


5-2010

Displacement or diffusion: A secondary analysis of the Las Vegas Safe Village Initiative

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DISPLACEMENT OR DIFFUSION: A SECONDARY ANALYSIS
OF THE LAS VEGAS SAFE VILLAGE INITIATIVE

by

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Bachelor of Arts
University of Nevada Las Vegas
2003

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
Of the requirements for the

Master of Art Degree in Criminal Justice
Department of Criminal Justice
Greenspun College of Urban Affairs

Graduate College
University of Nevada Las Vegas
May 2010



THE GRADUATE COLLEGE

We recommend the thesis prepared under our supervision by

Daniel Duane Swanson

entitled

Displacement or Diffusion: A Secondary Analysis of the Las Vegas Safe Village Initiative

be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Master of Arts in Criminal Justice

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May 2010

ABSTRACT

**Displacement or Diffusion: A Secondary Analysis
Of the Las Vegas Safe Village Initiative**

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Police initiatives have been implemented by many agencies in an attempt to curtail growing crime rates. The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department implemented the “Safe Village Initiative” to address this issue in west Las Vegas. This deterrence based model reduced calls for service in the target area with a diffusion of benefits to the surrounding neighborhoods.

The current study will analyze two research questions pertaining to the “Safe Village Initiative”. The first will assess the possibility that a displacement of crime occurred as a result of the treatment. The second research question will address whether, if no displacement occurred, there was an unintended diffusion of crime benefit to the surrounding neighborhoods. Data were obtained from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department and were analyzed for assessment.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department who allowed me to assess their data in conducting this research. I would like to thank my thesis committee for all of their assistance. I would like to thank Dr. William Sousa along with Dr. Randall Sheldon, Dr. Tamara Madensen and Dr. Anna Lukemeyer for numerous hours spent assisting with questions and concerns.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Growing gang activity, coupled with the ease of attaining legal handguns, has attracted many young people into a life of violence. Police agencies, and their accompanying reactive response to these occurrences, continued to watch as victimization continued. Despite the fact that crime has been declining in recent years, it remains a persistent problem for police agencies. The police therefore should engage in proactive initiatives to make sure that the crime rate continues to go down. New strategies were developed to address these issues. Police initiatives were implemented across the country in an effort to deter crime, rather than wait for it to happen. The idea was to implement a proactive approach to policing, focusing on a goal of reducing calls-for-service. Deterrence style approaches had been used by police agencies for over a century and the majority of agencies incorporated some form of strategy aimed at proactive measures. Most notable was the New York “Quality of Life” initiative, which was implemented based on its accompanying claim of crime reduction (Kelling & Sousa, 2001).

One such initiative has taken place in Las Vegas Nevada called, “The Safe Village Initiative” (SVI). The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department developed a strategy involving community leaders and rehabilitated gang members. The goal was to educate possible offenders at critical times during crises events. The strategy, utilizing heightened enforcement, resulted in a reduction in calls-for-service in the targeted area. This collaborative approach met the needs of this community at a time when violent

crimes were on the rise and policy makers understood that the days of being reactive were over. An aggressive approach was necessary and the results seemed promising.

Despite the success of such programs like SVI, one potential complication involves displacement. Displacement is the idea that when employing rigorous police strategies in a confined area, offenders relocate or change modus operandi to avoid attention. This is often in close proximity to the target area or just out of reach of the treatment. Opponents of initiatives argue that time and efforts are wasted with no real reduction in criminal behavior. The belief is that calls-for-service continue to pour into dispatch centers, only around the corner from their previous locations. A false reduction in crime is correlated to the treatment in the target area at the cost of increasing Calls-for-Service in surrounding neighborhoods. This is considered spatial displacement or geographical displacement, (Clarke & Eck, 2003).

In opposition to the above, (Clarke & Weisburd, 1994), find that crime is reduced in accompanying areas of concentration creating the phenomenon of “diffusion.” Diffusion is the unintended consequence of decreasing crime in surrounding areas to the treatment, based on the implementation of proactive policing in a target area. It appears to proponents of initiatives that a ripple effect occurs to adjoining neighborhoods. Dispersion of offenders away from the target dilutes the actors across all geographic borders.

The purpose of this study is to address the issues of displacement and diffusion. This paper re-examines the SVI initiative and corresponding statistical data. The first part discusses SVI in more detail followed by the methods used to examine them. A closer look will allow for further scrutiny on a much politicized topic.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

Police departments transitioned away from the reactive approach and into a proactive mode decades ago (Kelling & Moore, 1988). Starting in the 1980's, most police agencies began to place stronger emphasis on proactive policies. Agencies realized the urgency for officers to identify and isolate offenders before serious crime occurred. The idea was to focus police resources on more specific targets. The goal was to reduce or dilute the offender pool by managing minor offenses.

One example of proactive policing is NYPD's "Order Maintenance Policing", based on the "Broken Windows" (Wilson & Kelling, 1982) philosophy. Under the Bratton administration, a great deal of focus and attention was given to areas within the city that were considered disorderly and plagued with escalating crime rates. The idea was to manage minor offenses, thus limiting opportunities for more serious crimes (Skogan, 1990).

A new style of policing arose out of this heightened enforcement. It involved the community and peer role models. In an attempt to reduce crimes in neighborhoods, closer scrutiny by the police demanded a partnership with those in the community driven by the desire to take back ownership from criminals. These police-citizen contacts reduced crime (Kelling & Moore, 1988). This partnership allowed respected community leaders to have direct access to the police department in return for highly needed intelligence on crimes and criminals in these areas.

This partnership flourished and crime trended downward as a result. This new relationship allowed information to be traded and a more efficient targeting of behavior

was initiated. The totality of information regarding both the offender and the characteristics leading to the victim, allowed for a more appropriate response to the issue at hand (Goldstein, 1990). The progression of the community role in policing led to a two-pronged approach targeting violent behavior. This “pulling levers” strategy (Weisburd & Braga, 2006) involved heightened police scrutiny coupled with community working groups reaching out to the targeted audience. The community leaders would strengthen and reinforce the clear and expected standard for behavior. This idea drove the engine on many police departments’ proactive initiatives. Proactive strategies were developed to address the growing crime rates and initiatives were implemented. The initiatives that follow produced positive results with reductions in violent crimes along with incorporating the assistance of the community. As a result of the initiatives, many researchers began to ask questions of unintended consequences. Did the proactive approach only move the crime offenders to new locations creating displacement, or was there a diffusion of crime benefits associated to the initiative?

Initiatives

The “pulling levers” intervention strategy began to evolve during the 1990s. A key element to “pulling levers” is the delivery of a message from community leaders, in an effort to deter possible violators. These community leaders target the audience and warn them of possible consequences based on their actions (Braga, 2005). This idea spread rapidly across the country with cities implementing the tactics in an effort to address the escalating crime problem. One notable initiative implemented in Boston Massachusetts coined, “Operation Cease Fire”, gained notoriety. Richmond Virginia followed suit with a “pulling levers” tactic that was similar called “Project Exile”.

Chicago and Los Angeles continued this template with an “Operation Ceasefire” and Las Vegas, Nevada with “Safe Village Initiative”.

Operation Ceasefire

The city of Boston Massachusetts in the 1990’s, initiated a response to the growing youth homicide rate. Gang activity continued to recruit young violators at an alarming rate. The focus was placed on the illegal firearms and the ability for minors to attain them. A collaboration of multiple agencies gathered to create a task force that involved the federal, state and local agencies. The goal focused on long term results based on intervention techniques used to persuade gang members away from their activity (Braga et al., 2000). This task force consisted of the Boston Police Department, the Massachusetts Department of Probation and Parole, Office of the Suffolk County District Attorney, Office of the United States Attorney, the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms, Massachusetts Department of Youth Services, Boston School Police, and a whole host of social service gang outreach members attached to the Boston community centers.

“Operation Cease Fire” began with the implementation of two main components. The first was a law enforcement saturation targeting illicit firearms and the traffickers supplying the minors with guns. The second was a mass public message warning any potential violators of the consequences of their actions. This was a deterrent approach to combat the gang violence in the city (Braga et al., 2000).

Operation Cease Fire began in January of 1995. One year later in 1996, the Boston youth homicide rate had declined from 44 in 1995 to 26 in 1996. The rate continued to drop in 1997 an additional 15 (Braga et al., 2000). A post time frame of

June 1, 1996 showed a 63% reduction in the mean monthly number of youth homicide victims from a pre-test mean of 3.5 per month, to a 1.3 per month post test (Braga et al., 2000). This program appeared to exceed the goals set forth in the implementation.

Project Exile

Richmond Virginia was experiencing many of the same crime problems as did Boston. It was considered one of the top five cities in the United States for murder rates. In 1997, the murder rate was 144 with the majority using a firearm in the commission of the crime. Expanding on the ideas used in the Boston initiative, the United States Attorney's office in Richmond created "Project Exile". The focus of project exile was heightened police enforcement directed at ex-felons and their use of firearms in the commission of crimes. If a suspect was charged, the complaint would then be federally prosecuted with the assistance of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms and local authorities. The goal was to execute a swift and severe penalty on violators that had previously been ignored in the state court system. A media campaign was then waged, warning all potential offenders of the high probability of facing federal sanctions for their actions (McGarrell, 2005).

The post test results showed a large decrease in violent crimes. According to the United States Attorney Office for the Eastern District of Virginia (1999), 287 criminals were arrested during this initiative. The rate of felons using firearms was cut in half, giving police managers a positive template for future initiatives.

Los Angeles Cease Fire

The gang violence was not exclusive to the east coast. The city of Los Angeles was experiencing an alarming escalation of violence by youth gangs, and their past

efforts to thwart the actions seemed futile. The post results of the Boston model showed promising results and it was quickly used as a template to begin proactive policing aimed at youth gang violence. Los Angeles adopted the heightened media message of deterrence, but attached a menu of “sticks” and “carrots” to the initiative. The idea of “sticks” was to warn violators of the consequences facing the gang members if they proceeded to commit violent infractions. The “carrots” were the prevention component aimed at showing the youth an alternative lifestyle. It was believed that this early intervention by community leaders would persuade them away from street crime and the possible incarceration into the state prison system. The Los Angeles Police Department saturated the Boyle Heights area that consisted of its highest crime areas. Targeted areas showed an overall 37% reduction compared to 24% in the remainder of the Boyle Heights areas. The treatment showed significant positive effects.

Safe Village Initiative

The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department in February of 2007, implemented one such proactive police strategy. This initiative, which is the focus of this current study, was labeled, “Safe Village”. It was focused in west Las Vegas in a high density neighborhood known for a large number of violent crimes. The year prior to the initiative resulted in 283 illegal shootings and 139 calls-for-service involving a person with a gun. The initiative involved collaboration from many social networks combined with law enforcement agencies. The Safe Village Initiative involved four key components or teams which were directed by a leader in each. The response component involved a former gang member turned pastor that had direct ties to the community. He would respond to violent events within 72 hours and demonstrate his outrage towards the

occurrence and preach the need to refrain from retaliation. The outreach component involved a Clark County gang specialist that acted as a mentor developing a trust with members of the community. The trauma team acted as the bridge for intervention. They assisted the mentor in gaining access to victims of violence and several locations that previously were inaccessible to anyone but family and law enforcement. Sustainment dealt with program functioning which received oversight by an employee of the city of Las Vegas with the responsibilities of providing funding mechanisms and points of entry for anyone needing assistance as a result of violent events.. The response is the reactive approach where the outreach is proactive and guided by mentors. The goal was to intervene at critical times in order to direct future actions. The initiative resulted in a significant reduction in calls-for-service, (Radtke, 2007). Radtke found significant correlations in violent crime reductions based on the strategies employed. The time frame was one year prior to the treatment in February of 2006, to one year after treatment which concluded in January of 2008.

Table 1. Safe Village Initiative Strategies

	Directed Initiative	Jurisdiction/ Working Group	Enforcement	Message	Outreach	Community Mobilization
SVI	Violence	Specific Beat Sector (We & W6)/ Policing, Probation and Parole, Community Agencies	SVI Team Created, Identified & Cracked Down on “Problem Houses”	“Stop the Violence” Fliers	Outreach workers, Faith Based Leaders	Distribute Anti-violence literature, Host events, Response to Violent Events

Displacement and Diffusion

Critics of crime control initiatives often believe that a saturation of officers in problem areas will not necessarily reduce crime. In fact, opponents often believe that the crime is not eliminated or reduced just relocated (Sherman, 1990). This is referred to as displacement- an “alteration of criminal activity as a consequence of preventative efforts” (Gabor, 1981). Accordingly, offenders will attempt to circumvent the pressure placed upon them by the heightened scrutiny. The belief is that implementing a police strategy that only moves the crime from one location to another serves no purpose. Money and resources are used with no clear advantage to the public.

There are five different types of displacement discussed in the literature, (Clarke & Eck, 2003). Researchers (Hakim & Rengert, 1981) examined these five categories and divided them into types based on specific criteria. *Temporal Displacement* is the process of adjusting times to avoid capture. Certain crimes that were routinely committed in the evening hours would be changed to the morning thus reducing scrutiny. This can also be the result of a “postponement” of action, awaiting a more productive time frame to avoid capture or recognition. *Target* displacement is switching the object of offending. This can be as simple as selecting a new target. Many times a concentration of victimization directed towards one class brings on unwanted attention thus resulting in a change of desired victims. *Tactical* is the changing of procedures in order to adapt to the growing pressure. This changing of methods is a learning scale for offenders who adapt their techniques in order to be more productive and successful at flying under the radar. Most violators of law attempt to remain hidden, but initiative policing attempts to flush them into the open. Changing the methods of offending is a logical result in the attempt to

avoid incarceration. The most widely recognized type of displacement is that of *geographical* or *spatial* displacement where the offender relocates to a different area. The remaining displacement type is *crime type*. This type of displacement involves the perpetrator changing the crimes they commit based on the pressure placed on their previous crime type. Previous studies focused on the economic system of costs and benefits (Palmer, 1977) and the desire based on these incentives to adapt but not cease the activity. One similar study (Vold, 1979) found that responses to pressure only deflected rather than eliminate a particular crime pattern. As the gold rush attracted prospectors, crime opportunities for success attract more perpetrators as noted by (Barr & Pease, 1990) who found another type labeled “perpetrator displacement.” This is the result of enormous opportunity for offenders thus creating an influx of business opportunity for individuals preying on victims.

Displacement is a concept frequently used by critics of opportunity-reducing measures. The problem is the lack of empirical evidence to support such claims. When researchers attempt to analyze spatial displacement, it is extremely difficult to say with certainty just where the offenders relocated. Many assumptions are made lacking empirical evidence to support such claims. Researchers have a difficult task of measuring such occurrences based on the multitude of forms exhibited (Hakim & Rengert, 1981). They do not argue that results in the target area produce reductions of certain crimes, only that actors move to different locations. The belief is that spatial displacement occurs. The overwhelming majority of research has focused on the target area and the treatment administered, leading to wide speculation on the surrounding areas. Past researchers have focused in on a zone or close proximity to the treatment (Green, 1996; Weisburd &

Green, 1995). Most metropolitan cities have a concentration of low income developments that are huddled together in different geographical areas. Implementation of treatment in one area that displays economic hardships might be surrounded by high income residential areas with little in common to the treatment area. Projects or economically depressed neighborhoods can be geographically separated by miles of terrain resulting in the blinders being placed on researchers “looking in front of the hood and not seeing the roadway.” There have been several criticisms about this kind of displacement (Barr & Pease, 1990), but research is lacking with specific focus on the displacement itself. The vast majority of displacement theory commentary has been due to the research on data specific to the initiative itself and not directly on the displacement or diffusion (Weisburd, 2006). Analysis of the evidence suggests that displacement is not inevitable.

Research recently found that correlations can be drawn to a positive crime reduction in the surrounding areas to the target treatment administered by the police initiatives (Weisburd & Green, 1995). This “diffusion of benefits” suggests that areas close to the treatment receive positive results in crime reduction without the heightened police scrutiny brought on by initiative policing. Proponents of such hot spots police strategies claim that crime is concentrated in certain locations (Sherman & Weisburd, 1995). Analysis of these hot spots reveal statistically significant mean effect size for these targeted areas (Braga, 2005), and research suggests an overall reduction in calls for service in these hot spots areas in comparison to the control area. This suggests an overall reduction in calls for service based on police intervention strategies. Researchers claim that crime reduction occurs, although unintended, and it ripples through

neighboring locations. These strategies develop a “Diffusion of Crime Control Benefits” that only strengthens the arguments for implantation of pro-active police strategies, (Clarke & Weisburd, 1994). Many other scholars have noted these findings in their research (Caeti, 1999; Hope, 1994; Weisburd & Green, 1995). Weisburd (2006) conducted research by means of observational measures. His research involved two sites with substantial street-level crime that were monitored during an experimental period. Two neighboring areas were selected as “catchment areas” to assess whether displacement or diffusion occurred. His study supported the position that the most likely outcome of focused crime prevention efforts is a diffusion of crime control benefits. Social observations (Park & Burgess, 1921; Reiss, 1971; Sampson & Raudenbush, 1991) have been found to be very effective. Crimes that happen on the streets like prostitution and drug dealing can be empirically studied and measured by observational data. However, it is extremely expensive and time exhaustive. Most methodologies that have used observational instruments and code books, concentrated on the target area and corresponding initiative, rather than focusing on surrounding areas. A larger problem is the fact that while narrowing in on the locations proximate to the treatment, researchers can lose focus of possible displacement or diffusion effects. Predators are not limited to borders and have the ability to be mobile. Looking too close to the initiative and treatment area can lead a researcher to assumptions not backed up by empirical evidence.

The controversial nature of police initiatives has researchers looking for empirical evidence to support claims of viable programs. The past research has shown the inconsistent findings and many admit to the varying findings as Novak stated (1999):

“there is some reason to believe these efforts by police can displace crime to contiguous areas, or conversely, these areas can experience a diffusion of benefits”. It is apparent that both sides of the issue are given validity which only convolutes the issue. This research first must acknowledge that it is extremely difficult to detect either displacement or diffusion. The reason is the potential for diverse manifestations (Weisburd and Green, 1995b). Fear of peer review and possible scrutiny should never sway research into critical skepticism of police initiatives and their possible consequences. Political bias should be eliminated and valid empirical evidence should be sought after.

CHAPTER 3

METHODS

This study will examine potential displacement and diffusion from SVI. To do so, two areas of Las Vegas will be examined to determine evidence of displacement or diffusion. The Nora area, which includes sector beats in close proximity to the Las Vegas Strip, as depicted in appendix I, and the areas surrounding SVI, as depicted in appendix I. The Safe Village Initiative is concentrated in an economically depressed area, prone to violent crime. The Safe Village Initiative is in a geographically small area, and many residents comprise high levels of unemployment, large minority make-up and highly visible street narcotic activity. Its location is divided by freeway traffic and largely dense surface street activity. Its location is within walking distance of the downtown area of Las Vegas making pedestrian traffic commonplace unlike more suburban or rural areas.

Because of this study and its concentration on the SVI target area, secondary data have been attained from the Nora area within the Las Vegas Metropolitan Departments sector beat locations, depicted in appendix I. The Nora area was chosen as the site to compare statistical information based on characteristics, not on geographical proximity to the target area. The Nora area is one of the largest calls for service areas for the LVMPD consisting of large narcotics activity and prone to violent crime. This location is approximately 8 miles from the Safe Village Initiative target location, making any re-location of offenders by foot unlikely. Any movement between the two locations must be assumed to be by means of vehicle conveyance. The Nora area is prone to narcotic street activity with high numbers of cocaine arrests which is similar to that of the target area. Many of the street narcotics arrests in the target (William) area indicate addresses and

previous arrest data linking many suspects to the Nora area. The Nora area is policed without the guidance of a specific initiative, only numerous saturation points driven by key events. There is a heightened scrutiny by patrol officers at all intersections and developments within the area but police action is undertaken without specific guidance. The analysis between these two areas allows for a control group (Nora) and the target area given the treatment (William). The analysis is not a randomized control group-rather it is chosen based on similar characteristics.

Secondary data were received from the surrounding sector beats of SVI from the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department to analyze calls for service in regards to significant fluctuations in the time periods both prior and post implementation of SVI. The SVI target area involved the W5 and W6 sector beats within the Bolden Area Command. The surrounding sector beats are W4 and U2, which are in Bolden Area Command, along with sector beats B1, A1, A2, and C1, which are in the Downtown Area Command. Calls for service were analyzed both pre-treatment and post-treatment.

Also, data were obtained for the entire LVMPD reporting areas, thus allowing for the comparisons of crime trends valley wide.

Because of the enormous data set, key calls for service were used to encompass the full analysis of violent crimes that might not have been captured in the Radtke (2006) analysis of SVI. While violent calls for service categorized as 413-person with a gun, 413a- person with a knife, 415a assault with a gun, 420- homicide, 420z-attempted homicide, and 434-illegal shooting, many more can be added to broaden the data base and further the analysis. Radtke (2006) selected the above based on the violent nature of the offense. In this current paper, calls-for- service were broadened to encompass a

broader spectrum of possible violence related events. The following were selected and defined as: 405-suicide, 407-robbery, 407b-robbery with other deadly weapon, 413b-other deadly weapon, 415b-battery with other deadly weapon, 415c-drive by shooting, 426-sexual assault, 427-kidnap. The 405(suicide) call-for-service was added due to the violent and common firearm assisted method involved. It is understood that passive methods are sometimes used in this endeavor but due to the death and resulting coroners cause of death to be undetermined for lengthy time periods, the call was involved in a violent event needing to be added to the data. The disposition program that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police department uses in crime analysis allows for the patrol officer to reclassify an event in the system at the conclusion of a call to better describe the event. If and when the event unfolds to better describe the violence directed, the officer would reclassify and clear the event to a more specific event such as robbery or sexual assault. These two calls are obviously violent in nature and the need to incorporate such data is crucial to future analysis.

Secondary data was also collected using the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Departments calls-for-service involving property events. Research into this area will attempt to draw answers to questions of crime type displacement or the changing of violent crimes by offenders to property crimes. Using the data, calls for service were selected due to the non-violent, property offense nature. The following calls-for-service are defined as: 406-burglary, 411-stolen motor vehicle, 414-grand larceny, and 414a-petit larceny.

The final data set provided by the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police department was calls-for-service in relation to pro-active, self generated activity by the patrol officer to

analyze correlations to either reductions or increases in calls irrespective of any initiative generated. The premise for many initiatives is the heightened influx of patrol scrutiny towards potential offenders. The following calls-for-service are the only self generated calls defined as: 467-vehicle stop, 468-person stop (see Table 2) highlighted.

Table 2. Result of Total calls-for-service comparison Feb06-Jan08

	Violent	Property	Proactivity
SVI	1622	1095	3959
Surrounding Beats	2927	3380	5814
Comparison Beats	3178	4629	7909
Other LVMPD Beats	45136	103645	807365

A limitation to this data set is the fact that much victimization goes undetected as a result of victims failing to notify police. Therefore, caution will be used when interpreting analyses of violent crimes and property crimes.

Research Question: *Did crime displace spatially from the treatment administered in SVI to surrounding sector beats?*

If displacement occurred as the result of SVI, the average number of calls-for-service in the W4, U2, B1, A1, A2, and C1 areas, which surround the SVI target, during the one year implementation, will be expected to be more than the average number of calls-for-service during the one year period prior to SVI implementation. The displacement would occur proximate geographically to the SVI treatment administered. This type of displacement would be expected based on the heightened enforcement.

Conversely, the average number of calls-for-service in the W4, U2, B1, A1, A2, and C1 areas, which surround the SVI target, during the one year implementation, will be

expected to be less than the average number of calls-for-service during the one year period prior to SVI implementation. This would be a diffusion of benefits resulting in the action taken in the SVI area.

Research Question: *Did criminals displace to an area with similar characteristics not adjacent to the treatment area?*

The average number of calls-for-service in the Nora sector beats during the one year period prior to implementation of SVI, will be expected to be less than the average number of calls-for-service one year following the SVI implementation. The past research has focused on the spatial displacement that may occur in the close proximity to the treatment location. However recent questions have been directed at a displacement to another but similar location far from the initiative treatment. The Nora sector beats are in close proximity to a large tourist source due to the Las Vegas Strip. There is a great deal of pedestrian traffic associated with the casino industry service work force. The area residents comprise a large minority population and high levels of unemployment. Large numbers of arrests are made from street narcotic sales and the drug of choice is that of cocaine. This is similar to the SVI target location. Based on the pedestrian traffic, narcotics activity and steady flow tourist traffic, the two locations appear very similar.

Research Question: *Did criminals change their crime type to avoid scrutiny?*

The assumption is made that offenders when pressured by initiative treatment will substitute their crime type to another. While pressure was placed on the treatment area to reduce violent calls, the property crimes were increasing in frequency. Research focused on the property crimes calls-for-service. The average number of calls-for-service involving property crimes in the W5 and W6 areas should be greater following the one

year implementation, than the average number of calls-for-service during the one year period prior to SVI.

Conversely, the average number of calls-for-service involving property crimes, in the W5 and W6 areas, during the one year implementation, will be expected to be less than the average number of calls-for-service during the one year period prior to SVI resulting in a diffusion of crime benefit.

Research Question: *Was the crime decrease in West Las Vegas indicative of a larger trend in the entire city?*

The average number of calls-for-service in the entire LVMPD jurisdiction during the one year prior to the SVI implementation, compared to the average number of calls-for-service one year after SVI implementation would expect to show a decline city wide. There is a national trend of crime reduction that appears to be occurring. Many researchers believe that undue credit is placed upon the treatment outcomes, when the crime rate was already in a downward trend independently to the treatment administered.

Data collected from The Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department were entered into a database (SPSS) for analysis. Data were analyzed to assess significance in the mean for calls-for-service ($p < .05$).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

Research Question 1

Did crime displace from the treatment administered in SVI to surrounding sector beats?

When accounting for the entire sector beats surrounding the target area of SVI, there is a 14% reduction in violent calls-for-service during the one year after implementation (see Table 3). The data supports the Radtke (2007) study which found a 37.06% reduction in violent calls-for-service during this time period within the SVI beats. By broadening the data set to include 405(suicide), 407(robbery), 407b (robbery with other deadly weapon), 411(stolen motor vehicle), 413b (other deadly weapon), 415b (battery with other deadly weapon), 415c (drive by shooting), 426(sexual assault), and 427(kidnap) this research found a reduction of 30% concurring with the significant findings in the Radtke research in the SVI target area. In the surrounding areas, the t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=3.176$, $p=.020$). Pre SVI is defined by the mean counts of the fifteen calls-for-service per month for one year prior to implementation whereas post SVI is one year following. Table 3 shows the number of calls for service for violent crimes isolated in the target area compared to the surrounding, Nora and remaining portions of the Las Vegas valley.

Table 3. Calls-for-Service for violent crimes Isolated

	SVI	Comparison Beats	Surrounding Beats	Other LVMPD Beats
Feb06-Jan07	954	1584	1570	23639
Feb07-Jan08	668	1594	1357	21497
Total	1622	3178	2927	45136

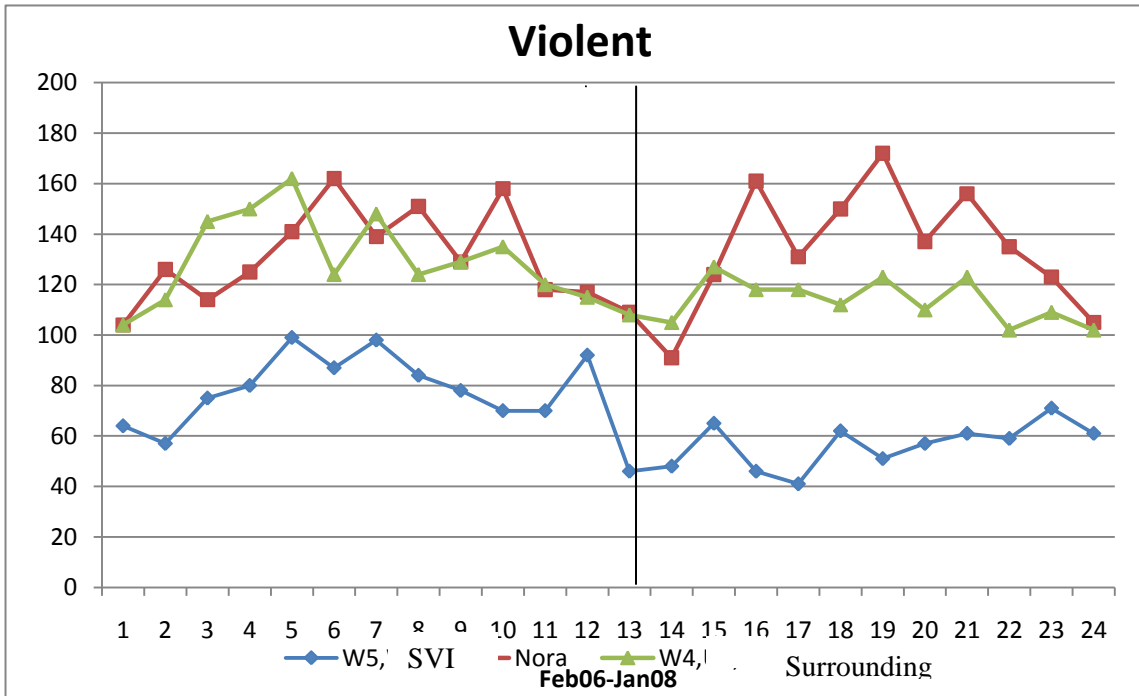
Table 4 depicts the time-series and corresponding percentage change. Figure 1 shows the trend with regards to violent crimes in all areas examined. When isolating the calls-for-service (violent) in the target areas only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant decrease of 29.98% between the pre SVI and post SVI violent calls-for-service ($t=5.157, p=.000$). When isolating the violent calls-for-service the t-test revealed a statistically significant 13.57% reduction between the pre SVI and post SVI violent calls-for-service ($t=3.176, p=.004$).

Table 4. Violent Calls-for-Service: Pre-implementation to post-implementation

	Feb06-Jan07	Feb07-Jan08	Percent Change
SVI	954	668	-29.98% *
Surrounding	1570	1357	-13.57% *
Comparison	1584	1594	+0.63%
Other LVMPD Beats	23639	21497	-9.06%

*Significance = $p < .05$

Figure 1. Time Series of Violent Calls-for-Service



Research Question 2

Did criminals displace to an area with similar characteristics not adjacent to the treatment?

When including a comparison study area several key characteristics were chosen to find as similar study location to that of the treatment area in SVI. When including a comparison area, the Nora sector beats were chosen for their similar traits. Although the area is approximately 6 miles from the treatment area, the research looked to see if spatial displacement away from the target area occurred. Figure 1 depicts the time period of one year following the treatment which resulted in an increase in violent calls-for-service in the Nora areas of 0.63% which is not significant. When isolating the calls-for-service (violent) only in the Nora areas, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a difference

between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t = -.095$, $p = .925$) which is not significant.

Research Question 3

Did criminals change their crime type to avoid scrutiny?

As previously stated, many proponents of displacement believe offenders when pressured will change their crime type. The research looked at the data involving property calls-for-service including: 406(burglary), 414(grand larceny), and 414a (petit larceny) to analyze findings. Isolating the property calls-for-service, as depicted in Table 5, shows the reductions in the time series from pre-implementation to post-implementation.

Table 5. Property Calls-for-Service: Pre-implementation to post-implementation

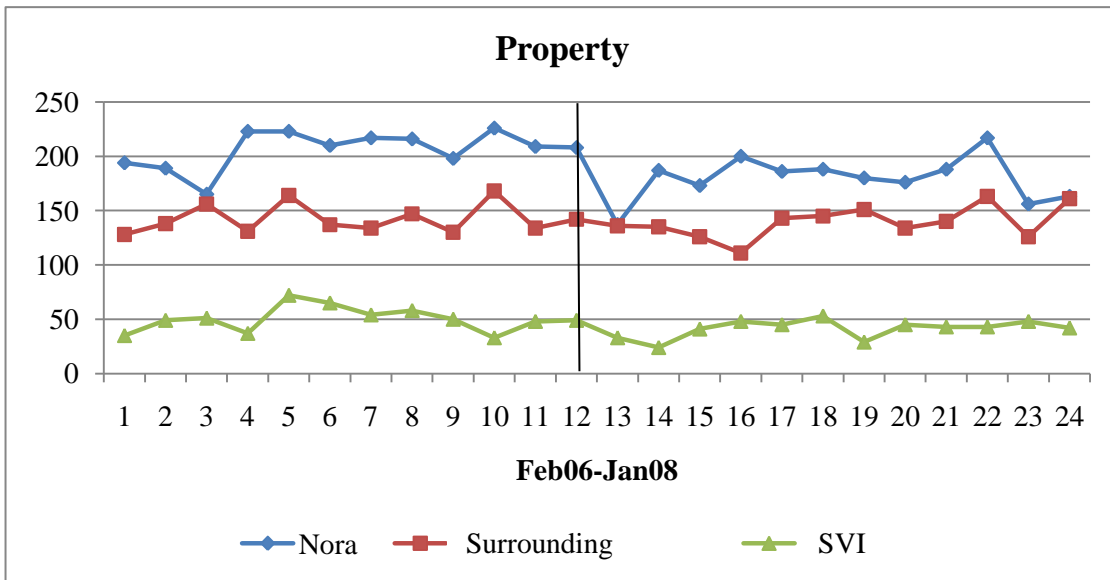
	Feb06-Jan07	Feb07-Jan08	Percent Change
SVI	601	494	-17.80% *
Surrounding	1709	1671	-.22%
Comparison	2478	2151	-13.20% *
Other LVMPD	52733	50912	-3.45%
Beats			

* Significance = $p < .05$

During the time period of one year after the implementation of SVI, there was a significant decrease of 17.80% in calls-for-service involving property crimes in the target area. The surrounding sector beats to the SVI treatment also found a reduction of 2.22% in calls-for-service property crimes, although not statistically significant. However the comparison study location of Nora sector beats displayed a significant reduction during this same time period of 13.20%. In the remaining areas of Las Vegas a reduction in calls-for-service for property calls-for-service reduced 3.45%. When isolating the calls-

for-service (property), in the target area only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant decrease between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=2.156$, $p=.042$). When isolating the calls-for-service (property), in the surrounding areas only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a decrease between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=.546$, $p=.590$), which is not significant. When isolating the calls-for-service (property) in the Nora areas only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant decrease between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=3.46$, $p=.002$).

Figure 2. Time Series for Property Calls-for-Service



Research Question 4

Did crime rates in the entire LVMPD jurisdiction decline or increase?

The entire Las Vegas area, excluding the SVI, surrounding and Comparison areas, were researched to determine if a possible crime trend was occurring. The target area of

SVI accounted for only 1.2% of all calls-for-service. The comparison group or Nora beats accounted for 3.3% while the surrounding beats to the treatment accounted for 3.6% of the calls-for-service. The remainder of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Departments calls-for-service accounted for 91.9% as shown in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Total Frequencies of LVMPD Calls-for-Service

	Frequency	Percent
SVI	32028	1.2
Comparison	88392	3.3
Surrounding	97736	3.6
Other Beats	2486348	91.9

When isolating the violent calls-for-service in the entire rest of the LVMPD jurisdiction, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=2.92$, $p=.008$). It resulted in a decrease of 9.06% for violent calls-for-service city wide which is significant. When isolating the property calls-for-service only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t=1.61$, $p=.121$), which is not significant. Pre SVI is defined by the mean counts of the fifteen calls-for-service per month for one year prior to implementation whereas post SVI is one year following. Figure 3 shows the time-series results for both property and violent calls-for-service during pre-implementation and post-implementation. There was a reduction in property calls-for-service of 3.45% which is significant.

Figure 3. Time Series for Entire Las Vegas Valley

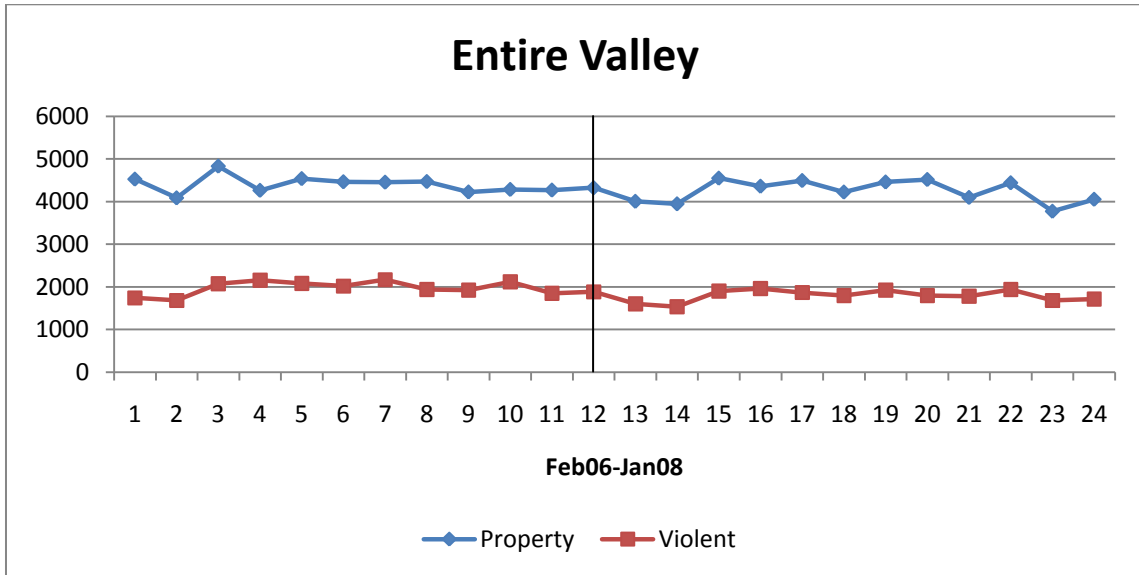


Table 7 depicts the time-series and corresponding percentage change with regard to the proactive nature of officers working the areas. It is apparent that across the LVMPD jurisdiction, a policy of aggressive, proactive patrolling was in effect during this time frame. Significant increases in all study areas were evident. Figure 4 displays the increase of activity across the time series in the Las Vegas Valley compared to the target and surrounding areas.

Table 7. Proactive Calls-for-Service: Pre-implementation to post-implementation

	Feb06-Jan07	Feb07-Jan08	Percent Change
SVI	1850	2109	+12.28%
Surrounding Comparison	2707	3107	+12.87%
Other LVMPD Beats	3126	4783	+34.64%
	369245	438120	+15.72%

When isolating the calls-for-service (proactive) in the target areas only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t = -1.05$, $p = .306$), which is not significant. When isolating the calls-for-service (proactive) in the surrounding areas only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t = -2.32$, $p = .030$). When isolating the calls-for-service (proactive) in the Nora beats only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t = -6.09$, $p = .000$). When isolating the calls-for-service (proactive) in the rest of the Las Vegas valley only, the following is revealed. The t-test revealed a statistically significant difference between the pre SVI and post SVI calls-for-service ($t = -4.36$, $p = .000$).

Figure 4. Time Series for Proactive Calls-for-Service

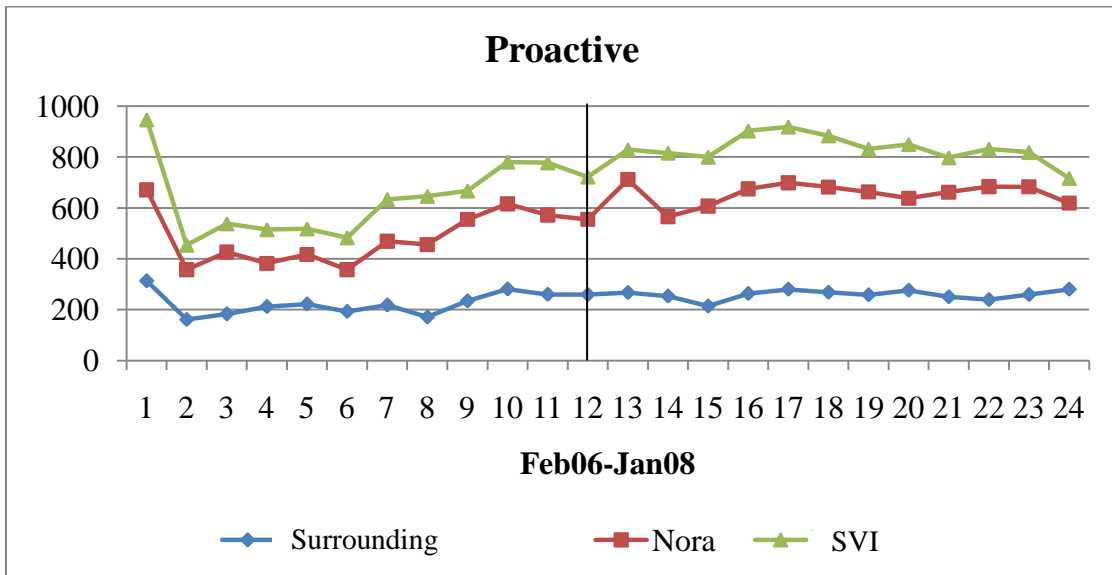


Table 8. Overall Results of Proactivity

	Proactivity	Violent Calls-for-Service	Property Calls-for-Service
SVI	+12%	-30%	-18%
Surrounding Areas	+12%	-14%	-%
Comparison Areas	+35%	+.63%	-13%
Other LVMPD Areas	+16%	-9%	-3%

Table 8 depicts the overall results based on the proactive calls-for-service of patrol officers and the corresponding effect to both property and violent calls-for-service.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

The research presented expanded on the research findings of Radtke (2007). The Safe Village Initiative was an effective mediation that the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department used in reducing violent crimes. The significant reductions in calls-for-service have given the citizens within the target area reason to applaud its success. Previous research findings have had conflicting results; however the research findings on the SVI initiative itself strengthen the argument of its validity. This research expanded the data field used by Radtke and was able to replicate the findings. The time –series shows a 29.98% reduction in the mean monthly number of the fifteen calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 79.50 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 55.67. This analysis suggests that even with the expansion of calls-for-service scrutinized, SVI was associated with a large reduction in calls for violent crimes.

Arguments of displacement tend to focus on the spatial or geographical relocation of offenders, which clearly in Table 2 depicts the contrary. With a reduction of 13.57% in violent calls-for-service in the surrounding areas to the treatment, it can be concluded that no spatial displacement occurred to neighboring communities as a result of heightened police enforcement. The time –series shows a 13.57% reduction in the mean monthly number of the fifteen calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 130.83 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 113.08. Crime did not move around the corner as opponents of initiatives have surmised. In fact, it can be argued that a diffusion of benefits occurred due the significant reduction in these areas. Spatial displacement to a further, comparison location may have occurred. With Table 2 showing an insignificant

0.63% increase in calls-for-service in the Nora areas, when the surrounding areas had evidence of a reduction as well as the remainder of the LVMPD jurisdiction with a reduction, it can be assumed that the comparison area should have sustained a reduction as well. An increase, although insignificant, may be as a result of spatial displacement to this location. It can conversely be stated that no effects of diffusion of benefits occurred to this similar study location with the violent calls-for-service holding consistent during this time period.

Displacement by means of crime type appears unlikely due to the 17.80% reduction in property crimes, as depicted in Table 3. The time –series shows a reduction in the mean monthly number of the four calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 50.08 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 41.17. Offenders did not seem to be changing their crime types based on the lack of a spike or significant increase in any property related offenses. In fact it can be assumed that a diffusion of crime benefits did occur in the property crime reductions as well. Although 2.22% is insignificant, it shows that the surrounding areas to the treatment did not sustain any unintended consequences in property victimization as a result of the initiative treatment. The comparison study area, Nora sector beats, sustained a significant decrease in calls-for-service at 13.20%, for property related crimes, which fails to correlate any empirical evidence to support any claims of displacement. The time –series shows a reduction in the mean monthly number of the four calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 206.50 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 179.25. It would difficult to draw correlations towards a diffusion of benefits, and future studies need to scrutinize possible variables for its positive effects.

The LVMPD data did show findings that any positive effects correlated to positive crime reductions were compounded by a Las Vegas Valley wide reduction in both violent calls-for-service as well as property crimes. A reduction in violent calls at 9.06% occurred in the entire rest of the Las Vegas valley. The time –series shows a reduction in the mean monthly number of the fifteen calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 1969.92 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 1791.42. These data shows a clear reduction in crime that appears to be happening and compounding the effects of the SVI initiative. Property crimes across the valley appear to be dropping but at a far less rate, 3.45%, again showing a reduction in crime rates that cannot be solely attributed to the police initiative. The time –series shows a reduction in the mean monthly number of the four calls-for-service from a pre-test mean of 4394.42 calls-for-service per month to a post-test mean of 4242.67.

An interesting finding by this researcher is the nature of proactivity, self generated by patrol officers in the field. Documentation provided by the LVMPD is based on the 400 codes and the call generated by a dispatch center to a patrol officer. The only data available to analyze the proactive nature is the 467(vehicle stop), and 468(person stop). When officers perform these tactics, the goal is to isolate and identify possible offenders in the area of concern. The profile nature of such strategies is not the focus of this paper, only to identify its possible correlations to any findings. Discretionary and selective authority has been awarded to the field officer in this endeavor, not requiring evenly dispersed scrutiny. Judgment on the part of the officer is crucial to its success. As Table 4 depicts, an increase of 12.28% in police proactivity occurred in the treatment area of SVI. The surrounding areas to the treatment sustained an even larger

12.78% increase with far fewer crime reduction results than the SVI treatment. This finding clearly shows that aggressive policing must be accompanied by other elements that were implemented by the SVI treatment. The study area (Nora) had an increase of 34.64% again showing that as any initiative unfolds, the necessity to compliment with community support is critical. This is a significant increase in police proactivity with minimal results to show and justify the man power consumed. The entire rest of the Las Vegas valley showed an increase of 15.72%. It is clear that police captains in the stations within the LVMPD are incorporating the aggressive tactics ensued in the initiatives like SVI, however the results are limited based on the failure to incorporate other elements of the treatment. However minimal, this could be the resulting variable causing the slight decrease in Calls-for-Service city wide. That needs to be a question asked in future research.

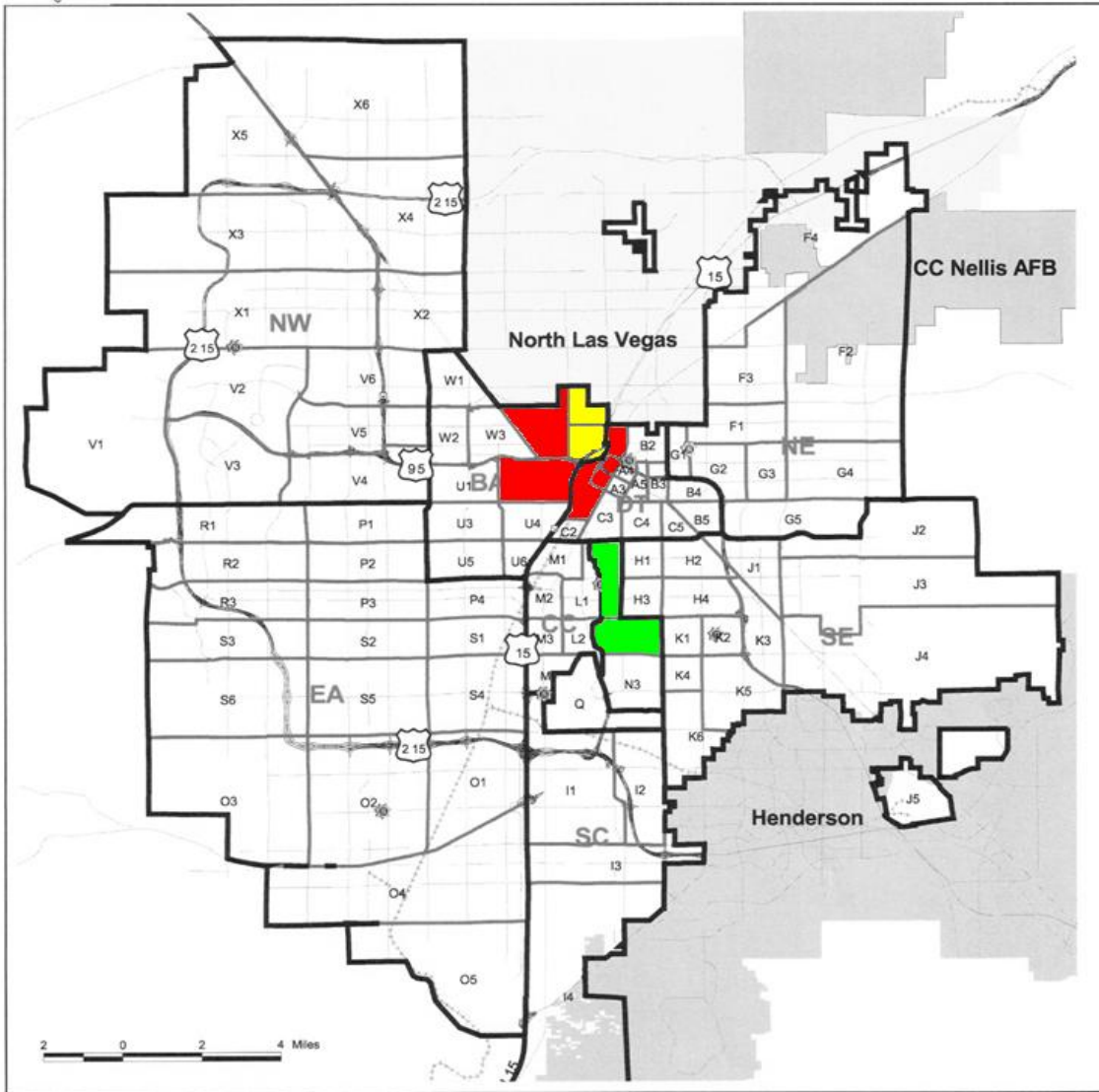
Conclusion

Policy implications for the future must include the continuation of community involvement. It is essential that the mentor component be implemented to increase the probability of success. This secondary analysis found a 30% reduction in calls-for-service related to violence which concurs with the findings of Radtke (2007). Many of the proactive measures were replicated in other areas within the LVMPD jurisdiction with minimal reductions in violent or property calls-for-service. The variable missing was the core component of community ownership and neighborhood assistance. Given the expansion of violent data analyzed with similar findings, it can reasonably be concluded that the SVI template should be replicated in other jurisdictions with future research scrutiny. The manner in which SVI incorporated community support along with multiple

agencies shows significant promise in the fight to reduce calls. This research set out to look at empirical evidence that showed signs of displacement. Spatial displacement did appear to occur in the comparison area based on the entire LVMPD jurisdiction showing a reduction in calls-for-service, whereas, the comparison area showed a minimal increase. A diffusion of benefits did however occur to surrounding areas to the SVI treatment. Communities need to help refine these strategies and add upon the successes.




Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department





**Area Command and Sectors/Beats
Effective November 1, 2008**

DOC maps are produced solely to meet the needs of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department. Please contact the DOC at 828-2281 regarding this or any other products.



SVI (W5, W6) 

Surrounding (W4, U2, C1, A1, A2, B1) 

Comparison (N1, N2) 

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