CITY OF SURVEILLANCE

Recommendations for Civic Disinvestment in Surveillance Technology in Detroit, MI

January 10th, 2023

The enclosed recommendations have been prepared for review and consideration by members of Detroit's City Council, members of the Board of Police Commissioners, and public employees working in service of all people residing in Detroit, Michigan.

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About this Report

This report summarizes and expands upon the findings of "We Want Safety, Not Surveillance," a community-based survey project conducted by the Green Light Futures Coalition (GLBF) released in 2022.This report was collaboratively written by Rae Baker, Peter Blackmer, Alex Jiahong Lu, and Rebecca Smith, who were members of the Green Light Black Futures research working group, a subgroup of the coalition's Communication, Action, and Research and Education (CARE) Team.

Table of Contents

Executive Summary

In 2016, the Detroit Police Department initiated Project Green Light (PGL) as a pilot program with eight gas stations, hosting surveillance cameras and streaming footage to Detroit's Real Time Crime Center, a city-wide surveillance hub initiated under the leadership of former Chief of Police, James Craig. At the conclusion of PGL's first year of operation, more than forty three businesses were registered to participate in the program. Although Mayor Duggan referred to PGL as the "next generation of violence reduction"[1] research and organizing in response to PGL was immediately initiated by Detroit residents and community groups. They identified concern over PGL's ability to intensify racism through police reliance on facial recognition technology and algorithmic modeling, referred to by Ruha Benjamin, Professor of Sociology at Princeton, as "the New Jim Code"[2]. In PGL's six years of operation, Detroiters have continued to raise valid concern over the program's technology being inherently biased for its reliable misidentification of the faces of Black residents at a rate of 96%, which has so far resulted in two Detroit men, Robert Williams and Michael Oliver, being wrongfully arrested.

In their 2019 report, the Detroit Community Technology Project identified that "surveillance and data collection [of PGL] was deeply connected to diversion of public benefits, insecure housing, loss of employment opportunities, and the policing and subsequent criminalization of the community members that come into contact with these surveillance systems."[3] The increasing presence of surveillance technology in Detroit is a disturbing example of what Tawana Petty calls "the automation of racism,"[4] and is inseparable from Detroit's identity as an 80% Black city in the United States. Project Green Light is ubiquitous throughout the city's gas stations, convenience stores, businesses, and public housing, locations which concentrate surveillance in the lives of the city's working-class and poor residents.

Project Green Light and adjacent surveillance technologies being implemented in Detroit represents a turning point in the city's policing strategy. Civic leaders embracing data-driven surveillance technologies are not unique to Detroit, though as one of the U.S.'s majority Black cities, greater understanding and action toward local and national

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[1] Ferretti, Christine. (2016, September 9) "Detroit, Comcast partner to expand Project Green Light" The Detroit News
https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/detroit-city/2016/09/08/greenlight/90016834/
[2] Benjamin, Ruha (2019) "The New Jim Code" (Chapter) pg. 211-214 in "Which Side of History? How Technology Is Reshaping Democracy and Our Lives" (2020).
[3] Detroit Community Technology Project (2019), "A Critical Summary of Detroit's Project Green Light and its Greater Context" https://detroitcommunitytech.org/system/tdf/librarypdfs/DCTP_PGL_Report.pdf?file=1
[4] Petty, Tawana (2020, July 10) "Defending Black Lives Means Banning Facial Recognition"
https://www.wired.com/story/defending-black-lives-means-banning-facial-recognition/

calls for bringing an end to anti-Black police brutality needs to be a focal point of consideration in decision making processes for how to create safety in cities that align with resident needs, and the reality of systemic vulnerability Black residents experience at the hands, and by extension the technologies of police. The increasing reliance of police departments on the use of surveillence technologies, such as Project Green Light, is a contemporary extension of anti-Black policing tactics and governmentality that have been visible throughout U.S. history, that took on new pervasive tactics of infiltration and surveillance during the Civil Rights struggles of the 1950 and 1960's and have continued to evolve through increasing digitization. Communities that are living under constant surveillance, including Detroit residents, vocally pose concerns about the growing presence of surveillance technology to elected officials addressing privacy, criminalization, and the deep need for municipal funding to be directed toward universal pro-social resources including parks, street lighting, employment training, public health, and affordable housing. The growing use of facial recognition technology across the country through municipal programs including Project Green Light will indelibly have a deep consequential afterlife on the quality of Black community wellbeing, the US prison system, and in the destructive legacies of elected initiators and enablers of the increasingly expansive culture of surveillance being carried out as a new hallmark of "logistical governance" through 'smart' and modern urban planning.[5]

This report offers a comprehensive analysis of Project Green Light by presenting data from the Community Safety Survey, conducted by the city-wide Green Light Black Futures coalition between 2019 and 2021. The data presented here is composed of contributions of knowledge and experiences from Detroit residents about safety in the city and their communities. Research conducted by a multidisciplinary team representing the fields of architecture, urban planning, geography, information science, and African American history conducted extensive research for this report that addresses pressing questions about the impact, effect and reliability, and data reporting of Project Green Light. This team's research also pursued common questions about Project Green Light asked by residents, and Detroiters' concerns about safety and police violence in relation to constant surveillance and monitoring. The authors of this report situate Project Green Light within Detroit's historical and contemporary histories of policing and community-driven actions responding to violence.

As is outlined in the Community Safety Survey, the authors of this report sought responses from community members to the following questions:

1. What does safety look like from the perspective of people living in Detroit's neighborhoods?; and
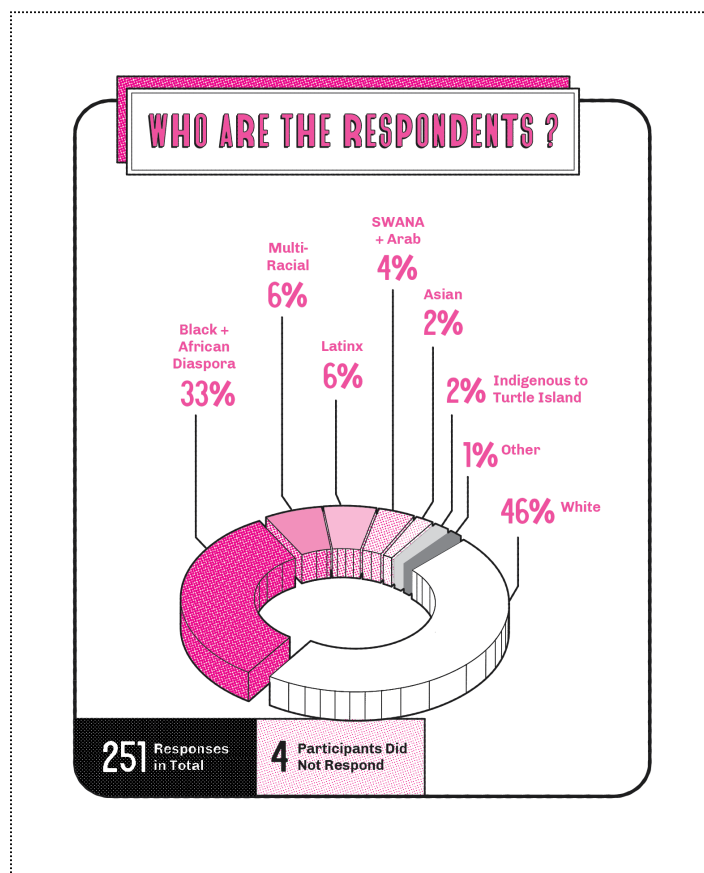
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[5]Aaron Shapiro, *Design, Control, Predict: Logistical Governance in the Smart City* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2020), https://doi.org/10.5749/j.ctv1b0fvcz.

2. What do Detroiters need in order to achieve a sense of safety?

The following key findings were arrived at through careful analysis of the Community Safety Survey results, as well as data collected from one-on-one interviews with community members and additional primary and secondary data sources including city budget documents, reporting on policing and crime data, Board of Police Commissioners meeting minutes, and political education documents from current and past community organizing initiatives in Detroit.

WHO ARE THE RESPONDENTS ?

SWANA + Arab 4%

Multi-Racial 6%

Asian 2%

Black + African Diaspora 33%

Latinx 6%

2% Indigenous to Turtle Island

1% Other

46% White

251 Responses in Total

4 Participants Did Not Respond

Our key findings from the Safety Survey data are as follows:

1. Project Green Light does not increase safety in Detroit. Project Green Light creates a *sense* of safety but does not increase safety as defined by Detroiters. Detroiters envision safe communities as resourced communities.

Detroiters want to feel safe in their homes, their neighborhoods, and while moving through the city. Surveillance technologies like Project Green Light, ShotSpotter, cellphone readers and simulators[6], and more policing can sometimes make Detroiters *feel* safer, but surveillance does not reduce "crime" in the city. Surveillance technology does not prevent violence or threats to personal safety and property, and it deprives communities of resources that are proven to decrease the causes of petty theft and violence. Addressing the socio-economic and political conditions that lead to violence and petty theft requires budgetary prioritizing of social services, public amenities, and well maintained and affordable public infrastructure, including access to housing and reliable transportation. Defining safety only in terms of "crime" does not encompass all

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[6] Fassett, Camille (2019, May 13). Detroit police spent over half a million on cellphone tracking technology. Truthout. https://truthout.org/articles/detroit-police-spent-over-half-a-million-on-cellphone-tracking-technology/

of the ways that Black life, people, communities, and spaces are threatened and harmed by surveillance and policing.

Respondents to the Community Safety Survey defined safety through a wide and comprehensive framing of the urban environment, which includes social relationships as well as physical infrastructure. A range of resources, both physical and social, were cited as important for creating a safe environment. Respondents highlighted that being able to access healthcare facilities is critical to a safe environment. They also described access to resources such as safe water, food, shelter, education, and healthcare as foundational to promoting safe environments. Respondents also described fearfulness about experiencing violence and brutality at the hands of police in their neighborhoods.

2. Crime data is not a reliable metric for measuring instances of violence, crime, or safety. Investment in carceral infrastructure criminalizes Black Detroiters.

The city and the Detroit Police Department (DPD) claim that there is a direct link between crime rates and the use of Project Green Light, but this has never been proven. When DPD claims that crime is down or uses the term crime rates, it's never clear if they are addressing the rate of arrests, the amount of convictions, or reduced reporting of violent crimes.[7] Using DPD reporting alone, it is challenging to understand how city-wide crime rates are – or are not – linked to Project Green Light, because crime rates vary overall throughout the year, both in the city of Detroit as well as nationally.[8] Data measurements, particularly of crime data, are never neutral or objective; instead, human and institutional biases along the lines of race, gender, class and more are entrenched in the collection, processing, and use of data when the purpose of its collection is to fulfill institutional reporting objectives and requirements. When data is collected for transformative purposes, as so much citizen science has been in the United States, communities work to initiate changes that reflect challenges that threaten their rights, opportunities to better meet their needs and increase wellbeing, and to strike a balance between institutional authorities and the collective power inherent in people struggling together toward a shared goal.

3. Increased transparency of technologies used for police surveillance in Detroit is needed: from the criteria used to the evaluate their effectiveness, to the data they generate and their funding mechanisms.

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[7] Gross, A. (2018, April 21). Does Detroit's Project Green Light really make the city safer? Detroit Free Press. Retrieved from
https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2018/04/20/project-green-light-detroit/509139002
[8] These trends are also tied to demographics: for example, if there are more young people in the population overall.

The Community Input Over Government Surveillance (CIOGS) ordinance, passed in Detroit City Council in 2021, requires that technical documentation be provided about any surveillance technology adopted by the city. As we have seen in recent City Council hearings surrounding the adoption of ShotSpotter, CIOGS is not being enforced in practice. Transparency in contracting, finances, and defined technological capacity is essential as new forms of technology continue to come out and be adopted by the city, because transparency is essential for expert analysis - from sources unbiased and not affiliated with the city or the DPD - to occur. The total cost of Detroit's surveillance infrastructure is difficult to calculate due to a lack of transparency from DPD, the program's reliance on multiple sites of operations including the RTCC, and unclear reporting. A conservative estimate based on available contracts adds up to over $30 million since 2014.

4. **Safety Survey indicates that there is plenty of intelligence in Detroit's communities, and long-term activists that should be supported and prioritized instead of unproven technologies.**

Detroiters know better than anyone how to build community, and how to care for each other. Our long-term residents are the real experts and have developed effective alternatives to surveillance for creating safe communities. This is why dedicated activists call, over and over again, for collective resources to support these forms of knowledge and action: to find solutions that can keep us all safe, in ways that actually address harm, provide long-term solutions, support our communities comprehensively and address the root causes of violence.

Necessary Resolutions to the Use of Surveillance in Detroit

The process of assembling this report has included analyzing the Community Safety Survey data and secondary sources of budgeting and policy documents, interviews with residents, listening circles conducted with community members, and academic and policy research in the areas of computer science, architecture, African American history, and urban planning and geography. By synthesizing the knowledge and information generated through these varied methods, the following policy and budgetary recommendations and practice-oriented suggestions have been prepared for the consideration of members of Detroit's City Council and Board of Police Commissioners, and technology professionals:

1. Discontinue all municipal budgetary support for the Real Time Crime Center, Project Green Light, and adjacent components of the Detroit Police Department's surveillance infrastructure.

2. Terminate all municipal contracts with private surveillance companies, including but not limited to: Motorola Solutions, DataWorks Plus, and ShotSpotter.
3. Adopt the provisions of the Detroiters Bill of Rights proposed by the Charter Revision Commission in 2021, including;
    a. Demilitarizing the police
    b. Restricting the use of surveillance technologies owned and operated by public agencies in Detroit including the police; and,
    c. Restructuring the Board of Police Commissioners to reflect true accountability to the community.
4. Require that all landlords and property management companies seeking participation in Project Green Light submit a valid Certificate of Compliance as well as proof of registration in the City of Detroit rental registry, as mandatory eligibility criteria to host PGL cameras. Demonstrating legal operation of their rental units as per the City of Detroit Code (Sec. 8-15-81 and Sec. 8-15-82) would prevent landlords who are not upholding Detroit's rental ordinance and are therefore operating their rental units illegally from surveilling their tenants and passers by for illegal activity.
5. Create and fund community response teams to carry out wellness checks, and respond to substance use and mental health issues, without involving DPD officers.
6. Strengthen the CIOGS ordinance by mandating a third-party evaluation of community needs, concerns, and resources related to issues of public safety that the city seeks to address through surveillance technologies, by entities not affiliated with law enforcement and with no financial, political, or professional interest in adoption of these technologies. These evaluations should be funded from the DPD budget.
7. Invest in services that improve the quality of life and safety of residents, specifically:
    a. Clean and affordable drinking water
    b. A well resourced school district with operable infrastructure
    c. Food accessibility and affordability
    d. Repair and maintenance of green spaces, parks, and street lighting
    e. Permanently affordable housing
    f. Reliable and accessible public transportation
    g. Public health initiatives that address mental health, the prevention of communicable diseases, and meet the growing needs of Detroit's aging population, residents with limited access to care, and those living with HIV/AIDS.
    h. Expanded access to free unbarriered wifi and digital access in Detroit's neighborhoods, along with free digital literacy training

    i. Develop and provide employment training resources
    j. Re-entry support services for Detroiters exiting incarceration.

Necessary Protocol for Review of Research and Contracts Pertaining to Surveillance

1. Practice awareness of human and institutional biases coded into the collection, processing, and use of crime data, as well as the design, development, and use of surveillance technologies.
2. Increase transparency in the process of surveillance technology procurement and implementation. Fighting to make technical specifications available, to increase opportunities for insight into the impact and effect of these technologies by unbiased outside entities.
3. Listen to non-elected experts and advocates in the fields of education, non-profit, and community sectors to receive critical insight into the efficacy and potential consequences associated with surveillance products both in the city of Detroit and other cities in the US.
4. Be critical about where information about proposed surveillance technology's efficiency is coming from, and how success and efficiency are measured. Do not take at face value data that is presented by agencies who have a direct conflict of interest in its collection.
5. Invest in the knowledge and insight of community-based safety initiatives, to understand what makes Detroiters feel safe, beyond solutions that rely solely on policing and surveillance technologies.

Section One: Surveillance Ain't Safety

GLBF Community Safety Survey

The Green Light Black Futures Coalition "Community Safety Survey" was developed by the coalition's Committee for Action, Research & Education (CARE) Team in the fall of 2019. Coalition members developed questions addressing what Detroiters prioritize and know most on the topics of personal and community safety, community members' knowledge of Project Green Light, and how Detroiters organize for safety in their communities. Over the course of two years (2019-2021), physical copies of the survey were distributed through canvassing outreach and street teams, and collected during multiple events organized by the coalition. Links to an online version of this survey were also distributed, and online results were collected up until August of 2021.

Analysis of Community Safety Survey responses indicate that 35% of the respondents identified as Black or African-American, and 84% of those who completed the survey lived within the city of Detroit. Because of the widespread reach of the survey online and the number of people who lived beyond the city limits and were actively engaged during and after 2020's uprisings, 14% of the opinions represented in survey responses were from people who lived outside of the city of Detroit.

This survey reveals community perceptions of safety at the personal, neighborhood and community, and civic levels. Results indicate that to community members, safety means having control over our environments, and the freedom to move through them without the threat of harm to themselves or their friends and family.

Safety Is Freedom From Bodily Harm and Violence

In response to a Community Safety Survey question asking respondents to define safety, respondents described safety as: freedom from fear within a given space (46/177 responses, 26.0%), freedom from the threat of physical harm (35/177 responses, 19.8%) and freedom from overall violence (11/177 responses, 6.2%). One respondent described safety as "a feeling of freedom [and being] able to move without worry of harm from others, community or government officials." Another respondent said safety is "freedom and peace of mind for all kinds of people in all kinds of spaces." One respondent described safety as freedom from being "killed, attacked, robbed, followed, watched". Another respondent said safety is "personal distance from a likelihood of becoming the victim of violent crime...including police brutality".

Many respondents also emphasized freedom of movement and mobility as important for feeling safe (19/177 responses, 10.7%). They describe having choice, freedom, and

control over how they move through their immediate environment as essential to feeling safe, especially for those with marginalized identities of race, gender, and/or queerness.

More respondents stated:

> *"Being able to rely on neighbors and friends for help when needed; having a place to sleep, eat, go to the bathroom; not being near, questioned by, or watched by police; knowing around me that the young people, Black and brown people, homeless people, Spanish-speaking people are not going to be messed with by police; feeling comfortable to say hi to people walking by."*
> (Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

> *"Safety to me means stay[ing] secluded from potential dangers around me. And learning preventions to situations that others go through on a daily basis. Staying as discreet as possible in attempts to not attract any unwanted or unwarranted attention from the police. Not because I have secrets. But because I don't want to put myself in any situations I've seen in my life from others. Safety means doing everything legal and properly arming yourself because at the end of the day a surveillance camera isn't going to help at that exact moment when I don't feel safe."*
> (Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

> *"Safety means being free to come and go and walk my neighborhood without fear of being bothered, harassed, assaulted, accused made to feel like I don't belong by anyone."*
> (Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

Calling the Police is a Last Resort

A common response from community members was that instead of calling the police, they would instead turn to neighborhood and tangible community resources (30 responses, 20.8%), policing alternatives such as mental health professionals and social workers (32 responses, 22.2%), and family or friends for support. A number of respondents discussed handling and navigating the emergencies and de-escalating the situations by themselves (24 responses, 16.7%). These responses all show the importance of strengthening alternative resources within communities. As one community member wrote:

> *"I live in a majority black neighborhood and I don't trust racist cops not to use violence since that seems to be their only solution. Instead there have been multiple times when I've relied on talking to neighbors face to face or using our combined skillsets as a block to solve problems and conflicts when they arise, like when a neighbor's acquaintance stole our Pride flag, or when we found an abandoned car blocking our driveway and we worried the driver was in danger. Both situations were resolved and provided*

opportunities to strengthen community because we reiterated in conversations with neighbors that we don't call the police unless someone is seriously injured, dying, or dead."
(Responding to Question "If you do not call the police, why not? What do you do instead?")

"The police almost never help… They don't resolve cases or do any investigation. And I've been stopped for walking while black so many times I just don't trust them. Some issues I've had are not important enough to worry about. Like getting something stolen. Other times when people are missing I just call around for them, i.e. hospitals or jail. And I've gotten in between folks fighting before. There was a time when I'd threaten to call the cops to get people to stop fighting w/o ever intending to call, but I don't do that anymore."
(Responding to Question "If you do not call the police, why not? What do you do instead?")

In responses to the Community Safety Survey, community members discussed varied reasons for deciding to access 911 services. Among 116 respondents who expressed their opinions on this issue, nearly half (54 responses, 46.6%)stated they would contact 911 for health and medical emergencies. Other reasons stated for calling 911 included witnessing gun violence and crime (55 respondents, 47.4%), witnessing and experiencing property related crimes such as break-ins and thefts (40 respondents, 34.5%), and carjackings (39 respondents, 33.6%). Over a quarter (31 respondents, 26.7%) said that they would call the police in response to witnessing domestic violence.

While community members described police presence and alternatives to calling the police in these situations, many of the 144 responses to this question identified that police presence could result in unnecessary anxiety, decreased safety, increased likelihood of violence, and distrust (25 responses, 17.4%), and that the police often offer little help and often escalate the situations on the ground (33 responses, 22.9%). One respondent stated:

"Police escalate non violent calls. All police don't protect and serve most harass and one car may be called but their partners may just swing [by] because they're bored and harass innocent people. Flash their high beam flashlight into oncoming cars. Most importantly they don't come immediately they take hours to come out to [a] call."
(Responding to Question "If you do not call the police, why not? What do you do instead?")

Safety Comes From Interpersonal Relationships and Community

When asked to describe the resources, services, and people that contribute to safety, survey respondents provided a variety of answers indicating that strong relational connections increase one's sense of safety. Survey answers also showed that survey respondents prioritized investments in infrastructure and resources that are proven to increase quality of life, including access to green spaces and parks, food, and opportunities to socialize. Survey answers also indicated access to healthcare services as a key component of feeling safe.

SURVEY QUESTION

What groups of people, resources, and/or services contribute to the safety you feel in your neighborhood?

173 RESPONSES

97% NEIGHBORS
83% PARKS + PLAYGROUNDS
70% STREET LIGHTS
69% CMTY FARMS + GARDENS
68% SMALL BUSINESSES
67% BLOCK CLUBS
40% HEALTHCARE
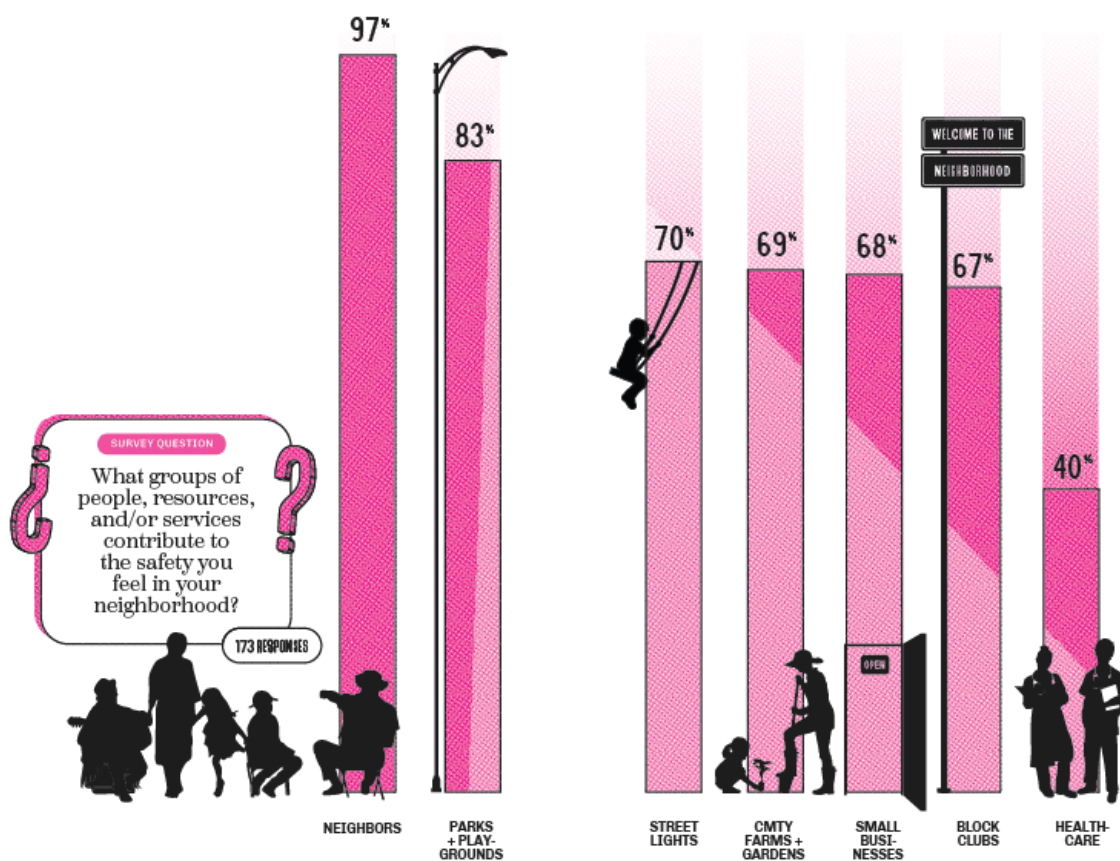
Elements of Detroit's neighborhoods that survey respondents stated provide them with a sense of safety included the (among 173 respondents who addressed this issue).

Interpersonal relationships allow community members to look after one another, and to count on each other when they need support. Residents describe that being known, seen and understood is the opposite of police surveillance. Specifically, safety means "knowing that folks are looking out for me," as opposed to "being watched through surveillance." In one community member's words, safety is:

"Having a network of people near me that I can trust if I need help…Safety is not feeling isolated…People who have your back and will take you in when you need something - like when you're afraid or sick or hungry. It's knowing the people around you and that they care about your well-being and growth and you feel the same about them (and you'd have their back, too). The proximity thing is important."
(Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

"Me knowing the people in my community makes me feel safer than other places because you have people not connected to me or my family in any way that watched me grow [as a] kid…. Knowing that there isn't heavy police presence at the business I go to on a day to day basis and that I know the community around me."
(Responding to Question "What makes you feel safe in your neighborhood?")

The forms of safety described above are products of community members working together, and creating practices of community-based care.

Community Infrastructures Build Relationships and Safe Neighborhoods

Community members' survey responses highlighted the importance of physical and social infrastructures in creating safety. Having access to and use of shared spaces and resources that facilitate interpersonal relationships among neighbors and residents are important components of building community safety.

Community members also described having access to resources such as safe water, food, shelter, education, and healthcare as foundational to neighborhood safety. Nearly 40% of respondents (69 responses, 39.9%) included having accessible healthcare facilities in their neighborhood as critical to a safe environment.

"Basic human needs must be provided to all to promote safe environments. This includes access to clean water, access to food, access to options to purchase and maintain a home, access to fulfilling education. Extremely reduced police presence, particularly in schools. A system that stifles people's ability to just live creates stress and promotes unsafe environments. I mean you can't call a place safe where you can't even have water."
(Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

Community members widely named streetlights as an essential component of safe environments, with the majority (144, 83.2%) including basic lighting infrastructure as critical for neighborhood safety. Community members describe that streetlights and

porch lights encourage communication and relationships with neighbors, which is essential for creating a culture of safety.

> *"Friendly people and neighbors around, street lights and the active communication between neighbors."*
> (Responding to Question "What makes you feel safe in your neighborhood?")

> *"Street lights, neighbors on porches that talk to each other, lots of gardens, parks with kids playing in them"*
> (Responding to Question "What makes you feel safe in your neighborhood?")

Surveillance infrastructure is a black box: residents are told to trust in its ability to keep them safe through increased policing, while its actual functioning and purpose is opaque, disempowering residents. The forms of physical infrastructure that residents identify as increasing safety within their environments - such as proper street lighting infrastructure and access to adequately funded schools, affordable water[9], and housing are the opposite because these public goods create outcomes that build individual and neighborhood capacity and decrease material and emotional vulnerabilities.[10]

Social Justice and Equity-focused Services Make Communities Safe

When asked to define safety, out of 177 responses, 21 responses (11.9%) stressed that measures of safety should include every member of our society, especially those who have been historically marginalized because of race, gender, class, and sexual orientation and gender identity. In one community member's words, "Safety is for the most marginalized people to determine in any group." Some participants took this sentiment further, suggesting that collective safety requires individuals to actively combat systems of bias and oppression:

> *"Safety means providing an equal and just society for all, which means acknowledging the systems of biases that place poor people, Black people, and people of color at a disadvantage. It means not only acknowledging it but actively combating it in a reactive mode of action but also building new and just systems in a proactive mode of action."*
> (Responding to Question "What does safety mean to you?")

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[9] Johnson, H., South, N., Walters, R. (2016) The commodification and exploitation of fresh water: Property, human rights and green criminology. International Journal of Law, Crime and Justice,44, 146-162.

[10] Kondo, M., Degli Esposti, M., Jay, J., Morrison, C. N., Freisthler, B., Jones, C., Yang, J., Chisolm, D., Branas, C., & Hohl, B. (2022). Changes in crime surrounding an urban home renovation and rebuild programme. *Urban Studies*, *59*(5), 1011–1030.

New Measures of Safety

The Green Light Black Futures Community Safety Survey results demonstrate that future conversations about how safety is defined, how safety is measured, and how to better support safety for the community should be aligned with the opinions, experience, and knowledge of residents. Doing so would likely produce vastly different approaches to municipal spending, community planning, and the design and implementation of community services and resources. It would also support non-policing alternatives to violence prevention, and work toward the forms of social justice that Detroiters are already addressing in their neighborhoods, within community organizations such as the Metro Detroit Restorative Justice Network, and the Detroit Safety Team.

Responses to the survey indicate that community members understand and value safety that results from relational connections, and access to resources that increase well being, rather than the limited framing of safety that is measured by policing and crime rates. Crime data exists to justify the use of surveillance technology and policing, it does not measure human infrastructure like personal relationships and mutual aid, physical infrastructure like community spaces and good lighting, or larger questions of social justice: the things that make us all safer. These true forms of safety are not only left out of how safety is often evaluated and measured by the DPD, the city, and law enforcement; they are directly threatened by surveillance.

Section Two: Race, Technology, and Data

Crime Data Is Not Neutral or Objective

A complex relationship exists between crime data, the occurrence of crime, and policing: often, police presence will actually increase crime rates, because more crime is reported due to police presence. Researchers have pointed out that crime data cannot be an objective measure, because it is collected by the police, who have a vested interest in what these facts and figures reveal, as crime data is important in promotions, department funding, and political careers.[11] Crime rates also go up and down by year overall, both in the city of Detroit and nationally.[12] Because of these various conflicts and limitations, even the FBI warns that crime data should not be relied on as a specific measure of safety.[13]

The city of Detroit and the DPD regularly claim that there is a direct link between the use of surveillance technology and lower crime rates, but this has never been proven. When they say that "crime is down" or refer to "crime rates," it's never clear if these decreases are in reference to the number of arrests, or the amount of convictions, or a particular category of crime.[14] In regards to Project Green Light, there is the added question of the spatial relationship between crime incidents and Project Green Light locations: it is unclear how big a radius of impact Project Green Light can be thought to have.

In a 2019 report, Circe et al. addressed many of these concerns, and attempted to determine the efficacy of Project Green Light using crime data. The research team did a comprehensive and detailed analysis, using a range of statistical methodologies, but were not able to prove that PGL had any significant impact on arrest or conviction

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[11] Brayne, for example, shows how police data embodies such racial biases. See "Policing by the Numbers: The Public History and Private Future of Police Data" in Brayne, S. (2020). *Predict and Surveil: Data, Discretion, and the Future of Policing*. Oxford University Press.

[12] These trends are also tied to demographics: for example, if there are more young people in the population overall.

[13] From: https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/explorer/state/michigan/crime. Last Accessed October 10, 2020.

[14] For example, James Craig as quoted in the *Detroit Free Press*, April 20, 2018. "https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/detroit/2018/04/20/project-green-light-detroit/509139002/" Last Accessed June 3 2022.

rates.[15] The only category of offense that PGL had any impact on was carjackings.[16] According to current Chief of Police James E. White even this relationship is unclear, as Detroit has recently seen an uptick in carjackings city-wide, while Project Green Light continues to expand.[17]

The use of crime rate as an objective measure of safety in our communities has become thoroughly normalized, and is often taken for granted, but is both a relatively recent phenomenon, and also linked to long-standing histories of racist practices within conceptions of safety. Elizabeth Hinton, a professor of law at Yale University, and Khalil Gibran Muhammad, a historian of race and criminal justice, have both shown in their research how crime data and other statistical measures have been historically used to characterize Black people as a danger to public safety.[18] They show how this is an extension of the same racism that justified the practice of lynching and other forms of racial terror.

The use of crime data to describe conditions of safety became popular in the 1960s and 1970s, as cities and urban communities were becoming Blacker and browner. This was during a time of community organizing and activism that stressed autonomy and self-reliance, and in the context of civil unrest and rebellions in cities around the country. Crime data became a way to manage and represent cities from a distance, putting responsibility for safety in the hands of governments and police, instead of communities on the ground. In a trend that continues today, crime data became a high-level way to justify the allocation of federal money towards block grants, the same kinds of grants that are used to support surveillance technology in Detroit. In this context, the use of crime data became a self-fulfilling prophecy, used to increase funding for more police, more criminalization, and more technologies like Project Green Light.

Together, crime data is a distorted representation, aligned with racist policing practices, and the racist characterization of Black people and communities as criminal and

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[15] Regarding crime in the Detroit overall, Circo et al. state that "The findings on the impact on crime trends are difficult to interpret. We did not find clear and consistent indications of crime declines associated with PGLD participation." Circo, Rogers, and McGarrell, *Project Greenlight Detroit: Evaluation Report* (Lansing, MI: Michigan State University School of Criminal Justice, 2020), 37. https://wipp.cj.msu.edu/_assets/pdfs/mjsc/pgld-report-2192021.pdf

[16] Circo et al. state that there was a higher "clearance rate", (or rate of arrests for these crimes), at PGL locations versus non-PGL locations (38.2% versus 18.7%).

[17] Statement made by James E. White, Detroit City Council Meeting, Detroit, MI. October 11, 2022.

[18] Hinton, for example, discusses multiple widespread issues with the use of crime data in her book "From the War on Poverty to the War on Crime: The Making of Mass Incarceration in America" (2016), describing the ways that crime data and policy, "together became a perpetuating force" that resulted in over-policing of urban Black communities" (pg. 18), and that way that this combined with "the rise of a statistical apparatus" used to justify these policing practices." (pg. 22). Hinton additionally questions the validity of crime data produced by law enforcement entities, who have a vested interest in the representation produced by it (pg. 6).

dangerous. These representations themselves are a form of violence, and reflect how society at large is conditioned and indoctrinated into thinking about race, public safety, and public space.

Surveillance Data Produces Digital Injustice

Data is a form of representation: from the crime data used to perpetuate self-justifying narratives of policing, to the data collected through contemporary surveillance technologies. Digital technology, and the data it produces, is neither objective nor neutral. It is both enabled by, and productive of, specific narratives which serve the interests of corporations that produce proprietary software and policing agencies seeking a greater share of municipal budgets. This is a point that has been made criticality by Detroit-based activists, researchers, and organizers, who are leaders in the national conversation on digital justice.[19] One of these groups is the Detroit Community Technology Project, whose Our Data Bodies project seeks to engage and educate community members about the way that digital technology collects data. They say:

> *"Our data are our stories. When our data are manipulated, distorted, stolen, exploited or misused, our communities are stifled, obstructed, or repressed, and our ability to self-determine and prosper is systematically controlled."*[20]

The same arguments that Detroit-based activists have been making for years, regarding the dual capacity of digital technology to simultaneously represent and distort, are now echoed within academic literature, often with explicit reference to the significance of community-based knowledge originating in Detroit. Sociologist Ruha Benjamin, writes about the importance of Detroit-based activist frameworks in countering both the racial harms of contemporary surveillance technology, and the lack of true engagement with marginalized communities within tech culture more generally – which, in turn, leads to a wide array of racially biased technologies. She stresses that, rather than a superficial emphasis on "inclusion", the intelligence, experience, and creativity of community-based and grassroots individuals and groups should be integrated into how we think about technology in communities, from its design and development, to its deployment. Benjamin references the work of Our Data Bodies, and the Detroit Community Technology Project, as highly influential and replicable examples of "abolitionist toolmaking"; approaches that recognize the inherently narrative quality of digital

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[19] See, for example: Gilliard, Chris (2020, January 19). Caught in the Spotlight. *Urban Omnibus.* https://urbanomnibus.net/2020/01/caught-in-the-spotlight/; Petty, Tawana (2020, July 10) Defending Black Lives Means Banning Facial Recognition. *Wired.* https://www.wired.com/story/defending-black-lives-means-banning-facial-recognition/

[20] *Our Data Bodies Digital Defense Playbook*, p. 5 https://www.odbproject.org/tools/ (last accessed 10/26/2022)

technology, and which seek to reframe its capacity for representation.[21] Benjamin also cites Tawana Petty's concept of "co-liberation" as influential in understanding that whatever technology is currently harming the most marginalized communities in our society will eventually be expanded to impact society more generally;[22] a point that is particularly true in regards to surveillance technology.[23]

The idea that digital technology should center and prioritize the needs of the most marginalized has increasingly become a guiding principle within design and technology work. For example, technologist and scholar Sasha Costanza-Chock, in her book "Design Justice," references the often-quoted slogan of the non-profit Detroit Disability Justice, adopted from the US's disability rights movements, "nothing about us without us,"[24] as a stance that should inform the design of technology and media.[25] This principle also resonates with the descriptions of safety provided in the GLBF Community Safety Survey: Detroit's communities need to be involved in every stage of the process of determining and envisioning solutions that create safety.

Foregrounding the Racial Biases and Harms of Surveillance Technologies

The threat and harms of surveillance are profound for marginalized and vulnerable people, and intersect with other pre-existing and ongoing forms of oppression. Inequalities along the lines of race, gender, class, nationality, and are reproduced and perpetuated through the design and use of contemporary surveillance technologies, in the name of protection, safety, and democracy.

Multiple scholars have argued that the abstractions and distortions of surveillance technology are shockingly similar to the lived experience of oppressed racialized identities. Black Studies scholar Simone Browne draws parallels between contemporary biometric surveillance and the branding of enslaved people, a process through which their physical bodies were turned into information under extreme relations of racialized power. Browne's research addresses the similarities between digital surveillance

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[21] Benjamin, Ruha (2019). *Race after Technology: Abolitionist Tools for the New Jim Code*. Polity, 188-189.

[22] "This is why, as Petty insists, oppressed people do not need 'allies,' a framework that reinforces privilege and power. Instead, 'co-liberation' is an aspirational relationship that emphasizes linked fate." Benjamin, *The New Jim Code,* 94, citing Petty's concept of co-liberation as cited by Ana Maria Leon, *Spaces of Co-Liberation* (2016) http://dimensionsofcitizenship.org/essays/spaces-of-co-liberation/index.html. Last accessed October 26, 2022.

[23] Eubanks, Virginia (2018). Automating inequality: How high-tech tools profile, police, and punish the poor. St. Martin's Press.

[24] https://www.detroitdisabilitypower.org/about

[25] Costanza-Chock, Sasha (2020). Design justice: Community-led practices to build the worlds we need. The MIT Press.

technologies with the historical identification documents that shape "human mobility, security applications and consumer transactions."[26] One's detailed personal information, their lived experiences, and embodied feelings, are quantified into information, while individuals often have little to no control over how the data is collected, processed, and used by institutions, corporations, and governments for varied purposes.

Ruha Benjamin similarly frames today's digital technologies as having continuity with past forms of racial oppression, in her description of "the New Jim *Code*," aptly illustrating how pre-existing racial discrimination and prejudice is embedded and replicated in contemporary technologies.[27] She argues that technologies are designed to explicitly justify and amplify racial hierarchies, overlook and reproduce social divisions along racial lines, and that they "unintentionally" perpetuate racial biases - all while claiming to neutralize them. In the same way that redlining, crime data, and other forms of technology have shaped the built and social environment, today's contemporary forms of digital technology have continuity with the racism of the past; cloaked in marketing that presents them as unbiased and neutral: this is especially the case with technologies utilizing artificial intelligence (AI) including facial recognition technology.

Since the 2010s, big data and data-driven technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI), machine learning, and algorithmic automation have perpetuated different domains of our everyday lives. In the name of efficiency, objectivity, and transparency, varied social institutions—including law enforcement, state government, social welfare, education, and more—have embraced the promise of data-driven techno-solutions. In reality, far from promoting efficiency and objectivity, critical scholars have argued that these data-driven techno-solutions merely promote illusions and fictions that are politically crafted.[28] Complex social and material realities, practices, and relations have been reduced to data points. States, corporations, and platforms alike have been relying on big data to capture, track, monitor, predict, and control political and economic activities and behaviors. Researchers have repeatedly pointed out that these forms of data can never be objective measures, because they are produced and collected by the police and other institutions who have a vested interest in their own promotion and funding, as well as political and business goals.[29]

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[26] See Browne, S. (2010). Digital epidermalization: Race, identity and biometrics. *Critical Sociology*, *36*(1), 131-150 and Browne, S. (2015). *Dark matters: On the surveillance of blackness*. Duke University Press.
[27] See Benjamin, R. (2019). *Race after technology: Abolitionist tools for the new Jim Code*. Social forces.
[28] See Gillespie, T. (2014). The relevance of algorithms. *Media technologies: Essays on communication, materiality, and society*, *167*(2014), 167.
[29] See Brayne, S., & Christin, A. (2021). Technologies of crime prediction: The reception of algorithms in policing and criminal courts. *Social Problems*, *68*(3), 608-624; Brayne, S. (2020). *Predict and surveil: Data, discretion, and the future of policing*. Oxford University Press, USA; Jefferson, B. (2020). *Digitize and punish: Racial criminalization in the digital age*. University of Minnesota Press.

Data that consolidates these existing racial biases are often perceived and framed as "objective" and "racially neutral", and thereby used for decision making. As we have seen in the city of Detroit, such data have been used to justify a series of decisions of investing and expanding the techno-driven carceral infrastructures that criminalizes Black and brown Detroiters. It is therefore critical to understand and make visible the relationships among surveillance technology, data, and larger systemic and structural forms of racism, both contemporary and historical. It is also important to understand how these failures of digital technologies and data-driven systems are brought about by the systematic lack of marginalized perspectives in every step of the design, deployment, and use of technologies. In the larger socio-political context, it's not just about *"fixing"* the algorithm, but also understanding the inherent problem with framing any of these technologies as purely objective or neutral, or as separate from human influence and the racism of our systems of policing and our larger society.

Section Three: Transparency of Technology Use

In 2016, the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) launched the Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS) initiative, a nationwide campaign to support the development of legislation "mandating that local communities are given a meaningful opportunity to review and participate in all decisions about how surveillance technologies are acquired and used locally"[30]. Why was the ACLU motivated to take on such a campaign in 2016? In the first half of the 2010's, movements responding to police violence following the murders of Freddy Grey, Travyon Martin, and Eric Garner, made public demands for police investigation transparency and to disarm and defund the police persisted following mobilizations in Baltimore, MD and Ferguson. Critical need for mass collective organizing against rising white supremacist mobilization became particularly urgent following the 2016 election of Donald Trump into the White House. Trump's platform declared the intention to identify and deport undocumented immigrants, to track the Muslim population and more aggressively police Black and communities of color through the sharing of local level surveillance data with Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and other federal agencies, including Customs and Border Security (CBS).

The ACLU CCOPS initiative has supported municipal level organizing and liaising with members of city councils over the last three years, to write and advance ordinances banning the use of surveillance technologies by public agencies- including police services- in just over one dozen cities across the United States, most notably in the state of Massachusetts where six city councils have adopted ordinances banning the procurement and use of surveillance technologies. To support CCOPS and adjacent initiatives to introduce greater transparency and community input into municipal procurement of surveillance technology, the ACLU assembled a bill template, which can be read on the CCOPS website[31], as well as staff attorneys who provided direct assistance to members of city councils across the country including in Detroit.

The CCOPS initiative utilizes policy to enable members of city councils and active residents to apply pressure to elected representatives, to introduce transparency measures in municipal surveillance programs. The CCOPS program also importantly acknowledges that a component of upholding public safety includes protecting public welfare, civil rights and liberties, and decisions that directly impact the first, fourth, and fourteenth amendments affecting resident wellbeing, safety, and privacy. During public comment in an October 2022 meeting of Detroit City Council, local attorney Eric

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[30] Community Control Over Police Surveillance | American Civil Liberties Union (aclu.org), https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/community-control-over-police-surveillance-ccops-model-bill
[31] https://www.aclu.org/legal-document/community-control-over-police-surveillance-ccops-model-bill

Williams of the Detroit Justice Center urged members of council to recognize that adjacent surveillance technology to PGL, ShotSpotter-in contractual language and operation compromise the constitutional rights of Detroit residents. Williams urged members of council to uphold Detroit's Community Input Over Government Surveillance (CIOGS) ordinance, unanimously passed by council in May 2021, which was introduced to council as a response to public demands for greater transparency following several years of investment in PGL, to distribute public information and consider public comment prior to continuing to approve expanded use of surveillance technology across the city, and further investment in Shot Spotter specifically.

Cities that have passed the Community Control Over Police Surveillance (CCOPS) bills:
- San Francisco, CA: May 2019
- Somerville, MA: June 2019
- Oakland, CA: July 2019
- Northampton, MA: September 2019
- Berkeley, CA: October 2019
- Springfield, MA: October 2019
- Brookline, MA: December 2019
- Alameda, CA: December 2019
- Cambridge, MA: January 2020
- Boston, MA: June 2020
- Pittsburgh, PA: August 2020
- Jackson, MS: August 2020
- Portland, OR: September 2020
- Portland, ME: November 2020
- Wocester, MA: December 2021

Community Oversight Initiatives

In cities bans would likely struggle to receive required city council votes, the ACLU's national CCOPS project has worked with members of city councils in just over one dozen cities to draft ordinances that subject public agencies seeking funds for surveillance technology to processes of city council oversight and review, and in some instances to public comment. Detroit's Community Input Over Government Surveillance ordinance (CIOGS) was approved by Detroit City Council in May of 2021. While other cities have successfully banned the use of surveillance technologies by public departments and agencies with the support of the American Civil Liberties Union, the CIOGS ordinance in Detroit introduced oversight processes for all city departments and agencies when seeking funding for the purchase of surveillance technologies.

Under Detroit's CIOGS ordinance, all municipal requests for procurement of new surveillance technologies require city council approval. Council must also determine that the cost of the technology will not outweigh the benefits, that the implementation of the technology will not be used to target a particular community or group based on discriminatory factors, and that the civil rights and liberties of Detroiters will not be compromised. The ordinance also granted residents the right to review all proposed contracts prior to contracts going before council for voting. The outstanding question CIOGS presents is how surveillance will protect Detroiters from discrimination, given that neighborhoods where Black people, people of color, and poor people live are disproportionately surveilled, policed, and imprisoned.

 All municipal agencies holding surveillance contracts issued prior to the adoption of CIOGS in 2021 are not subject to these oversight requirements, such as the controversial Shot Spotter program, however any renewal of existing contracts are required to uphold CIOGS. The ordinance also grants DPD broad discretion to sidestep CIOGS, which community organizer Tawana Petty called "a predictably slippery slope" for abuse.[32] Although the CIOGS ordinance potentially creates greater transparency of the use of municipal funds for police surveillance,increased public oversight is only a starting place and not a finish line. Rodd Monts, former staff attorney at the ACLU Michigan played a pivotal role in introducing this community oversight bill in Detroit, and worked with the office of then Council Member Mary Sheffield's staff and office to prepare CIOGS for sessions of community engagement, education, and eventually the vote of passage through Detroit City Council in 2021. As of October 2022, the City of Detroit CIOGS website remains incomplete, lacking a copy of the ordinance itself as well as any supplementary information to inform Detroiters about what responsibilities for community oversight the city is legally required to uphold in relation to the use of surveillance technology by government agencies in the city.

Cities that have passed surveillance oversight and community input ordinances since 2016:

- [Grand Rapids, MI](): 2015
- [Santa Clara County, CA: 2016]()
- [Seattle, WA: 2017]()
- [Yellow Springs, OH: October 2018]()
- [Davis, CA: 2018]()
- [Oakland, CA: 2018]()
- [Yellow Springs, OH: October 2018]()

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[32] Huffman, B. (2022, February 11). *Detroiters get oversight of surveillance technology, but is it enough?* BridgeDetroit. https://www.bridgedetroit.com/detroiters-get-oversight-of-surveillance-technology-but-is-it-enough/

- [BART System (Bay Area of CA): 2018](#)
- [Palo Alto, CA: 2020](#)
- [New York, NY: 2020](#)
- [Madison, WI: 2020](#)
- [Nashville, TN: 2021](#)
- [Detroit, MI: May 2021](#)
- [Dayton, OH: 2021](#)
- [San Diego, CA: 2022](#)
- [Lawrence, MA: 2022](#)

What the CIOGS ordinance in Detroit lacks is genuine consideration for how the allowance of government agencies to procure technologies capable of conducting mass surveillance with unprecedented ease threatens the civil liberties of residents. Detroiters should not only enjoy but be ensured protection against the seizure of their privacy and civil liberties. City Council members and the Board of Police Commissioners repeat to constituents that Safety is the number one concern motivating the approval and purchase of these technologies, however both bodies reference crime data relating to PGL and arrests as though either is a reliable metric for public safety.

Detroit's Charter and Proposal P (2021)

While the CIOGS ordinance was being tabled and discussed among City Council, Detroiters were also working to curb surveillance by revising the City Charter. Between 2018 and 2021, the Detroit Charter Revision Commission held community engagement sessions requesting input from residents about changes Detroiters thought necessary to ensure that the city's governing document reflected the current needs of the people.

Recognizing the opportunity to expand democracy in the city, a coalition of residents, activists, and organizations advocated for a Detroiter's Bill of Rights in the charter, which would include a number of police reforms and restrictions on surveillance technology. As Tawana Petty explained, the coalition was energized by struggles against surveillance technology and formed "to pull together impacted residents, organizations and social justice organizers, who felt their voices were not being heard by city government."[33]

In 2021, the Detroit Charter Revision Commission presented voters with a ballot initiative called Proposal P that outlined revisions to the City Charter pertaining to the Detroit Police Department hiring and training processes and training requirements for the Board of Police Commissioners. Proposal P also included restrictions on the use of

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[33] Petty, Tawana (2021, March 5). Detroit: On a Journey to Be Seen. *Data for Black Lives Blog*. https://blog.d4bl.org/detroit-on-a-journey-to-be-seen-2/#

surveillance by public agencies, including requirements for City Council to approve the acquisition and use of any technologies with the capacity to conduct facial recognition, and to document all requests, approvals, procurement, and implementation of surveillance technologies by public agencies in Detroit.[34]

Proposal P also detailed civilian civil rights and requirements, including:

- Instituting digital recordings of all civilian interactions with police
- Receiving justification for police stops or detentions
- Receiving the names and badge numbers of any duty or reporting officer in files brought against them, and
- Request the presence of a supervising officer during stops and detentions.[35]

Supporters of Proposal P, including a broad coalition of residents, civil rights, labor, and community organizations, debated the costs and argued the new proposed charter would combat structural racism in the city and allocate funding to real sources of public safety like affordable water, employment, housing, healthcare, and education. Proposal P was ultimately defeated by a well-financed campaign that drew endorsements from Gov. Whitmer (D) and Mayor Duggan (D), former police chief Ike McKinnon, current members of Detroit City Council, and community leaders like Rev. Horace Sheffield III. Opponents claimed the costs of Proposal P would put Detroit at risk of once again approaching municipal bankruptcy and that initiatives would have a high impact on municipal pension funds. These specific concerns are scare tactics that are repeated to residents anytime pro-social policy resolutions and recommendations are brought forth through community organizing.

The defeat of Proposal P deprived Detroiters of important protections against police violence and surveillance. In addition to addressing policing, Proposal P would have created new municipal departments responsible for environmental justice, disability rights, veterans affairs, and economic justice. Detroiters who bore the financial and material consequences of over assessment on residential property taxes would have been provided with tax credits for the purpose of financial repair, and provisions for deeper civic investment in truly affordable housing would have become responsibilities inscribed into the city charter. These revisions to the city charter would have created vital investments in key sources of public safety in the city.

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[34] Detroit, Michigan Proposal Revised City Charter, https://ballotpedia.org/Detroit,_Michigan,_Proposal_P,_Revised_City_Charter_(August_2021), See sections 70801 to70828
[35] See Section 7-827: Detroit, Michigan, Proposal P, Revised City Charter (August 2021) - Ballotpedia

Detroit's Rental Ordinance and PGL

In August 2020, a tenant advocacy group called Detroit Renter City communicated the concerns of residents of 512 West Grand Blvd, to their (former) city council representative, Raquel Casteneda-Lopez's staff and office. The concerns included illegal activities being carried out by the building's landlord, such as gross negligence of maintenance and structural and safety requirements outlined in the Detroit Rental Ordinance. Of greatest concern was that residents were experiencing extralegal evictions during the standing COVID-19 state and federal eviction moratoriums. Though both the state and federal moratoriums should have prevented evictions, the building's property managers and landlord were actively pushing residents out of the densely latinx and immigrant populated building through renovations that prevented resident use and enjoyment of their units, denial of access to water and electricity, and 'renovictions', claiming tenants needed to leave in order for repairs and updates to occur, without any commitment from the landlord for residents to return. No eviction judgements against the tenants were issued by Detroit's 36th district court, the only legal pathway for eviction; though the building's landlord persisted in pushing tenants from the building through intimidation, structural negligence, the disabling of the buildings only elevator, and the looming presence of an 'eviction' dumpster.

What Detroit Renter City advocates found through researching records from Detroit's Building, Safety, Environment, and Engineering Department (BSEED) was that in addition to extralegal evictions being carried out, the building's property owner was collecting rents at the building illegally. Since the building was operating without being registered as a rental property[36] with the city and lacked a certificate of compliance[37] as outlined in the City of Detroit Rental Ordinance, tenants were voluntarily paying rent but were not obligated to pay because the building lacked both registration and a certificate of compliance with BSEED. While operating without meeting crucial health and safety and structural compliance standards and without designation as a registered rental property, 512 W Grand Blvd was a host site of Project Green Light. While tenants were being actively extralegally evicted and extorted for rent, the landlord was providing real time surveillance of the property's residents and passersby to the RTCC via Project Green Light cameras.

Upon further investigation, the research initiatives of Detroit Renter City organizers found that of the forty residential apartment buildings hosting PGL in 2020, only one

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[36] See section Sec. 8-15-81 Registration of Rental Property, of the 2019 Detroit City Code
[37] See section Sec. 8-15-82. - Inspection of registered rental property; Certificate of Compliance required; of the 2019 Detroit City Code.
https://library.municode.com/mi/detroit/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=PAIVCOCH1--20_CH8BUCO PRMA_ARTXVPRMACO_DIV3REREPR_SDAINGE_S8-15-82INREREPRCECORERECECOREPRVIOC

building was formally registered as a rental property and zero buildings held a certificate of compliance. The City of Detroit and DPD actively allow PGL to operate at residential rental sites that do not meet basic health and safety guidelines outlined in the City of Detroit Rental Ordinance, and where rents are illegally charged to tenants.

Acting on these clear violations of tenant rights and the rental ordinance, researchers from the University of Michigan, Urban Praxis Workshop and a local non-profit housing agency submitted a policy recommendation to the office of (former) member of council Raquel Casteneda Lopez, urging the member to bring the recommendation before council. The recommendation stated that landlords of all residential rental properties would be required to hold a valid certificate of compliance as well as proof of registration of their rental property in accordance with the City of Detroit Rental Ordinance as a prerequisite for applying to become a PGL host site. The recommendation was also brought to the 36th District Court's Chief Judge McConico on October 13, 2020 during a scheduled in-person meeting with tenant advocates represented by members of Detroit Rener City, Detroit Eviction Defense, Detroit Action, and Charlevoix Village Association. Neither Council Member Casteneda Lopez or Judge McConico advanced this recommendation brought by the community to council vote, though Laura Sanchez of Member Casteneda Lopez's office forwarded the recommendation to the city's legislative and policy division for review. No further communication to the recommendations author's within Detroit's housing justice community was extended, and the recommendation was never brought before council. This policy recommendation, at the very least, would have ensured that rental properties hosting PGL were legally operating; rather than being host sites surveilling for criminal activity using PGL equipment and RTCC monitoring while operating as illegal rental units. As of October 2022, 94% of residential rental properties in Detroit continue to lack a certificate of compliance or registration and are therefore not legally entitled to collect rents from inhabited units. The precedent being set by allowing rental property owners to monitor for criminal activity at and immediately surrounding buildings that are being illegally operated outside of the clear standards set by the City Code demonstrates that property ownership seems to alter one's relationship to the law in Detroit, while those who are unable to own property, the majority of whom are Black renters, become subject to surveillance at their places of residence.

Section Four: Community Alternatives to Surveillance

For decades, Detroit residents have experienced the organized abandonment of their communities from municipal, state, and federal governments. Countless schools, community centers, healthcare facilities, and small businesses have been shuttered in the past four decades, while employers and many residents have fled the city. For Detroiters who remained, waves of foreclosures, water and utility shutoffs, and drastic cuts to city services have left neighborhoods without vital institutions and resources for safe and healthy communities. In response, Detroiters have developed effective programs and practices for community safety that offer compelling–and proven–alternatives to policing and surveillance technologies.

Relationships and Institutions Build Safe Communities

One of the longest-running community organizations in Detroit working toward community safety has been the Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality (DCAPB). The organization was formed in 1996 by Dr. Gloria House (Aneb Kgositsile), Marge Parsons, and Ron Scott, partly as a response to the 1992 DPD killing of Malice Green.[38] A key point in DCAPB's program has been Peace Zones 4 Life (PZ4L). The three main goals of the PZ4L program are:

1. De-escalating conflicts within communities and hostilities between community members and public/private institutions
2. De-escalating randomized violence within communities
3. Developing institutions to foster a "sense of empowerment" and create a "self-sustaining community," which will promote safety and prevent crime

Creating Peace Zones begins with an assessment of challenges, needs, and opportunities in the community, through which leaders and organizers are identified. The practice of de-escalation and mediation are carried out at conflict resolution centers in neutral places (like churches and community centers). Youth are asked to be leaders in this program by becoming trained to keep the peace in the community and conduct mediation. Lastly, PZ4L incorporates artistic storytelling initiatives to chronicle neighborhood challenges and celebrate community heroes to "connect individuals and catalyze change."[39]

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[38] Scott, Ron. (2015) *How to End Police Brutality*. Detroit: The Boggs Center to Nurture Community Leadership.

[39] Detroit Coalition Against Police Brutality (2009). Peace Zones for Life' Concept Paper. https://growingrootsnyc.files.wordpress.com/2012/05/peacezonesforlife_concept_paper.pdf

Some may remember the physical manifestation of the PZ4L project in the early 2000's on Detroit's Eastside, that included the building of low wooden platforms and painted signs, designating open greenspaces as Peace Zones where conflict resolution could be conducted by neighbors. These Peace Zones demonstrated that space for non-violent and non-punitive conflict resolution already exists in Detroit's neighborhoods, and that peace and safety can be accomplished without exiling people from their immediate community through arrest and eventual incarceration. An important contribution of PZ4L was demonstrating that vacant land in Detroit's neighborhoods can be channeled as a resource for non-violent conflict resolution and meeting the social and safety needs of the neighborhood without lands being sold to developers.

While surveillance programs like ShotSpotter and Project Green Light rely on digital technologies that trigger police dispatch without actual human confirmation of harm or violence, PZ4L relies on our ability as neighbors to look after the safety and well being of our communities. It also encourages us to prevent and mediate harm by understanding conflict and violence as the results of unmet needs that can be addressed through human connection and community support. The concept of Peace Zones, organizer Shea Howell explained, shifts conversations away from control and punishment to drawing from community traditions to "create peaceful relationships among us." Projects like PZ4L practice addressing harm and violence from a place of need, rather than punishment, and approach conflict as an opportunity to identify how people in communities can best support one another, both of which are central practices within the transformative justice[40] framework.

One of the most visible projects to build upon the foundations laid by organizations like DCAPB has been Green Chairs, Not Green Lights. The initiative was started in the Jefferson Chalmers neighborhood on the Eastside. Operating under the slogan of "return to front porches," Green Chairs, Not Green Lights encourages people to think back to the days when neighbors sat on their front porches to look out for one another, keep an eye on the block, and create a strong social fabric in the community. Green Chairs envisions a city where people keep each other safe by dealing with harm at a neighborhood level instead of relying on surveillance and policing.

Since its inception at Feedom Freedom Growers in 2019, organizers have hosted Green Chairs workshops in neighborhoods around the city as Detroiters have embraced

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[40] "Transformative justice is an abolitionist framework that understands systems such as prisons, police and I.C.E. as sites where enormous amounts of violence take place and as systems that were created to be inherently violent in order to maintain social control. Transformative justice works to build alternatives to our current systems which often position themselves as protectors, while simultaneously enacting the very forms of violence they claim to condemn." From, Mingus, M. (2019) Transformative Justice: A Brief Description. TransformHarm.org.
https://transformharm.org/tj_resource/transformative-justice-a-brief-description/

a vision of neighborhood-based safety. "There has not been one person I've talked to about Green Chairs, Not Green Lights who hasn't said, 'I want to hear more. That sounds wonderful. We need more of that," organizer Myrtle Thompson-Curtis explained.

These examples illustrate some of the ways Detroiters are working to build a culture of safety without relying on the expansion of surveillance technologies and policing in their communities.

Restorative Justice

Over the past several years, community-based organizations have developed programs and practices based on restorative justice to resolve conflicts and keep communities safe in non-punitive ways. As defined by Dr. Fania E. Davis, restorative justice "emphasizes bringing together everyone affected by wrongdoing to address needs and responsibilities and to heal the harm to relationships and community, to the degree possible."[41] Instead of punishment and exile, which often exacerbate harm, restorative justice recognizes systemic factors and focuses on repairing and healing from harm and enabling people to remain in the community.

The Detroit Safety Team (DST) offers training in Safety Training, Community Building, and Restorative Processes. DST was formed by John Sloan III, Rasha Almulaiki, and Curtis Renee, who grew up learning about Peace Zones and community safety from veteran organizers like Ron Scott and Wayne Curtis. To develop community-based alternatives to policing and surveillance, DST is building a City-Wide Safety Team through its Neighborhood Fellowship Program, which brings together cohorts of city residents to receive training in mediation, intervention, and de-escalation practices through restorative justice programs.

The Metro Detroit Restorative Justice Network (MDRJN), a project of the Detroit Justice Center, advocates for expanded access to restorative justice, and promotes it as a viable alternative to punitive justice, one that centers the needs of those impacted by harm. MDRJN is developing a Community-Based Restorative Justice Toolkit to be used by local communities, faith groups, direct service providers, and local community organizers/activists. MDRJN is also conducting a survey on "Community Insights on Safety, Accountability, and Resources," which aims "to give Detroiters a public voice in how policies and practices of community-based safety are shaped." Alongside the GLBF Safety Survey, the MDRJN survey data should be used to inform the City's approaches to safety, surveillance, and policing. As of January 2023, the MDRJN survey remains live online and is accepting responses.

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[41] Fania E. Davis (n.d.) Race and Restorative Justice. https://metrodetroitrj.org/restorative-justice

MDRJN is part of DJC's broader work to transform the justice system and promote equitable and just cities. For example, in 2018 DJC held a Youth Design Summit where young Detroiters were asked how they would spend the $533 million that had been allocated to the new downtown Wayne County Jail to make their communities safer. The 40 participants cited the following:

- Health and wellness services (including holistic healing from trauma)
- Educational resources (including investment in infrastructure and better pay for teachers)
- Public spaces for youth (such as youth-led community centers with after-school and weekend programming to "help keep youth safe and reduce involvement with the criminal legal system")
- Safe and affordable housing (with specific supports for unhoused people)
- Public transit

The Summit showed that children in Detroit are dreaming of a city that invests in community well-being rather than policing and prisons. This is an example of "**restorative investment**," which can serve as a guide for policymakers to begin repairing the harms caused by decades of both racist *disinvestment from* Black communities and *investment in* criminalization and incarceration.[42] Rather than continuing to invest massive sums on policing and surveillance to address the symptoms of inequality, policymakers should look to "restorative investment" as a framework for promoting safety in the city by resolving the root causes of "crime."

Healing as Prevention

Meanwhile, organizations like Detroit Life is Valuable Every Day (DLIVE) have taken a public health approach to community safety and interrupting violence. Launched in 2016, DLIVE is a "hospital-based, community-focused violence intervention initiative" operating out of Detroit Medical Center Sinai-Grace Hospital with the Wayne State University Department of Emergency Medicine. Informed by leading medical research on trauma, DLIVE understands violence as a preventable public health epidemic that requires a holistic approach for harm reduction and prevention.

Research on trauma shows that victims of violence are more likely to be re-injured, harm others, and are more susceptible to behaviors such as substance use, mental illness, and self harm, as well as material outcomes including challenges maintaining

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[42] Detroit Justice Center (2018). Restorative Justice Youth Design Summit. https://detroitjustice.org/restorative-justice-youth-design-summit-report/

employment, and food and housing insecurity[43]. DLIVE therefore focuses its interventions on helping victims of violence heal from trauma to prevent future harm. Highly trained Violence Intervention Specialists reach young adult victims of violence in the hospital to provide immediate crisis intervention, trust-building, and mentorship that evolves into a personalized therapeutic aftercare plan that lasts between 6-12 months. This data-driven, holistic approach effectively interrupts cycles of violence by addressing the needs of victims and their families to heal from trauma, rather than compounding problems through punishment and confinement. "We have participants who have demonstrated resilience, are receiving mental health counseling, have become employed and have voiced their desire to no longer retaliate against their perpetrator," founder Dr. Tolulope Sonuyi explained in 2017.[44]

This approach is also informed by the lived experiences of Violence Intervention Specialists like Ray Winans, who was twice the victim of violence before being incarcerated. "It would seem that someone ought to have treated me with an intervention, as opposed to traumatizing me further," he explained. These interventions are more effective when implemented by empathetic community members with shared experiences, rather than police (or police adjacent organizations) that represent threats of further violence and trauma through punishment and incarceration.

Through this approach, DLIVE models the mantra of "care, not criminalization" that the City of Detroit could support through a commitment to restorative investment to help communities heal from violence and effectively address the root causes of "crime." The experience of racism and living as a Black person in the United States is a leading cause of trauma[45], which must be treated by dismantling the violence of institutional racism at local and national levels through the ongoing work of abolition.[46]

Safety, Not Ceasefire

It is important to note that the above examples stand in contrast to current "violence interruption" programs endorsed by DPD, the City, and the federal government. Whereas state-sanctioned interventions often cause individuals and communities to

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[43] See Crichton, E. S., Manhan, A. J., Wang, Z., Woodard, J., Thompson, A. N., Sheaffer, K., Williams K., Schenker, M. L. & Smith, R. N. (2022). The Potential Impact of Food Insecurity in an Urban Trauma Population. The American Surgeon, 88(8), 2045-2049.

[44] Bitely, J. (2017, May 26). How a Detroit Hospital is fighting violence with a public health approach. *MI Blues Perspectives.* https://www.mibluesperspectives.com/stories/for-you/how-a-detroit-hospital-is-fighting-violence-with-a-public-health-approach.

[45] See Williams, M. T., Holmes, S., Zare, M., Haeny, A., & Faber, S. (2022). An evidence-based approach for treating stress and trauma due to racism. *Cognitive and Behavioral Practice.*

[46] See Davis, A. Y. (2011). *Abolition democracy: Beyond empire, prisons, and torture.* Seven Stories Press.

experience further violence, such as family separation, cash bail, imprisonment, or holding a criminal record that causes lasting forms of societal exclusion, transformative justice initiatives specifically work to stop cycles of violence for all parties involved by changing the conditions that produced harm in the first place. Bay Area transformative justice advocate Mia Mingus states, "Transformative Justice (TJ) is a political framework and approach for responding to violence, harm, and abuse. At its most basic, it seeks to respond to violence without creating more violence and/or engaging in harm reduction to lessen the violence,"[47] or creating justice together. Rather than perpetuating racialized violence through state sanctioned disciplinary judicial mechanisms that lead to structural conditions that further marginalize Black and brown communities and accelerate criminalized people toward increased mortality[48], transformative justice works to find constructive and healing means for people to continue to live alongside one another by transforming the root causes of harm and violence.

Ceasefire Detroit was launched by the US Department of Justice in 2013 as a partnership between city, state, and federal law enforcement agencies and local institutions to combat violent crime. In the years since, Ceasefire Detroit has received millions of dollars in funding from federal, state, local, and philanthropic sources, working closely with law enforcement and prosecutors to address violent crime through the identification of potential 'target' individuals who have previously been connected to gun or gang related violence. The Ceasefire program uses "street-level intelligence and crime analysis" to identify individuals "involved in gangs and street groups."[49] Ceasefire then requires individuals to take part in two call-in meetings as part of their probation or parole supervision, in which a member of law enforcement delivers a message of violence and crime deterrence. In the 2022 National Institute of Justice program profile on Detroit's Ceasefire program, the crime deterrence message is described as:

> *In general, the messages communicate to targeted individuals who commit offenses that 1) violence is unacceptable, 2) law enforcement is aware of targeted individuals' risk of violence and are closely monitoring their behavior, 3) law enforcement organizations are working together to remove those who commit violence from the community, and 4) future violence committed by targeted individuals or their associates will be met with increased sanctions.[50]*

The National Institute of Justice report rated Ceasefire as having "No Effects," meaning:

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[47] Mingus, M. (2019) Transformative Justice: A Brief Description | TransformHarm.org
[48] Gilmore, R. W. (2007). *Golden gulag: Prisons, surplus, crisis, and opposition in globalizing California* (Vol. 21). University of California Press.
[49] National Institute of Justice (2022) Program Profile: Detroit (Mich) Ceasefire.
[50] Ibid. National Institute of Justice.

There were no statistically significant differences found for weapons arrests or shooting victimizations for participants in two age groups (15–24 and 25–34). The program did show a statistically significant reduction in all arrests and violent arrests.

A No Effects rating implies that implementing the program is unlikely to result in the intended outcome(s) and may result in a negative outcome(s).[51]

Nonetheless, Chief James White insists that "One of the most powerful components we have is Ceasefire…but it's not a replacement for enforcement or arrest." Although Chief White previously admitted that "we're not going to arrest ourselves out of crime," it's clear that he sees arrest and incarceration as the primary methods of crime prevention and has increasingly leaned on Ceasefire as a tool for carrying them out.[52] As of February 2023, the City of Detroit or the Detroit Police Department and Board of Police Commissioners have yet to release an official statement in response to the NIJ's Ceasefire program report or address whether this "No Effects" rating will result in budgetary reductions to the program.

There are important distinctions between community-driven transformative justice programs and police-driven violence reduction programs, which must be made clear. Whereas transformative justice programs aim to promote safety within communities by changing the conditions that produce harm and thereby breaking cycles of violence,[53] police-driven violence interruption relies upon the threat of individual punishment and incarceration without addressing the systemic root causes of conflict and violence.

Further, by working cooperatively with law enforcement, organizations like Ceasefire, Live in Peace, and others are often at odds with community members seeking to divest from policing or working toward police reform. While Ceasefire organizers claim to represent the interests of the communities they serve, they receive their funding from the government and police-affiliated philanthropies, which presents an inherent conflict of interest. History shows us that such state-sanctioned organizations are often called upon by police and politicians to suppress dissent during social movements like the Civil Rights Movement and Black Lives Matter Movement. For example, when hundreds of community members across the city expressed data-driven concerns about the ineffectiveness and dangers of ShotSpotter in 2022, organizers with Ceasefire and Live

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[51] National Institute of Justice (2022) Program Profile: Detroit (Mich) Ceasefire.
[52] Newman, E. (2023, February 8). Justice Department gives Detroit crime reduction programs 'no effects' ratings. WDET. https://wdet.org/2023/02/08/justice-department-gives-detroit-crime-reduction-programs-no-effects-ratings/
[53] Mingus, M. (2019) Transformative Justice: A Brief Description | TransformHarm.org

in Peace worked closely with DPD and city officials to rally public support for the controversial and dubious technology, often using talking points provided by ShotSpotter.[54] For these reasons, city officials who are genuinely interested in public safety must be critical of state-sanctioned organizations and look directly to community-driven programs for guidance on creating safe communities.

Recommended Resolutions to Surveillance Use in Detroit Informed by the GLBF Community Safety Survey

These recommendations are one component or a larger report that was created by members of the Green Light Black Futures coalition. The report centers the knowledge, opinions, and expertise of Detroiters through sharing the results of GLBF's Community Safety Survey. This survey was circulated in response to the lack of community input Detroit residents have had about the sweeping use of surveillance technologies in the city. While community organizations, activists, and residents have consistently uplifted community concerns about surveillance, past evaluations by the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners and the Detroit City Council have not comprehensively addressed or incorporated community members' understandings of safety or taken community-driven safety initiatives and their leaders seriously in their contributions to reducing harm and building safety in Detroit's neighborhoods. The only academic research done to date, "Project Greenlight Detroit: Evaluation Report" (2020), was written by faculty in the Department of Criminology at Michigan State University, many of whom are former law enforcement personnel. These evaluations have largely excluded the experiences of long-term Detroiters and community activists, and reflect the kind of bias that police agencies are repeatedly told to address within their ranks.

A full report based on the survey, "We Want Safety Not Surveillance: What Safety Means and What Residents Want," written by members of the GLBF coalition is now available[55]. It includes analysis of local political contexts, histories of surveillance, and traditions of resistance to pervasive policing in Detroit, as well as community-driven recommendations for how we can move forward. Besides uplifting the knowledge, opinions, and expertise of Detroiters, the report foregrounds community members' understandings of safety and concerns about surveillance, which has not been

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[54] Smith, R. (2022, September 25). Opinion: Shotspotter profits off fears of gun violence. Detroit Metro Times. https://www.metrotimes.com/news/opinion-shotspotter-profits-off-fears-of-gun-violence-31174194
[55] Baker, R., Blackmer, P., Lu, A., Smith, R., Watkins, P.G. (2022) *We Want Safety Not Surveillance: What Safety Means and What Residents Want.* Urban Praxis Workshop. https://urbanpraxis.org/green-light-black-futures-community-safety-survey-report-and-booklet/?preview=true

comprehensively incorporated in past evaluations of Project Green Light by the Detroit Board of Police Commissioners and the Detroit City Council. Highlights from the safety survey are included below.

By presenting and contextualizing the results of the Community Safety Survey, in combination with additional research and interviews with organizers and community members in 2020-22, the report is intended to inform our actions as neighbors, the decisions we make together about safety in our communities, and to educate elected and paid officials who make decisions about policing and the use of surveillance technology in the city.

Policing and surveillance are funded at the expense of public safety in the city of Detroit. As continued acts of police violence around the nation have fueled the growth of the Black Lives Matter movement, Detroiters have organized against the harms of policing and the expansion of surveillance in the city. While Detroit police, city officials, and mainstream media have tried to alienate activists and silence criticism against Project Green Light and police violence, younger generations of Detroiters have built upon the legacies of the Civil Rights and Black Power movements to demand an end to police violence by investing time and energy into their neighborhoods and communities, and developing alternative forms of public safety. Like their activist elders, Detroiters have adopted a range of approaches to organizing for community safety, including policy advocacy, direct action protest, mutual aid efforts, and community-based alternatives to policing.

The Community Safety Survey data makes visible that the knowledge of long-time Detroiters could lead the city toward a more just and safe future without relying on surveillance technology. Elected representatives and city staff who are genuinely interested in public safety have an opportunity to engage with the data found in this white paper, generated through the Community Safety Survey. Act on the experience and knowledge of Detroiters by investing in the residents of this city who have shown the collective capacity to envision and create a safe and vibrant Detroit.

Necessary Resolutions to the use of Surveillance Technology in Detroit

1. City Council should defund and discontinue support for the Real Time Crime Center, Project Green Light, and other parts of the Detroit Police Department's surveillance infrastructure.

2. City Council should terminate all contracts with private surveillance companies, including but not limited to: Motorola Solutions, DataWorks Plus, and ShotSpotter.
3. City Council should adopt the provisions of the Detroiters Bill of Rights proposed by the Charter Revision Commission in 2020, including demilitarizing the police, restricting the use of surveillance technologies owned and operated by public agencies in Detroit including the police, and restructuring the Board of Police Commissioners to reflect true accountability to the community.
4. City Council should create and fund community response teams so that wellness checks, substance use, and mental health issues are not dispatched through DPD.
5. City Council should invest in services that preserve and increase the quality of life of residents, such as clean and affordable drinking water, a strong school district, food accessibility, permanently affordable housing, reliable and accessible public transportation, and public health initiatives.

Necessary Protocol for Review of Research and Contracts Pertaining to Surveillance

1. Technology is never neutral or objective. Be critical of marketing that presents it as such, and be aware that many surveillance tech companies have deep pockets and sophisticated branding and marketing strategies, intended to play off community fears around safety. Be skeptical and critical of where information on the technology's efficiency is coming from, and how success and efficiency are measured. What is the goal of the technology and how does it define safety?
2. Surveillance technology is typically cutting-edge and new. Public officials and the lay public often do not have the expertise, resources, or time to fully evaluate its capacities and impact. Transparency around the process of technology adoption is absolutely essential, because it allows outside advocates with greater understanding to weigh in on the way the technology works. Elected representatives need to require such transparency, and allow advocates and constituents the chance to examine proposed forms of technology and evaluate claims being made about effectiveness and data storage.
3. Detroit has been characterized as a dangerous and deeply divested city, both as a result of racist representations in the media and crime reporting, as well as the reality of racialized disinvestment that is driving concentrated gentrification and increasing the displacement of Black Detroiters. Elected representatives have a responsibility to be skeptical and critical when it comes to the adoption of these technologies, because what happens in Detroit signals trends for Black, brown and working class cities and communities around the country. Technologies that

clearly uphold racial bias are unsafe for use in majority Black and brown communities, and therefore everyone.

4. Results from the Community Safety Survey indicate that Detroiters value access to resources that increase a sense of safety and security, rather than associating safety with measurements of crime data. Detroiters want investment in initiatives that increase their daily wellbeing. Elected representatives should invest in, listen to, and support the knowledge and insight expressed by Detroiters. The GLBF Community Safety Survey is an example of an initiative that generated community input about what makes Detroiters feel safe, and elected representatives have an opportunity to review and take this community-driven data into account.

5. Detroiters and the safety of the city's residents would benefit from initiatives that can involve community members in tech literacy and tech development, to cultivate a critical and informed public and ensure actual accountability of the CIOGS ordinance and the use of surveillance tech by public agencies in Detroit.

To access the coalition report, "We Want Safety Not Surveillance: What Safety Means and What Residents Want", use the QR Code below.

The report can also be access at this linked URL:

Green Light Black Futures Community Safety Survey: Report and Booklet – Urban Praxis

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The work of challenging police violence and, by extension, resisting the pervasive surveillance of Black and brown neighborhoods always starts in communities, and has been ongoing in Detroit for decades. The fight against police brutality and the evolving technologies of policing is a central pillar of the Black Radical Tradition that must be informed and led by the experiences of communities who are most deeply impacted by policing and criminalization.

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