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# Community Attitudes Regarding Public Safety in Portland's Parkrose Neighborhood

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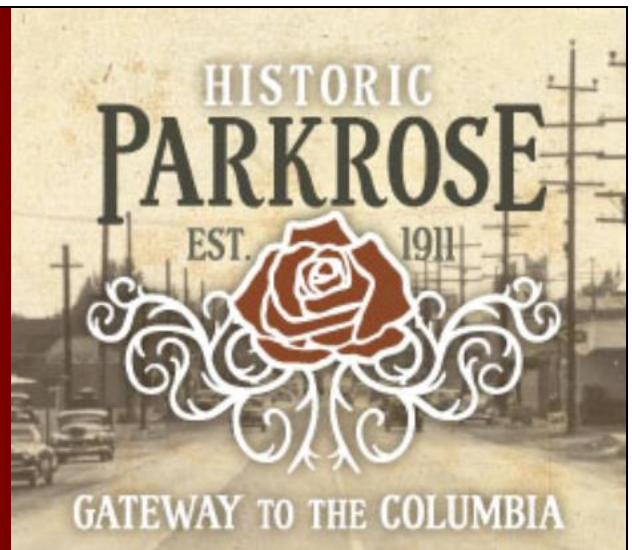
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# Community Attitudes Regarding Public Safety in Portland's Parkrose Neighborhood

**Kris Henning, Portland State University**

**Jason Jones, Portland Police Bureau**

**Christian Peterson, Portland Police Bureau**



## Key Findings

- *Social disorder (e.g., noise, squatters, trespassing, panhandlers, and prostitution) property crime, and drugs/alcohol were the top public safety concerns identified by Parkrose residents completing the online survey.*
- *Respondents to the survey demonstrated a high degree of agreement regarding the areas within their neighborhood that have public safety concerns. This includes the corridors running east to west surrounding NE Sandy Blvd and NE Prescott St.*
- *People from Parkrose who completed the survey feel considerably less safe walking alone in their neighborhood than the average city resident. Moreover, the majority of survey respondents reported that public safety in Parkrose had declined over the past 12 months.*
- *The majority of respondents expressed confidence with the Portland Police and felt the Portland Police treat people in the neighborhood with respect. People felt this could continue to be strengthened through non-investigatory foot patrols, community meetings, and expanded police participation in community events.*

## Introduction

The Portland Police Bureau (PPB) is partnering with Portland State University (PSU) and neighborhood groups to develop new strategies for improving public safety and police-community relations. The current initiative seeks to provide residents with greater voice in where police work in their neighborhood, what problems they address, and how they intervene. We also hope to provide residents, businesses, and community organizations with data they can use to leverage additional resources for improving public safety in their neighborhood.

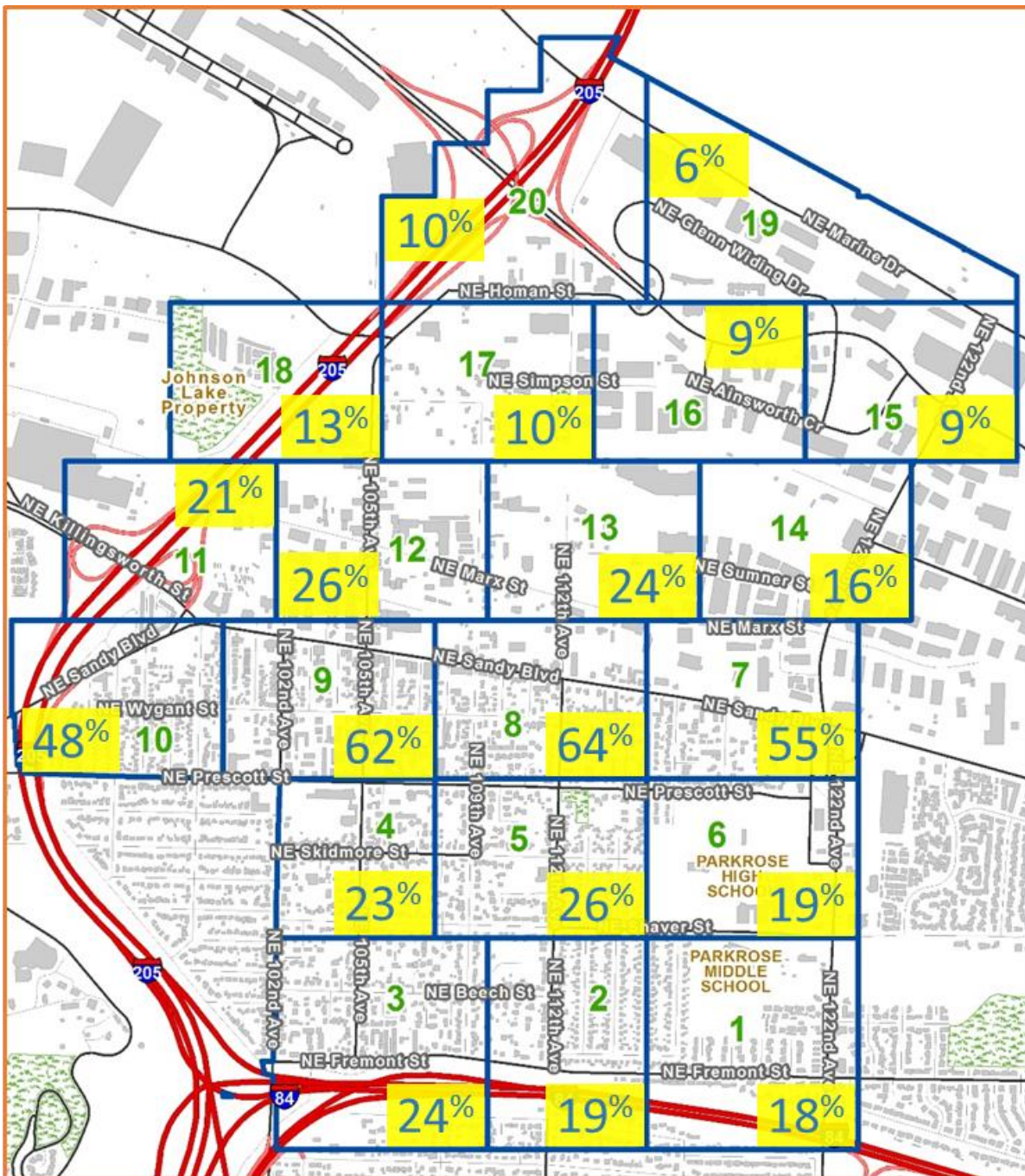
This report focuses on the Parkrose neighborhood. Parkrose is located in the Northeast section of Portland (i.e. North of Burnside Ave. and East of the Willamette River). PSU's [Population Research Center](#) estimates that there were 6,363 residents living in the neighborhood in 2010, a 5.5% increase from 2000 (see full [neighborhood profile](#) for additional details). For additional information on the neighborhood, contact the [Parkrose Neighborhood Association](#).

In July 2016 all households in the Parkrose neighborhood were mailed a letter inviting the adult occupants to participate in an online survey. Additional invitations were delivered in-person by PPB officers and the link to the online survey was in several newsletters and community-oriented websites. The questionnaire asked residents to identify their primary public safety concerns, whether they supported or opposed various actions the city might take in responding to these problems, and for ideas on improving police-community relationships. Three hundred and forty-nine surveys were submitted and analyzed for this report.



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## Neighborhood Map & Areas of Concern



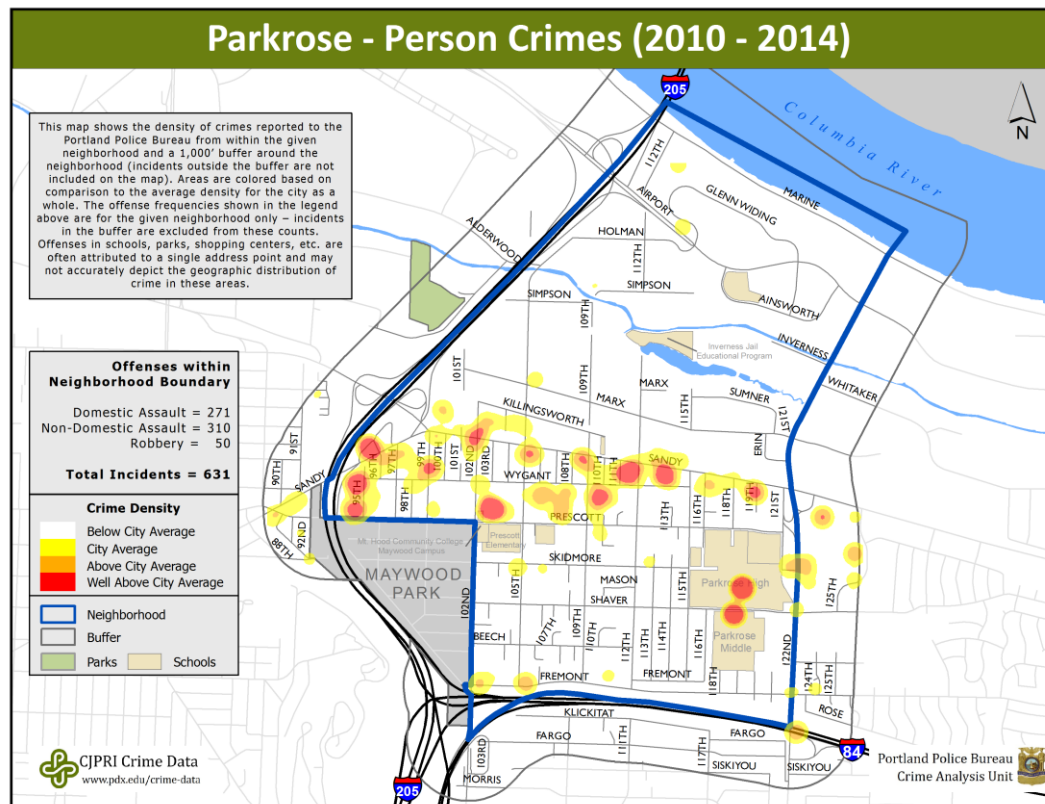
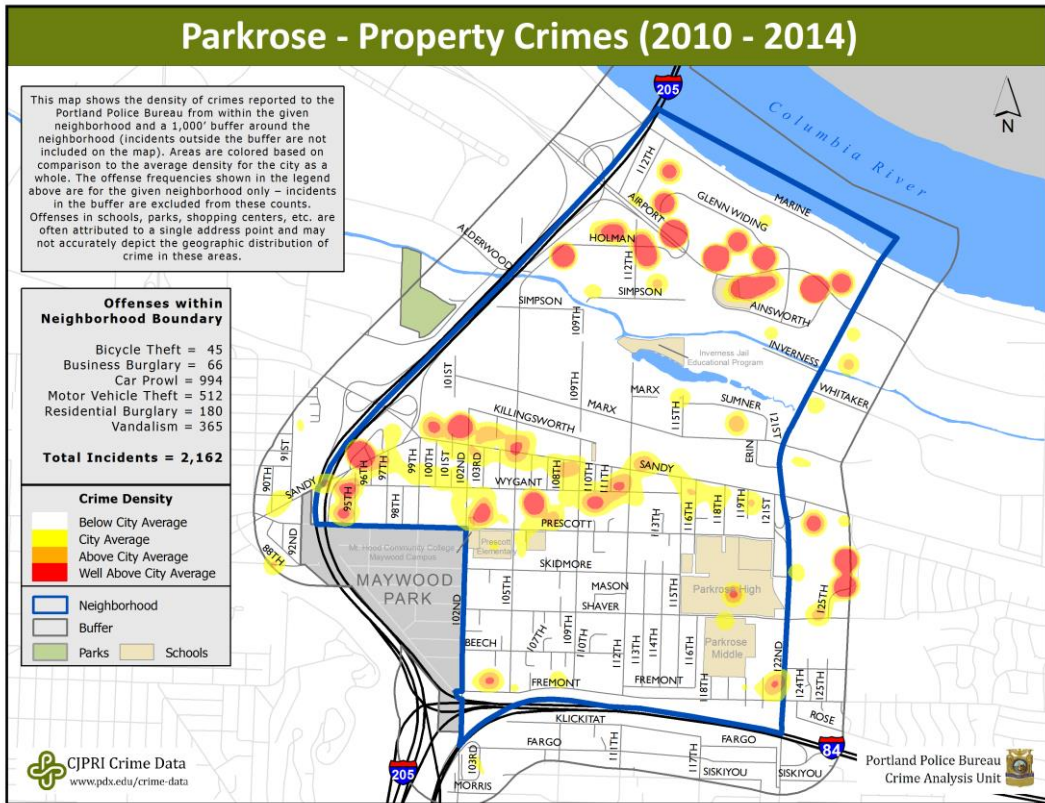
The rough boundaries of the Parkrose neighborhood were mapped for the online survey and divided into 20 distinct areas. These regions are numbered in green text on the map above, from 1 (lower right corner) to 20 (top left). People were asked to ‘click’ with their computer mouse all of the areas where they had public safety concerns. No limit was placed on the number of problem areas they could select in this first question. **Public safety** was defined as “*crime, traffic safety, environmental hazards, etc.*” After this task was completed people were asked to select one location that represented their area of biggest concern.

The yellow boxes (light blue text) on the map above give the percent of survey respondents ‘clicking’ each region to designate it as a location of concern. For example, 18% of the respondents reported they had public safety concerns in area #1 on the map.

Overall, there was a high degree of consensus among respondents regarding the presence of public safety concerns in the corridor between NE Sandy Blvd. and NE Prescott (areas 7, 8, 9 and 10). Area 8 was identified as the location of “most concern” by 27% of the respondents, followed by area 9 (13%) and area 10 (12%).



The residents' perceptions about problem locations in their neighborhood were compared to official crime reports filed by the PPB. The two maps provided below detail the "hotspots" of property (includes bike theft, motor vehicle related thefts, burglaries and vandalism) and person crimes (i.e., assault & robbery) in Parkrose for the years 2010 to 2014. Consistent with the survey responses, the corridor between NE Sandy Blvd and NE Prescott accounted for the majority of hotspots for person crimes and a large number of the high density locations for property crime. The one exception noted between the two sources of data was the high number of property offenses happening in the northern region of the neighborhood, an area that contains several large retail businesses. For more information about the crime maps please visit [PSU's Crime Data Website](http://psu.edu/crime).



## Public Safety Concerns & Problems Reported

In addition to identifying areas of concern on the neighborhood map, people were asked to identify specific public safety problems in Parkrose. The respondents selected their three biggest concerns from the following list: Property crime, violent crime, guns, drugs/alcohol, social disorder, property maintenance, gangs, unsupervised youth, traffic offenses, environmental hazards, and “other”. The table below provides the results of this analysis.

# Times Selected	Ranking of Public Safety Concerns
212	Social disorder (e.g., noise, squatters, trespassing, panhandling, prostitution)
206	Property crimes (e.g., theft, burglary, car break-ins)
149	Drugs/alcohol (e.g., people using, selling in public)
105	Property maintenance (e.g., vacant buildings, unkempt yards, abandoned cars, garbage, graffiti)
71	Traffic offenses (e.g., speeding, failure to stop, aggressive driving)
56	Guns (e.g., shots fired/availability of guns)
44	Violent crime (e.g., assaults, robberies)
44	Other concerns (e.g., loose dogs, poor street lighting, lack of sidewalks, limited parking)
41	Gangs (e.g., gang activity, fighting)
15	Unsupervised youth (e.g., loitering, truancy)
11	Environmental hazards (e.g., lead, air quality)

Social disorder, which included noise, squatters, trespassing, panhandling and prostitution, was the problem identified by the most people (212 respondents). This was followed closely by property crime, including theft, burglary and car break-ins (206 respondents). The next two highest rated problems included drugs/alcohol (148) and property maintenance (105).

The PSU/PPB research team conducting the present survey had previously surveyed residents in the King (2015) and Humboldt (2016) neighborhoods. Residents from those surveys ranked guns and gangs as their two biggest threats to public safety. These findings highlight major differences in the perceived threats to public safety problems from one region of the city to another.

The survey respondents from Parkrose were asked to provide additional details regarding their primary public safety concerns. These open-ended text responses were analyzed to identify recurring themes. Consistent with the ranking of problems in the table above, the most frequently cited problem for the neighborhood was the homeless and transient population. For example:

- *“It’s hard to see illegal squatting happening in the overgrown area next the Jiffy Lube. Several years ago, the walking (on-foot) neighborhood police officer had this area cut down and cleaned up. The homeless have taken over this area again.”*
- *“There are a few homeless areas that are not being looked in on. A row of vans and campers that appear permanent on Marx, for example, as well as an encampment.”*
- *“The homeless people and their fleet of unregistered vehicles and campers that continue to litter our neighborhood.”*
- *“There are vacant homes that have squatters residing in them. Squatters have no ownership or care for the property. They shouldn’t be there in the first place. They are degrading the*

People responding to the survey often drew connections between the homeless/squatter population and other problems in the neighborhood like illicit drug use, prostitution, illegal dumping, vandalism, theft, and physical threats.

- *“This area is getting worse with chronic repeat overnight campers in RV’s and cars and all that goes along with that (fighting, trash dumping, nudity, crimes, intoxication).”*
- *“The homeless issue is out of hand. From the drug use, home invasions, cars being stolen, solicitation from prostitutes, packages stolen, aggressive people using neighbor’s water for bathing, etc, drug deals. Not to mention the trash - causing rats to nest and invade the neighborhood. Squatters in vacant homes. Sad that east county is getting the brunt of this.”*
- *“The presence of people living in campers in our neighborhood makes me feel unsafe and causes me to worry about my children/property/self. I have seen drug use, prostitution and theft centered around these transient campers. The garbage left behind when they move to a new location is enormous.”*
- *“Homeless folks leave trash & human waste, & make some areas feel unsafe. We no longer use the bike trail as a result.”*
- *“Homelessness in local parks. I take my children to the park and there are homeless people on drugs camping out.”*
- *“Our biggest problem is squatter/camper related. This includes piles of trash left anywhere they like, local property crimes, open drug and alcohol use, abandoned cars and car parts on the roads, trashing homes and properties they squat on, walking the street and making noise at all times of night and morning.”*
- *“The transient population moving in, as well as the drug activity around the squatter houses.”*
- *“The homeless problem is just completely out of control. Desperate people do desperate things. We can’t even leave our windows open at night or our house unattended for more than a couple of hours or someone will break in and steal whatever is within reach.”*

Some of the respondents went further and listed potential causes for the homeless and camping issue. They attributed blame to banks, landlords, social activists, and chronic underfunding by city administrators.

- *“The banks need to board up these homes or get them on the market faster so they do not get stripped and destroyed. They are in another state and do not care about the problems they are allowing.”*
- *“The banks have several empty homes in the area. So squatters and drug dealers are moving in to our sweet neighborhood.”*
- *“There are many abandoned/foreclosed homes in this area. This contributes to homeless setting up camp or moving into the empty homes, garbage left on the street and on the property and a general run-down appearance.”*
- *“Vacant homes being used as drug houses and the companies that have foreclosed on them not doing anything.”*
- *“This influx of campers came after the ‘sweep’ from Springwater Trail, they were deposited in our neighborhood by advocates who brought their belongings in a U Haul and then unloaded the squatters and their items into our neighborhood.”*
- *“Parkrose has become a dumping ground for the city. No money is spent on services here. Squatters and homeless everywhere and out of control slum landlords. More effort should be made to reduce rentals and get more owner-occupied homes.”*
- *“I am a strong believer in the broken windows theory, and the lack of funding the city of Portland puts into this neighborhood really shows.”*
- *“Don’t feel safe walking at night in my own neighborhood. Factors that are definitely contributing is the lack of community resources and the notorious underfunding of East Portland.”*

Concerns regarding traffic safety in the neighborhood were also frequently voiced in the open-ended responses. This includes speeding vehicles, inadequate traffic control devices, and a lack of sidewalks and bike lanes.

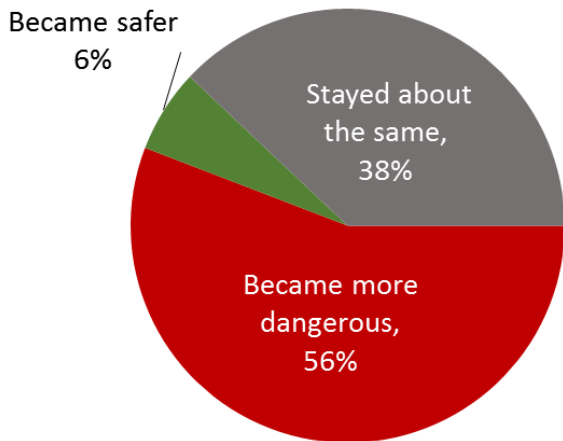
- *“People often don't stop at the stop sign while driving on shaver at 115th or at 112th. There are a lot of kids in the neighborhood and I'd like to see more enforcement.”*
- *“The intersection of NE Sandy Blvd and HWY 205 does not seem to be working well and causes dangerous driving on the side streets from people trying to avoid the problem. We have had many reckless drivers by our house and several close calls for accidents and property damage.”*
- *“Traffic flow of 102nd and on Sandy Blvd is terrible - Lights don't seem to be synchronized, people wanting to go through have to wait for people trying to get on the freeways, it is impossible to get into the lane you need”*
- *“Traffic on 102nd to Sandy Bv is in a race track mode for the week ends especially.”*
- *“The intersection of 109th & Shafer has Stop signs only on two sections. Many folks just drive through causing accidents. Shrubs are grown up on the corners blocking a clear view of any oncoming vehicles.”*
- *“Lots of speeding on Sandy, Prescott, and other major roads in the area. Infrastructure for walking or riding a bike is sparse and usually low quality in the area so dealing with dangerous drivers is hard to avoid, especially during rush hour.”*
- *“129th Street between Halsey and San Rafael St has cars speeding between them all the time. Need speed bumps or to be monitored. There are kids who play in the streets or on their yards and it's scary to watch these cars speeding through.”*
- *“At 122 & the 1-84, I see 3-5 people daily running red lights. I am a cyclist and I am nearly hit every single time”*
- *“The stretch of Fremont St between NE 122nd Ave and NE 148th Ave is treated as a drag strip more often than not. Additionally, there are no designated bike lanes. With a new park going up, I am concerned about the impending speeding traffic. I have a young child and worry about her safety along this street.”*

Finally, a number of respondents reported ongoing concerns related to prostitution and sex trafficking. Some of this was attributed to campers and zombie houses, but more people placed blame on hotels/motels in the area.

- *“The presence of people living in campers in our neighborhood makes me feel unsafe and causes me to worry about my children/property/self. I have seen drug use, prostitution and theft centered around these transient campers.”*
- *“There is still occasional prostitution on 107th and 108th and Sandy. The problem is getting better now that there are less vacant buildings.”*
- *“Wygant is where you can easily see prostitutes.”*
- *“Panhandlers and prostitutes are still present on Sandy and side streets.”*
- *“Cheap motels on Sandy Blvd. are a magnet for drugs & sex trafficking.”*
- *“The motels on Sandy are ‘seedy’. Sandy has been known for prostitution.”*
- *“There are a lot of motels along Sandy that seem to have a prostitution issue.”*

# Perceived Safety in Parkrose Neighborhood

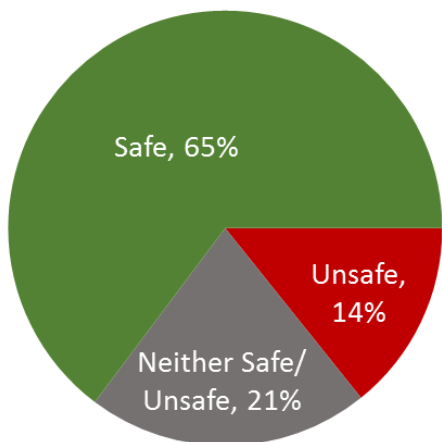
## Perceived Safety Over Past Year



The survey asked three global questions about **perceived safety** in the neighborhood. Perceptions about safety may be just as important as objective risk in that excess fear can result in deterioration of psychological well-being, community relationships, business sales, and home values. Hence, the PPB's stated [mission](#) includes a focus on reducing both crime and *fear of crime*.

For the first question, respondents were asked about changes in their perceived safety over the past year. The majority of respondents felt that Parkrose had become a more dangerous place to live over the past 12 months (56%). Only six percent of the respondents felt that the neighborhood had become safer (see chart to the left).

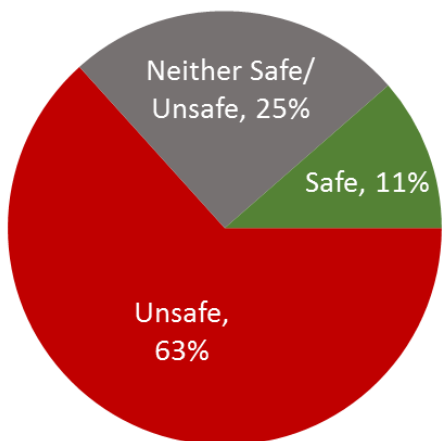
## Perceived Safety Walking Alone: Daytime



Unfortunately, official crime data for 2015 and 2016 are not yet available, so we do not have "objective" data to contrast with residents' perceptions about safety in Parkrose. Police reported offenses for the years 2000 through 2014 are available. While the city of Portland as a whole saw the crime rate for person offenses (e.g., assaults, robbery) drop 46% over this period, the rate for Parkrose declined just 16%. Similarly, the property crime rate in Parkrose dropped 20% over this period compared to a 26% decline for the city overall [see [PSU's Crime Data Website](#)].

Residents were also asked how safe they would feel walking alone in Parkrose during the daytime and at night. The majority of people (65%) responded "safe" or "very safe" for a daytime walk. A much smaller number (14%) answered that they would feel "unsafe" to "very unsafe" walking alone at this time of day. These figures can be compared to city-wide figures from the Portland City Auditor's [2016 Community Survey](#) which used a similar question. They found that 90% of Portland residents would feel "safe" to "very safe" walking alone in their neighborhood during the day.

## Perceived Safety Walking Alone: At Night

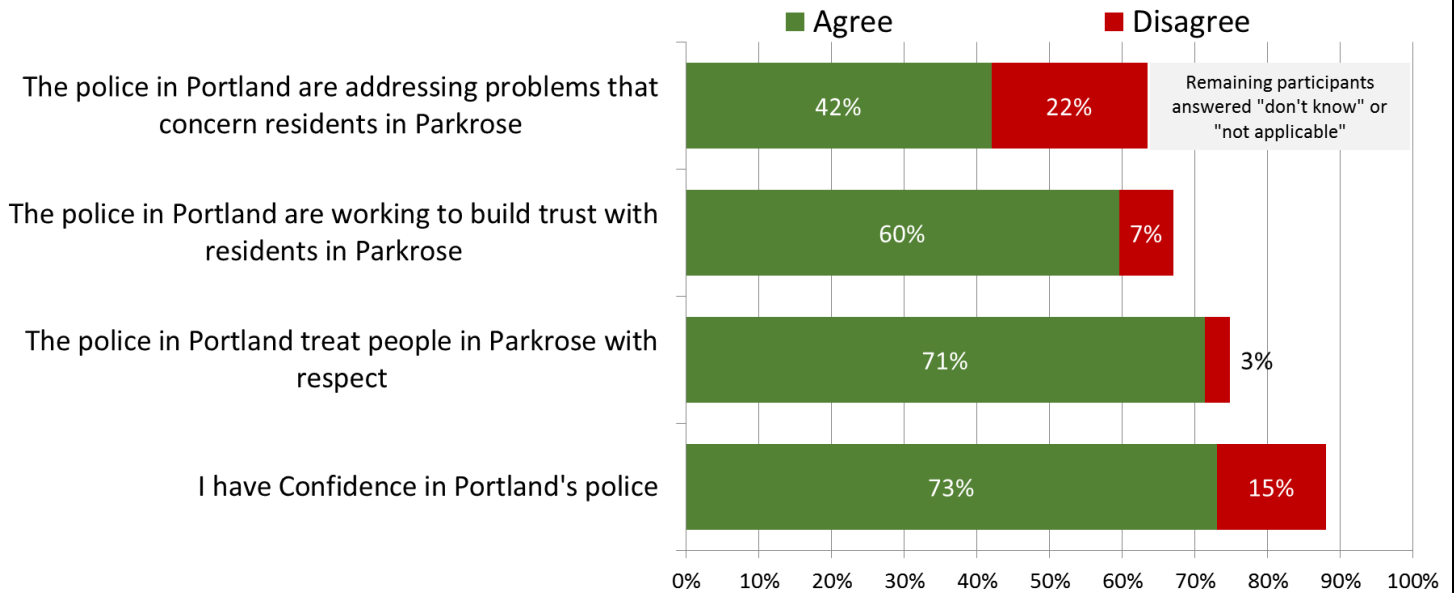


Perceived safety while walking alone in Parkrose was considerably lower for nighttime hours. Only 11% of the survey respondents answered "safe" to "very safe". The majority said they would feel "unsafe" to "very unsafe" (63%). By comparison, the Auditor's citywide survey found that just 21% would feel "unsafe" to "very unsafe" walking alone in their neighborhood.

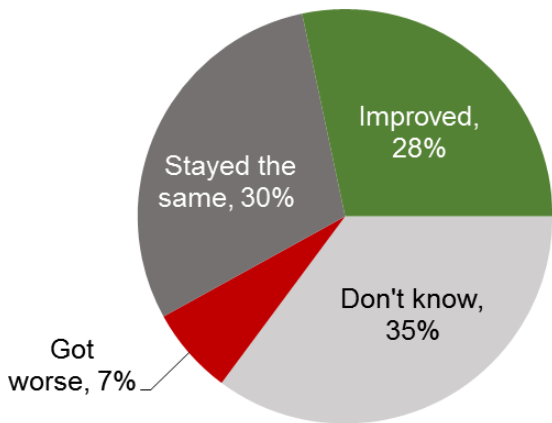
Taken together, these findings suggest that most people feel safe in Parkrose during the daytime, but that perceived safety, at least when walking alone, declines considerably at night. The comparison to citywide data from the Auditor's office also reveals that people in Parkrose feel considerably less safe walking in their neighborhood than the average Portland resident.



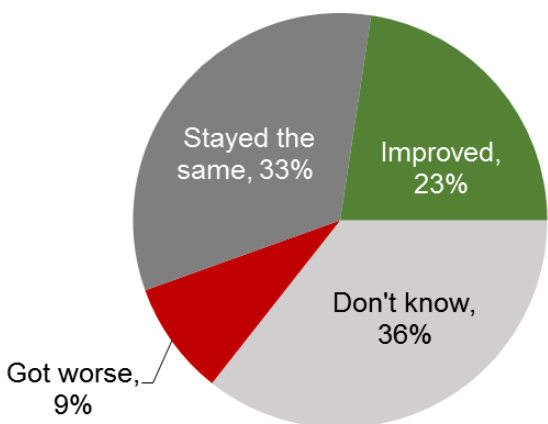
# Residents' Perceptions About Portland Police



## Communication Between Residents & Portland Police



## Trust Between Residents & Portland Police



Several items in the survey explored respondents' opinions about the Portland Police Bureau (PPB). These questions help us evaluate the current relationship between the police and Parkrose residents and may provide guidance on improving partnerships to enhance public safety.

Starting with the bar chart above, we found that the majority of respondents have confidence in the local police (73%), feel that the police treat people in the neighborhood with respect (71%), and most believe the Portland police are working to build trust with residents in the neighborhood (60%). The area of biggest concern was whether the police are addressing problems that concern residents in Parkrose. Nearly one quarter of the respondents (22%) disagreed with this statement and one third (37%) were unsure or answered "not applicable".

Two questions addressed possible changes in police-community relationships over the past year. The majority of respondents stated that communication between residents and the police had improved or at least stayed the same over the past 12 months (58%; see chart to the left). Only a small proportion of people felt that communication had gotten worse (7%). Similarly, the majority of respondents (56%) reported that trust between the residents and police had stayed the same or improved. One in ten (9%) felt that trust had declined over time.

While the data on the prior page highlight opportunities to further improve police-community relationships in Parkrose, it is also worth noting that the opinions expressed regarding the police were consistently more positive than what we found in our surveys of the King and Humboldt neighborhoods. The table below provides a direct comparison of the items from these three surveys.

	Neighborhood Surveyed		
	Humboldt	King	Parkrose
I have confidence in Portland's police (% "agree ")	57%	56%	73%
The police in Portland treat people in the neighborhood with respect (% "agree ")	51%	45%	71%
The police in Portland are working to build trust with residents in the neighborhood (% "agree ")	32%	38%	60%
The police in Portland are addressing problems that concern residents in the neighborhood (% "agree ")	29%	31%	42%
Communication between police & residents in the neighborhood (% "is improving ")	9%	13%	28%
Trust between police & residents in the neighborhood (% "is improving ")	8%	6%	23%

People surveyed in Parkrose have more favorable views of the police than people surveyed in King and Humboldt. That includes greater confidence in the police, trust, and the perception that the police are working to address problems. Recent efforts made by local officers to engage with residents through a variety of community events may have contributed to these positive ratings. For example, when asked what could be done to improve relationships between the police and residents, people offered comments like these:

- *“More of the ‘Walk with a Cop’ and ‘Coffee with a Cop’ type events and the wonderful presence he (Officer \_\_\_\_ ) and his colleagues bring to community events.”*
- *“Our officers are great. They always attend our neighborhood meetings when they can and communicate with us regularly. They need more recognition for all they do and more support from the bureau.”*
- *“From what I have seen lately, there is a pretty good relationship between the two (officers). I have had quite a bit of contact recently with the police bureau and think there has been a great response and a seemingly caring attitude. They seem vested in the neighborhood.”*

Establishing a direct causal linkage between the survey findings and recent community policing initiatives in Parkrose is difficult and a couple of important caveats need to be provided. First, the surveys were done at different times: King (October 2015), Humboldt (March 2016), and Parkrose (July 2016). It is possible that the differences seen represent a city-wide trend rather than something unique to Parkrose. Second, for the King and Humboldt survey respondents were given slightly different options for answering some of the questions (i.e., “strongly agree”, “agree”) as compared to the Parkrose survey (i.e., “agree”). It is unclear whether this might have impacted how people responded to the questions. Third, slightly different approaches to delivering the surveys were used in each neighborhood. Finally, our data represent a single “snapshot” in time. We do not know, for example, whether attitudes toward the police have always been different in Parkrose. In short, we cannot be 100% certain that the more positive opinions found in the Parkrose survey are directly attributable to the recent community engagement efforts that have been made there.

As noted previously, participants were asked to provide a short answer to the following question: *“What steps could be taken to improve relationships between the Portland Police Bureau and residents in the Parkrose neighborhood?”* The most common response to this question involved increasing police resources in the area:

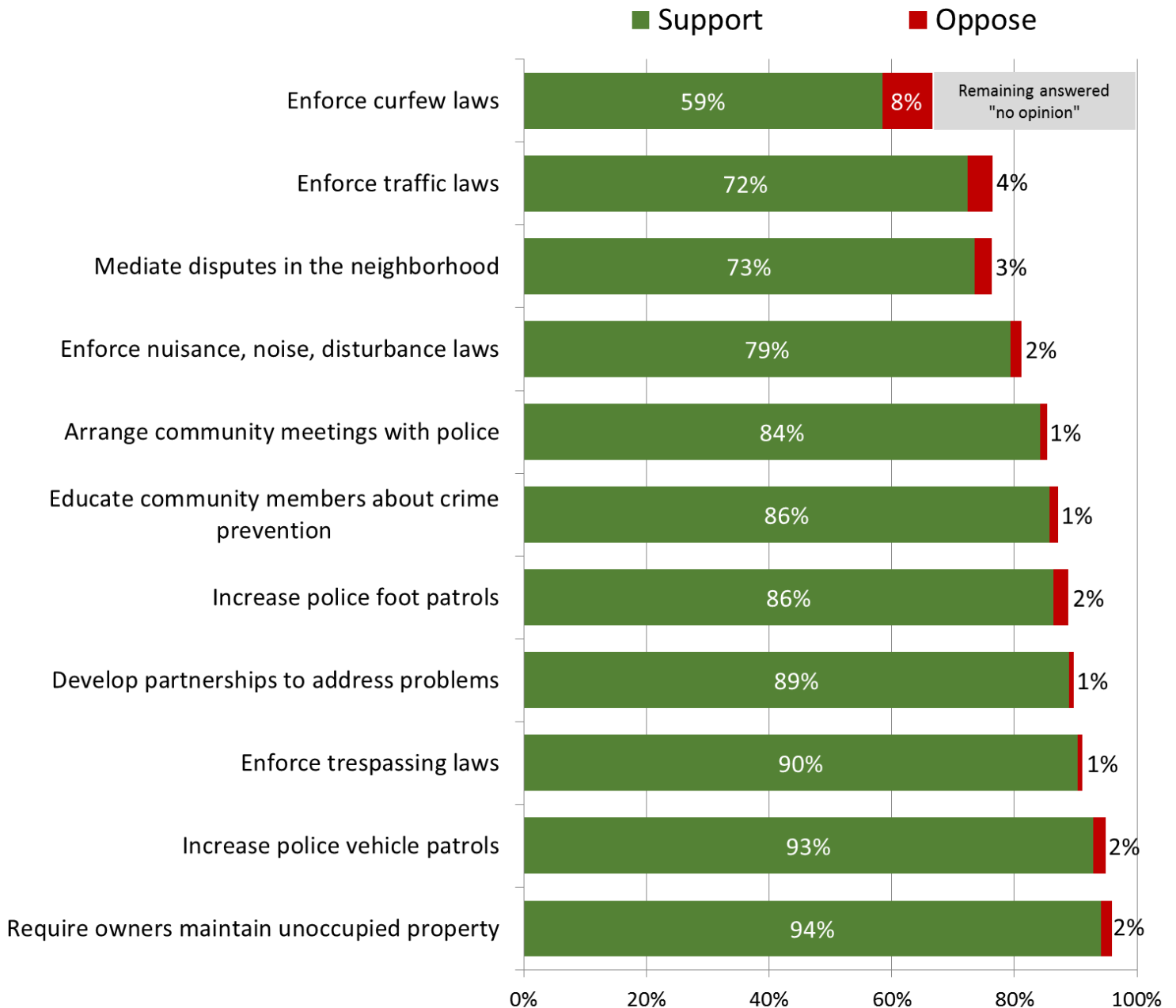
- *“I would like to see more police patrols.”*
- *“Increased visibility of the police in the neighborhood.”*
- *“They need to be more visible, that is, they need to be here in the neighborhoods.”*
- *“A more visible police presence in the neighborhoods (not just on major streets). We used to see the police regularly patrolling our streets (and one time had two of them join our neighborhood brunch), but we haven't seen anyone patrolling for a couple of years.”*
- *“I would like to see more police around the schools, interacting with the youth in positive ways, and helping me and other parents feel safe while students are in school.”*
- *“You have a substation up the street on Sandy Blvd; populate it and pay attention to Sandy Blvd and the drug traffickers in the RV Park.”*
- *“A more visible presence is important. The bad guys need to know you are there watching.”*
- *“There needs to be a more officers assigned to the Parkrose Area. Response time when there is an issue is tremendous, 1 - 2 hours. Individuals living in Parkrose have to deal with issues the police should be dealing with.”*

Many of the respondents also highlighted the need for consistent police staffing and expanded efforts to develop longer-term relationships with residents.

- *“Foot patrols, with regular (same group) officers, stopping in to meet and develop relationships with businesses. Also stopping to talk to residents when and where applicable. And they should get to know the resident homeless. Building trust relationships takes time, and is impossible or at least very difficult if the patrols are constantly changing. I believe that there is a lot of value to knowing the officers that cover our beat.”*
- *“Try to keep posting officers in areas they know or are known or live. Moving them around makes communication and understanding harder.”*
- *“Continue opportunities for residents to develop relationships with the police presence in Parkrose. When we know each other better we develop trust in one another.”*
- *“Interact positively with neighbors when present to address concerns/issues. We want to know we are heard and respected.”*
- *More personal contact in non-emergency situations - walk the beats. I've seen marvelous transformations when this has been in other cities.”*
- *“When you only see police when things are bad or you have a problem that is not helpful. People need to see police during good days and good times being people who are present in the community.”*
- *“More community engagement opportunities with cops in different parts of the neighborhood or with churches/faith communities. More police on foot patrol or bikes, make them more accessible than police cars.”*

## Strategies to Address Public Safety

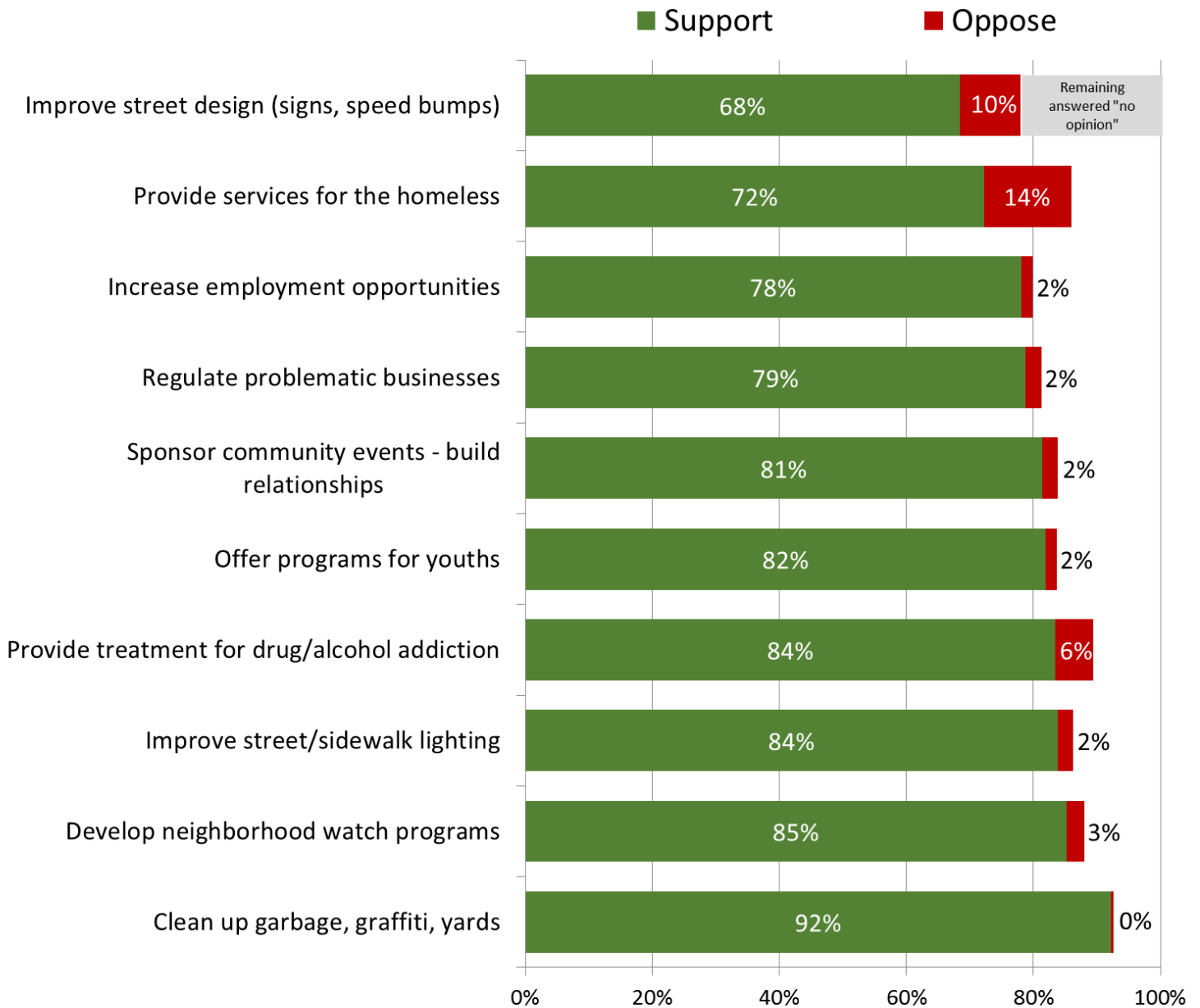
Survey participants were asked whether they supported or opposed eleven distinct police activities and ten broader city government actions that might be used in Parkrose to improve public safety. Data like these can be helpful when selecting and implementing strategies because the efforts will have enhanced legitimacy if they are supported by residents.



The policing strategy endorsed in greatest numbers (94% of respondents: see chart above) concerned maintenance of unoccupied property: *“Contact owners of abandoned properties/vehicles to request they maintain, secure, or remove property.”* Other police-led measures that were endorsed by at 90% of the residents surveyed included increasing police vehicle patrols (93%) and enforcing trespassing laws (90%). The two strategies that received the most opposition were enforcing curfew laws (8% opposed) and enforcing traffic laws (4%).



With regard to broader city government actions that might be taken in Parkrose to improve public safety, the four options receiving the most support were: Clean up garbage, graffiti, empty buildings or yards (92% support; see chart below), Develop neighborhood watch programs (85%), Improve street/sidewalk lighting (84%), and Provide treatment for drug/alcohol addiction (84%). While still endorsed by the majority of respondents, there was more opposition to provide services for the homeless (14%) and efforts to improve street design (e.g., signs, speed bumps; 10%).



Participants were also given the opportunity to voice their own opinions about what the police and/or city could do to improve public safety (“What is the most important thing the City or Police could do to improve public safety in Parkrose?”). The results largely mirror the findings from above. First, residents want the police/city to do more to address squatters and abandoned/neglected properties.

- *“If the empty Zombie houses are kept empty and clean this should limit the number of squatters. with squatters come drugs/ garbage/ violence to the neighborhood. We are tired of being the ‘dumping’ ground in East County. This is our home we want to keep it clean and safe, help us to do this.”*

- *“In Parkrose (as in many neighborhoods), there are abandoned properties that sit vacant. In our experience (with a house down the street), it is very difficult for police to intervene when squatters are in the house. Taking care of these properties is extremely important for the whole neighborhood.”*
- *“I think the most important would be to clean up garbage, graffiti, also empty buildings or yards and make the banks or whoever owns these buildings or homes make them take care of them. If we have businesses that bring problems into the neighborhood we should make them clean up or ban them from our neighborhood.”*
- *“Holding property owners and banks accountable for the condition of their properties is key. If these properties were not available to be squatted, we would not have this problem.”*
- *“There are many new home owners in our neighborhood and many of them are cleaning up the homes and yards---it would nice if everyone got on board because there are a few that are not kept up, vacant homes and vacant businesses that look run down.”*

Related to property maintenance, people also suggested that the city deal with the local homeless/camper population. Opinions diverged widely, however, about how to approach this problem. A minority of people suggested more resources be made available to the homeless. More often, people suggested that services be reduced in favor of strict enforcement of trespassing laws.

- *“The majority of the issues I see relate to homelessness. It seems to take up a lot of our police force's time and attention, but it is not, in the end, something they can really fix. I would love to see the City and/or County find a way to start housing these people.”*
- *“I believe that we need to address the drug and alcohol problems and provide more homeless resources.”*
- *Please work with the banks and absentee landlords to give PPB trespass rights. PPB can only do so much when the City is flaccid about this entire problem.”*
- *“Arrest loiters, move the homeless to shelters, not just do ‘outreach’ ENFORCE laws, Arrest Drug Traffickers not just watch/monitor them, Force the Railroad to police their right of way and not allow homeless camps on railroad right of way.”*
- *“More strict treatment of vagrants. If someone doesn't live here or have business to conduct here, then they have no reason to be here.”*
- *“Enforce current laws in the books about panhandling, illegal camping, drug use. I don't want more services for the homeless especially on the east side.”*
- *“Enforce the existing laws - it takes way too long to have abandoned & homeless vehicles removed - way too long to have the illegal dumping removed - homeless should not be allowed to take over empty/foreclosed homes - they should be removed immediately.”*

Finally, people recommended that the city increase police resources in the neighborhood and that PPB officers continue to develop stronger connections with community members.

- *“Be present and visible in the neighborhood. Develop positive relationships with the neighbors that want to help Parkrose.”*
- *“Increase patrol/relationships. This neighborhood has a lot of valuable resources and should be a great place to live. There are well known problematic apartment buildings and businesses. By building police/citizen relationships in the area, we can work together to address issues.”*
- *“I feel that having a greater presence in the neighborhood whether it be via car or foot patrols (or both) would really help. I realize that police have limited resources, but seeing more officers in my neighborhood would be reassuring.”*
- *“By continuing to improve community outreach, the community will be more empowered to partner with police, rather than only point blame and exacerbate current problems.”*

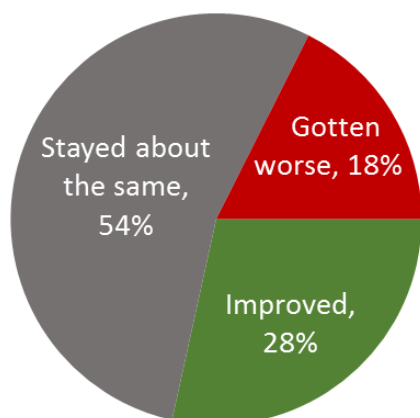
## Collective Efficacy

Public safety may be enhanced when neighbors look out for one another, intervene early to address problems, and share the same values. This is often referred to as “*collective efficacy*.” Several questions in our survey addressed this topic.

RESIDENTS IN PARKROSE...	% Agree	%Disagree*
Would contact a child's caregivers if they saw the child skipping school	21%	33%
Would intervene if they saw someone vandalizing property	51%	20%
Share the same values	36%	25%
Are willing to help each other	72%	9%

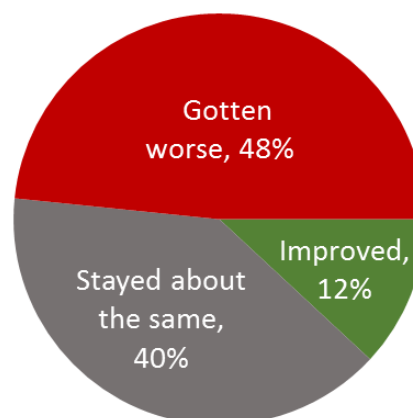
\*remaining proportion answered "don't know / not applicable "

### Relationships Between Residents in Parkrose Have:



Excludes 56 people (19% of respondents) answering "don't know"

### The Overall Quality of Life in Parkrose Has:



Excludes 21 people (7% of respondents) answering "don't know"

Three quarters (72%) of the respondents felt that residents in Parkrose are willing to help each other when needed (see table above). Fewer people felt that residents in the neighborhood share the same values (36%). Regarding informal commitment to maintaining public safety, just one-half of the respondents (51%) said that residents would intervene if they saw someone vandalizing property in the neighborhood. Even fewer (21%) reported that residents would address juvenile truancy by contacting a child’s caregivers.

As shown in the pie charts above, we found that most of the survey respondents felt that relationships between residents in Parkrose had either improved (28%) or stayed about the same (54%) over the past twelve months. Respondents were considerably less positive about overall quality of life in Parkrose: Nearly one-half (48%) thought that the overall quality of life had decreased in the past year.

Another aspect of collective efficacy is how people feel about their neighborhood. We asked the survey participants the following question: “*What are some of the strengths of the Parkrose neighborhood, things you like about living here or spending time here?*”

The most popular theme emerging from this question was **positive relationships with neighbors, a strong sense of community and the feeling of a small town.**

- “*Friendly neighborhoods where people, for the most part, look out for one another.*”

- *“There is a strong sense of community here. I grew up here - graduated in 1989 (GO BRONCOS!) - went off to military service and then came back here to raise my family.”*
- *“The neighbors are great and friendly. We share vegetables and plants, walk each other’s dogs and keep our eyes on our properties when we vacation! There is an awesome sense of community here.”*
- *“Relationships between neighbors are strong and for the most part we take pride in our homes and neighborhood.”*
- *“I have lived here for 18 years and I really do LOVE it here! I LOVE the schools, my neighbors, and the community!”*
- *“Feels like a small town where people care about the community.”*

People also appreciate that the neighborhood is usually **quiet, laid-back, and separated** from the busier areas of Portland.

- *“For the most part it's really quiet, and most of the people that you meet seem to be pretty friendly and engaging.”*
- *“It's a nice quiet residential area. There aren't too many apartment complexes.”*
- *“More rural feel. Quieter neighborhood.”*
- *“Relatively quiet. Not too many bicyclists riding on the streets. Makes driving less nerve wracking.”*
- *“We just moved here in November so we are still getting settled in but so far I love Parkrose. It's a nice quiet neighborhood.”*

Residents also appreciated the physical design elements in the neighborhood including larger lot sizes, trees, access to transportation, and the local schools.

- *“Parkrose has beautiful neighborhoods! The trees and nature is abundant! Love the schools!”*
- *“It's close to major arteries, I have changed jobs many times and have never needed to move. I like the larger lot sizes and the 1900-1920's houses.”*
- *“We really love our neighbors and friends. We have a very large lot and like this much private yard space. We like the big trees in the neighborhood. We like the closeness to so many other districts by bus or car.”*
- *“I love the space we have between houses and the wide streets (no sidewalks helps with this), you can breathe in our neighborhood.”*
- *“The transit options out here are great with the Max, a variety of bus routes, the 205 bike path, and the freeways. We have several nice established neighborhoods with cute older houses.”*

Taken together, these findings raise concerns about the neighborhood’s collective capacity to address public safety issues at this time. While many of the people surveyed feel very positively about the neighborhood, recent changes appear to be threatening their perceived safety, quality of life, and shared commitment to the area. As one resident noted, *“having lived here for 70 years it is hard to see our once safe neighborhoods changing to problem areas.”* Moreover, many of the residents surveyed attribute blame for the recent changes to public officials in Portland, who they feel have ignored their concerns and favored other areas in the distribution of public resources (*“Parkrose has become a dumping ground for the city. No money is spent on services here”*).



## Summary & Recommendations

Several of the key findings from the survey are summarized below along with recommendations for improving safety and livability in the Parkrose neighborhood.

1. The corridors surrounding NE Sandy Blvd and NE Prescott St. (areas 7 to 10 on our map) generated the most concern among residents. These areas have also accounted for a sizable proportion of the reported property and person offenses in Parkrose over the past few years. We recommend that efforts to improve public safety in Parkrose start with this area. Research finds that geographically focused crime prevention efforts produce better outcomes than more diffuse interventions.
2. Perceived safety in Parkrose was considerably lower at night and fell well below the city average. Forthcoming efforts to improve safety in this region should consider this temporal pattern.
3. The public safety concerns most commonly cited for Parkrose included various forms of social disorder (e.g., noise, squatters, trespassing, panhandlers, prostitution), property crime, and drugs/alcohol. Residents often connected these issues to one another rather than seeing them as separate problems. Perceived increases in these problems over time are negatively impacting the overall quality of life for residents. We recommend that social disorder be the primary focus for new public safety initiatives launched in Parkrose.
4. The overwhelming majority of residents surveyed support increasing police resources in Parkrose. This includes expanded vehicle and foot patrols, traffic enforcement, and enforcement of trespassing laws. We recommend that any increases in said activities be closely coordinated with residents, business owners, and other partners to ensure that the efforts have broad community support.
5. Many of the problems reported by residents involve broader social and regulatory issues beyond the direct control of the police (e.g., property maintenance, poor street lighting, homelessness, and alcohol/drug addiction). Efforts to improve public safety in this neighborhood will require the formation of partnerships with social service organizations and other governmental/regulatory agencies with more direct influence over these issues.
6. The PPB's North Precinct has a strong history with Problem-Oriented Policing (POP; e.g., Albina & Killingsworth Initiative) and this approach could work well in Parkrose, particularly given the relative specificity of the major problem (i.e., social disorder) and the geographic and temporal focus detailed above. We recommend the following steps for such a project:
  - a. Conduct additional analyses on recent calls for service in the target corridor to refine the geographic and temporal focus of the initiative.
  - b. Identify key stakeholders in the community who are willing to partner with the police in addressing social disorder (e.g., residents, businesses, non-profits, governmental agencies).
  - c. Convene meetings to review the survey and research findings. Identify underlying factors contributing to social disorder in the target area.
  - d. Generate intervention strategies – narrow list to those that are achievable given a short time frame (60-90 days) and available resources.
  - e. Implement strategies and monitor outputs (e.g., # patrols, lights added, trespass citations issued).
  - f. Evaluate outcomes (e.g., calls for service, public perceptions) and refine strategies as needed.

## Survey Methodology & Sample Characteristics

PPB crime analysts used city databases to identify 3,163 household addresses in the Parkrose neighborhood. They mailed each household a letter in July 2016 from (then) PPB Commander George Burke. The letter explained the purpose of the project (i.e., “*learn more about public safety in the Parkrose neighborhood*”) and requested that all adult occupants complete an anonymous online survey. Additional efforts to encourage responding included targeted requests with key community groups and media sources in the neighborhood. Street officers in the applicable police district also handed out 3 x 5 cards with the survey link and paper versions of the survey.

Data for the present report were downloaded from the online survey site in November. A total of 349 completed surveys were available at that time. Unfortunately it is impossible to accurately determine the response rate for the survey because we do not know the true number of people who read the mailed invitation or heard about the survey through other means.

We acknowledge that the current sample represents a small proportion of the estimated 5,032 adults living in the neighborhood. We also know that the sample is not representative of all residents. Whites, females, and those 35 to 44 years of age were over-represented as compared to the 2010 Census figures (see table below; Population estimates obtained from PSU’s [Population Research Center](#)).

For more information about the survey methodology please contact Dr. Kris Henning at Portland State University, ([khenning@pdx.edu](mailto:khenning@pdx.edu)).

Demographics		% Survey Respondants	% 2010 Census*
Gender	Male	37%	58%
	Female	63%	42%
	Other	1%	**
Age	18 to 24	2%	14%
	25 to 34	19%	24%
	35 to 44	31%	21%
	45 to 54	18%	19%
	55 to 64	18%	13%
	65 or older	12%	9%
Race	White	84%	61%
	African-American/Black	4%	13%
	Asian	2%	10%
	Am. Indian/Alaska Native	1%	1%
	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Isl.	1%	2%
	Some Other Race	5%	9%
	2 or more races	4%	5%
Ethnicity	Hispanic	7%	16%
	Non-Hispanic	93%	84%

\*Gender and age based on adults; Race & ethnicity based on all ages. \*\*Not available.



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**For Additional Data  
and Maps on Crime in  
Portland Visit:**

**<http://www.pdx.edu/crime-data>**