy[80] in the community around

---

[80] Generally speaking, collective efficacy is associated with a community's sense of social cohesion and own perceived ability to address disorder and other social issues within the surrounding environment (see for example Sampson, Raudenbush & Earls, 1997). Criminologists and other social scientists have often operationalized measures of collective efficacy to capture the level of informal forms of social control operating within neighborhoods—as for instance, the level supervision, communal trust, and social cohesion among neighbors—and their correlation with reported crime and deviant acts (see for example, Lee, 2000; Wolf, Baiocchi & Arguello, 2018). In the context of the HOT-SPI Logic Modal, we posited a modified a version of collective efficacy to conceptualize collective improvements in how a community addresses both the drivers and consequences of homelessness. Accordingly, the HOT-SPI activities not only help individuals recover from homelessness, but the broader community policing aspects of these activities contribute to a more effective, collective and integrative, response to homelessness in these areas of the county. The HOT-SPI activities help foster new collaborations among community organizations, establish new service linkages between service providers, and address gaps in the broader system. It is assumed that as these activities contribute to a more integrative response to homelessness, residents of these communities will feel more confident—as well as safer—that existing communal systems are in place to address and help individuals experiencing homelessness. Residents will, in turn, be less likely to request help from formal systems of control—i.e., calling for a law enforcement response—to address homelessness when it is observed in the community.

issues of homelessness (the long-term impacts). The anticipated immediate/short-term benefits of SPI-HOT included more individuals recovering from homelessness in the hot spots (individual-level impacts). While intermediate outcomes depict SPI-HOT community partnerships resulting in more integration and coordination between service providers (community/system-level). It was also envisioned that SPI-HOT activities would result in the development of new tools and knowledge that a broad range of SSO deputies would be able to leverage in their interactions with the homeless individual; thereby improving SSO response and police culture around these social issues (organizational-level impacts).

More broadly, the SPI-HOT Logic Model assumes that these various outcomes would together contribute to greater community safety and efficacy; as evidenced by decreasing calls for service from concerned community members over time about homelessness. Below we assess evidence of these assumptions and the SPI-HOT general theory of impact.

Figure 10 | SPI Homeless Outreach Logic Model – Outcomes and Impacts

Suggestive Evidence of Individuals Transitioning Out of Homelessness

SPI-HOT was not designed to operate as a direct social service or housing program, but was instead envisioned as an *auxiliary* referral service for existing social service programs in the community. Nonetheless, given the service-oriented focus of the SPI-HOT intervention it was assumed that over time an increasing number of individuals encountered by the outreach team would recover and transition out of homelessness.

A review of the qualitative data as well as the outputs discussed above indicate consistent evidence that the program helped several hundred transition into housing and/or access services. During the course of the grant, SPI contributed to:

- Approximately 260 individuals becoming more engaged with services and programs in the community

- Approximately 200 individuals/families recovering from homelessness and transitioning into some form of housing.[81]

While relatively few individuals transitioned into housing through the Coordinated Entry System (only 19 out of the 200 housed), which was originally envisioned as the main conduit to housing that the team would leverage, patrol reports submitted by SPI-deputies document that the team assisted a number of families and individuals each month access housing through other county programs as well as by informal arrangements with landlords (e.g., renegotiating rents, down payments etc.). The team was also able to help individuals access residential programs for substance use.

However, observations by the research team reveal that the SPI-HOT deputies played varying roles in resolving housing situations, which highlights the difficulty of assessing the specific contributions and impacts of the SPI-HOT team across different encounters.

- In some situations, it was clear that SPI-HOT deputies played a critical and consequential role in identifying families living in their vehicles and often times provided crucial follow-up support either helping families access county resources and/or assisted them in resolving their housing situations quickly. Some families interviewed by the research team described the SPI-HOT deputies as a "lifeline" to critical resources and supports that they had been unaware existed in the county. While some of these families had spent several weeks living in their vehicles, sometimes nearby DHA offices or social service providers, it took the initiative of the SPI-HOT deputies for these families to access appropriate supports.

- In other situations, SPI-HOT deputies played more of a supplemental, supportive role in which they worked alongside other organizations or outreach workers that essentially took the lead of a particular situation after an initial warm-hand off by the team. In these situations, it was less clear how consequential the SPI-HOT role had been. It is possible that some of these individuals would have eventually recovered from homelessness independent of the SPI-HOT team's intervention—either through an eventual contact with another outreach worker in the area or through their own resources over time.[82]

Across these different situations, however, it seems clear that the SPI-HOT team played at the very least a *contributive role*, either directly or indirectly, helping families and individuals transition *relatively quickly* into housing. Interviews with providers suggest that the SPI-HOT team was particularly efficient in identifying individuals on the streets quickly which likely speeded the transition into housing or a program. As providers

---

[81] It should be noted that only 19 individuals were housed through the Coordinated Entry System. However, deputies' daily reports to their sergeant suggest that an additional 175 individuals were assisted with housing or placed into a residential program outside of the Coordinated Entry System during the period of the grant.

[82] The research literature on homelessness indicates that the majority of individuals that face homelessness during the year do eventually resolve their housing situations—though many may fall back into homelessness again later. As already discussed in Section 1, within most communities the vast majority of individuals experiencing homelessness throughout the year (80% or more) face either brief periods of temporary or intermittent homelessness. See below reference:

Kuhn, R., & Culhane, D. P. (1998). Applying cluster analysis to test a typology of homelessness by pattern of shelter utilization: results from the analysis of administrative data. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *26*(2), 207–232.

discussed, shortening the time that a person or family is homeless can have many benefits including reducing the risk of other trauma occurring.

Observations of the SPI-HOT team also revealed that the deputies were at times very effective helping individuals navigate different systems of programs and making linkages between health and social service providers. The research team observed a number of situations in which SPI-deputies helped ensure that individuals did not "fall through cracks" as they navigated different service providers and case managers (e.g., helped individuals get to appointments, re-establishing contacts with case managers/providers, initiate case consults between providers).

Strong Evidence of Improved Community Response

While some individuals may have transitioned out of homelessness as a result of the SPI-HOT deputies' efforts, the problem of homelessness is well beyond the capability of the Sacramento Sheriff's Office – or any single entity – to solve. However, it was assumed that the place-based community engagement strategy pursued by the SPI-HOT team would over time enhance the coordination and integration of existing services; in effect improving the community's response to homelessness.

Interviews with stakeholders and observations of the SPI-HOT team indicate strong evidence that the intervention enhanced institutional linkages to a growing number of community resources. In a number of situations SPI-HOT team played a key role establishing relationships between service providers and improving coordination, which ultimately decreased barriers and increased access to these resources. Some notable examples of these community and system-level impacts include:

- The coordination of HOPE gatherings *(Homeless Outreach Partnership Event)* that the SPI-HOT team, and the broader Sheriff's Office, organized several weekend events in the North Division. These events billed as a "one shop stop for homeless resources," brought together representatives from nearly 30 organizations each time into one central location for people experiencing homelessness to have easier access to their services. SPI-HOT made special efforts to locate and help transport individuals with physical disabilities to the gathering. Approximately 80 to 100 individuals participated in each of these events.

- The SPI-HOT team collaborated with two substance-abuse/medical agencies that provide medically-assisted-treatment (MAT) for individuals with opioid and heroin addiction. The SPI-HOT team helped identify individuals interested in these treatments and reduced barriers by providing transportation for treatment appointments. The SPI-HOT team has helped put together a proposal for these providers to work with DHA to establish a new transitional housing program for individuals who are homeless to access MAT in a more stabilized setting.

Interviews and document reviews[83] conducted by the research team also indicate strong evidence that SPI-HOT efforts became integrated with broader initiatives in the county to address homelessness. Notable examples of this integration include:

---

[83] In addition to conducting interviews with various stakeholders (various team members, service providers, representatives from the county, and individuals assisted by the intervention), the research team also reviewed county meeting notes, SPI-HOT field reports, and other forms of documentation associated with county efforts to address homelessness in Sacramento County (see for example footnote 85).

- The SPI team met with representatives from DHA and other County Departments several times during the course of the SPI grant to discuss ways to formally collaborate and strategically leverage resources on new initiatives, programs and policies being pursued by the County.

- One result of these discussions was the integration of the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team as one of the key referral sources for the county's new supportive shelter program for chronically homeless individuals launched in 2018 called the *Full Service Re-Housing Shelter*. To date, the Sheriff's Outreach Team has referred approximately 20% of the 300 chronically homeless individuals that have participated in this program.

- Moreover, in Sacramento County's revamped 2019 County Homeless Plan (formally adopted by the County Board of Supervisors in December 2018), the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team is identified several times as a strategic partner for key goals that the County established itself for addressing the recent rise in homelessness.[84] Specifically, the Homeless Outreach Team was integrated in three out of the six goals outlined in the 2019 plan,[85] most notably in the County's second goal to "Improve response to the Street Crisis and Improve Quality of Life."[86]

Mixed Evidence of Improved Policing Culture

An anticipated institutional outcome of SPI-HOT was that the intervention would result in a new approach for how SSO deputies can more effectively engage individuals experiencing homelessness; that SPI deputies would over time develop new engagement tools, community partnerships, and referral capacities that in theory all patrols would be able to eventually leverage in their interaction with individuals experiencing homelessness. Accordingly, it was envisioned that SPI would institutionalize this model of engagement and promote culture change for how deputies can help divert homeless individuals into social service and housing programs and become less reliant on enforcement tactics (i.e., solely relying on citations and arrests for addressing homelessness).

One important piece of evidence that some of these institutional changes in police practice did occur at SSO over time was the development and deployment of new hybrid outreach-patrol team in 2018 called the countywide Homeless Outreach Team. Given the early evidence that the SPI-HOT team reduced calls for service during Phase 1, as well as growing concerns about homelessness in Sacramento County, the Sacramento Board of Supervisors voted in Fall 2017 to allocate additional resources for a countywide Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team of 14 full-time patrol deputies. This new hybrid outreach-patrol team was inspired partly by the SPI-HOT project; both not only have similar names but also share a commitment to be more service-oriented and less

---

[84] Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Williams, S., Argüello, T., Price Wolf, J., & Morris, J. (2019). *Homelessness in Sacramento County: Results from the 2019 Point-in-Time Count*. Report prepared for the Sacramento Continuum of Care. Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento. Retrieved from https://sacramentostepsforward.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/2019-Final-PIT-Report-1.pdf Accessed June 2020.

[85] County of Sacramento. (2018). *County of Sacramento NPLH Homeless Plan*. Retrieved from:
https://www.saccounty.net/Homelessness/Documents/20181130%20Sacramento%20NPLH%20Plan%20with%20Appendices.pdf

[86] The county homeless plan outlines six general goals that the county will pursue to address the substantial increase in homelessness in Sacramento County and particularly unsheltered homelessness. Within this comprehensive plan the Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team is identified several times with respect to the following goals: 1) *Prevent People from Becoming Homeless*—by intensifying diversion efforts for people who can be assisted in other ways and engaging in collaborative discharge planning to reduce the number of people who enter the homeless system; 2) *Improve Response to the Street Crisis and Improve Quality of Life*—by strengthening outreach and engagement efforts that connect people to care, and addressing individual and community health and safety needs to improve the quality of life both for people who are unsheltered and their housed neighbors; and 3) *Expand and Improve Shelter and Interim Housing*—by increasing shelter capacity, removing barriers, expanding the services offered, and linking people directly to housing resources, to decrease the number of people living outside and move people more quickly to permanent housing.

reliant on enforcement tactics when engaging with homeless individuals. The two teams are also supervised by the same lieutenant and sergeant and consequently often collaborate. As reported above, the SPI team often deviated from their hot spots in the last two years of the grant to provide consult and referral assistance to the countywide Homeless Outreach Team. In the third year of the grant, SPI-HOT almost functioned as an internal referral and support team for the countywide patrols, following up with individuals that had made initial contacts with deputies in the countywide Homeless Outreach Team.

Accordingly, some of the lessons learned and engagement tactics developed by SPI-HOT are now being practiced by a broader team of patrol deputies who are deployed seven-days a week across a larger segment of the county. The initial lieutenant leading the two teams codified the core orientation of both teams in the mantra: "*the three E's of Engagement—Educate, Encourage, then Enforce.*"

- **Educate** one's self, the public, as well as individuals facing homelessness, of the various programs and services available in the community.

- Build rapport and continuously **Encourage** homeless individuals to seek services.

- Rely on **Enforcement** only when education and encouragement have failed or if the situation dictates immediate action.

As we elaborate in the next section on Integration and Sustainability, however, the two teams are nonetheless distinct from one another and operate within a different set of responsibilities and constraints. While the countywide Homeless Outreach Team is deployed to hot spot areas they nonetheless also maintain simultaneous patrol duties within the districts in which these hot spots are located. Consequently, these patrol officers respond to a broader set of calls from the community, and unlike the SPI-HOT deputies, do not focus exclusively on homeless related issues. For these and other reasons we discuss later, the countywide Homeless Outreach Team should not be seen as a duplication or expansion of the SPI-HOT team, though both teams do seem to be guided by a similar evolving approach.

Moreover, analysis of CAD data indicates mixed evidence that these teams engaged with homeless individuals in the same way. While SPI-deputies clearly showed evidence of becoming more service-oriented in their interactions, and relied less on enforcement tactics, the evidence is less clear for the countywide outreach team.

- Enforcement represented less than one percent of all SPI interactions (0.5%). Out of the 1,535 encounters that SPI deputies logged with homeless individuals across the three years, only four resulted in citations, and none resulted in arrest. This represented a stark change in engagement tactics by the three SPI deputies when compared to their previous patrols. [87]

- In contrast, enforcement occurred in nearly one in five encounters reported by the countywide Homeless Outreach Team in 2018. Out of the 4,897 encounters with individuals experiencing homelessness reported by the team that year, 18% resulted in some type of enforcement (877). Specifically, 14% of these encounters resulted in a citation and 4% resulted in an arrest.

---

[87] Historically these same three deputies reported much higher rates of enforcement before SPI. For example, in 2016 the three deputies arrested 22 out of the 23 homeless individuals that they collectively encountered in the course of routine patrols.

While the countywide Homeless Outreach Team reported a much higher rate of enforcement than SPI-HOT, it should be noted that their rate of arrests was nonetheless substantially lower than that of other SSO deputies who reported interactions with homeless individuals in 2018.

- Specifically, the countywide outreach team arrested homeless individuals half as often than other patrols in 2018 (4% vs. 9%). However, outreach deputies were more likely to issue a citation than other patrols (14% vs. 11% of the time).

- The countywide outreach team was more likely to initiate contact in these encounters with homeless individuals (88% of outreach team contacts were initiated by the officer) than regular patrols (46%), which were more likely to be responding to a call from a community member. This suggests a more proactive approach by the countywide outreach team to engage with homeless individuals outside of immediate crises, a greater set of tools that reduce the need for arrest, or likely a combination of both.

More broadly, however, analysis of available CAD data indicates inconsistent evidence that SSO as a whole has changed its enforcement strategies with individuals experiencing homelessness as result of SPI-HOT or the countywide Homeless Outreach Team. In fact, between 2016 and 2018, SSO reported 57% more interactions with individuals experiencing homelessness, which was also associated with an increased use of enforcement (from 16% to 21%).

- In 2016, 9% of all interactions with homeless individuals resulted in arrests while in 2018 the rate of arrest was similar at 8%. Moreover, the rate of citations increased from 6% to 13% from 2016 to 2018.

- This broader examination of the data reveals that the majority of homeless encounters occurs with deputies who are neither in SPI-HOT or in the countywide Homeless Outreach Team; approximately 83% of encounters with homeless individuals in 2018 were reported by other SSO deputies.

Table 3 shows comparable rates of encounters, and encounters that resulted in enforcement, that other SSO deputies reported with individuals experiencing homelessness in the North Division. Overall, the pattern indicates that SSO deputies as whole have become significantly more proactive in initiating interactions with individuals experiencing homelessness (as opposed to responding to calls). As the number of officer-initiated contacts with homeless individuals increased in 2017 and 2018, deputies were more likely to write tickets than arrest homeless individuals.

- In contrast, rates of arrest and ticketing in response to community calls did not change over the course of the program.

Table 3: Homeless Encounters and Use of Enforcement in CAD

	Community-initiated			Officer-initiated		
	2016	2017	2018	2016	2017	2018
Total homeless encounters	13,350	11,928	12,179	6,456	6,185	12,004
Percent resulting in arrest	9%	9%	9%	10%	10%	8%
Percent resulting in ticket	2%	3%	3%	15%	19%	23%

In sum, there is inconsistent evidence about the institutional impacts of SPI-HOT on changing the cultural and engagement tactics of the broader SSO. While SSO did launch a new hybrid outreach-patrol team in 2018, the available CAD data does not indicate a corresponding reduction in the use of enforcement; rather the pattern shows a notable increase in these tactics over time. Though there are some limitations to consider in this analysis, which are discussed in the conclusion of this report, it also seems realistic that some notable programmatic changes may have indeed occurred in three years even while the overall institution has shifted little in approach during this time.

Suggestive Evidence of Community Impacts (Decreased calls for service)

As already discussed, the SPI-HOT Logic Model assumes that the short-term and intermediate outcomes reported above will all contribute over time to a greater sense of safety and collective efficacy in the community around issues of homelessness (the long-term impacts). One way to measure this impact in the community is to assess the reduction of homelessness-related calls for service over time in the specific areas to which SPI-HOT deputies were deployed. Accordingly, the research design of the evaluation intentionally assigned SPI-HOT deployments to specific hot spots, each of which was paired with a similar "control" hot spot where the SPI-HOT team was not engaged.[88]

The initial analytical plan, which was modified for Phase 3 given some complications, was based on similar prior studies and assessed the relative change in the number of calls within a two-block radius of the respective hot spot intersections (approximately equivalent to a radius of ¼ mile).[89] If SPI-HOT had an impact on collective efficacy and safety, we would expect to see a change in the number of calls in the treatment hot spot areas (using the prior year's calls in this area as the baseline). Moreover, we would expect that these reductions in calls to hot spots would be above and beyond any changes observed in the control hot spot areas. As noted previously, place-based policing strategies have sometimes resulted in displacement of crime and disorder to nearby areas.[90] To test for this kind of displacement, the research team also measured calls for service in adjacent areas (from ¼ to ¾ miles away from a hot spot).

Figure 11 depicts changes in homelessness-related calls for service throughout Phase 1 and Phase 2 of SPI-funded activities. In both phases, calls for service decreased in the hot spots targeted by the SPI-HOT team, and there is little if any evidence of displacement to nearby areas. In Phase 1, this is a clear story.

- During Phase 1, the combined number of calls in the treatment hot spots decreased by 21% between the baseline period and time of deployment. The adjacent areas did not show a corresponding increase in displaced calls but rather also decreased by 16%.

- The matched controls hot spots in Phase 1 showed a 15% increase in calls during the same time period, suggesting a net overall reduction of 36%.

---

[88] The paired control hot spots were relatively nearby and were also similar to the hot spots with respect to relatively high rates of calls for service and centered on major intersections dominated by commercial land use.

[89] For this analysis, the research team noted that prior studies of hot-spot policing have often considered an intervention to encompass a two-block radius. This is approximately equivalent to the ¼ mile used here, which was also chosen because it captured a relatively large share of the SPI-HOT deputies' efforts, at least during the first phase of deployment.

[90] Such displacement would not be surprising in the case of homelessness-related disorder, especially to the extent that homelessness itself might be defined as disorder by members of the public.

- During Phase 2, calls in the treatment hot spots decreased by 37% between the baseline period and time of deployment. Again, there was no evidence of displacement as adjacent areas also saw a decrease in calls.

- However, the "control" hot spots in Phase 2 actually saw a greater decrease in calls for service than the targeted hot spot itself (46% vs. 37%).[91] This could suggest that community-wide decline in calls were greater than those observed in the treatment areas.

Figure 11 | Change in Homeless-Related Calls for Service
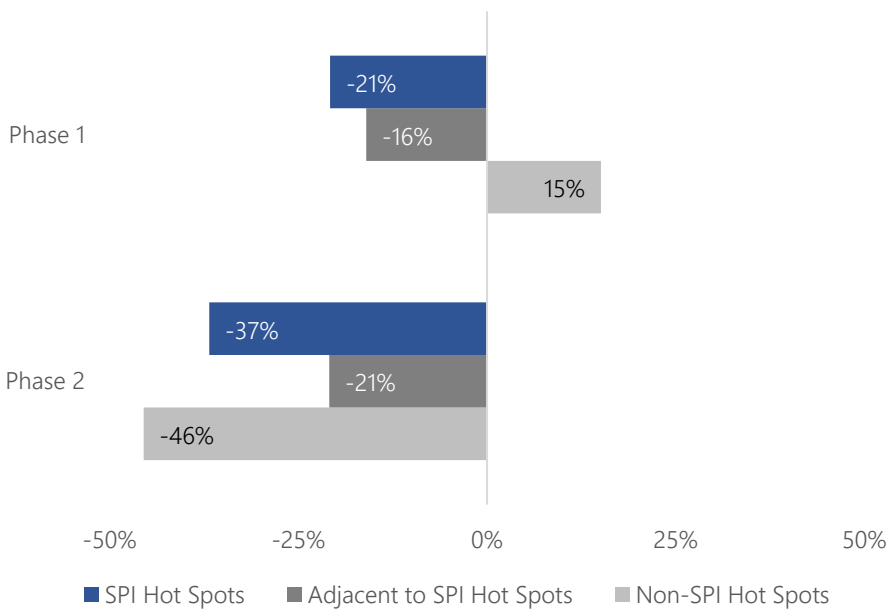
To make further sense of this pattern, the research partner conducted a fixed effects regression – a statistical technique that allows for the results of staggered implementation to be combined into a single estimate. This analysis also controls for unknown characteristics within the hot spots that might have influenced the frequency of calls as well as control for countywide trends in calls. The results of this model suggest that the SPI intervention was associated with an average of 3 fewer calls per month in targeted hot spots across Phases 1 and 2 (see appendix for model estimates).[92] Given that the baseline number of calls within each hot spot varied from 30 to 50 calls for most months, this suggests that SPI-HOT reduced calls by 6% to 10% each month.

The research team initially planned to conduct these analyses using data from all three phases of the intervention. Unfortunately, near the end of Phase 2, a procedural change in how CAD data was reported in

---

[91] Only one of two targeted hot spots were included in this analysis, because the SPI-HOT team conducted few activities near one of the designated intersections.
[92] This effect was not statistically significant (p=.158), likely because the statistical significance of the SPI-HOT effect was limited by the small number of hot spots.

2019 made the call data unreliable for this analysis.[93] To examine all three phases of the intervention, the research team used incidents of reported crime within the hot spots as a proxy measure for community perceptions of safety and collective efficacy. It is important to emphasize, however, that this is not an ideal measure of the intervention's intended impacts as reducing crimes themselves were not the explicit goal of the intervention. Moreover, it is not possible to determine whether any given crime involved individuals experiencing homelessness. Nonetheless, a reduction in social disorder associated with homelessness could in theory lead to a reduction in crime and would itself represent a benefit of the intervention.

Figure 12 depicts changes in the number of all crimes reported in all treatment hot spots, adjacent areas, and controls across all the three phases of SPI-HOT.

- During Phase 1, crime fell in hot spots targeted by the SPI-HOT team, but this change was paralleled by a similar change in the control hot spots. This may be due to the SPI intervention, but is consistent with general trends in crime in 2017.

- In Phase 2, crime decreased in the targeted hot spots, in contrast to a stark increase in the control hot spots. This would be clearest evidence of the expected impacts.

- In Phase 3, the pattern was exactly reverse to what was expected. Again, there is little evidence that crime was displaced to nearby areas by the SPI intervention.

Figure 12 | Change in Overall Crime – All Types
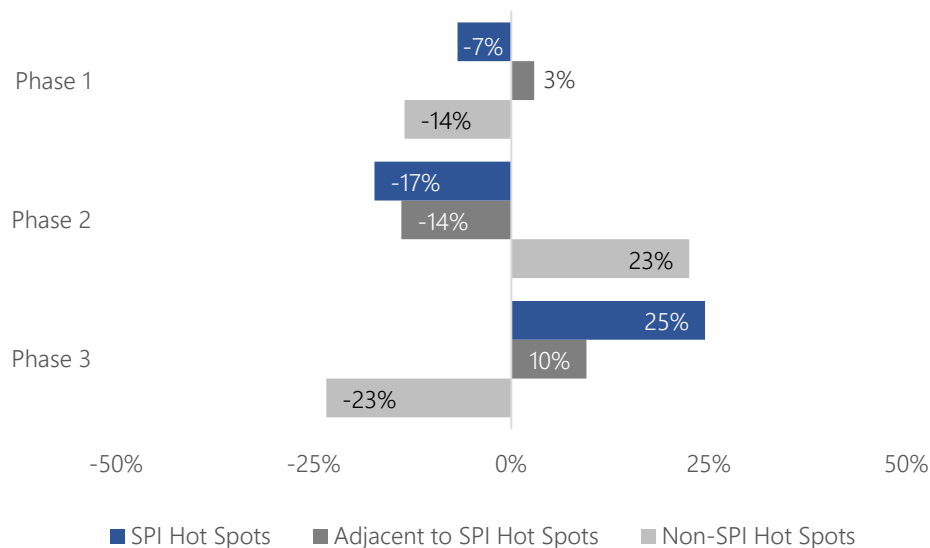
_____
[93] When researchers received CAD data in 2020, it was apparent that reported encounters with homeless individuals were inconsistently documented (i.e., flagged) in 2019 compared to previous years—that SDD had likely shifted reporting requirements and/or protocols for documenting encounters with homeless individuals. Though deputies in SPI-HOT and the countywide Homeless Outreach Team were still indicating encounters/calls involving individuals experiencing homelessness, deputies in other patrols were no longer following the same procedure for reporting these same encounters. Consequently, there was dramatic drop off in homeless calls in 2019, which made CAD an unreliable indicator for our final analysis.

One possible reason for the lack of a clear pattern is that this analysis combined different kinds of crime into a single statistic, while homelessness is presumably more closely related to some kinds of crime than others. Individuals experiencing homelessness are often cited for "quality of life" crimes, such as public intoxication, and may also resort to property crimes (i.e. theft) as a survival strategy, or may be the victims of such crimes. On the other hand, while individuals experiencing homelessness certainly perpetrate and are victimized by violent crime, factors other than homelessness are likely much more important determinants of trends in violent crime. To better understand trends in crime, the research team grouped crimes into several categories, and the results of the intervention are reported for two of these categories: quality of life and property.[94] Definitions of these categories are shown in Appendix B.

Figure 13 | Change in Quality of Life Crimes
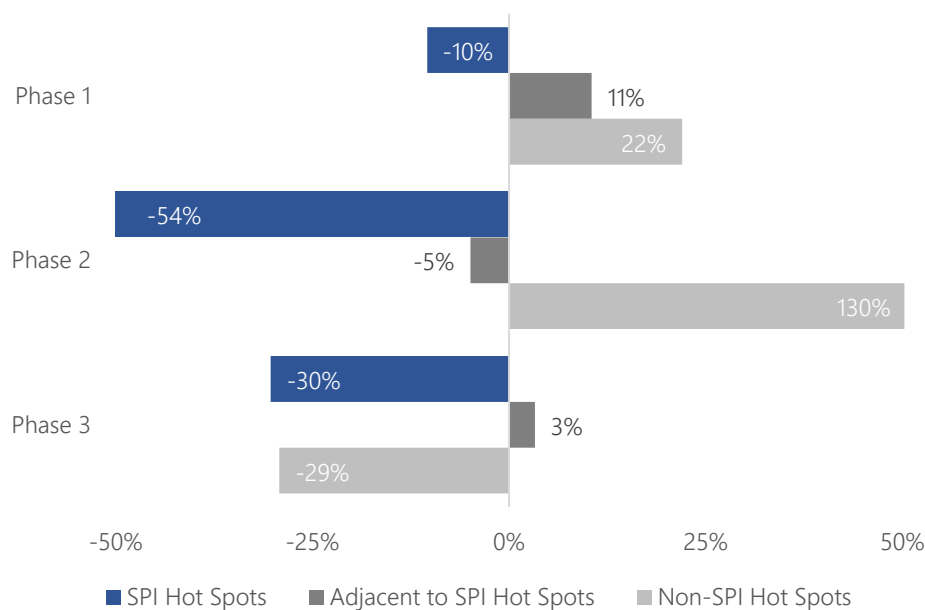
During all three phases, quality of life crimes fell in SPI-targeted hot spots, and in each case by more than the decrease in control hot spots. In Phases 1 and 2, this distinction was dramatic, but less notable in Phase 3. In all Phases, quality of life crimes decreased by a greater amount in the SPI-targeted hot spot than in adjacent areas, but only in Phase 1 does it seem possible that quality of life crimes were displaced to adjacent areas.

---

[94] Overall, the research partner did not expect violent crime to be measurably impacted by the SPI-HOT intervention and so they were not included in this analysis.

Figure 14 | Change in Property Crimes
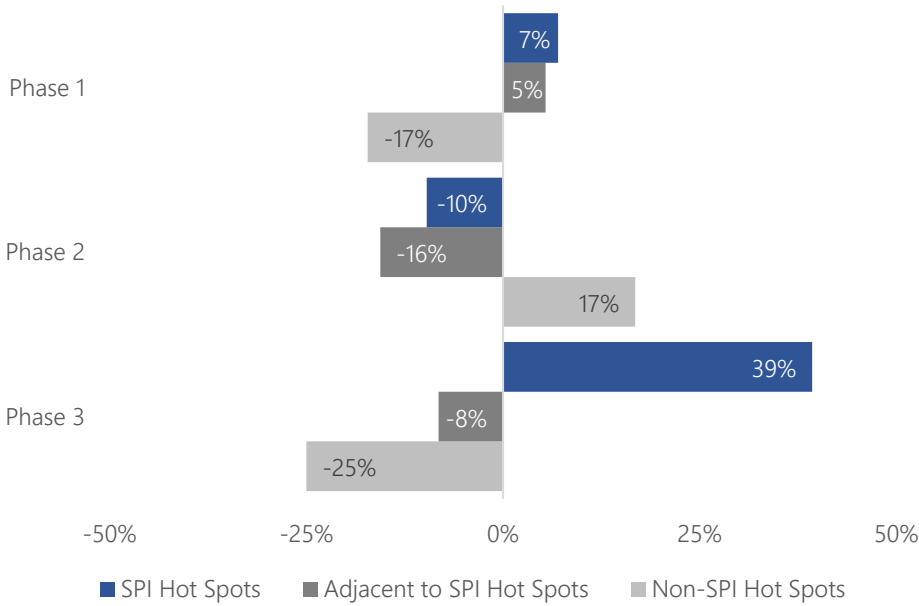
The pattern of changes in property crime is less clear. During Phases 1 and 3, property crime actually increased in targeted hot spots while decreasing in control hot spots. In Phase 2, this pattern was reversed, with property crime decreasing in the SPI-HOT areas and increasing in the control areas. In no case does there appear to be displacement of crime away from SPI-targeted hot spots.

In sum, the early evidence of SPI-HOT's success in reducing calls for service appears to be corroborated by reductions in quality of life crimes in targeted hot spots throughout all three Phases. Three major factors make it difficult to draw more extensive conclusions, including: (1) the evolution of SPI-HOT away from a place-based strategy and toward a model in which SPI-HOT deputies served as subject-matter experts; (2) the confounding effect of a large change in the policing of homelessness in Sacramento County;[95] and (3) the lack of available data on homelessness-related calls for service during Phase 3. Although the first two reasons were unanticipated, and make it more difficult to draw firm conclusions, the reasons for this evolution are important to understand, and are discussed further in the next section.

---

[95] In addition to SPI-HOT deputies' lack of adherence to deployment decisions during Phase 2 and, to some extent, Phase 3, a final complicating factor is the deployment of the countywide Homeless Outreach Team. This team consists of 10 full-time deputies who proactively interact with individuals experiencing homelessness and businesses in areas with high levels of homelessness, and its activities are described more fully in the Integration and Sustainability Section. Here, it is important to note that their capacity is far greater than the capacity of the SPI-HOT intervention, and this – in combination with the SPI-HOT deputies' increasing involvement in engagement outside of their designated geographic areas – may explain the reason that the results from Phases 2 and 3 do not demonstrate a clear pattern.

Section 6: Integration and Sustainability

As we have discussed in this report, the goal of the SPI-HOT grant was to develop a new service- and community-oriented, and ultimately more effective, approach for how the Sheriff's Office and its deputies interact with individuals experiencing homelessness. Moving away from what had been the SSO's previous de facto homeless policy of enforcement and confinement, the SPI outreach team attempted to cultivate a new policing culture and engagement strategy that the Lieutenant leading the team later codified in his mantra "*the three E's of Engagement: Educate, Encourage, then Enforce.*"

As we elaborate below, the Sheriff's Office has attempted to institutionalize and integrate this new approach beyond the SPI-HOT team, most notably in its launch of a new hybrid outreach-patrol team in 2017 called the countywide Homeless Outreach Team. Also, at the time of this writing, the Sheriff's Office has used internal funding to continue the operation of the original SPI-HOT team and their work as outreach workers and liaisons between law enforcement and social service providers.

Moving away from TED to a new HOT Approach

Before SPI, the Sacramento County Sheriff's Office (SSO) had for several years operated a designated team of officers, called the *Transient Enforcement Detail* (TED), which primarily responded to calls for service in the community associated with homelessness. Adhering to a broken-windows approach to social disorder, TED's team enforcement strategy was to cite or arrest individuals committing public order crimes (e.g., public intoxication, solicitation) and actively discourage the homeless from congregating in certain commercial or residential areas of the county (i.e., displacement). The TED team was also involved in the enforcement of the county's previous no camping ordinance and were reportedly active in removing encampments throughout the North Division.

The SPI grant submitted by the Sheriff's Office reflected, in part, an acknowledgement that a strict focus on enforcement and displacement had been both an inefficient and ineffective use of resources.[96] Accordingly, the SPI grant project sought to re-orient and re-brand the TED team, or at least the functions performed by the TED team, toward a more service and community-oriented approach to homelessness. The name, Homeless Outreach Team was chosen in part communicate this change in deployment strategy. The SPI-HOT team was also charged with developing new tools, community partnerships, and internal capacities that in theory all patrols would be able to eventually leverage in their interaction with individuals experiencing homelessness. The long-term goal of the SPI pilot was to create a sustainable model and referral resources that all patrol deputies could use to divert individuals to social services and housing programs and thereby decrease the SSO's reliance on enforcement tactics.

Continuing Investment in the Model

Given growing concerns about homelessness in Sacramento County, as well as the perception that the SPI-HOT team had been successful in its earliest work,[97] the Sacramento Board of Supervisors voted in Fall 2017 to

---

[96] Analysis of CAD data in 2016 revealed that the thousands of patrol hours dedicated to enforcement and displacement each year had not resulted in a decrease of crime or calls for service in the North Division; indeed, both had increased in the intervening years.

[97] After the first nine months of the SPI-HOT deployment the research team provided some preliminary evidence that the intervention had made some positive impacts on reducing calls for service in the treatment hot spots during Phase 1 of the project (with no evidence of displacement of homeless activity in adjacent areas). The SPI-HOT team had also received some positive local news coverage highlighting some early successes of the intervention—as for example, news stories about how the SPI deputies had helped various families living in vehicles access services and attain emergency housing.

allocate additional resources for a new countywide Homeless Outreach Team of 10 to 12 full time patrol deputies and one sergeant. The broader Sheriff's Homeless Outreach Team included:

- Four (4) officers assigned to North Division

- Four (4) officers assigned to Central Division

- Two (2) officers assigned to Work Release Division

- Two (2) officers assigned to the Rancho Cordova Police Department (funded by other sources)

- One (1) sheriff's sergeant assigned as the countywide program supervisor and coordinator.

In addition, the North Division assigned a sheriff's lieutenant to serve as the assistant commander of the North Division to also provide additional supervision to the countywide team. To date, these have been the same lieutenant and sergeant as those overseeing the SPI-HOT grant.

This substantial investment into the Homeless Outreach Team significantly expanded the scope of outreach activities of the Sheriff's Office – and the "three E approach" – across the county. Because the countywide Homeless Outreach Team patrolled seven days a week, they covered much more ground than the SPI-HOT deputies and encountered many more individuals as well.

It should be noted, however, that while local officials may have been partly motivated by the SPI-HOT pilot to create the countywide Homeless Outreach Team, this newer outreach team operates within a different set of constraints and set of responsibilities. One critical differentiation between the SPI-HOT pilot and the countywide outreach team is that the former enjoyed a unique flexibility and position in the North Division that allowed the three deputies to experiment and seek out creative solutions to individuals' situations. In contrast, the countywide Homeless Outreach Team has some traditional responsibilities of a conventional patrol unit which limit some of their outreach activities. Interviews and ride-alongs with the countywide Homeless Outreach Team, for example, revealed the following observations:

- The countywide Homeless Outreach Team responds to a broader set of calls from the community, and unlike the SPI-HOT deputies, do not focus exclusively on homeless related issues during their patrol.[98]

- Relatedly, deputies in the countywide Homeless Outreach Team have less flexibility in their daily patrol schedules to cultivate the same level of community partnerships. They have less time to research potential resources and broader community solutions to homelessness, and consequently are not as familiar with the various referral resources in the county.

- The Homeless Outreach Team responds to calls related to homelessness and will take time in their patrols to engage with individuals living on the streets. However, they have less time for prolonged interactions with individuals. The Homeless Outreach Team are also more likely to rely on enforcement tactics with individuals.

---

[98] While the countywide Homeless Outreach Team is deployed to hot spot areas of the county they also maintain simultaneous patrol duties within the districts in which these hot spots are located.

In short, the Homeless Outreach Team should not be seen as a duplication of the SPI-HOT pilot, though it is clear that both teams share similar orientations toward engagement. Accordingly, the research team has described the countywide Homeless Outreach Team in this report as a type of *hybrid* between an outreach team and a traditional patrol. While it is beyond the scope of this evaluation to assess the implementation and impact of the countywide Homeless Outreach Team, a preliminary analysis of these deployments, as discussed in the last section, do reveal that these new officers did significantly increase a patrol presence within homeless hot spots of the county and that these teams were more proactive in their engagement with individuals experiencing homelessness. Though it appears that the countywide Homeless Outreach Team still relies to some degree on enforcement tactics (issuing citations or arrests at least 18% of the time that they interact with homeless individuals) it is also true that these interactions are less likely to result in arrest than those involving other deputies. There is also evidence that countywide Homeless Outreach Team has helped numerous individuals access services and housing. Patrol reports submitted the countywide Homeless Outreach Team indicate that since January 2018 the countywide Homeless Outreach Team has assisted:

- 368 individuals transition into housing.

- 1,710 individuals with a referral and/or warm hand-off to services.

- In the collection of 1,397 tons of garbage from camp sites.

It should be noted that the evaluation of the SPI-HOT team found that a number of individuals initially engaged by the countywide Homeless Outreach Team, were eventually referred to the SPI-HOT team, who often followed up with their own outreach engagements with these individuals.[99] Indeed, the SPI deputies had by this time become more acquainted with the various programs and services available for individuals—and were as a consequence likely better versed in the eligibility requirements of various homeless providers. The SPI deputies began consulting with the broader outreach team out in the field when these situations occurred and helped problem-solve issues and navigate referrals. This pattern is evident in the results discussed in the previous section that found that SPI deputies were spending less time in their own deployment in the designated hot spots. In short, the county's additional resources enabled an expansion of service-oriented policing, but also reduced the place-based focus of the SPI-HOT team itself.

Continuation of SPI-HOT after SPI

In the end of September 2019, the SPI grant ended but the Sheriff's Office shifted resources to keep two of the three part-time deputies from SPI team operational in the field through the end of the year. One justification for this extension was because the research team wanted additional observations and datapoints of the SPI-HOT team—particularly since it had changed its function. But it was also true that the SPI-HOT team had become somewhat integral to the broader efforts of the Homeless Outreach Team, as discussed above. It was also clear that the SPI-HOT deputies had proven themselves as valuable for maintaining many of the connections and partnerships that get leveraged by not only the Homeless Outreach Team but also some social service providers. Since January 2020, the Sheriff's Office has continued to use other internal resources to keep two of the three deputies that served in SPI-HOT active within its Security Services Division so that they can perform some of the same outreach and community liaisons functions as before and continue developing the collaboration with social service providers in the county—particularly the Department of Human Assistance.

---

[99] Starting midway in the second year of the grant, it became evident that SPI-HOT deputies were providing occasional consult and referral support to the broader Homeless Outreach Team, reportedly in instances when the countywide team encountered complex and more pressing situations.

Section 7: Summary and Conclusions

Our process evaluation of how SPI-HOT was implemented found that the pilot initiative was largely successful in establishing a team of deputies focused on service-oriented policing and community engagement. The deputies and the Street Navigator worked collaboratively, and creatively, to problem solve and provide a large number of referrals to individuals and families encountered on the streets and/or living in their vehicles. While the deputies faced a steep learning curve when familiarizing themselves of the various services and programs in the community—as well as experienced some early challenges modifying their engagement strategies with certain individuals—the team over time became subject-matter experts quite adept at identifying referral strategies for specific individuals and families. The team also did significant outreach and collaboration with numerous stakeholders in the community concerned about homelessness and were successful establishing and maintaining new relationships with a broad spectrum of providers and organizations. In contrast, we found mixed evidence that the pilot initiative adhered to a hot spot methodology of targeted deployment based on data. Specifically, we found that targeted deployment was data-driven mainly during the first year of the grant, but that a commitment to a place-based hot spot approach faded throughout the three-year period due to an evolution in the SPI-HOT team's role.

With regard to the outcome evaluation, we found strong evidence that SPI-HOT has likely improved the community response to homelessness in this part of the county. The Sheriff's Office has established new and effective referral linkages across various public and non-profit agencies that did not previously exist and is contributing to a more consistent response to growing homelessness across the region. SPI-HOT also helped spearhead new initiatives between substance-abuse/medical programs (for example helped in shaping a new medically-assisted-treatment program for individuals with opioid and heroin addiction) and has become integrated within the county's initiatives to address broader homelessness. The SPI-HOT team has also had some success in transitioning a number of individuals and families out of homelessness, though it is also true that this was a relatively small number of total individuals encountered during the intervention (we estimate that approximately 10% of all individuals encountered during the grant period were assisted into housing). The team's efforts in certain instances were intensive, but finding housing for a large and growing population of chronically homeless individuals is a challenge that may simply be beyond the capability of policing agencies to solve.

There was also some promising evidence—albeit limited—that these various activities contributed to fewer homelessness-related calls for service within areas targeted by the SPI-HOT deputies. When the intervention was targeted during the first year it yielded substantial reductions in call for service, similar to those reported in other place-based interventions.[100] This was consistent with our hypothesis that the SPI-HOT intervention has broad benefits to the community, beyond the just the individuals directly helped by the deputies. Our final impact analysis of calls from community members, however, was limited due to data gaps in the last year as well as the fact that deployment became less targeted over time, making it more difficult to measure localized impacts of the team's work.

Finally, there was mixed evidence of a change in policing culture—such a change clearly occurred within the SPI-HOT team, as evident from the very limited use of enforcement tactics by the deputies (reported in fewer than 0.5% of interactions) and ride-alongs with the SPI-HOT deputies. But it is less clear that this change in culture and orientation extended to the Sheriff's Office as a whole. While the County's investment in a separate countywide Homeless Outreach Team in 2018 symbolized a commitment to institutionalize the SPI-HOT model of engagement (i.e., the three E's of engagement that de-emphasize enforcement as just one of several

---

[100] Braga, A. A., & Bond, B. J. (2008). Policing crime and disorder hot spots: A randomized controlled trial. *Criminology, 46*(4), 577-607.

policing tools), the available CAD data did not indicate a corresponding reduction in the use of enforcement with homeless individuals. Rather, the pattern shows a notable increase in these tactics over time—enforcement increased from 16% to 21% across all homeless interactions between 2016 and 2019. Nonetheless, it could be argued that reducing citations and arrests is not always possible in certain situations; reducing enforcement may not be the most appropriate indicator for assessing a hybrid policing outreach strategy in which deputies are still performing many of the same patrol functions as before. Indeed, it is worth noting that the countywide team to date has helped at least 368 individuals transition into housing and referred many more (approximately 1,700) to other services—outcomes that were unlikely to have occurred before this new team was deployed.

In sum, it is beyond the scope of this current evaluation to adequately assess the implementation of the countywide outreach team. Our limited research of this newer initiative suggests that there are some clear benefits of a hybrid patrol-outreach policing team, but our observations also point to some potential challenges and complications of blurring the roles and function of policing and outreach. Indeed, the term *outreach* is being loosely defined in this context, which could risk becoming an overly-broad definition that includes a variety of policing activities that may run counter to the spirit of the original intervention (e.g., when clearing out homeless camps becomes confused with a form of outreach). There is also the risk of conflict with other stakeholders who interpret the term differently. In conclusion, a fuller examination of the countywide outreach team is warranted. We recommend that the county continues funding the countywide outreach team but that it also commissions a fuller, more rigorous, study of its implementation and impacts.

Recommendations

This project highlights that law enforcement plays an important, albeit unclear and evolving, role in how communities respond to the issue of homelessness. As first-responders, patrol officers have to respond to calls and concerns from community members about homelessness. The SPI-HOT initiative demonstrates, however that *how* police respond to these calls can vary substantially and lead to differential impacts; while police responses to homelessness have often relied on enforcement tactics they can also be re-aligned to work alongside a variety of existing programs and services, which are more likely to have lasting impacts for the individual and the broader community. And though law enforcement agencies cannot replace the function of social workers and service providers—nor should they attempt to—SPI-HOT nonetheless demonstrates how Community-Oriented Policing can not only support but also improve the various systems addressing homelessness. Given this, other police agencies interested in deploying similar joint-response teams in their community to address homelessness and/or mental health issues may want to consider some of the following pragmatic lessons learned from the SPI-HOT pilot:

- **There is a learning curve to navigating service systems**
  In many communities there are a variety of programs and social services attempting to help individuals experiencing homelessness. However, these service systems are often fragmented and siloed across medical and mental health care, substance abuse treatment, housing, and social services. SPI-HOT benefited from its early and strategic partnership with the local Continuum of Care (CoC)—the community board of service providers that coordinates local homelessness planning efforts and disperses federal funds awarded by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). However, even with this strategic partnership the outreach team realized that there are a variety of other programs and entities that operate outside of the CoC. Law enforcement outreach teams will require time and effort to identify and foster referral networks that likely differ from community to community—and that likely change over time. Programs and services also have varying eligibility requirements as well as ebb and flow in their service capacity at different times of the year. In short,

there is a steep learning curve to understanding and navigating the services available in the community. Nonetheless, over time the SPI-HOT deputies have become subject-matter experts on the most relevant and useful services for the specific individuals and families that they encounter on a daily basis.

Relatedly, it is important to note that over time SPI-HOT also had a fair amount of success, and became quite adept at, assisting individuals self-resolve their housing situations outside of formal housing programs and services. On a number of occasions, the SPI-HOT and Housing Navigator were able to help individuals to identify resources within their own networks and other informal means for addressing their homelessness—what is sometimes described by some providers as a successful diversion from formal housing programs. Just as SPI-HOT deputies became more familiar with the referral options in the community over time, they also became more effective in identifying situations in which individuals/families could be assisted with some limited assistance.

- **Different perspectives and orientations can be useful**

This pilot was very successful in building community partnerships, but those partnerships involve organizations that may have very different approaches than policing agencies to working with the same population. Maintaining such partnerships requires ongoing discussions about the role of police and the role of social service agencies. These are not one-time conversations. Agencies should also understand that housing and homeless service providers tend to have less clearly delineated lines of responsibility, which can make for inefficient decision making. Law enforcement officers—who are trained to address emergencies and are oriented toward immediate action—can sometimes become frustrated by the drawn-out process of engaging difficult-to-serve individuals or what can be perceived as a slow-to-respond social service system. This crisis orientation, and the desire to have immediate results, has some benefits but also drawbacks when working with service providers. In some situations, the SPI-HOT deputies brought a new perspective to the importance of providing timely services to individuals in crisis; on a number of occasions it was evident that the SPI-HOT deputies motivated some programs to be more responsive to the immediacy of a situation. Other times, however, the deputies struggled with the reality that some situations cannot be resolved, or at least resolved effectively, within the context of a single encounter, or, that taking time to establish rapport with some individuals experiencing homelessness can be a necessary first step before engaging in other outreach activities. Over time, it appeared that the SPI-HOT deputies became more appreciative of the different orientations to engagement and varying perspectives of some service providers (and vice versa). While there is some risk of *role confusion* about the goals and function of law enforcement performing outreach, there also seems to be some real potential for useful exchanges of ideas and perspective between social workers and law enforcement.

- **Experience combined with training can help foster new tools**

Deputies can dramatically expand their toolkit to take on new roles, but such an expansion relies on training and experience. Sacramento County's SPI-HOT deputies had each spent decades with the force, and completed various trainings on crisis intervention and motivational interviewing. The intervention benefited from the wealth of knowledge that the SPI-HOT deputies were able to draw upon in their encounters with individuals. The fact that these deputies were already so experienced may have also given them more clout and standing within SSO to motivate other patrols and teams to experiment with new engagement tactics. Also critical was the fact that the SPI-HOT deputies

exhibited a generally open perspective—despite their years of policing experience—to learning new approaches, tactics, and resources that can be leveraged in encounters with individuals experiencing homelessness. Carefully recruiting individuals who are both experienced but also open minded to developing new expertise may likely be a key ingredient for a program like SPI-HOT to be successful.

Police agencies should also consider exposing outreach teams to trainings that are outside of a conventional policing curriculum; trainings, for example, on *Trauma-Informed Care* and *Mental Health First Aid* may be particularly relevant given the challenges of some homeless individuals. Alternatively, other communities deploying similar interventions have chosen to embed social workers within policing departments to provide such training and case consults, recognizing that social workers' training and expertise is built around these subjects. While the goal should not be to re-train law enforcement officers to become social workers (or vice versa) these types of joint-response interventions should strive to balance the expertise and limits of each disciplinary response to the complex issue of homelessness. One key advantage of a multi-disciplinary approach is that it might help officers see homelessness from different perspectives and in turn see new opportunities for engagement. For example, because law enforcement is often encountering individuals during acute moments of crisis—when individuals may be exhibiting extreme behaviors—it can be difficult for some officers to see how some homeless individuals ever recover from these situations. This pessimistic view of human behavior may be a function of repeatedly, and exclusively, observing individuals at these crisis movements, and not seeing these same individuals in other moments after they have recovered from their particular challenge (whether it be related to untreated mental health, substance use, and/or housing insecurity). Understanding that many individuals can and do recover from homelessness is important for outreach teams to appreciate—as well as how this recovery process can differ from individual to individual—as it fosters a more positive and effective orientation to engagement. From the perspective and observation of the research team, the SPI-HOT deputies became more optimistic and hopeful in their work with individuals over time, perhaps in part because they were able to work with several individuals through a full recovery cycle.

- **The need for case management tools and training**

SPI-HOT often just provided the initial point of contact with an individual before they were referred to other services; many times SPI-HOT had just a single contact with an individual before providing a warm hand-off to a specific service provider. Despite this, SPI-HOT deputies nonetheless found themselves having some repeat encounters with approximately 25% to 35% of individuals that they encountered on the street. Even when these individuals or families transitioned into a program or temporary housing, SPI-HOT also provided a number of follow-up visits with some of these individuals to ensure a continuity of support and assistance (e.g., visiting families at a motel etc.). In essence, SPI-HOT provided a type of *case management service* for about 15% to 25% of individuals that they interacted with across multiple encounters. While this was not originally envisioned as a core activity or component of SPI-HOT, in hindsight it would have been useful to provide the deputies some general training and support on case management practices as well as provided them access to formal case management software. The research team observed that the SPI-HOT deputies were generally organized and effective with their time, but some general training on case management processes may have helped the deputies balance multiple priorities across clients. Moreover, interventions like SPI-HOT can benefit from specific case management software and IT support to help document and

track client progress. While SPI-HOT did invest in a smart phone application to document individuals that they encountered, the software was not explicitly designed for case management purposes and therefore provided limited pragmatic benefits to the outreach deputies themselves.

Another similar challenge is that the SPI-HOT received limited updates from providers about the specific individuals that the team referred to them. Though Sacramento Steps Forward did provide quarterly dashboards to SPI-HOT showing the housing status of individuals referred into the Coordinated Entry System by the team, more generally, there were few case management updates about the progress of individuals across most programs. This type of information, even in aggregate form, would have been useful for the team to learn about, as it would have provided SPI-HOT some regular feedback about the effectiveness and appropriateness of their referrals.

In conclusion, SPI-HOT has reflected an ongoing and evolving learning process for how law enforcement can more effectively respond to the growing homeless crisis in Sacramento County. The intervention has highlighted some success, challenges, as well as pragmatic lessons, for how a service-oriented and community-oriented approach can be effectively implemented in the context of a broad collection of existing service programs and organizations. While better policing cannot solve the complex reality of homelessness, this project nonetheless showed how a service-oriented policing approach can be part of, and serve in alliance with, a broader community approach to address it.

Works Cited

Baiocchi, A., Wolf, J. P., Hodson, K., Barker, D., & Foy, M. (2017). *Homelessness in Sacramento: Results of the 2017 Point-in-Time Count*. Institute for Social Research, California State University, Sacramento.

Baiocchi, A., Curry, S., Williams, S., Argüello, T., Price Wolf, J., & Morris, J. (2019). *Homelessness in Sacramento County: Results from the 2019 Point-in-Time Count*. Institute for Social Research: California State University, Sacramento.

Bazari, A., Patanwala, M., Kaplan, L. M., Auerswald, C. L., & Kushel, M. B. (2018). 'The thing that really gets me is the future:' Symptomatology in older homeless adults in the Hope Home study. *Journal of Pain & Symptom Management*, *56*(2), 195–204.

Berk, R., & MacDonald, J. (2010). Policing the homeless: An evaluation of efforts to reduce homeless-related crime. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(4), 813-8

Braga, A. A., & Bond, B. J. (2008). Policing crime and disorder hot spots: A randomized controlled trial. *Criminology, 46*(4), 577-607.

Bizjak, T. (2019, September 6). Sacramento had state's second highest rent increase. But there's good news for tenants, too. *The Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/business/real-estate- news/article217796560.html.

Bittner, E. (1967). The police on Skid-Row: A study of peacekeeping. *American Sociological Review 32*(5): 699–715.

Community Solutions, & OrgCode Consulting, Inc. (2016). *Vulnerability Index Service Prioritization Decision Assistance Tool (VI-SPDAT) Prescreen Triage Tool for Single Adults Version 2* [Measurement instrument]. Retrieved from http://pehgc.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/VI-SPDAT-v2.01-Single-US-Fillable.pdf

Corporation for Supportive Housing. (2005). *AB 2034 Program Experiences in Housing Homeless People with Serious Mental Illness.* New York. Retrieved from https://www.csh.org/wp-content/uploads/2011/12/Report_AB20341.pdf

County of Sacramento. (2018). *County of Sacramento NPLH Homeless Plan*. Retrieved from: https://www.saccounty.net/Homelessness/Documents/20181130%20Sacramento%20NPLH%20Plan%20with%20Appendices.pdf

Culhane, D. (2010). Tackling homelessness in Los Angeles' skid row. *Criminology and Public Policy*, *9*(4), 851-857.

Ellsworth, J. T. (2018). Street crime victimization among homeless adults: A review of the literature. *Victims & Offenders, 14*(1), 96-118.

Fazel, S., Geddes, J. R., & Kushel, M. (2014). The health of homeless people in high-income countries: descriptive epidemiology, health consequences, and clinical and policy recommendations. *The Lancet, 384*(9953), 1529-1540.

Fischer, S. N., Shinn, M., Shrout, P., & Tsemberis, S. (2008). Homelessness, mental illness, and criminal activity: Examining patterns over time. *American Journal of Community Psychology, 42*(3-4), 251-265.

Garrison, E., (2017, June). Frustration mounts over homeless crisis. County leaders say they need more money. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article160845249.html. Accessed June 2020.

Gill, C., Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., Vitter, Z., & Bennett, T. (2014). Community-oriented policing to reduce crime, disorder and fear and increase satisfaction and legitimacy among citizens: A systematic review. *Journal of Experimental Criminology, 10*(4), 399-428.

Hinkle, J. C., Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., & Petersen, K. (2020). Problem-oriented policing for reducing crime and disorder. *Campbell Systematic Reviews, 16*(2), e1089.

Hipple, N. K. (2016). Policing and homelessness: Using partnerships to address a cross system issue. *Policing, 11*(1), 14-28.

Kelling, G. L., & Bratton, W. (1998). Declining crime rates: Insiders views of the New York City story. *Journal of Criminal Law and Criminology, 89*(1), 775-836.

Kuhn, R., & Culhane, D. P. (1998). Applying cluster analysis to test a typology of homelessness by pattern of shelter utilization: results from the analysis of administrative data. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *26*(2), 207–232.

Lee, B. A., & Schreck, C. J. (2005). Danger on the streets: Marginality and victimization among homeless people. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 48(8), 1055–1081.

Lee, M. R. (2000). Community cohesion and violent predatory victimization: A theoretical extension and cross-national test of opportunity theory. *Social Forces, 79*(2), 683-706.

McNamara, R. H., Crawford, C., & Burns, R. (2013). Policing the homeless: policy, practice, and perceptions. *Policing: An International Journal of Police Strategies & Management, 36*(2), 357-374.

Melnikow, J., Ritley, D., Evans, E., Baiocchi, A., Ciuffetelli, R., Loureiro, S., & Curry, S. (2020). Integrating care for people experiencing homelessness: A focus on Sacramento County. *University of California, Davis. Center for Healthcare Policy and Research*. Retrieved from https://health.ucdavis.edu/chpr/reports/Files/Integrated-Care-for-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-FINAL.pdf

National Law Center (2009). Housing not handcuffs: Ending criminalization of homelessness in American cities. Retried from www.nlchp.org/content/pubs/2009HomesNotHandcuffs1. Pdf. Accessed June 2020.

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. (2014). *Community policing defined*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services. Retrieved from https://cops.usdoj.gov/RIC/Publications/cops-p157-pub.pdf

Police Executive Research Forum. (2018). *Critical Issues in Policing Series: The Police Response to Homelessness.* Washington, DC. Retrieved from https://www.policeforum.org/assets/PoliceResponsetoHomelessness.pdf.

Quigley, J. M., Raphael, S., & Smolensky, E. (2001). Homeless in America, homeless in California. *Review of Economics and Statistics*. 83(1), 37-51

Reese P. (2019). California hospitals see massive surge in homeless oatients. *California Healthline*. Retrieved from https://californiahealthline.org/news/california-hospitals-see-massive-surge-in-homeless-patients/ Accessed June 2020.

Sabalow, R., & Moleski, V., (2019, September). 'What diluted sewage looks like.' American River in Sacramento tainted with feces. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/sacramento-tipping-point/article234440612.html. Accessed June 2020.

Sampson, R. J., & Lauritsen, J. L. (1990) Deviant lifestyles, proximity to crime, and the offender-victim link in personal violence. *Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency,* 27(1), 110-139.

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

Shapiro, G. K., Cusi, A., Kirst, M., O'Campo, P., Nakhost, A., & Stergiopoulos, V. (2015). Co-responding Police-Mental Health Programs: A Review. *Adm Policy Mental Health, 42*(5), 606-620.

Snow, D. A., Baker, S. G., & Anderson, L. (1989). Criminality and homeless men: An empirical assessment. *Social Problems 36*(5), 532-549.

Snow, D. A., & Anderson, L. (1993). *Down on their luck: A study of homeless street people*. Univ of California Press.

Snow, D. A., & Mulcahy, M. (2001). Space, politics, and the survival strategies of the homeless. American Behavioral Scientist, 45, 149–169.

Stuart, F. (2015). On the streets, under arrest: Policing homelessness in the 21st century. *Sociology Compass, 9*(11), 940-950.

U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). Financial characteristics: Sacramento County, CA. 2013-2017. *American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates*. Washington, D.C.: Author.

Vitale, A. S. (2008). City of Disorder: How the Quality of Life Campaign Transformed New York Politics. New York: New York, University Press.

Wilson, J. Q., & Kelling G. L. (1982). Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety. *Atlantic Monthly* 249(3): 29–38.

Weisburd, D., Telep, C. W., Hinkle, J. C., & Eck, J. E. (2010). Is problem-oriented policing effective in reducing crime and disorder: Findings from Campbell Systemic Review. *Criminology and Public Policy, 9*(1), 139-172.

Wolf, J. P., Baiocchi, A., & Argüello, T. (2018). Child maltreatment reporting in the general population: Examining the roles of community, collective efficacy, and adverse childhood experiences. *Child abuse & neglect, 82*, 201-209.

Yoon-Hendricks, A. (2019, September). The American River Parkway is filled with your trash. Help clean it up this Saturday. *Sacramento Bee*. Retrieved from https://www.sacbee.com/news/local/article235276022.html. Accessed June 2020.

Zillow Research (2019). U.S. Rents Continue to Rise as For-Sale Inventory Dries Up. Retrieved from https://www.zillow.com/research/u-s-rents-continue-to-rise-as-for-sale-inventory-dries-up-october-2019-market-report-25987.

Appendix A: Calls for Service Analysis

Consistent with a data-driven, problem-oriented policing model, the SPI-HOT pilot was expected to have an impact on reducing calls for service within the hot spots targeted by deputies. However, the deputies were deployed multiple times over the course of the intervention, and in some cases were deployed to areas that had previously been designated as "control" areas for the purposes of this analysis.

Under such conditions, one strategy to measure the effect of an intervention is a fixed-effects analysis, in which homelessness-related calls for service within each "hot spot" are compared with calls within that same hot spot at different times. By choosing hot spots to which deputies were deployed in Phase 1, Phase 2, and in neither phase, it is possible to distinguish time trends that affected calls for service in all spots from reductions in calls for service that occurred only while the SPI-HOT team was present.

Appendix Table 1: Results from Fixed Effects Regression of Calls for Service on SPI-HOT Team Deployment

	Regression Coefficient (Standard Error)
SPI-HOT deputies present	-3.47 (2.33)
Monthly trend	-.23 (.22)
Constant	26.96 (1.65)
N	216 (6 "hot spots" x 36 months per spot)

This table shows that hot spots had, on average, 3.5 fewer homelessness-related calls for service in months when the SPI-HOT team was active in that area, after accounting for time trends impacting all hot spots.

These results are not statistically significant, meaning the changes in calls for service could have occurred by chance alone. However, with only two years of data and six spots under consideration (three spots to which teams were deployed during Phases 1 and 2, and three hot spots serving as control areas), it was very unlikely that a statistically-significant effect would be found. Regardless of statistical significance, this analysis should be seen as supporting the analyses in the main body of this report, which suggests – but does not prove – that calls for service decreased in areas where the SPI team was active.

Appendix B: List of Crime Types

The following definitions were used to categorize crimes as property crimes or quality of life crimes, for the analyses of crimes presented in Section 5.

Property Crimes

Burglary report (vehicle)
Stolen vehicle recovery
Failure to Prevent Fire from Spreading
Theft of Elder/Dependent Adult
Damage/Etc. Property to Violate Civil Rights
Mal Set/Etc. Fire Prop/Etc.
Arson (any)
Causing Fire (any)
Attempt/Aid/Counsel/Procure Arson
Attempt/ Burglary
Burglary (business, residence, vehicle, shoplifting)
Damage Jail/Prison/Property (Over $400)
Possess/Etc. Burglary Tools
Attempted Theft
Theft (any amount)
Grand Theft (any amount or type)
Petty Theft
Possession of Stolen Property
Receive/Etc. Known Stolen Property
PC 496(B) Dealer/Etc. Not Determine Ownership: Stolen Property

PC 496(D) 496 Pc:Stolen Property
PC 496(D) Attempt to Commit 496 Pc:Stolen Property
PC 496(D) Attempt to Commit 496 Pc:Stolen Propertyf
Possession of a stolen motor vehicle
Alteration on Gas Meter to Steal Gas
Unlawfully Obtaining Utility Services W/O Paying
Personate to Get Money/Property [any amount]
Obtain Money/Etc. By False Pretenses [any amount]
Present/Etc. False/Etc. Insurance Claim for Payment
Forcible Entry: Property Damage
PC 666 Petty Theft W/Prior Jail Term for Specific Offenses
Mail Theft/Etc.
Motor vehicle theft
Tamper with Vehicle
Hit and Run
Throw Substance at Vehicle

Quality of Life

Trespassing on private property
Female in male restroom
Damaging Park Property
Obstruction Sidewalk/Ped Pathway/ Public road right of way
Illegal Camping
Bridge Jumping
Public Consumption of Marijuana
Viol Curfew - 2200 To Dawn (Minors)
Trespass on Private Property
In Park where permit needed
Male in Female Restroom
Unlawful Poss. Of Open Container in Park
Unlawful Smoking in Park
Unlawful Minor Poss. Of Open Container in Park
Open Fire Prohibited
No person ignite/maintain or use fire
No fires in can, box purpose of garbage disposal

No Charcoal fire except in picnic area
Unleashed animal in Park
Vehicle in Restricted Area
Violation of Park Hours After Dark
Possession of Unauthorized Shopping Cart
Unauthorized use of Shopping Cart other than originally intended
Urinate/Defecate in Public Place
Trespass on Private Property
Trespass on after being notified to leave
Aggressive soliciting in public place
Soliciting on a median strip
Prohibited Loitering
No Loitering: create a danger breach of peace
No Loitering: disturb/annoy comfort/repose of any one
No Loitering: Obstruct free passage of pedestrians/veh

No Loitering: remain on business prem after hours w/out consent
No Loitering: Remain on private property w/out consent
Possession of Open Container in Parking Lot
Driving on levee, canal bank unless have permission
Riding Bicycle Under Influence of Alcohol And/or Drugs

Red or Stop, Vehicle Stop at Limit Line or Cross Walk
Disobey Red Traffic Signal
Ride A Bicycle on Wrong Side of Roadway
Changing lane/straddling - nonuse of designated lane to keep slow traffic moving
Truancy