



National Case Closed Project

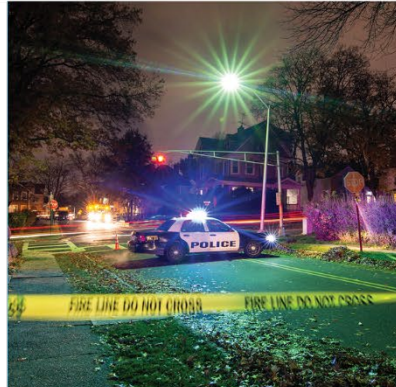
Response to Fatal and Non-fatal Shootings Assessment

Final Report

June 2023



Lansing (MI)
Police Department



This project is supported by Grant No. 15PBJA-21-GK-04008-JAGP awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Department of Justice's Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

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Executive Summary

Over the last 4 years, the City of Lansing, Michigan, has reported an annual increase in violent crime involving firearms. Shots fired incidents more than quadrupled from 2018 to 2021. This increased gun crime rate has hindered the ability of the Lansing Police Department (LPD) to clear cases for these offenses, which include both homicides and non-fatal shootings.

In 2022, LPD applied for and was accepted as a site in the National Case Closed Project (NCCP), an initiative funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and led by RTI International. NCCP is designed to support local law enforcement agencies in improving their response to fatal and non-fatal shootings. An RTI-led team comprising criminal investigators, forensic scientists, researchers, prosecutors, and victim services experts conducted an assessment of LPD's policies and practices. The assessment included a review of LPD policies and training materials, a review and analysis of fatal and non-fatal shooting case files, and personnel interviews within LPD and among external partners including prosecutors and members of community organizations. The NCCP project team will offer follow-up guidance and technical assistance to LPD as it looks to implement recommendations contained in this report.

Throughout the assessment process, it was clear that LPD has a cohesive and dedicated group of personnel. Staff are passionate about serving the Lansing community and approach casework with a desire to seek resolution and justice. Having identified both strengths to build on and gaps in protocols and operations, the recommendations put forth in this report are tailored to fit the LPD and its accompanying partners in order to optimize its response to fatal and non-fatal shootings.

The following list of topics highlights the assessment team's findings and recommendations:

- **Policies and Procedures.** LPD has an organizational structure that lends itself to successful operation. One of the major themes of recommendations in this report with regard to policies and procedures is encouraging clarity and structure for all personnel. This includes developing standard operating procedures (SOPs) as well as setting clear expectations on roles and responsibilities for each unit.
- **Agency Resources and Workload.** To promote efficiency and accuracy, it is critical to allocate existing resources in an effective way. Recommendations relevant to this topic include proposing the implementation of formal procedures for case assignment, case triaging, and detective selection. Additionally, recommendations were developed for staffing various supervisory positions to help promote sustainability and leadership.
- **Investigator Training.** In addition to various recommendations focused on policies and procedures for new personnel, advanced and targeted training on homicide and non-fatal shooting investigations is encouraged.
- **Case File Documentation.** A strength identified through the case file review process was the ability of detectives to reflect all necessary information in report narratives, especially regarding officers' actions at a crime scene. To further supplement this strength, recommendations support a standardized method for capturing case information and policy development for doing so.
- **Investigating Fatal and Non-fatal Shootings.** To improve the effectiveness of investigations, recommendations feature details on how to staff cases, delineate roles at a crime scene, and improve coordination among personnel on-scene. This section also provides insight into how to best involve crime analysts to support improved investigation tactics.

- **Developing Trust and Engaging Witnesses.** The assessment team focused aspects of personnel interviews on investigative involvement with victims and other witnesses. This report provides recommendations on educating LPD personnel on trauma's effects on victims and witnesses, pursuing community engagement strategies, and utilizing community partnerships to increase community participation in investigations.
- **Investigative Follow-Up.** Lack of participation from victims and witnesses in investigations has hindered the case follow-up process in recent years. This section provides recommendations for conducting a formal case review process, implementing an in-person interview cadence, and developing policies and protocols for engagement.
- **Cold Case Capacity and Process.** Although LPD has staff specifically dedicated to cold case investigations, providing adequate support and resources has been a challenge. Recommendations include assigning additional personnel to the unit, establishing formal procedures for cold case investigations, and encouraging reengagement of involved individuals.
- **Physical and Digital Evidence.** Increased crime in Lansing has equated to increased demand for evidence processing. Recommended areas for improving evidence processing capacity and effectiveness include increasing staffing, expanding training curricula, optimizing the relationship with the Michigan State Police Crime Laboratory, and reducing turnaround times when possible.
- **Case Prosecution.** LPD historically has a strong relationship with the Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney's Office, despite recent strain over a few charging policies. Under this topic, recommendations involve the development of joint trainings between the agencies, providing case debriefings, scheduling routine strategy meetings, and leveraging the United States Attorney's Office when applicable.
- **Victim and Family Advocacy.** Support for victims and their families is available through multiple channels, both internal and external to LPD. Advocacy expansion, policy development, case documentation, and implementation of victim-centered approaches are all highlighted in a variety of these recommendations.

1. Shooting Response Assessment Overview

1.1 Introduction

In summer 2022, the Lansing Police Department (LPD) applied for and was accepted into the National Case Closed Project (NCCP), a project funded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance and led by RTI International designed to support law enforcement agencies in improving their response to fatal and non-fatal shootings and increasing their clearance rates for these crimes. This report describes the methods used to assess LPD's response to shootings and provides recommendations for agency changes that are based on the findings from the assessment and evidence-informed best practices. The NCCP is funding training and technical assistance for each participating site to support the implementation and evaluation of project recommendations.

1.2 Lansing Violent Crime

Lansing currently ranks as the sixth largest city in Michigan, with a population of more than 112,000. The state capital does not, however, encompass East Lansing, a neighboring city that is home to Michigan State University and is equipped with its own law enforcement entity. Gun violence is on the rise in Lansing, especially with respect to “shots fired” incidents, which are characterized by LPD as the discharge of a firearm resulting in property damage, personal injury, or both. In just 3 years, LPD reported having an increase of more than 300 shots fired incidents—from 109 incidents reported in 2018 to 449 incidents reported in 2021. Additionally, the number of persons injured in non-fatal shootings more than doubled, from 38 in 2018 to 85 in 2021. Based on data submitted to the National Incident-Based Reporting System, Lansing saw a more than 50% increase in homicides between 2020 (16 homicides) and 2021 (25 homicides) (Federal Bureau of Investigation, n.d.). Along with this increase in homicides, LPD experienced a decrease (17%) in its homicide clearance rate—from 88% in 2018 to 71% in 2021. LPD reported a non-fatal shooting clearance rate of 21% for 2019, 30% for 2020, and 21% for 2021. LPD reported approximately four non-fatal shooting incidents for every one homicide, which is consistent with the national average for large cities (Hipple et al., 2019).

1.3 Lansing Police Department

LPD is comprised of four divisions: Patrol, Investigations, Administrative, and Staff Services (see Appendix 9.1 for LPD organizational chart). The responsibility of addressing violent crime primarily falls to the Patrol and Investigations divisions. In total, LPD has 194 sworn officers, although the department has received approval for up to 212 sworn personnel. The Investigations Division's Detective Bureau is led by a captain, one detective lieutenant, and two detective sergeants who oversee seven distinct units: Major Crimes, General Crimes, Special Victims, Fraud, Domestic Violence, Cold Case, and Unlawfully Driving Away in an Automobile (UDAA). This also includes a close partnership with the Special Operations Violent Crime Initiative (VCI) team—a unit that seeks to identify violent offenders, executes warrants, and arrests individuals on new charges. VCI consists of one sergeant, five officers, one LPD detective, and five Michigan State Police (MSP) troopers. Additional support is provided for shooting investigations by LPD's Intelligence Staff (four crime analysts), Clerical Support (two staff members), and Crime Scene Investigation (CSI) team (two sworn officers).

Although LPD does not have a designated homicide unit, all homicides, non-fatal shootings, and other firearm crimes are investigated by the Major Crimes Unit (MCU). The MCU comprises six sworn

detectives and is supplemented by four MSP detectives through the Secure Cities Partnership. Within the Detective Bureau also resides a Cold Case Unit, which includes one detective and three civilian volunteers. The Community Service Unit (CSU) provides proactive support to residents of Lansing through crime prevention awareness. LPD also has a designated Public Information Officer who facilitates interactions between sworn law enforcement and the media.

LPD has a number of external partnerships that assist in the response to shootings. The Ingham County District Attorney's (DA's) Office provides prosecutorial support and assists with developing relevant warrants, and the LPD also maintains a strong relationship with the United States Attorney's Office, which provides the department with federal oversight on crimes involving firearms. MSP also plays a critical role in shooting investigations and has MSP detectives embedded in LPD. Additionally, LPD is able to leverage the MSP Crime Laboratory for a number of evidence processing responsibilities, including DNA testing. Cases in the National Integrated Ballistic Information Network (NIBIN) are cross-checked by LPD-embedded agents with the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF). The Michigan Department of Corrections's probation and parole officers provide offender compliance checks on behalf of LPD. The department also maintains a strong relationship with juvenile court officers in Ingham and Eaton County. Additionally, community-based organizations play a vital role in advocating to end gun violence, fostering community well-being, and supporting shooting victims and their families. Some of the most notable organizations involved include the Advance Peace, the Mikey 23 Foundation, and the Pastors Alliance.

1.4 Scope of the Assessment

The NCCP involves an in-depth agency assessment to understand how each participating site responds to fatal and non-fatal shootings¹ and to identify strengths and weaknesses within each agency to improve upon through customized training and technical assistance. Though data collection took place throughout the agency and some findings may be relevant to other units within LPD, the assessment was directed at fatal and non-fatal shooting investigations conducted within the LPD Criminal Investigations Division's Major Crimes Unit.

2. Assessment Methods

The LPD assessment considered all operational and administrative activities associated with the investigation of fatal and non-fatal shootings. The assessment was conducted using three primary methods:

- Review of relevant policies, trainings and curricula, and other documented procedures related to LPD's response to fatal and non-fatal shootings.
- Interviews with LPD personnel and external partners.
- Systematic review of fatal and non-fatal shooting investigative case files.

The assessment team first met with LPD command staff to develop an understanding of how fatal and non-fatal shootings are investigated, from the initial patrol response to case closure. The assessment included interviews with members of command staff, Detective Bureau supervisors and investigators, Patrol supervisors and officers, Fugitive Team, CSI team, Cold Case Unit, CSU, Social Work Unit, LPD crime analysts, LPD victim advocates, prosecutors from the Ingham County DA's Office and the United

States Attorney’s Office, the MSP Forensic Laboratory, and numerous stakeholders from the community and community-based advocacy groups. Concurrently, the assessment team reviewed administrative materials, a sample of investigative case files, crime statistics and investigative/analytical bulletins and memos, organizational charts, SOPs, and strategic plans.

2.1 Policy & Training Review

One component of the assessment was an evaluation of policy, training, and organizational structures to assess whether LPD’s policies and trainings (1) guide agency personnel through the response and investigation processes; (2) align with recommended practices in investigations; and (3) are used for agency oversight, accountability, and performance management. LPD provided copies of all policies, memos, and documented procedures relevant to its violent crime response and investigations. LPD did not have a policy on training standards for any detective unit. RTI also requested relevant operational procedures, including organizational charts, case assignment processes, and caseload measures.

2.2 Personnel Interviews

Personnel interviews provided the opportunity to speak directly with individuals who participate in the response and investigation of fatal and non-fatal shootings cases, including staff within LPD, and those within external agencies and organizations (e.g., DA’s Office). Interviews documented current practices, policies, trainings, and perspectives on what is going well and what has room for improvement in the agency’s response to shootings.

The RTI-led assessment team identified relevant staff positions for the interviews and coordinated with LPD to set up these interviews, most of which were conducted in person. Two-person teams completed interviews using semi-structured interview guides specific to the position being interviewed. The interview guides used in this assessment are available to LPD or its partners upon request.

Interviews typically lasted 30–60 minutes. As seen in **Table 2-1**, the assessment team interviewed 42 individuals, including 31 personnel from LPD such as detectives and supervisors, patrol officers, victim advocates, command staff, forensic analysts, and crime scene personnel. In addition, the team interviewed 11 external stakeholders, including prosecutors, and staff from community-based organizations.

Table 2.1. Personnel Interviews Completed

Agency Affiliation	Role	Number
Lansing Police Department	Command Staff	3
Lansing Police Department	Detective Bureau Command	3
Lansing Police Department	Detectives/Cold Case/ATF	10
Lansing Police Department	Fugitive Team/Special Operations	2
Lansing Police Department	Crime Scene Investigation	1
Lansing Police Department	Crime Analysts	3
Lansing Police Department	Victim Advocate	1

(continued)

Table 2.1. Personnel Interviews Completed (continued)

Agency Affiliation	Role	Number
Lansing Police Department	Public Information Director	1
Lansing Police Department	Patrol	5
Lansing Police Department	Social Work Unit	1
Lansing Police Department	Community Service Unit	1
MSP	Detective/Sergeant/Trooper	2
MSP	Crime Lab	1
U.S. Attorney's Office	Assistant U.S. Attorney	1
Ingham County Prosecutor's Office	Prosecutors	3
Community Organizations	Various Leaders & Volunteers	4

2.3 Case File Review

The assessment team reviewed investigative case files for 47 non-fatal shootings, 27 fatal shootings, and 10 incidents involving both a fatal and non-fatal shooting for a total of 84 shooting cases. Most of the incidents involving only a non-fatal shooting had not yet been cleared (83%), while roughly half of the incidents involving a fatal shooting had not yet been cleared (49%). The assessment team recorded over 100 pieces of information about the crime, agency response, and investigative follow-up for each case. The purpose of this data collection activity was to understand common features of shootings in Lansing and the types of actions taken by LPD in response.

3. Assessment of Policies and Procedures

The assessment team reviewed LPD's SOPs that govern Detective Bureau operations. These SOPs are directly related to general detective operations that include arrest, interview and interrogation, evidence handling, and child abuse, to name a few. They are well-organized and provide descriptions of the roles and responsibilities of certain personnel and their duties. The assessment team noted that LPD does not have SOPs that outline duties, responsibilities, or expectations of personnel assigned to the MCU, and provides no specific direction for homicide or non-fatal shooting investigations.

3.1 Policies and Procedures

The assessment team identified multiple areas where the SOPs can be strengthened. This section provides recommendations for implementing new SOPs and strengthening specific language and content within existing SOPs.

Policy Recommendations

- LPD should develop new SOPs that address the duties and expectations of personnel assigned to MCU regarding homicide and non-fatal shooting investigations.

- The developed SOPs should be part of LPD’s detective training, reviewed annually, and discussed during training for members of the Detective Bureau. Each detective should be issued a copy of the SOP upon joining the unit. We also recommend that all relevant SOPs are reviewed at least every 2 years by supervisors to ensure that they are up to date.
- LPD should create a user-friendly manual that includes all relevant policies, SOPs, checklists, and other written materials that govern MCU’s responsibility to homicide and non-fatal shooting investigations. The manual should be organized into clearly marked sections and include a detailed table of contents. Each detective should be given a copy of the manual upon joining the Detective Bureau. To make the manuals more user-friendly, they may be separated into a “Homicide Manual” covering homicide investigations and a “Non-Fatal Shooting Investigations Manual” covering non-fatal shootings.
- The CSI unit does not have adequate SOPs or written standards. A number of guidelines are available to assist in developing these, such as those developed by the National Institute of Justice’s Organization of Scientific Area Committees for Forensic Science (<https://www.nist.gov/organization-scientific-area-committees-forensic-science/osac-registry>). The MSP also have a publicly accessible “Crime Scene Response Procedure Manual” (<https://www.michigan.gov/msp/divisions/forensic-science/policies-procedures>), which contains sections that may assist the LPD in developing its own standards.
- Include procedures for how MCU detectives should handle digital and physical evidence, including the following: who is responsible for collecting which types of digital and physical evidence; procedures for submitting evidence to CSI (physical evidence) or to the Computer Crimes Unit (digital evidence) for testing; how and when test results will be obtained and documented by detectives; required and recommended communications with the CSI or Computer Crimes Unit; and cross-references to the CSI SOPs. For more details on what these policies should include, please see Section 6.10 (“Physical and Digital Evidence”) of this report.
- LPD should implement a two-detective partner configuration at the onset of all cases assigned to MCU, with one detective assigned as the lead. It was clear that MCU works well as a team during the early stages of an investigation with an “all-hands-on-deck” approach. However, as the case progresses, the case becomes the responsibility of one detective. When that assigned detective is absent due to days off, vacation, or illness, the case usually receives limited or no attention. When determining the detective partnerships, consideration should be given to an investigator’s time within the unit and unique abilities. Investigative partner teams should share investigative responsibility for each case; however, one investigator within the team should be designated as the lead detective. The partners should alternate being the lead on every other case that they are assigned.

Section 500.06: Interviews, Interrogations, and Recognition of Rights

- LPD’s current policy is for all suspects to sign and date a *Miranda* waiver form after their rights are read to them. Given that LPD requires detectives to audio and video record all interrogations, the department, in consultation with the involved DA’s Offices, might consider moving away from obtaining the signed waiver forms. The signing of a waiver is not required by law and can only lessen the chance of obtaining a waiver. A detective cannot obtain a confession or admissions if they do not obtain a waiver. Therefore, this potential roadblock should be eliminated.

4. Case File Review Findings

Reviewing and coding fatal and non-fatal investigative case files enabled the assessment team to evaluate certain aspects of the shooting; the agency’s response, follow-up investigative actions, and case outcomes. Case files for a random sample of 27 fatal shooting incidents, 47 non-fatal shooting incidents, and 10 incidents involving both a fatal and non-fatal shooting were provided to RTI for the years 2019–2021. Because agencies typically prioritize murder investigations over non-fatal shooting investigations and may apply distinct resources to this crime type, we grouped cases involving both a fatal and non-fatal

shooting with cases involving only a fatal shooting and compared them with incidents involving only a non-fatal shooting.

RTI and LPD had a data use agreement in place that met the data security standards of both RTI and LPD and RTI adhered to this agreement when storing and accessing case files for review and analysis. Members of the assessment team reviewed the case narratives to understand LPD’s response to each type of shooting and to extract over 100 variables on the shooting and agency response from each case. **Tables 4-1** and **4-2** provide summary statistics for key attributes related to the crime and agency response, respectively, measured from the case file data. Key information was extracted from the case files and coded using a set of predetermined data metrics. The data collection instrument and codebook used to code investigative case files are available to LPD or its partners upon request.

Table 4.1. Incident Characteristics, by Type of Shooting

Incident Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Total number of cases reviewed	47 (100%)	37 (100%)
Number of guns fired		
1	30 (64%)	29 (78%)
2	5 (11%)	4 (11%)
More than 2	3 (6%)	4 (11%)
Unknown	9 (19%)	0 (0%)
Median number of rounds fired	3.0	4.0
Type of gun used ^a		
Handgun	25 (53%)	31 (84%)
Rifle	1 (2%)	5 (14%)
Shotgun	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Unknown	23 (49%)	4 (11%)
Location of shooting		
Street/outdoors	32 (68%)	18 (49%)
Inside residence	8 (17%)	9 (24%)
Other	6 (13%)	10 (27%)
Unknown	1 (2%)	0 (0%)
Victims armed		
No	36 (77%)	29 (78%)
Yes	2 (4%)	7 (19%)
Unknown	9 (19%)	1 (3%)

(continued)

Table 4.1. Incident Characteristics, by Type of Shooting (continued)

Incident Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Number of victims		
1	39 (83%)	24 (65%)
2	3 (6%)	6 (16%)
More than 2	5 (11%)	5 (14%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Number of suspects at time of initial response		
1	11 (23%)	14 (38%)
2	8 (17%)	10 (27%)
More than 2	6 (13%)	2 (5%)
Unknown	22 (47%)	11 (30%)

^a Because crime incidents can involve more than one type, totals may sum to greater than 100%.

Table 4.2. LPD Response Characteristics, by Type of Shooting

Response Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Total number of cases reviewed	47 (100%)	37 (100%)
Initial Police Response		
Number of patrol officers who responded to scene		
1–4	13 (28%)	3 (8%)
5–9	17 (36%)	13 (35%)
10+	3 (6%)	14 (38%)
Unknown	14 (30%)	7 (19%)
Patrol supervisor present at scene		
No	10 (21%)	4 (11%)
Yes	9 (19%)	17 (46%)
Unknown	28 (60%)	16 (43%)
Number of detectives who responded to scene		
0	12 (26%)	1 (3%)
1	10 (21%)	2 (5%)
2	2 (4%)	7 (19%)
3+	3 (6%)	18 (49%)
Unknown	20 (43%)	9 (24%)

(continued)

Table 4.2. LPD Response Characteristics, by Type of Shooting (continued)

Response Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Investigative supervisor present at scene		
No	22 (47%)	13 (35%)
Yes	4 (9%)	15 (41%)
Unknown	21 (45%)	9 (24%)
Evidence collected at scene		
No	5 (11%)	1 (3%)
Yes	42 (89%)	36 (97%)
Type of evidence collected at scene		
DNA/bodily fluids	9 (19%)	33 (89%)
Latent prints	5 (11%)	20 (54%)
Pattern or trace evidence	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Suspect firearm	3 (6%)	13 (35%)
Bullets	20 (43%)	26 (70%)
Casing	29 (62%)	31 (84%)
Clothing	23 (49%)	29 (78%)
Electronics	15 (32%)	31 (84%)
Digital	21 (45%)	35 (95%)
Drugs	2 (4%)	4 (11%)
Other	7 (15%)	14 (38%)
Victim statement obtained ^b		
No or not applicable	2 (4%)	15 (41%)
Yes	44 (94%)	12 (32%)
Unknown	1 (2%)	10 (27%)
Victim participated in investigation during initial response ^b		
No or not applicable	7 (15%)	26 (70%)
Yes	39 (83%)	11 (30%)
Unknown	1 (2%)	0 (0%)

(continued)

Table 4.2. LPD Response Characteristics, by Type of Shooting (continued)

Response Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Number of third-party witnesses		
0	4 (9%)	0 (0%)
1	9 (19%)	1 (3%)
2	12 (26%)	4 (11%)
3	4 (9%)	2 (5%)
4+	18 (38%)	30 (81%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Witness statement obtained		
No	7 (15%)	0 (0%)
Yes	40 (85%)	37 (100%)
Witness participated in investigation during initial response		
No	9 (19%)	0 (0%)
Yes	38 (81%)	37 (100%)
A suspect identified at time of response		
No	34 (72%)	16 (43%)
Yes	13 (28%)	21 (57%)
Source of suspect identification at time of response ^a		
Police identified	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
Victim or witness identified	6 (13%)	6 (16%)
Other identification	2 (4%)	1 (3%)
Identifying information on a suspect vehicle at time of response		
No	37 (79%)	24 (65%)
Yes	10 (21%)	13 (35%)
Follow-up Investigation		
Number of days until first detective activity		
0	20 (43%)	34 (92%)
1	2 (4%)	1 (3%)
2	2 (4%)	2 (6%)
3+	5 (11%)	0 (0%)
Unknown	18 (38%)	0 (0%)

(continued)

Table 4.2. LPD Response Characteristics, by Type of Shooting (continued)

Response Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Investigator(s) contacted victim(s) ^b		
No or not applicable	12 (26%)	29 (78%)
Yes	27 (57%)	8 (22%)
In person	22	8
Not in person	4	0
Unknown	8 (17%)	0 (0%)
Victim participated in investigation after initial unwillingness to ^b		
No	4 (9%)	1 (3%)
Yes	1 (2%)	0 (8%)
Unknown	2 (4%)	0 (0%)
Not applicable	40 (85%)	46 (97%)
Detective contacted third-party witnesses identified at scene		
No	15 (32%)	0 (0%)
Yes	20 (43%)	34 (92%)
In person	17	34
Not in person	2	0
Unknown	8 (17%)	3 (8%)
Not applicable	4 (9%)	0 (0%)
Witness participated in investigation after initial unwillingness to do so		
No or not applicable	45 (96%)	30 (81%)
Yes	2 (4%)	7 (19%)
Initial leads on motive		
No	26 (55%)	13 (35%)
Yes	21 (45%)	23 (62%)
Unknown	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Search warrant executed		
No	35 (74%)	5 (14%)
Yes	12 (26%)	32 (86%)

(continued)

Table 4.2. LPD Response Characteristics, by Type of Shooting (continued)

Response Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Community group/leader asked to help with investigation		
No	45 (96%)	36 (97%)
Yes	2 (4%)	1 (3%)
Investigator made further contact with patrol officer(s) who responded to scene?		
No	46 (98%)	35 (95%)
Yes	1 (2%)	2 (5%)
Suspect interviewed by an investigator		
No	35 (74%)	10 (27%)
Yes	12 (26%)	27 (73%)
Suspect confessed to the crime		
No	45 (96%)	26 (70%)
Yes	2 (4%)	11 (30%)

^a Because crime incidents can involve more than one type, totals may sum to greater than 100%.

^b Homicides with no surviving victims were coded as “Not applicable.”

5. Findings

The case file analysis revealed important information regarding LPD’s response to fatal versus non-fatal shootings, with fatal shootings tending to receive a stronger response in terms of manpower and supervision. Patrol supervisors were at the scene of a fatal shooting in 46% of cases compared with 19% for non-fatal shootings. The same patterns applied to the investigator response. For non-fatal shootings, about one in four incidents had no detectives respond to the scene (26% of cases) and one in five had a single detective respond (21% of cases). For fatal shootings, these figures were 3% and 5%, respectively, as the majority had two or more detectives respond to the crime scene. An investigative supervisor was present at the scene of 41% of the fatal shootings reviewed compared with 9% of the non-fatal shootings reviewed.

Interestingly, victims were often willing to participate in non-fatal shooting investigations during the initial response. For instance, a victim statement was obtained in 44 (94%) of the 47 non-fatal shootings reviewed and a victim appeared to participate in the investigation during the initial response in 39 (83%) of cases. It was also common in both fatal and non-fatal shootings to have a third-party witness both provide a statement and appear to participate in the investigation during the initial response.

Non-fatal shootings faced a greater number of inherent challenges compared to fatal shootings during the time of the response. For these cases, there tended to be fewer third-party witnesses, less participation in the investigation among third-party witnesses, a lower likelihood of having an initial lead on the motive for the shooting, a lower likelihood that a suspect was identified, and a lower likelihood that identifying information on a suspect vehicle was available. There also appeared to be a more timely and active response in terms of investigative activities for fatal shooting investigations. For instance, 11% of the non-

fatal shootings we reviewed had 3 or more days pass between the date of the crime report. No fatal shootings fell into 3 or more days range. Non-fatal shooting investigations were also much less likely to involve follow-up with third-party witnesses identified at the scene compared with fatal investigations.

There were also examples of more agency resources being utilized for fatal shootings compared with non-fatal ones. For example, a crime analyst assisted in 27% of fatal shooting investigations but did so in only 9% of non-fatal shooting investigations. Fatal shooting investigations were more likely to use technology, especially social network or digital data or firearm/toolmark identification. Bullets were collected in 43% of non-fatal shootings and casings were collected in 62%, but firearm/toolmark identification was used in only 15% of these investigations overall according to the case file narratives we reviewed. Additionally, digital data were collected in 45% of non-fatal shootings and 95% of fatal shootings, but technologies to analyze these data were used in only 4% of non-fatal shooting investigations and 24% of fatal shooting investigations.

In sum, these findings suggest that non-fatal shootings receive a less intense initial response and a less thorough investigation compared with fatal shootings, which may explain some of the difference in clearance rates between these crime types. Additionally, investigations of both crime types would likely benefit from a greater use of technology and a continued commitment to building positive relationships with victims, witnesses, and the broader community. As discussed in the next section, inconsistent documentation of detective activities in the case narratives can also impact the ability to draw robust conclusions, particularly regarding investigative follow-up and case closure.

5.1 Agency Resources and Workload

5.1.1 Staffing, Organization, and Caseload

Major Case Unit

There are currently five LPD detectives assigned to the MCU, which is responsible for investigating fatal and non-fatal shootings. These detectives are augmented by two detective sergeants and three MSP trooper/detectives who are led by an MSP detective sergeant. In addition to the MCU, LPD's Detective Bureau has the following additional units/detective specializations: General Case Unit, Special Victims Unit, Fraud, Domestic Violence, Cold Case and UDAA. Additionally, there is a detective assigned to the VCI.

The Detective Bureau is led by a captain, one detective lieutenant, and two detective sergeants. CSI and the Intelligence staff also fall within this rank structure. MCU detectives work an 8-hour shift Monday through Friday (between 0700–1600 hours) and are expected to be available for off-hour callbacks on nights and weekends. There is not a formal procedure for determining which MCU detectives will respond to calls after hours and on weekends. The detective sergeant will often communicate with MCU detectives every Friday to determine who is available for calls. According to interviews, due to a sense of obligation to their fellow detectives, members are often hesitant to decline availability.

Upon receiving a call for an incident that may require the assistance of the MCU, one of the detective sergeants will coordinate the response. This includes assigning a primary and secondary detective and calling in additional detectives to assist as needed. Supervisors have discretion over whether a case will be assigned to an investigator. Some detectives who were interviewed noted that there was not a clear system regarding who was assigned as a primary detective for shooting cases. Currently, the MCU's

response to non-fatal shootings is determined by the MCU sergeant and is based on the perceived need for a detective's response.

MCU detectives, including those assigned from the MSP, have investigated around 2 fatal and around 9 non-fatal shootings each year over the last few years.

Recommendations	1	Develop a formal procedure for supervisors to follow when assigning cases. This will help detectives better plan and manage caseloads. Cases should be assigned to detectives working in two-person teams, with one detective serving as the primary investigator.
	2	Develop a systematic process for triaging non-fatal shooting cases for investigations. LPD should consider using a set of research-based solvability factors to prioritize non-fatal shooting cases. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. The use of a triage process should be consistent and thoroughly documented in a written policy.b. MCU sergeants should be trained on how to use the triage process, including solvability factors, to assess cases, and patrol officers and dispatchers should be trained on how to elicit and report information that addresses any criteria used.c. Non-fatal shooting cases, especially prioritized cases, should receive greater investigative urgency.d. It may be necessary to add more personnel to the non-fatal shooting response team to implement a more robust response to these incidents.
	3	Implement a structured on-call system for MCU detectives. Some interviewees stated that the current callout system, which essentially requires detectives to always be available, can lead to burnout and decreased work performance. LPD should review its homicide and non-fatal shooting data to determine the times of day and days of the week when these incidents are most likely to occur, and then structure its shift and callout schedule to ensure that there is adequate coverage during those times. This may result in the need for additional MCU detectives and/or compensation for on-call status.
	4	Take necessary steps to maintain the current annual caseload per detective, per year. This is consistent with national best practices, which recommend that homicide detectives take on an average of no more than four to six new homicide cases per year (Police Executive Research Forum and the U.S. Department of Justice's Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2018). The current MCU staffing levels appear to be adequate for maintaining reasonable caseloads. However, if homicides or non-fatal shootings in Lansing continue to rise, and if the agreement with MSP to utilize its investigators is ended or diminished, then MCU's staffing levels will need to be increased. If LPD does determine that MCU needs additional detectives to respond to homicide and non-fatal shootings, one solution may be to utilize detectives from other units within the Detective Bureau, such as the General Case Unit. These detectives could be assigned the role of primary or secondary investigator on cases. This would also help detectives throughout the Detective Bureau gain experience and knowledge regarding how to investigate shooting cases.

5	<p>Consider increasing the number of detective sergeants who oversee Detective Bureau units.</p> <p>A recommended practice for investigative unit supervision is to have one supervisor for every four to six investigators. This ratio generally affords the supervisor the ability to monitor and direct investigations, as well as to use their investigative experience and training to help guide detectives and close cases successfully. LPD should consider the possibility of assigning an additional detective sergeant specifically to the MCU due to the volume of work performed by the unit.</p>
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5.1.2 Personnel Selection and Supervision

Selection

It is critical that investigative units are staffed with experienced and knowledgeable detectives. If detective personnel lack experience in investigating violent crimes, this puts detectives in a difficult position and may make it harder for them to clear cases successfully (Goodison, 2021).

Recommendation	6	<p>Establish a rigorous, formal process for selecting detectives for the MCU and for membership on the VCI.</p> <p>The process and metrics for selecting detectives into the MCU and VCI should be standardized and put into an SOP.</p>
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Supervision

Detective supervisors (sergeants) are assigned to the Detective Bureau for a period of 3 years. Based on LPD policy, assignment to the rank of detective sergeant may be given even if the officer promoted does not have prior investigative experience as a detective. This is problematic, as it can take typically 1 or 2 years to learn the duties, daily activities, and difficulties encountered by homicide and violent crime detectives.

Recommendations	7	<p>Work toward the goal of filling the detective sergeant positions with personnel who have prior investigative experience. This will help supervisors provide additional guidance to detectives.</p> <p>When detective sergeants are promoted without having prior investigative experience, LPD should require them to work a case as a lead detective. This would involve the detective sergeant handling the case from crime scene through prosecution, which should expose them to many of the challenges regularly faced by detectives.</p>
	8	<p>Explore the idea of not limiting the duration a sergeant can be assigned to their MCU. The culture that is built and maintained within the unit has long-lasting benefits. It can take a new supervisor over 1 year to learn the duties of their new assignment and understand the strengths and weaknesses of their assigned personnel as well as build culture in a productive unit.</p>

9	<p>Consider lengthening the time that a detective sergeant is assigned to the unit from 3 years to at least 5 years.</p> <p>Although there are benefits to having a supervisor rotate into Patrol, the 3-year rotation plan limits the ability of detective sergeants to develop the investigative skills needed to fully assist in these cases.</p>
10	<p>Create a corporal track for the specialized investigative units within the Detective Bureau, including the CSI unit.</p> <p>This step would allow personnel to be promoted and stay within the unit where they have established experience. It could also help keep experienced people within the specialized units, where expertise is often critical for success.</p>

5.2 Training

All new detectives, regardless of their assigned unit, should receive basic investigations training that provides the knowledge and skills needed to work general investigations (Carter, 2013; Police Executive Research Forum and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2018). The training can also ensure that detectives selected into the Detective Bureau are well-versed in fundamental investigative techniques. This gives new detectives a solid base on which to expand.

Recommendation	<p data-bbox="282 974 315 1003">11</p> <p>Members of the Detective Bureau, including supervisors, should receive advanced training in homicide and non-fatal shooting investigations.</p> <p>Specialized training would include using social media in investigations, advanced interview and interrogation techniques, and network analysis to identify linkages between individuals or groups.</p>
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5.3 Case File Documentation

The assessment team reviewed 84 investigative case files supplied by LPD, consisting of 27 fatal shooting incidents, 47 non-fatal shooting incidents, and 10 incidents involving both fatal and non-fatal shooting. Although it was apparent that the supplied cases did not include all reports and documents prepared by detectives, there was enough information supplied in the narratives for a review and assessment of LPD’s investigative response to homicides and non-fatal shooting cases. LPD officers who respond to a fatal or non-fatal shooting incident are required to complete a statement form listing their duties performed and any information that adds to the investigation. These reports were thorough and described the officers’ actions at the crime scene. Likewise, the CSI reports were detailed and listed the duties performed, the processes of the identification and recovery of all evidence, and the scientific testing conducted. The CSI reports were excellent in their thoroughness.

However, the reports completed by detectives often lacked important information. Many cases had been classified as “Closed/Inactive Leads Exhausted,” yet they did not document enough information to support the conclusion that all leads were in fact exhausted. Many cases left the reader to wonder what other investigative duties must have been performed to reach that conclusion. The assessment team noticed that although activities were well documented at the beginning of investigations, documentation sometimes trailed off toward the end of investigations, leaving clearance outcomes unexplained. In some instances, cases were listed as cleared without information supporting a clearance and in other instances

cases were listed as open but described a suspect’s arrest. Some cases listed a suspect or possible suspect who was never interviewed according to the reports. A specific example was a case narrative which stated that a suspect was arrested but gave no indication of how that person was identified or what led to their arrest. The assessment team only learned this information following an online search that revealed the presence of DNA and ballistic evidence recovered from a firearm. This information was not provided in the case narrative. It is possible this information was documented in other places in the investigative case file, but it was not in the narrative for this case file and similarly important information to justify clearance outcomes appeared to be missing from other case narratives the assessment team reviewed. There were also references to a victim’s or suspect’s phone being in police custody and no documentation indicating whether a search warrant was obtained to retrieve information from the phones. Somehow, these cases were listed as “Leads Exhausted.” Some cases indicated that casings were recovered from scenes, but the file did not include information about NIBIN entry or hit results.

Recommendations	12	<p>Adopt the “Murder Book” model, which was developed by the Los Angeles Police Department, as a standardized method to capture and retain case information.</p> <p>Case reviews and personnel interviews both demonstrate that case files are not well-organized and that there was no required structure for them. A structured Murder Book concept would ensure standardized organization and reporting, which is critical in managing major investigations and prosecutions. Shooting investigations organized consistently based on a standardized protocol also promotes efficiency and accountability. LPD’s current case file organization is less effective and less efficient than a system that includes a table of contents, chronology section, and consistent organizational protocols. All CDs and DVDs of witness interviews, photographs, and other digital evidence should be properly labeled, identified, and stored. A standardized Murder Book can also be easily scanned and digitized for copying and sharing with prosecutors. Another benefit of a uniform Murder Book is accountability. A supervisor or command staff can easily review a book that has all information under consistent tabs, allowing them to review the important reports as opposed to being required to review all documents.</p>
	13	<p>Include requirements for proper case documentation in the policy manuals governing fatal and non-fatal shooting investigations.</p> <p>The importance of case file documentation should be reinforced during training. Policies should include a case file checklist that states which documents must be included in the file and the order in which they should be filed. Supervisors should review the files as part of the detectives’ evaluations. LPD should work with the DA’s Office and U.S. Attorney’s Office (USAO) when determining the information that must be documented in case files.</p>

5.4 Investigating Fatal and Non-fatal Shootings

This section explores how fatal and non-fatal shootings are investigated by LPD and provides recommendations for strengthening practices through every stage of the investigation.

A key finding that emerged from interviews and the case file review was that there was not a standardized investigative checklist for MCU detectives to use, and for MCU supervisors to review, when working fatal and non-fatal shooting cases.

Recommendation	14	<p>Develop and use a standard case checklist of basic investigative tasks for detectives to follow when conducting fatal and non-fatal shooting investigations. The checklist should provide a detailed, step-by-step description of actions to be taken at each stage of the investigative process (Police Executive Research Forum and the U.S. Department of Justice’s Bureau of Justice Assistance, 2018).</p> <p>Supervisors should hold detectives accountable to completing the checklist. The checklist form should include room for the detective to note when the task was completed and the reason for not completing any unfinished tasks. Supervisors should use the case checklist as the primary basis to conduct supervisory case reviews at specific intervals throughout the investigation. The case review should include the supervisor’s signature, date/time of review, and comments or suggestions. The checklist should include confirmation that victims and their families were provided with information about their rights and expectations for assistance (National Crime Victim Law Institute, 2021).</p>
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5.4.1 Initial Crime Scene Response and Management

Patrol Response to Crime Scenes

Patrol officers are typically the first to arrive at a fatal or non-fatal shooting scene. The patrol supervisor also often responds to the scene and contacts the detective sergeant. Given that there are only two detective sergeants in the Detective Bureau, it is unclear whether there is a formal on-call system for detective sergeants or when a particular detective sergeant would get called. Upon arriving at the scene, officers secure the scene, look to see if the suspect(s) is still present, attend to victims, conduct a preliminary canvas, attempt to identify witnesses, look for surveillance cameras, and more. Several interviewees said that it is common for patrol officers to complete the initial search warrants for shooting cases, including murders. The assessment team learned that the Patrol Division as a whole is relatively inexperienced and that the completeness of their search warrants can vary depending on the individual.

Recommendations	15	<p>Develop SOPs for the response to fatal and non-fatal shooting crime scenes.</p> <p>The SOPs should clarify expectations for personnel who respond to the scene and include a checklist of tasks to be completed, including the requirement for the first officers and sergeant at the scene to remain present for the briefing and the handoff to detectives. The checklist of tasks should also include a procedure in which a crime scene log is initiated and maintained by a patrol officer until the scene is cleared.</p>
	16	<p>The SOPs governing crime scene response should clearly delineate which tasks should be performed by patrol officers and which should be performed by detectives.</p> <p>If patrol officers are being asked to perform tasks that are investigative or outside of their usual responsibilities such as search warrants, they should receive training on how to complete those tasks safely and effectively. LPD should also consider transferring the responsibility of writing search warrants for shooting incidents to detectives (staffing levels permitting).</p>

Some interviewees said that LPD formerly had a post-police academy in-house training program for new officers. This program helped to familiarize new officers with policies and procedures specific to LPD and to refine skills deemed most valuable for a new LPD officer.

Recommendations	17	<p>Reintroduce the in-house training program for new officers, with a focus on strengthening the response to fatal and non-fatal shootings.</p> <p>The training program should include specific instruction on topics that are critical to effective crime scene response, including interviewing techniques, crime scene security, and canvassing for evidence. MCU detectives should be included in the training to instruct sections that are directly related to shooting incidents.</p>
	18	<p>LPD should develop a procedure that allows for integration of a social work unit to become involved in shooting cases.</p> <p>The unit should be brought in as early as feasible to help develop a proper response strategy and assist in taking over tasks now performed by detectives and patrol officers.</p>

Crime Scene Log

A crime scene log is used to record information regarding all persons entering or assigned to a major crime scene. The log is typically initiated by the first unit at the scene and is continued by the unit handling the call. Upon completion, the crime scene log should be given to the lead detective handling the investigation. The assessment team learned that LPD does not utilize a crime scene log or similar report that documents information about the crime scene.

Recommendations	19	<p>Develop and consistently utilize a crime scene log to document all personnel who are present at a major crime scene, their time of arrival and departure, and the duties they performed at the scene.</p> <p>The crime scene log can be initiated by the first unit at the scene and then completed by the unit handling the call. Once the crime scene log is completed, it should be given to the lead detective.</p>
	20	<p>Explore ways to improve coordination between the case detective and responding officer, both at the scene and after.</p> <p>SOPs should mandate that the first responding patrol unit and/or patrol supervisor be responsible for briefing the MCU and VCI unit upon their arrival. The case detective should also hold a “day after” incident meeting with the patrol officer or patrol supervisor who first responded to the scene.</p>

5.4.2 Follow-up Investigation

The assessment showed that there is much room for improvement in the amount of follow-up conducted by detectives, particularly for non-fatal shooting cases. Findings from both the case file review and interviews with personnel outside MCU revealed that investigators sometimes seemed reluctant to pursue leads vigorously. During case file reviews, there were multiple instances of investigators failing to follow up on leads, such as not conducting interviews or applying for search warrants, prematurely ending interviews with witnesses and suspects without asking key questions, or making it easy for interviewees to end the interview.

Recommendations	21	<p>Strengthen the performance review process to include metrics that assess whether detectives are conducting thorough investigations. All LPD members, including MCU personnel, should have at least an annual performance review.</p> <p>Evaluations for detectives should be designed to measure whether they are performing all necessary investigative tasks, conducting thorough follow-up, properly documenting investigative tasks and findings, and meeting the needs of victims and families. Supervisors should be trained on how to conduct these assessments. Performance metrics and the evaluation process should be documented in policies and SOPs.</p>
	22	<p>Implement a timeframe to conduct a formal case review of all unsolved shooting investigations.</p> <p>Case reviews should be conducted no more than 60 days after the occurrence and should be comprehensive. The assigned detective would be required to complete a single summary report documenting the facts of the case and all investigative steps taken. Once the detective completes the report, an in-person meeting should be scheduled to include the assigned detective, homicide supervisor(s), and the MCU commander.</p>
	23	<p>Provide more specific guidance and requirements regarding MCU detectives' engagement with victims and families. This includes developing policies and protocols.</p> <p>Protocols should include developing a communication plan with victims, including timelines for initial contact, follow-up, and case status updates; requiring notifications and contacts with co-victims and families; documenting contacts with co-victims and families; and working with LPD's victim advocates. Also, as part of standard procedure, detectives should inform victims' families about the victim advocate position and provide the victim advocate's contact information.</p>

Victim and Witness Follow-Up

MCU detectives consistently reported experiencing a lack of cooperation from victims and witnesses during shooting investigations. Although the case review appeared to indicate that cooperative victims and witnesses existed in most cases, it is possible that the case files do not fully capture, for example, if a detective feels that witnesses are not being fully forthcoming or are holding back information. A lack of cooperative victims and witnesses is a common complaint among violent crime detectives across the country. However, fatal and non-fatal shooting cases are difficult by nature, and some, if not most, reluctant victims and witnesses can be persuaded to cooperate with enough follow-up and engagement from detectives. That is where a detective's training and experience make a clear difference with success.

Although the assessment team's case review revealed that many follow-up interviews with victims and witnesses were done in person, the review also found that LPD detectives conducted many of their investigations primarily by telephone, which can make it difficult to foster the type of connection and engagement that can persuade reluctant victims and witnesses to cooperate. For example, a common situation found in the case files was for patrol officers to conduct an initial interview with a non-fatal shooting victim at the hospital. The victim would tell officers that they did not want to cooperate or were afraid to cooperate with the investigation. Days later, the MCU detective assigned to the case would attempt to call the victim on the phone. If the victim did not return the call, or if the victim repeated their reluctance to cooperate, the detective would close the case as "Victim Refused to Cooperate" without making a concerted effort to follow up or try to gain the victim's cooperation. These difficult cases require much more than a simple phone call from a detective.

Recommendations	24	Implement a policy requiring the assigned detective to conduct in-person interviews of all victims and witnesses in fatal and non-fatal shooting cases.
	25	Require detective supervisors to review all fatal and non-fatal shooting cases classified as closed, especially those cases closed due to the designations “Leads Exhausted” or “Victim Refused to Cooperate,” to ensure that thorough follow-up investigations were conducted.

5.5 Victim & Family Advocacy

5.5.1 LPD Victim Advocates

LPD has a volunteer-based group of victim advocates (VAs) who are available to respond to death incidents, which include homicides, accidental deaths, and suicides. The VA group consists of 13 advocates who rotate through an on-call basis and are available 24 hours a day. The lead VA is also a paid LPD employee working as an administrative assistant for LPD’s Detective Bureau, though her time spent doing VA work for LPD is unpaid.

It is up to individual LPD officers to request a VA’s assistance with an incident. VAs only respond to incidents involving a death, and therefore do not respond to non-fatal shooting incidents. Typically, a request for VA assistance occurs after a patrol officer asks the family of the victim if they would like to have a VA present. For homicides, the VA typically responds immediately and will accompany an LPD officer to notify the victim’s family and may assist with other notifications. When a VA responds to a death scene where the family of the victim is present, the VA acts as a liaison between the family and detectives. The VA contacts the family of victims the day after the death to discuss action steps that the family needs to know such as getting information from the Medical Examiner’s office, receiving information about funeral and financial planning, and knowing what state assistance is available. The VA’s assistance to families is designed to be short term to help families with the immediate needs and impact of a loved one’s death.

LPD’s VAs do not currently participate in many community-based events or partnerships with community organizations, though at least two leaders from community-based organizations included in the assessment are also volunteer VAs. One VA suggested it would be a good idea for the VAs to participate in violence prevention walks facilitated by LPD’s community-based partners and to be more active in community events.

5.5.2 LPD Social Work Unit

LPD’s in-house Social Work Unit is available to provide wraparound assistance to individuals on a referral basis, as well as to assist with immediate on-scene response upon officer request. The Social Work Unit has little to no involvement with LPD responses to shooting and death incidents. The VAs provide most of the support and assistance to families of homicide victims, and again, the VA assistance is designed to meet short-term, immediate needs (usually within a week of the death). Social workers from the unit may be deployed by dispatch, or if an officer requests a social worker to respond to a call with them. There is no protocol or formal training for dispatchers regarding the types of calls that the Social Work Unit should be dispatched to, but the calls tend to be those involving possible mental health or substance use issues,

family or juvenile issues, houselessness, adult and child protective services cases, legal support needs, and domestic and sexual assault cases. It was reported that dispatchers have learned over time which calls are best suited for Social Work Unit involvement. If an officer requests assistance from the Social Work Unit on a call, a social worker responds immediately if it is during business hours. If there is a referral from an officer, the Social Work Unit has a waitlist. Nonemergency requests receive lower priority. The Social Work Unit attempts to connect individuals in the community to needed resources such as mental and behavioral health care, housing, substance abuse treatment, and financial assistance. The unit conducts needs assessments of individuals when they arrive on-scene.

The Social Work Unit comprises a supervisor who is a full-time social worker, two additional full-time social workers, and a team of interns. Interns within the Social Work Unit assist with many tasks. One intern is currently working with the cold case detective on the cold case website to make sure that victims' stories and photos are updated and to make anniversary calls to families. The intern is also fielding calls from families of cold case victims who are requesting case updates. There are currently no written policies for the VAs or the Social Work Unit. The recommendations related to victim and family advocacy focus on building upon the strong foundation of the VA group and the Social Work Unit and ensuring that the roles and responsibilities of these key personnel are formalized in policy.

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Expand advocacy efforts to families and victims through the following considerations:

- a. Expand victim advocacy efforts to include families and victims of non-fatal shootings. Advocacy support to victims and families involved in non-fatal shootings could be instrumental for LPD to develop relationships with victims/witnesses and the community more broadly, thereby leading to better case closure outcomes. LPD's in-house VAs, who are all volunteer based, appear at capacity and unable to offer additional advocacy outside of the immediate support they offer to families of homicide victims. Other options should be considered such as expanding the responsibilities of the Social Work Unit to meet this need or discussing options with existing community-serving partners who intersect with victims and families of fatal and non-fatal shootings. For example, the Healing Hearts Project has a family support group for those impacted by violence. A formalized approach could be developed for community-serving partners to meet LPD's advocacy needs for non-fatal shootings.
- b. Offer advocacy to families of homicide victims beyond response to immediate needs to include longer-term support through the investigative process. The current victim advocacy model focuses on immediate support (no longer than a week or so) and after that the VA is typically no longer involved with the family. Consider including the Social Work Unit more intentionally in advocacy efforts with families of homicide victims to provide for longer-term advocacy and support needs.
- c. Designate someone already in a support position in LPD to also serve as the point of contact who updates families on homicide (including cold cases) and non-fatal shooting cases. Currently, if a family wants an update about a homicide case, they are referred to the detective. This contact should have training to work with families in a trauma-informed way and have access to detectives. This change can also alleviate any demand on detectives' time that is spent fielding calls to provide updates to families and/or victims (including for non-fatal shooting cases).
- d. Consider hiring a dedicated lead advocate who has no other roles in the agency.

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Develop policies clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the VAs and the Social Work Unit.

Currently, there are no policies for either the VAs or the Social Work Unit to direct their response to incidents. If advocacy efforts of the VAs and/or the Social Work Unit were expanded based on the recommendation in this section, the policies should reflect this. Policies for both the VAs and Social Work Unit should be based on research and best practices regarding a victim-centered approach to advocacy. Policies should include details regarding the following:

- a. Required outreach to victims and families, and the timelines for those contacts.
- b. Topics that should be covered during the initial contacts with victims and families.
- c. The death notification process and the VA's role in that process.
- d. Procedures for documenting contacts with victims and families.
- e. Formal reports or information-sharing protocols with detectives.
- f. Any required trainings or certifications, which should include specialized training on victim advocacy and training on trauma-informed death notifications.
- g. The process for selecting VAs and personnel for the Social Work Unit, which should include a background screening if the personnel are co-located with Detective Bureau and have access to Criminal Justice Information Services and LPD's records management system.
- h. Spontaneous disclosures of case-related activity by victims and families.

28	<p>Implement a formal, standardized, and consistent process for documenting the VAs (and potentially Social Work Unit if advocacy role was expanded) contacts with victims and families. The documentation requirements should be included in policies and SOPs governing the VAs and Social Work Unit.</p> <p>It is critical to continue to thoroughly document all contacts with families and all communications with detectives about these contacts. This is especially true given that everything an individual does as an advocate with LPD is discoverable, subject to open records requests, and subject to <i>Brady</i> disclosures.</p>
29	<p>Incorporate into written policies/SOPs expectations for detective follow-up and communication with families of homicide victims and families and victims of non-fatal shootings. These expectations should be grounded in a victim-centered approach and emphasize that detectives should treat all victims and families with respect. Policies should also require that all detectives receive training on the duties and capabilities of the VAs and the Social Work Unit.</p> <p>Policies and protocols should require detectives to:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Provide families of homicide victims with an advocate’s contact information before and after interviews, and, if possible, have an advocate available before and after interviews for additional victim support (and expand to interviews with victims of non-fatal shootings); Keep victims and families informed of the investigation to every extent possible; Promptly return calls and emails from victims and families regarding inquiries about the case or status of the investigation; and Proactively reach out to victims and families at regular intervals (e.g., monthly), regardless of whether the detective has any case updates.

5.6 Internal and External Coordination

Collaboration and communication between various investigative units within a police agency can be critical to an effective homicide or shooting investigation (Wellford, 2018). Members of different units may have pertinent information to share about suspects, witnesses, or leads, and this vital information may fall through the cracks without strong coordination. Similarly, it is critical for investigators to work closely with external organizations, such as state and federal law enforcement agencies, crime laboratories, and task forces.

The project team found that there are strong working relationships between MCU investigators and members of other units within LPD, including VCI detectives and LPD crime analysts. For example, personnel indicated that VCI has been invaluable and its work is one reason for LPD successes when investigating violent crimes, including homicides. Interviews also revealed that MCU investigators have a strong relationship with external partners, including the MSP personnel assigned to LPD, the MSP Crime Laboratory, and the ATF task force officer assigned to LPD.

Recommendations	30	<p>Formalize the process of holding a team meeting immediately after a homicide occurs and after prioritized non-fatal shooting cases. The purpose of the meetings is to establish strong coordination and communication at the outset, as well as to share information that was learned at the scene.</p> <p>The meeting should include officers from the responding patrol unit, the detective sergeant, CSI, and the case detective. A crime analyst should also be included in this meeting. LPD should consider using a rotation system so that the same analyst is not required to attend all meetings. The practice of including an analyst in these meetings should be formalized and stated in an LPD SOP.</p>
	31	<p>Involve a prosecutor in the briefing when the case is complex or when it appears that investigators will need legal advice on how to proceed.</p>
	32	<p>Hold more frequent, regularly scheduled team meetings.</p> <p>The Detective Bureau should hold a weekly violent crime meeting to discuss the city's most serious crimes. Each murder, non-fatal shooting case, and any other prioritized violent crime that occurred during the preceding 7 days should be discussed by the lead detective in an effort to gain information and intelligence from those present. Another benefit to the meeting is to invite guests to discuss their specialty, such as a medical examiner, prosecutor, CSI expert, or community group. The meeting should include LPD personnel and partner agencies that have overlapping responsibilities regarding violent crime response.</p>
	33	<p>Bring back the regularly scheduled meeting, which included local law enforcement agencies in the surrounding areas and prosecutors, to share information and intelligence across jurisdictional boundaries.</p> <p>Several interviewees mentioned this meeting as a place where information could be shared across agencies and with prosecutors. This meeting was viewed as valuable, but it had been paused. Interviewees noted that it would be useful to restart these meetings.</p>

5.7 Crime Analysis

LPD's Crime Analysis Unit (CAU) is located in the Detective Bureau and comprises four crime analysts and one sergeant supervisor. Two of the crime analysts are in contract positions and are not full-time LPD employees. In addition, there is a database administrator who is assigned to LPD's Central Records, rather than to the CAU. The database administrator performs queries for analysts and provides them with data tables. The database administrator has built templates of standardized reports that LPD personnel can automatically generate.

Personnel indicated that the four crime analysts are driven and motivated, which LPD can leverage to improve its response to fatal and non-fatal shootings. Analysts currently perform a range of tasks, including strategic and tactical analyses. One analyst is assigned to VCI and performs intelligence analyses for that unit, as well as creates reports for hits from the ATF's NIBIN. Analysts and investigators described these NIBIN intelligence hit reports as being very useful because key pieces of information about the connected cases were included in a single report. The VCI analyst also produces reports on annual shooting offenses by reading shooting reports as they come to LPD, rather than by extracting information from existing databases.

Another crime analyst is "called out" to attend the team meetings that occur immediately after a homicide, which are also attended by detectives, CSI, and other relevant personnel. This analyst thus plays an

important role in the immediate homicide response by gathering intelligence pertinent to the investigation as soon as the incident occurred.

LPD's crime analysts have completed some training, have attended analysts' conferences, and bring skills and experience to their positions. However, it would be useful for LPD to take a more systematic approach to providing training and professional development for its crime analysts. In addition, the development of closer collaborations between the analysts and the database administrator would facilitate stronger analytic work. Analysts indicated a desire for more training opportunities and greater communication with LPD supervisors and administrators, and they would like the opportunity to ensure their responsibilities and needs are understood.

Recommendations	34	Convert contract crime analyst positions to full-time positions. LPD executives reported that crime analysts are skilled and perform vital tasks. Analysts were found to be dedicated to LPD and took pride in their work. Converting the positions to full-time would signal to the analysts that they are valued members of the organization and would offer a greater degree of job security. This would help LPD retain the experienced analysts.
	35	Adopt a systematic approach to training crime analysts. Crime analysts should be provided with training opportunities, such as through the International Association of Crime Analysts or another organization. Training should include the analysis of NIBIN hits, link analysis, social network analysis, and how to leverage the ATF NIBIN Enforcement Support System analytic tool. In addition, all analysts would benefit from formal GIS and SQL training. The database administrator should be provided with formal training on crime and intelligence analysis to facilitate an improved understanding of the analysts' responsibilities and data needs.
	36	Provide crime analysts with direct access to back-end databases. For analysts to work efficiently, leverage their analytic skills, and meet customer needs, they should be provided with access to LPD databases. <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. As an example, an analyst currently reads reports each morning to identify and count shooting incidents. However, it may be possible for the analyst to instead access records management system data and perform queries to summarize shooting crimes, which would be more than reading individual reports.b. Additionally, providing analysts with access to LPD databases would allow them to generate unique reports that are not possible by relying on standardized report templates. For example, analysts could directly access data to perform spatial analyses or to combine datasets (e.g., a database that links NIBIN hits to incident reports). If granted access to the databases, analysts will need basic training on how to perform queries to access the data.
	37	Assign an individual crime analyst to every shooting case, including both fatal and non-fatal shootings. The lead detective should be required by policy to work directly with the assigned analyst. This will help ensure that the detective and analyst consult with one another on every case. In the alternative, LPD could designate one of the crime analysts as the "gun crime intelligence analyst," whose main responsibility would be to support non-fatal shooting investigations. This would allow the analyst to develop expertise in working with gun crime data and supporting investigators.

5.8 Real-Time Crime Center

Several personnel discussed the need to further develop the Real-Time Crime Center (RTCC) capabilities in order for it to reach its full potential. Personnel also indicated a need to enhance video evidence collection and video analytic capabilities. A more fully developed RTCC may aid video evidence collection and analysis.

Recommendations	38	Develop a detailed plan for the development of the RTCC. The plan should include, for example: <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Responsibilities of the RTCC and positions in the RTCCb. Required staffing levels necessary for proper functioningc. Budgetary needsd. Expected responsibilities for supporting investigationse. Products and outcomes to be generatedf. RTCC data access needsg. Policies that need to be developed and existing policies that require the inclusion of the RTCC
	39	As part of the RTCC development plan, attention should be given to current procedures for collecting video evidence as part of homicide investigations. SOPs should be updated to include responsibilities for crime analysts, RTCC staff, and RTCC capabilities. <p>RTCC staff and crime analysts may require specialized training on accessing and analyzing video evidence.</p>

5.9 Developing Trust and Engaging Witnesses

Trust between police agencies and the communities they serve is particularly important when it comes to earning participation from witnesses in investigations and solving violent crimes. Without strong police-community relationships, it can be difficult to motivate members of the public to report violent incidents, participate in investigations, testify in court, and engage in the criminal justice process (Wellford & Cronin, 1999). Personnel with LPD and the DA's Office said that it is challenging to obtain participation from witnesses and victims in shooting investigations, especially if the victim or witness is exposed to potential criminal liability. The case file review revealed that victim participation is high in non-fatal shooting cases, wherein 94% included a witness statement and the victim appeared to participate in the initial response in 83% of non-fatal shooting cases. However, in interviews, the general response from site personnel was that participation from witnesses, especially in non-fatal shooting cases, was low.

Recommendation	40	Provide training to detectives to teach them how to build trust in the community and earn participation from reluctant witnesses and victims in shooting investigations.
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LPD has strong existing relationships with several community-based organizations that work with victims and witnesses of violent crime. These groups can serve as current or potential partners in LPD's efforts to develop and engage witnesses. LPD also has the benefit of a CSU, which can help enhance existing

partnerships and develop new ones with community partners and residents. Many recommendations in this section address how LPD can further leverage existing strengths to encourage victim and witness participation in investigations to improve clearance rates.

5.9.1 Trauma-Informed Engagement

When interacting with victims and witnesses of violent incidents, it is important to acknowledge and account for the trauma that they have experienced. A trauma-informed approach will lead to better interaction between law enforcement and victims/witnesses, which may improve cooperation, increase victim/witness sense of safety and feelings of trust, and elicit more information for investigative purposes.

Recommendations	41	Consider a required training that focuses on how trauma impacts the brain and body, which in turn affects a victim’s or witness’s ability to recall details of an event or to communicate about an incident. This training should be required for all LPD personnel, both sworn and non-sworn, who interact with victims or witnesses. This training will allow law enforcement personnel to better understand the behaviors of “difficult victims/witnesses,” which may be related to trauma.
	42	Consider a required training for all investigators about trauma-informed interviewing techniques.

5.9.2 Utilizing the Community Service Unit

LPD’s CSU comprises 12 community police officers (CPOs) who are assigned to specific neighborhoods in the city. At the time of this assessment, the CSU was short-staffed with only five CPOs. Several of the CSU’s current activities provide opportunities for LPD to strengthen existing relationships with the community, which can potentially increase the likelihood of victim/witness participation in investigations.

Several community-based interviewees also said that community events are important activities for giving the community hope and for fostering trust between LPD and the community. Interviewees described past community events where LPD officers have attended in support and have provided refreshments and giveaways. Interviewees from both the community and LPD agreed that they would like to start having events like these in every area of town. The assessment team was told that the CSU is hoping to take more of a leadership role in initiating community activities and efforts.

Several community-based interviewees told the assessment team that CSU’s educational efforts are important because at times families can become frustrated when the investigative process moves slowly or when there is an unfavorable prosecution outcome, so the community needs to be educated about criminal justice process and what aspects of a case are out of LPD’s control. Incorrect information or having an experience inconsistent with expectations may lead some victims and witnesses to disengage from the process. Therefore, setting accurate expectations up front and providing ongoing communication and support are good practices to sustain longer-term engagement throughout the investigation and prosecution of a case.

Additionally, there are several ways in which the CSU can directly assist with LPD’s response to shooting incidents. For example, the CSU could assist with communicating about shooting incidents via available social media platforms and neighborhood watch groups. Interviewees also shared that in the past, the CSU was more involved in supporting shooting investigations. They said that CSU personnel used to go

door to door to speak with neighbors in an area affected by shootings, provide cards with contact information, and leave a door hanger for those who did not answer. The CSU also leads the Security Camera Registry and Mapping (SCRAM) program, a program for residents and businesses to register their privately owned cameras with LPD.

Recommendations	43	<p>Reinstate the CSU’s door hanger and neighborhood canvassing efforts in areas affected by shooting incidents.</p> <p>In addition to receiving information relevant to shooting investigations, sometimes CPOs have received reports about other crimes or issues in need of repair, so consider also including contact information for city services on door hangers and other materials. See Recommendation below, which details ministerial-led efforts that could be combined with CSU efforts.</p>
	44	<p>Promote SCRAM registration in areas most impacted by shooting incidents and, if possible, provide cameras to businesses or property owners to increase the likelihood that incidents will be recorded on video.</p>
	45	<p>Explore programmatic and operational changes to better formalize or standardize communications and engagement opportunities with the community, many of which the CSU may already be leading.</p> <p>These include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Consulting with community groups. b. Engaging in dialogue with community residents and youth. c. Educating the public on the criminal justice system. d. Attending or hosting community events in partnership with community groups. e. Developing crime prevention programming.

5.9.3 Utilizing Community-Based Groups

Community partnerships should be central to a police agency’s efforts to develop and engage witnesses. Community groups can take on some of the work and responsibilities in this area to alleviate demand on LPD to do so, and community groups may be better suited in this area than law enforcement to facilitate community participation in investigations.

Recommendations	46	<p>Conduct a formal inventory of community-based and community-serving organizations and convene leaders of community groups to discuss ways to develop and implement strategies to address the recommendations in this section.</p>
	47	<p>Explore hosting an event to bring community-based organizations together for the purpose of sharing information and strengthening collaboration among these groups.</p> <p>The event could be hosted by LPD or another neutral partner.</p>

The project team learned that there are strong ministerial-led efforts in partnership with LPD wherein churches are serving as a trusted intermediary between the community and police department. If there is a shooting incident, a group composed of leadership from local churches goes door to door to speak with residents, offer prayer, and listen for ways they may possibly intervene. Ministerial-led efforts also include outreach in high-needs areas to help make resources and support available. The ministerial group has had residents come forward with information through these efforts. Additionally, when the community

sees LPD officers interacting with ministerial group members in the neighborhood, it enhances the community's trust in police.

Recommendations	48	<p>Consider building the capacity of community groups to serve as intermediaries, or “civilian buffers,” between witnesses/victims and LPD. Consider ways to develop and implement more formal approaches, in partnership with community groups, to allow community groups to grow their role as intermediaries in this area.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a. Develop and standardize protocols that LPD personnel take when engaging the community in the response to shooting incidents. One recommendation would be to implement community-led neighborhood canvassing, in partnership with LPD (and possibly the CSU), in areas where shootings have occurred. Canvassing efforts would include conversations with residents, door hangers, and materials to solicit information from potential witnesses.b. Include family members of those impacted by violence as messengers, in person and in written materials, to encourage witness participation. Messages to the community should aim to reset norms about sharing information and promote a sense of shared responsibility.c. Establish information-sharing agreements and policies between LPD and community-based organizations so that community-based organizations will know what to do with any information received and what they can expect law enforcement to do with the information. <p>Note: Victim-serving organizations may have policies that prioritize victim empowerment, safety, and confidentiality, which may conflict with sharing information with law enforcement for investigative purposes. Any potential challenges should be discussed and addressed in the development of information-sharing agreements and policies.</p>
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5.9.4 Combating the “No Snitching” Culture

The code of “no snitching” was mentioned across several interviews as a reason why victims/witnesses do not participate in shooting investigations. The code or norm not to snitch may be a powerful narrative within the community that must be addressed to increase the likelihood that victims/witnesses will come forward with information. Specific efforts to combat the “no snitching” code in Lansing include two community-led campaigns, one of which is being implemented in schools to educate youth. These efforts should be supported and supplemented by LPD. Community members must be convinced that working with the police benefits the community and that doing so is safe. It is important to recognize the “no snitching” norm as a reflection of the weakness of existing loyalty bonds between police and certain communities that can be improved by creating greater bonds between police and the community through listening to the concerns of the community, providing assistance, and forming meaningful relationships (Asbury, 2010). Recommendations to strengthen bonds between LPD and the community have been provided throughout this section. LPD has a strong foundation for many of these recommendations.

Recommendation	49	<p>Support and supplement community-led strategies to combat the “no snitching” norm in the community.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Refer to the resource called <i>The Stop Snitching Phenomenon: Breaking the Code of Silence</i> developed by the Police Executive Research Forum (PERF) and funded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (Police Executive Research Forum, 2009), which includes promising practices to address the “stop snitching” phenomenon. b. Identify and review existing campaigns to combat “no snitching” norms in the community and support them. Community-based groups in Lansing are leading these types of efforts. c. Consider convening a working group including community leaders and community-led organizations to discuss strategies on this topic. Partner with community groups to develop forums to discuss norms around “no snitching,” which would include listening to the community (especially young people) about their perceptions of the norm and suggestions to overcome it. d. Acknowledge fear of witness intimidation and potential retaliation and provide resources and support to assist with witness relocation in certain situations.
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5.9.5 Utilizing Crime Stoppers

Crime Stoppers is a tool that LPD can use to encourage witness participation in investigations. However, several community-based interviewees told the assessment team that the community does not fully trust Crime Stoppers to pay for information or to keep their identities anonymous. Interviewees also said that they do not really ever hear about Crime Stoppers. In general, there is a lot of misinformation and lack of information about Crime Stoppers and the community is unsure of how the Crime Stoppers process works. More collaboration between LPD, Crime Stoppers, and the community is needed to spread standardized messaging about Crime Stoppers to encourage community participation and to dispel myths about the tool. In the case review, only two cases (both fatal shooting incidents) noted a public tip line as helping with the investigation.

Recommendations	50	<p>Promote the use of Crime Stoppers as a safe, anonymous way for community members to provide information regarding crimes.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Update educational and awareness efforts about Crime Stoppers to include the message that the identities of the anonymous tipsters have never been compromised and that the program is a safe, confidential way to report information and help address violence in the community. b. LPD should continue to promote Crime Stoppers at community meetings, link the program with faith-based groups and other community organizations, distribute Crime Stoppers materials at public events, and have CSU officers advertise the program. c. LPD should encourage its community-based partners to promote Crime Stoppers at its events and to the individuals it serves. Messages should include content about the Crime Stoppers program’s value, safety, and anonymity. d. Related to the recommendation about a “civilian buffer,” Crime Stoppers serves as an intermediary between witnesses and law enforcement officers. Some witnesses are motivated to share information so that they are released from the burden of holding the information, but they do not want to go directly to law enforcement. Many tipsters are not motivated by financial reward. Crime Stoppers messaging to encourage witnesses to provide information should acknowledge the various motivations of witnesses to report information and highlight that the Crime Stoppers program is separate from LPD.
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5.9.6 Addressing Victim/Witness Intimidation

Community interviewees shared that victims and third-party witnesses are often reluctant to come forward with information due to actual or perceived fear of retaliation. Addressing community fears about intimidation or retaliation is an important strategy to increase community participation in investigations. Tracking levels of witness intimidation over time would support LPD's crime prevention and investigation strategies and allow for evaluations of practices meant to combat witness intimidation. Further, developing protocols to respond to witness intimidation quickly, assess the level of risk for witnesses who are intimidated, and actively protect witnesses who are at the highest risk will demonstrate to the community that LPD and its partners are taking the issue of witness intimidation seriously and are actively working to ensure witness safety through the criminal legal process.

Develop a protocol for LPD and partners to better identify, record, and respond to acts of victim/witness intimidation, including how to assess the level of risk for those threatened.

A main point of contact to whom all acts of witness intimidation are reported is recommended, so that one person is responsible for documenting and tracking incidents and ensuring there is an appropriate response to all incidents.

- a. Utilize existing tools to develop protocols to identify and respond to victim/witness intimidation and to promote victim/witness safety. Review the resource titled *Improving Witness Safety and Preventing Witness Intimidation in the Justice System: Benchmarks for Progress* (<https://aequitasresource.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Benchmarks-for-Progress.pdf>).
- b. Increase identification of potential victim/witness intimidation through the following:
 - i. Educating law enforcement, prosecution, and victim/witness-serving personnel about intimidation, including how social media can be used to facilitate intimidation.
 - ii. Educating victims/witnesses about the various forms of intimidation and manipulation they may encounter and how and to whom it should be reported.
 - iii. Checking in regularly with victims/witnesses.
- c. Ensure the collection and documentation of evidence related to victim/witness intimidation and appropriate response to these incidents through the following:
 - i. Instructing victims/witnesses on how to preserve evidence of intimidation or harassment (including online and social media evidence).
 - ii. Ensuring that communication on a victim/witness's personal device or computer is properly documented and collected according to departmental procedures.
 - iii. Developing a process and point of contact to ensure that all instances of victim/witness intimidation are shared with and documented by LPD.
 - iv. Creating information-sharing policies and sharing information about instances of victim/witness intimidation as quickly as possible in a standard format.
 - v. Developing a risk assessment protocol for victims/witnesses who are threatened and taking appropriate measures to ensure the safety of those at the highest level of risk.

5.10 Cold Case Capacity and Process

LPD has one sworn detective assigned to investigate cold case murders. The detective has three volunteer part-time workers who help with duties. The cold case detective works in a building that is located several miles away from where MCU is housed.

At the time of the assessment team’s visit, there were 85 unsolved murder investigations, none of which occurred during the previous 5 years. Only 44 of the 85 cold cases had been reviewed for potential leads or forensic capabilities.

Solving cold cases not only brings offenders to justice, but it can also raise morale within a police department, strengthen community trust and satisfaction in the police, and relieve the burden on detectives working active cases. However, there are also costs to investigating cold cases, and there is little evidence on which cold case investigation models provide the greatest return on investment. Should LPD decide it wants to expand its cold case investigation capacity, the assessment team can provide the agency with resources on how to effectively implement and manage a Cold Case Unit.

Recommendations	52	<p>Strengthen the cold case investigative capacity by allocating at least one additional full-time detective to the cold case function.</p> <p>This will allow the team to conduct follow-up activities in the field with officer safety taken into consideration. It will also allow for continuity with investigations and increased abilities and performance.</p>
	53	<p>Housing the cold case homicide detective(s) with MCU detectives.</p> <p>This will enhance communication, provide better supervision and accountability, allow for more resources, and increase productivity.</p>
	54	<p>Establish formal policies and procedures for investigating cold case homicides.</p> <p>The current practice is informal and not driven by objective criteria or procedures. LPD should consult with MSP when developing cold case policies, as MSP has been credited with conducting successful cold case investigations.</p> <p>Cold case policies should cover the following core topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. <i>Case selection for investigative work.</i> Currently, there are no LPD standards for identifying cold cases that will be prioritized for investigation. b. <i>Cold case investigative training.</i> Cold case investigators and their supervisor should complete specialized training on working these challenging cases. c. <i>Investigator supervision.</i> Cold case investigator(s) should be reviewed and provided performance feedback to continually improve work. In addition, the supervisor should maintain a database of all cold cases and measure activities and progress for the cases being worked. This database will be useful for case reviews and for making decisions about when to close a case. d. <i>Cold case reviews.</i> There should be a regularly scheduled review of cold cases with the investigator, supervisor, and others involved in the case. The review should be focused on providing updates on the status of key elements of the investigation, identifying how obstacles can be overcome, and determining if the case should be closed. e. <i>Notification of victims’ family and friends.</i> LPD should develop a trauma-informed protocol for notifying victims’ friends and family members when the case is receiving new investigative activity. It is important to recognize that victims’ friends and family members may be retraumatized when the case is opened for new investigative work. Care must be given to the notification process. The LPD notification protocol can be grounded in lessons learned from notifying victims when their sexual assault kits have been tested years after the incident.

5.11 Physical and Digital Evidence

5.11.1 Personnel and Training

CSI personnel reported working 10-hour shifts, 4 days per week, and being on call outside of standard working hours. Working weekends and being on call can take a toll on CSIs, especially with increasing numbers of homicides. In addition, the CSI position commitment is 10 years. Although there appear to be no standardized recommendations for the number of CSIs based on an agency size or per numbers of violent crimes, the site visit indicated that current staffing levels are inadequate given the workload.

Recommendation

55

Increase the number of CSIs to five and create a CSI sergeant position.

LPD recently increased the numbers of CSIs from two to three; however, more CSIs are needed to avoid burnout and maintain strong performance. As an alternative, LPD could consider hiring a civilian to handle the lab processing work, which could potentially reduce the number of needed CSIs to four instead of five.

Creating the CSI sergeant position would provide avenues for advancement within CSI, which do not currently exist. Currently, a CSI who gets promoted is transferred out of the unit.

LPD has a limited number of uniformed officers who are trained to be crime scene technicians. Patrol officers are typically responsible for collecting evidence from the scene if the LPD CSI unit does not respond, which generally happens in cases involving shots fired but with no victims on the scene. The assessment team was told that sometimes officers are not aware of the proper evidence collection protocols; for example, when patrol officers are tasked with collecting cartridge casings from a scene, they often place all the casings in the same collection container. This method of comingling the casings can limit DNA processing due to cross contamination.

Recommendation

56

Expand crime scene technician training for patrol officers. This will help relieve the CSIs of some minor scene processing duties.

Training should be focused on how to properly collect and store evidence, including how to correctly collect and store cartridge casings by placing each cartridge in a separate container.

5.11.2 Coordination with MSP Crime Laboratory

The assessment team learned that LPD has a strong partnership with the MSP Crime Laboratory and personnel. LPD should continue to foster this relationship and take continuous steps to strengthen coordination between the two agencies.

Recommendations	57	<p>Establish an agreed-upon methodology with the MSP Crime Laboratory in which LPD's fatal and non-fatal shooting cases are given priority status among all LPD cases.</p> <p>This system would lead to faster results and more timely intelligence for LPD.</p>
	58	<p>Include MSP personnel in responses to crime scenes where there is bloodstain pattern evidence.</p> <p>MSP laboratory personnel possess the advanced knowledge and training required to process this type of evidence. Careful coordination between CSI units will be required when these situations arise so there is a clearly defined lead CSI and lead agency responsible for all aspects of the scene, including maintaining the evidence log.</p>
	59	<p>Work with MSP Crime Laboratory personnel to receive training and updates at regular intervals throughout the year.</p> <p>Training should include information about the MSP laboratory procedures, and MSP's recommended evidence collection and submission methods. This would help LPD personnel identify the evidence that is most valuable and know how it should be submitted to the laboratory for analysis.</p>

5.11.3 Firearms and Ballistics Evidence

LPD's current practice is for detectives to transport seized and recovered firearms to the MSP Crime Laboratory for testing and submission. Although the use of detectives for this function allows for interaction with laboratory personnel, it is not an effective use of resources. Not only does this approach take detectives away from their core investigative work, but it may also result in firearms evidence not being transported to the laboratory in a timely manner when detectives must prioritize addressing tasks that need immediate attention.

Additionally, the assessment team learned that although MSP Crime Laboratory personnel will not test DNA or fingerprint samples from firearms that have been seized from a person, LPD continues to collect latent prints and swab guns seized from individuals. Ceasing this practice may help reduce the time it takes to submit the gun for test firing and then submission to NIBIN.

The assessment team also learned that the turnaround time for testing firearms evidence could be improved if LPD more consistently submitted recovered firearms and shell casings to the MSP Crime Laboratory at the same time.

Recommendations	60	<p>Take steps to reduce the turnaround time for submitting and testing firearms evidence. These steps include the following:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Designating non-investigative personnel, rather than detectives, to transport seized and recovered guns to the MSP Crime Laboratory on a daily basis. Ceasing the practice of collecting DNA or fingerprint evidence when guns are seized from individuals. Submit recovered firearms and casings to the MSP Crime Laboratory at the same time. Although this practice is already being done in many cases, the assessment team learned that it should be done more consistently. Coordinating with the MSP Crime Laboratory to develop a policy for processing firearms and casings that is consistent with the laboratory's submission criteria.
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	61	Consider expanding the use of gun tracing and integrating it into the work of crime analysts. As discussed in the Crime Analysis section in this report, LPD could consider designating one of the crime analysts as the “gun crime intelligence analyst,” whose main responsibility would be supporting non-fatal shooting investigations. This could help strengthen LPD’s capacity to perform firearm tracing and analysis.
	62	Strengthen the communication protocols surrounding NIBIN leads by holding crime analyst briefings at shift meetings and including information about NIBIN hits in these briefings. These briefings can provide a feedback loop to patrol officers about how their work, including casing collections, can lead to new intelligence and possible case closure. The briefings can also allow patrol officers greater buy-in when searching scenes and provide them with valuable information about how a case is progressing.
	63	Require investigators to document all firearms/ballistics testing and results in the case file. This includes information related to firearms and toolmark identification, gun tracing, and NIBIN hits. Obtaining and documenting these tests and results should be an item on the investigative checklist, which is discussed in Section 5.4 (“Investigating Fatal and Non-fatal Shootings”) of this report.
	64	Leverage the existing partnership with ATF to launch a Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC). The initiation of a CGIC would promote efficiencies in the collection and processing of crime gun evidence and encourage timely entry into NIBIN. This would also allow for the optimum use of eTrace to streamline the tracking of firearms.

5.11.4 Digital Evidence

From the case file review, digital evidence was collected in 45% of non-fatal shooting cases and in 95% of fatal shooting cases. Yet, use of technology to analyze digital evidence was documented in only 4% of non-fatal shooting cases and 24% of fatal shooting cases. It is possible that analyses were performed but that results were not included or documented in the case reports, particularly if the results were not helpful or used for the investigation.

Recommendations	65	Require investigators to document the results of all analyses of digital evidence in case files if analyses were performed.
	66	Provide LPD personnel with additional training in the area of digital evidence collection and analysis, including the use of social media evidence. When possible, LPD should seek joint training opportunities with the DA’s Office. This is especially important because the prosecutors often rely heavily on digital evidence to make cases when witness cooperation is low. LPD and the DA’s Office should work together to identify ways to expand digital evidence support and training, such as through grant funding.
	67	Take steps to strengthen the department’s capacity to collect and analyze video evidence. There are several options that LPD can consider when assigning this responsibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Embed this responsibility into LPD’s RTCC when the RTCC is more fully developed and staffed.

- b. Train patrol officers on the collection of video evidence, so officers who respond to shooting scenes can immediately begin the process of locating and collecting video evidence. After initial response to scenes, the patrol supervisor can assign certain uniform members to remain on scene (scene security) while those trained in video collection can start that function. The patrol supervisor should oversee this function and make note of possible closed-circuit television (CCTV) locations. As many shooting incidents occur in the evenings when businesses equipped with cameras may be closed, follow-up coordination of obtaining additional video should be managed in collaboration with the oncoming patrol supervisor. This activity will also keep uniform personnel engaged in an investigation, increases visibility in areas near but not directly at the shooting incident, and effectively expands the search area. While looking for potential CCTV cameras, officers may locate other evidence related to the crime.
- c. Additionally, LPD should consider hiring a dedicated video analyst(s) with responsibility for processing video evidence that is collected. There is a level of training that must be initially undertaken for this position as well as continued/updated training as technology evolves. Due to the training needs, this position may best be filled by hiring a civilian(s) as opposed to a sworn member.

5.12 Case Prosecution

5.12.1 Prosecuting Attorney's Office

The Ingham County Prosecuting Attorney's Office (ICPAO) has 30–35 assistant prosecuting attorney (APA) positions and is currently understaffed by two to three positions. Four to five APAs are assigned to the Violent Crime Homicide Unit. Homicide cases are distributed among those attorneys, as well as to a senior experienced APA not in the Homicide Unit and among APAs in other relevant units, such as child abuse and Domestic Violence, when the homicide is associated with those crimes. Currently, the office is handling roughly 50 homicide cases, including homicides that do not involve shootings. Cases involving non-fatal shootings and other firearms cases are handled by the Gun Violence Unit, which was created in 2019 in response to anticipated increases in gun violence.

The ICPAO does not employ investigators or crime analysts; APAs will do their own analysis in cases, particularly cases with digital evidence, largely from phones. Some APAs are more tech savvy than others, and interviewees expressed a desire for APAs to receive more training on digital evidence. The ICPAO has an active victim/witness unit consisting of four advocates who work with families of the victim throughout the case.

When a homicide occurs, the LPD detective calls one of the Violent Crime Homicide Unit APAs or the on-call APA to talk about the case, discuss potential charges if a suspect exists, and obtain approval of all search warrants sought by the detective. ICPAO uses vertical prosecution of homicide cases, meaning that one APA is assigned to the case from start to finish. This helps to ensure that families do not have multiple APAs working the case. Once the homicide is assigned to a specific APA, they then maintain a relationship with the assigned detective throughout the case. The ICPAO does not get calls on non-fatal shootings unless it is an extremely serious or unusual case. All charged felonies go through preliminary hearings within 21 days of arraignment. The ICPAO does not use a grand jury to investigate and charge violent crime.

APAs currently enjoy good results in their homicide cases, and the assessment team found that APAs generally have a good relationship with LPD and, in particular, the LPD Detective Bureau. Interviewees said that information sharing and collaboration between detectives and APAs is good and that detectives do an excellent job building homicide cases.

However, the assessment team also heard that there has been some strain in the relationship between the ICPAO and LPD due to certain charging and sentencing policies; specifically, the policy related to not charging unlawful possession of firearms associated with vehicle stops for infractions that are unrelated to safety. Some interviewees said that this policy has emboldened individuals who are otherwise prohibited from possessing or carrying concealed firearms to ignore the law without fear of consequences. According to site personnel, this policy has not noticeably reduced stops/arrests related to firearms but has resulted in a modification of the approach LPD takes in making stops for safety-related infractions and has caused LPD to thoroughly document the firearms seizure and any danger associated with an accused individual.

Prior to COVID-19, APAs participated in quarterly crime meetings at LPD. One APA also participated once a week in the VCI daily briefing. Additionally, APAs participate in Project Safe Neighborhoods (PSN) meetings to screen gun cases and discuss individuals who are driving violent crime. Each of these meetings, which occurred regularly with the USAO and other agencies, were seen as valuable by all who were interviewed on the topic. Since COVID-19, and due to the reduced staffing and increase in violent crime caseloads, these meetings are no longer attended by ICPAO. Additionally, ICPAO does not participate in any LPD training except for the appellate unit's legal updates. ICPAO and LPD generally do have other opportunities for training and expressed interest in working together on internal trainings.

ICPAO also has a good relationship with the USAO for the Western District of Michigan in part due to the fact that many former APAs are now employed by the USAO. Additionally, one APA is currently cross-designated as a Special Assistant US Attorney to handle firearms cases out of Ingham County.

Interviewees from the ICPAO concurred with the LPD's assessment of witness reluctance to participate in shooting investigations, particularly non-fatal shootings. When witnesses do come forward, by the time of trial (on average, about 2 years after the incident), witnesses are reluctant to testify. Some detectives do a good job of preparing witnesses for what will be expected of them and the basic timeline of the case. Although interviewees could not recall any incidents of physical attacks on witnesses, witnesses remain afraid to testify and, on occasion, intimidation can occur on social media, including posting of police reports online. ICPAO efforts to restrict discovery, including protecting the identity of witnesses, is generally met with skepticism by their judges, absent documented evidence of witness intimidation or tampering. There is little proactive investigation of witness intimidation and only occasional informal witness protection efforts largely due to a lack of witness protection funding.

Although the elected prosecuting attorney works with community groups to combat gun violence, line APAs, while aware of some of the community groups, do not engage with them.

Recommendations in this section pertain to ICPAO and LPD partnerships and joint activities aimed at improving investigative practices and outcomes. Therefore, these recommendations would require buy-in from the ICPAO.

Recommendations	68	<p>LPD and ICPAO should collaborate to develop joint trainings, both for LPD detectives and for APAs. LPD should develop a list of training needs and content to provide to ICPAO, and then work together to set a schedule for the trainings.</p> <p>Potential training topics include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Collecting and analyzing digital evidence. b. Using social media in investigations and prosecutions. c. Drafting search warrants. d. Clarifying evidentiary standards, including the difference between “probable cause” for arrest and “beyond a reasonable doubt” for conviction. e. Determining how to build stronger cases using circumstantial evidence, including identifying admissible hearsay statements at trial. This training is particularly important for those cases when victims or witnesses refuse to cooperate.
	69	<p>Develop a checklist that outlines the specific process for detectives to follow when preparing a case to be reviewed by the prosecutor’s office for charging decisions.</p> <p>Leaders from LPD and ICPAO should work together to develop the checklist.</p>
	70	<p>LPD and ICPAO should hold post-trial debriefings to discuss cases after they are completed.</p>
	71	<p>LPD should invite APAs to its quarterly violent crime meetings and VCI’s weekly meetings. This will improve upon the existing good communication and information-sharing about the individuals driving violent crime, as well as about shooting cases in general.</p>
	72	<p>ICPAO could consider implementing a formal process for assigning homicide and non-fatal shooting cases, which may include criteria for which cases are assigned outside the Violent Crime Homicide Unit or the Gun Violence Unit.</p>
	73	<p>Identify ways to bring on support in the ICPAO for crime analysts and investigations such as through grant funding.</p>
	74	<p>Formalize training and mentorship opportunities for new prosecutors within the ICPAO about how to try murder cases.</p>
	75	<p>For significant cases, strategically take those federally.</p> <p>A federal grand jury can question witnesses under oath and in that case, witnesses can be sent out of town to testify so they can be more remote and anonymous. This cannot be done for every case, but this could be a strategy to focus on those defendants known to be committing significant violence or who are repeat offenders.</p>
76	<p>Consider the use of grand jury to lock in witness statements early on.</p> <p>Michigan is one of three states with provisions for a one-person grand jury, although a recent Michigan Supreme Court case may have rendered the one-person grand jury unfeasible.</p>	

5.12.2 United States Attorney’s Office

There are currently two Assistant United States Attorneys (AUSAs) from the USAO for the Western District of Michigan who are assigned to cases involving violent crimes and prohibited persons in possession of a firearm. Interviewees stated that typically, there are three AUSAs who work in that unit, and that the open position should soon be filled.

The USAO typically takes around five to six gun cases per month for the entire Western District, with one to two of those cases usually coming from LPD. The USAO does not take cases involving juvenile

perpetrators and typically does not take violent crime cases from LPD. When determining whether to take a case from LPD, the USAO first reviews cases that are uploaded to a listserv by LPD, particularly the VCI unit, and looks for specific criteria for those cases to go federal. When the USAO identifies an appropriate case, it will institute grand jury proceedings to investigate and charge the case. Prior to COVID-19, all the relevant agencies, including ATF, LPD, and ICPAO, would meet monthly to discuss and screen cases appropriate for prosecution in federal court. The AUSAs found those meetings to be quite helpful; however, they have not resumed since COVID-19. Additionally, the ATF has one special agent assigned to Lansing, who works out of LPD, and one task force officer. There were previously three ATF special agents working in Lansing, but staff shortages have reduced the number to one.

The USAO has been asked to provide training to LPD on federal gun cases and gang/group enhancements. The USAO is a critical partner with LPD on firearms cases and works well with LPD, ICPAO, and other federal and local partners in the Lansing area to combat gun violence.

Many of the AUSAs started their careers with the ICPAO, so they have prior experience working with some of the more seasoned members of LPD and the ICPAO. Interviewees from all agencies said that this helps foster a good working relationship between the USAO and LPD. LPD and the USAO collaborate on the PSN program, a partnership between the USAO, ATF, LPD, and other allied professionals, including community groups, that is focused on reducing gun violence. Currently, the USAO is not working closely with any community groups, but the new US Attorney is interested in reengaging the community to combat the rising gun violence in the Western District.

Recommendations	77	Develop written criteria, including formal standards and checklists, to provide detectives with guidance for building cases that will be accepted for federal prosecution. Personnel from the USAO and LPD should collaborate to create these standards, which should be included in LPD’s SOPs and in training for officers and detectives.
	78	Reinstate monthly PSN meetings to screen firearms cases and share intelligence related to violent crime in the Lansing area.
	79	Strengthen processes for electronically sharing comprehensive case information for cases that originated with LPD and were adopted by USAO. This should include protocols for sharing all video and photo evidence in those cases.

6. Conclusion

Overall, the NCCP assessment of LPD’s response to fatal and non-fatal shootings revealed many agency strengths, including dedicated personnel who are committed to serving the Lansing community regardless of current obstacles like a staff shortage and large increases in fatal and non-fatal shootings. The assessment identified agency strengths, like a strong relationship between LPD detectives and ICPAO APAs and an effective response to crime scene evidence including professional LPD CSIs and a close relationship with the MSP Crime Laboratory. The assessment also uncovered gaps and challenges in LPD’s response to shootings, including that shooting investigations were sometimes concluded prematurely with remaining leads left uninvestigated; inadequate documentation of investigative activities in case narratives, especially for tasks occurring later in the investigations; and underdeveloped policies to guide LPD’s response to shootings. The NCCP team will work with LPD to determine which

recommendations the agency can address and will support the agency in implementing and evaluating changes to how it responds to fatal and non-fatal shootings.

7. References

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Appendix A

Figure A.1. LPD Organizational Chart

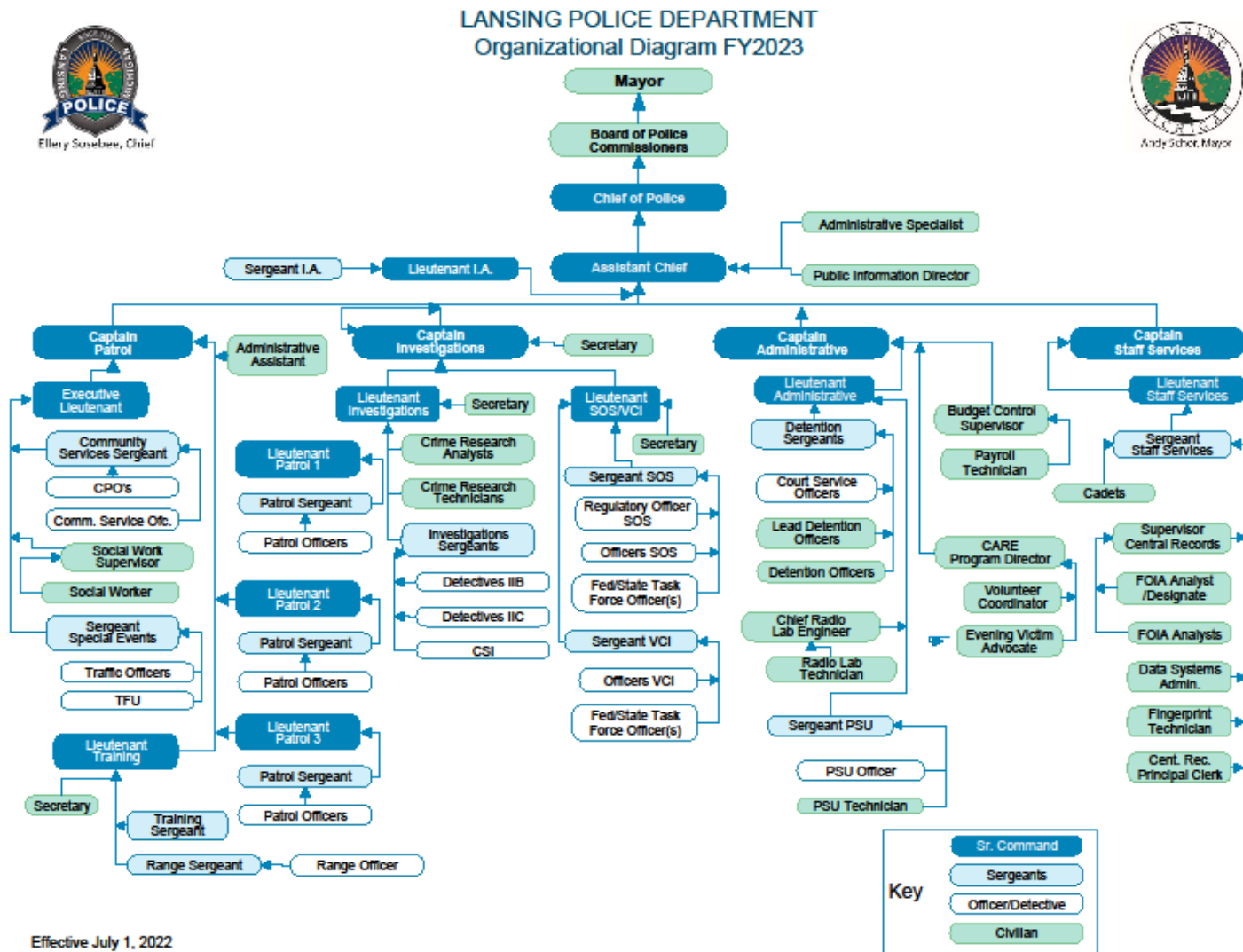


Table A.1. Victim and Suspect Relationships and Characteristics

Relationship Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Number of suspects at end of investigation		
1	18 (38%)	20 (54%)
2	6 (13%)	6 (16%)
More than 2	5 (11%)	4 (11%)
Unknown	18 (38%)	7 (19%)
Victim sex ^a		
Male	35 (74%)	33 (89%)
Female	15 (32%)	9 (24%)
Victim race ^a		
Black	21 (45%)	18 (49%)
White	3 (6%)	6 (16%)
Other	4 (9%)	2 (5%)
Median victim age	24 years	24 years
Final suspect sex ^a		
Male	26 (55%)	30 (81%)
Female	1 (2%)	4 (11%)
Final suspect race ^a		
Black	19 (40%)	19 (51%)
White	1 (2%)	4 (11%)
Other	4 (9%)	3 (8%)
Median final suspect age	23 years	21 years
Relationship between victims and offenders		
Current/former intimate partner	1 (2%)	4 (11%)
Family member	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Friend/acquaintance	8 (17%)	18 (49%)
Stranger	9 (19%)	2 (5%)
Rival gang/cliq ue member	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other relationship	3 (6%)	0 (0%)
Unknown	26 (55%)	11 (20%)

(continued)

Table A.1. Victim and Suspect Relationships and Characteristics (continued)

Relationship Characteristic	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Primary motive for shooting		
Conflict over money	3 (6%)	5 (19%)
Drug-related	2 (4%)	3 (19%)
Gang-related	1 (2%)	1 (13%)
Robbery	4 (9%)	3 (8%)
Shot inadvertently	3 (6%)	2 (5%)
Other	11 (23%)	13 (35%)
Unknown	23 (53%)	10 (27%)
Clearance status ^b		
Open/inactive	39 (83%)	18 (49%)
Cleared by arrest or exceptional means	8 (17%)	19 (51%)

^a Because crime incidents can involve more than one type, totals may sum to greater than 100%.

^b Due to a lack of documentation for case clearance status, these figures should be interpreted with caution. The authors discuss this point in more detail below.

Table A.2. Specialized Units and External Partners Involvement

Unit	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Specialized unit(s) helped with investigation ^a		
Fugitive	1 (2%)	10 (27%)
Gang/narcotics	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Intelligence	0 (0%)	4 (11%)
Crime analysis	4 (9%)	10 (27%)
Crime lab	3 (6%)	7 (19%)
Victim advocate	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Other	6 (13%)	0 (0%)
External resources/partners helped with investigation ^a		
Federal law enforcement	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Local/state law enforcement	0 (0%)	4 (11%)
Regional fusion/intelligence center	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Community-/faith-based organization	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Public tip line	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Other	2 (4%)	11 (30%)

^a Because crime incidents can involve more than one type, totals may sum to greater than 100%.

Table A.3. Technologies Used in Investigations

Technology	Shooting	
	Non-fatal	Fatal
Technologies used in investigation ^a		
Hidden recording device	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
License plate reader	0 (0%)	2 (5%)
Facial recognition	1 (2%)	1 (3%)
Social network data	3 (6%)	13 (35%)
Gunshot detection	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Firearm/toolmark identification	7 (15%)	13 (35%)
Gun trace	0 (0%)	1 (3%)
Digital data	2 (4%)	9 (24%)
IMSI-catcher	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Cell phone location	5 (11%)	10 (27%)
Vehicle computer data	0 (0%)	0 (0%)
Other	4 (9%)	10 (27%)

^a Because crime incidents can involve more than one type, totals may sum to greater than 100%.