ORT Prevention Grant Program

Local Evaluation Plan

Modesto Police Department's Retail and Motor Vehicle Theft Program

Submitted by:

City of Modesto- Police Department

Prepared by:

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Project Background

What information can you provide that is essential to understanding the need for the project:

Modesto is a large and centrally located city with a wide offering of services, retail destinations, close proximity to large urban areas, and easy access to and from the city via major roadways. In turn, Modesto creates opportunity for criminal activity, such as organized retail theft and motor vehicle theft. In 2021, Modesto ranked 29th nationally, and 12th in California, for auto thefts according to the National Insurance Crime Bureau. In recent years, Modesto has ranked as high as 4th nationally in auto thefts. Modesto also experiences significant motor vehicle accessory theft and a growing trend of organized retail theft (ORT). Recent examples of ORT include:

- Sunglass Hut at Vintage Faire Mall was victimized by a coordinated group on five separate occasions. This same group was responsible for over $2 million stolen from Sunglass Huts across California.
- Known instances of coordinated thefts from Rite Aids, Walgreens, Dick's Sporting Goods, Ross, Marshall's, BevMo's.
- As of June 24, 2023, eight national retailers provided 2022 shrinkage reports for Modesto which indicated losses greater than $8.3 million, corresponding with a local sales tax loss of $650,000.
- During the 2022 holiday shopping season, the Property Crime Unit (PCU) coordinated with 10 retailers to target ORT, which resulted in 74 arrests, four recovered vehicles, and more than $44,000 in merchandise returned to businesses.
- From March to May 2023, PCU coordinated with 11 retailers and conducted ORT operations resulting in arrests of 26 individuals, 2 recovered stolen vehicles, and nearly $6,000 in stolen merchandise returned to businesses.

The BSCC ORT grant will allow Modesto PD to implement a targeted and robust strategy to combat ORT, motor vehicle theft, and motor vehicle accessory theft. The grant provides resources to:

- Conduct at least two ORT and MVAT operations each month, supported by up to 11 officers, and to continue the "holiday operations" which previously demonstrated much success;
- Fund a dedicated Police Civilian Investigator and utilize an existing Crime and Intelligence Analyst. The Analyst will coordinate with retailers, extract data from police records, coordinate with outside agencies to share data, and compile required data for grant reporting. The Investigator will supplement the existing

ORT/MVAT Detective by investigating ORT cases, coordinating with retailers, preparing operational plans, and coordinating intelligence-sharing with retailers and Cal-ORCA.

- Deploy 200 license plate reader cameras (LPRs) to 25 strategically selected intersections throughout Modesto. In addition, 10 LPR/camera trailers will also be purchased to deploy to areas that are temporary issues or are not conducive to static LPRs.
- Purchase software that will provide for more effective intelligence sharing (for example, between the PD and the district attorney's office), and software that will integrate the camera feeds from the newly purchased LPR and trailer cameras, but also from a broader network of publicly and privately owned cameras.
- Implement additional technologies such as bait cars, radios for retailers, and magnetic vehicle trackers with accompanying iPads to manage the trackers.

Through the support of the BSCC ORT grant, MPD's targeted ORT and MVAT operations, coupled with the increased technological advances provided by cameras and software, will enable MPD to conduct effective and strategic efforts to reduce and prevent ORT and MVAT in Modesto.

What is the scope of the project?

Implementation of the project will be conducted largely by MPD, with coordination with the Stanislaus County Sheriff's Department and the Stanislaus County District Attorney's Office, as well as partners at the Modesto Chamber of Commerce and the Hispanic Chamber of Commerce. In addition, community stakeholders and multiple retailers and indicated their support for the project through letters of support, and we expect that they will continue to support and be invested in the work of the grant.

In May 2023, MPD hosted an ORT meeting with representatives from more than 40 local retail partners. Many representatives voiced concerns about the rise in organized retail theft, frustration how it feels nothing can be done, fear about rising loss numbers in the impact on store closures. Many community members are also concerned about the potential loss of local jobs. Attendees were excited that combatting ORT was a priority for MPD, to hear that MPD and the DA's office were closely coordinating on ORT, and the plans to increase operational and technological support through the BSCC ORT grant.

As previously described, the project will involve numerous targeted enforcement operations as well as utilization of an expansive network of LPRs coupled with advanced software and coordinated intelligence-sharing.

What are the target areas of the project?

The initial target areas of the project are centered around 3 primary retailer areas:

- Triangle-shaped area consisting of the Vintage Faire Mall at 3900 Sisk Road, the Costco and Lowe's on Pelandale Avenue, and the 3400 block of McHenry Avenue.
- The retailers at 2001 McHenry Avenue
- The retailers at 3400 McHenry Avenue
- In addition to the specified locations, MPD will also consider how to support smaller "mom and pop" businesses, which are often more greatly impacted by losses given that they are smaller businesses.

ORT-related crime incidents will be monitored throughout the grant to evaluate the focus on the identified areas and to consider the expansion of ORT efforts on other areas.

What are the project's goals and objectives?

Goal 1: *Reduce ORT and MVAT and the fear of ORT and MVAT in the target areas*

- **Objectives:** 1) Reduce ORT by 10% each year of the grant. 2) Reduce retail shrinkage among the eight original sample retailers by 10% each year. 3) Reduce auto theft and auto accessory theft by 5% each year

Goal 2: *Build and strengthen communication and relationships with the business community and allied agencies as it relates to ORT and MVAT*

- **Objectives:** 1) Host bi-monthly business/ allied agency meetings to share current results. 2) Provide regular updates to the business community and allied agencies on the progress of the grant activities. 3) Solicit feedback from the business community and allied agencies on perceptions of impact of grant activities

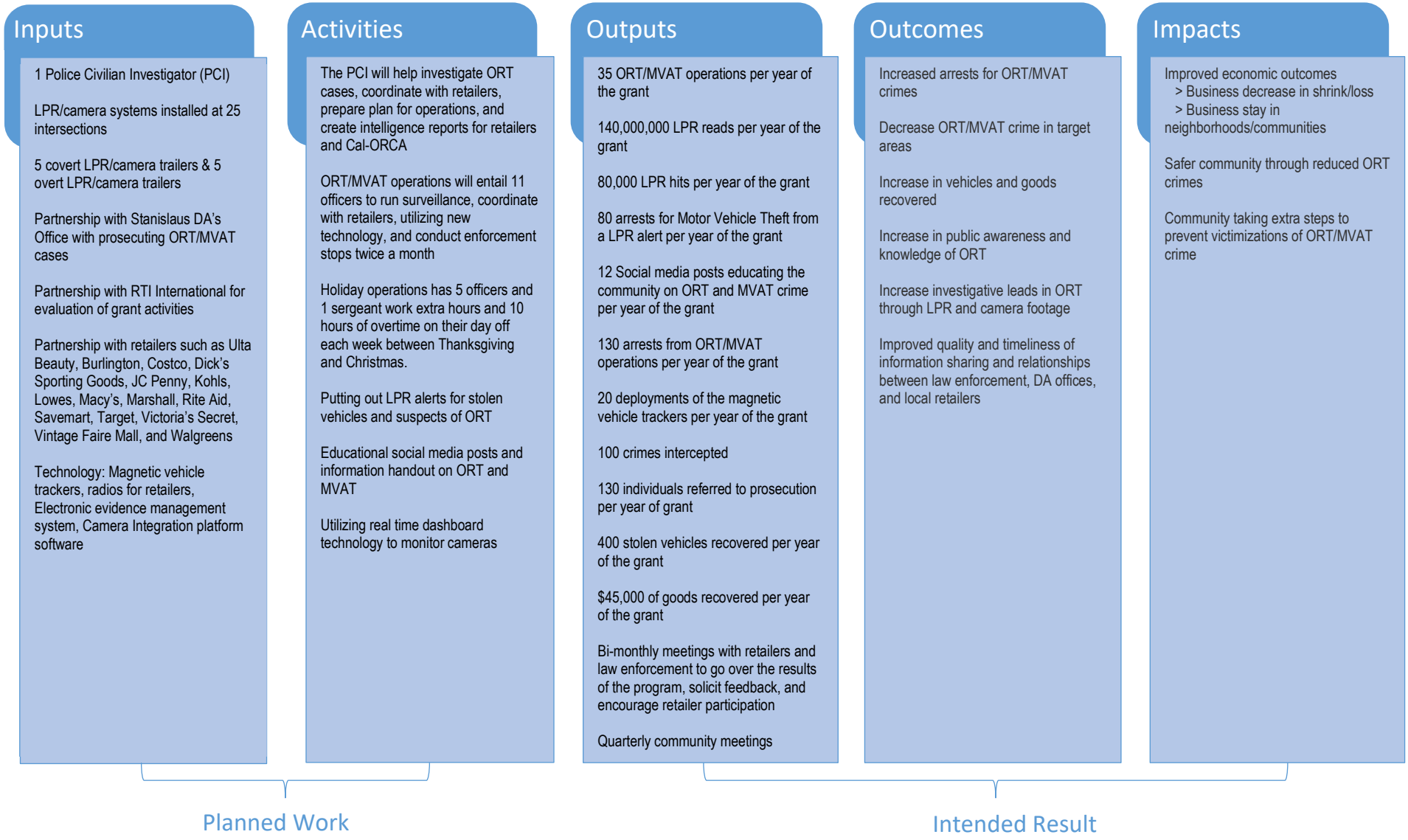
Goal 3: *Improve communication to and education of the community related to ORT and MVAT and how to keep themselves and the community safe.*

- **Objectives:** 1) Post monthly social media messages with updates on the progress/stats of the grant program activities. 2) Post regular public education information/graphics to social media accounts and encourage sharing of content by the business community and allied agencies. 3) Coordinate with MPD Public Information Officer to create informational handouts and education concerning ORT and MVAT to

provide to the public. 4) Host quarterly community meetings to share current results.

Project Logic Model

Provide a logic model for your project.



Process Evaluation Method and Design

The research design for the process evaluation will be primarily focused on descriptive statistics. Most areas of the analysis will be assessing whether an activity was successful completed and how much of each activity took place. For instance, as a part of this process evaluation, we plan to track the frequency of LPR reads and each component of ORT/MVAT operations. However, there will be some qualitative analysis to assess the utilization of some software such as the camera integration software.

The decision-making process for the project will be managed by the Lieutenant and the Sergeant in charge of the PCU at Modesto Police Department (MPD). The daily oversight of the ORT/MVAT Operations, ORT/MVAT technologies, the PCU, and the Police Civilian Investigator will be done by the Sergeant of the PCU. The social media and community education pamphlets will be managed by the Public Information Officer. The Police Civilian Investigator and a MPD Crime and Intelligence Analyst will keep track of the different activities and outcomes of the program. RTI International will be responsible with compiling all the data for the quarterly reports, final report, the fidelity dashboard, and conducting regular check-ins with MPD on the progress of the program.

Throughout the program, interim checkpoints will be established that ensure consistent evaluation fidelity and progress. Where data are incomplete or not collected, RTI will coordinate with MPD to establish additional reporting requirements. In coordination with MPD, RTI will develop a project timeline that identifies anticipated data transfers, progress reports, and final reports. The plan will also describe RTI's processes for ensuring that all data can be transferred to our team securely and in a deidentified manner, with specific protocols to be followed when transferring datasets to RTI.

To maximize opportunity sharing actionable information and monitoring program progress, RTI will develop interactive dashboards to track the fidelity of the program. The dashboards will be updated quarterly (depending on the frequency and completeness of the data) and will track process-level measures to ensure the program is being conducted as planned and identify any challenges to gathering data. The dashboard will serve as metric to help MPD keep track of their program, such as the number of police operations, the number of technologies being used, information on the number of ORT and MVAT crimes, number of handouts being given, information from retail shrinkage reports, and other identified datasets. As the project progresses, we, in coordination with MPD, will explore inclusion of additional datapoints that may be relevant. The dashboards will enable ongoing reporting to ensure that interim benchmarks are being met and that program fidelity is being maintained. A common challenge with program evaluations is that the shortcomings of implementation or data collection are only realized at the end of the program, at which point they are too late to correct. With regular reporting and monitoring of the interactive dashboard, we can

ensure that the project is progressing as planned and better respond to and mitigate any challenges that may arise.

See **Table 1** for the Process Evaluation Method and Design matrix.

There are various types of activities within this program so each process evaluation input is paired with one of the three goals of the program.

Goal 1: Reduce ORT and MVAT and the fear of ORT and MVAT in the target areas

As a part of this program, a Police Civilian Investigator was hired and trained to help with investigations regarding ORT and MVAT. Their duties include coordinating with partnering retailers, preparing ORT/MVAT operations, supporting ORT/MVAT cases, sharing intelligence reports with retailers and Cal-ORCA, and assisting with tracking the activities and outcomes of the grant. Currently, the position has been filled and fulfilling all the stated duties. Through the entirely of the program, the status of the position will be tracked on whether it is being occupied or not. If there is a vacancy, the timing and length of the vacancy will be tracked. There will be quarterly check-ins with the Police Civilian Investigator to assess how they are managing their duties and whether they have changed over the course of the program.

By the completion of the program, there will be LPRs and cameras installed at 25 additional intersections within Modesto, 5 additional covert LPR and camera trailers, and 5 additional overt LPR and camera trailers. Installation dates will be tracked for when the LPR and cameras are working within their designated intersections. The number of LPR reads and stolen vehicles/suspect vehicle alerts will be tracked for each LPR citywide and in the target area. All LPR reads and alerts are all tracked in the Vigilant database. This will help determine if the LPRs are working as they should and within the best locations. The location, length of stay, and LPR hit/alerts of the trailers will be tracked. This is tracked by the Police Civilian Investigator. This will help determine how often the trailers are utilized and if the LPRs are successful in receiving reads and alerts. These are all being track on an ongoing basis and will be regularly sent to RTI on a quarterly basis to be compiled together. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity of the LPRs and cameras.

There will be about 35 ORT/MVAT operations a year. There will be at least two ORT/MVAT operations a month, however during the holiday season (Thanksgiving to Christmas) there will be at least 11 additional ORT/MVAT operations. These operations have around 12 officers who run surveillance, make enforcement stops, transport individuals after an arrest, and coordinate with retailers. For the extra holiday operations, officers from the PCU will work overtime hours to conduct the operations. The number of operations, officers working operations, overtime hours, arrests, individuals referred to prosecutions from operations, crimes intercepted, price of recovered goods, and the recovered vehicles are being tracked by the Police Civilian

Investigator. The location and timing of these operations will also be tracked. These stats are then sent over to RTI International on a quarterly basis to be tracked for fidelity. These stats are all being tracked to ensure that ORT/MVAT operations are being staffed and operated consistently. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

There will be 6 additional magnetic vehicle trackers bought and utilized an average of 5 times per quarter. These trackers will be used by the PCU and patrol as a part of ORT/MVAT operations and within daily investigations. The number of magnetic trackers purchased, number of uses related to ORT/MVAT crime, dates, locations, and whether it resulted in an arrest will be tracked by the Police Civilian Investigator. These stats are then sent over to RTI International on a quarterly basis to be tracked for utilization. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

Goal 2: *Build and strengthen communication and relationships with the business community and allied agencies as it relates to ORT and MVAT*

Throughout the program, meetings with retailers will be held every other month. These meetings will include the 15 original partnering retailers (Burlington, Costco, Dick's Sporting Goods, JC Penny, Kohls, Lowes, Macy's, Marshall, Rite Aid, Savemart, Target, Ulta Beauty, Victoria's Secret, Vintage Faire Mall, and Walgreens), other additional retailers that join over the course of the program, and MPD. The number of meetings and the number of retailers that participate will be tracked by the Police Civilian Investigator. Meeting notes will be collected from every meeting going over the topics discussed and any voiced successes and challenges. In year 2 of the project, a survey will be created and administered by RTI during these meetings to garner feedback from the retailers. Feedback surveys will provide MPD with actionable insights on program effects, ongoing concerns, and retailer and community suggestions. RTI will consult with MPD to identify specific metrics they want to learn from their retailers and community and develop a feedback survey tool. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track if the meetings are happening and attended consistently and if surveys are administered and received responses.

12 radios have been purchased and given out to retailers to allow for quick communications between the retailer and MPD. The Police Civilian Investigator will track which retailers have received radios and how they are utilized. These stats are then sent over to RTI International on a quarterly basis to be tracked for utilization. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

A Camera Utilization Software called FUSUS will be purchased and installed by the end of the project. This software will allow the integration of cameras from multiple retailers to be access by MPD in real time. The date of purchase and installation will be tracked. The major goal is to have a core installed in the target areas every quarter. This would include gain access to retailer cameras and integrating LPRs to the real time dashboard. The usage and utility of the software will be check-in with the Police Civilian Manager in charge of FUSUS. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the amount of usage.

An electronic evidence management system called Cellebrite Guardian will be purchased and installed by the end of the project. This will efficiently send evidence to the Stanislaus DA's office to help expedite ORT/MVAT cases. The purchase, installation, and utilization of the software will be managed by MPD. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

Goal 3: *Improve communication to and education of the community related to ORT and MVAT and how to keep themselves and the community safe.*

There will be about 1 social media post per month educating the community about ORT/MVAT crime and how to prevent victimizations. The number of posts, their topics, and the amount of engagement will be tracked by the Public Information Officer. This information will be sent to RTI on a quarterly basis. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

An informational pamphlet about ORT/MVAT crime will be created and disseminated to the community. The number of pamphlets printed and disseminated will be tracked by the Police Civilian Investigator. This information will be sent to RTI on a quarterly basis. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

Meetings will be held with the community on a quarterly basis to share results of the program, provide updates, and solicit feedback. The number of meetings and the amount of people who attend will be tracked by Police Civilian Investigator. This information will be sent to RTI on a quarterly basis. A descriptive analysis such as counts, means for continuous measures and percentages for categorical measures will be conducted to track the fidelity.

Input/Resource/Activity/Output	Data Element(s)	Data Source(s)	Frequency of Data Collection
1 Police Civilian Investigator (PCI)	# of staff assigned, their duties	Employment records, interviews	Throughout the duration of the grant
LPR/camera systems installed at 25 intersections, 5 convert LPR/camera trailers, 5 overt LPR/camera trailers	# of LPR reads and hits, # of equipment installed Locations of installed cameras/LPR and trailers	LPR database (Vigilant), operations tracking sheets	Quarterly
Over 90 ORT/MVAT operations will be completed by the end of the project	# of operations split by type, # of enforcement stops, # of arrests, # of crimes intercepted, # of individuals referred to prosecution, # of overtimes hours work, # of officers working	Operation tracking sheets	Quarterly
Educational social media posts and information handout on ORT and MVAT	# of social media posts # of informational handouts	Social media tracking sheet	Quarterly
Retailer meetings	# of retailer meetings, partnerships made/maintained during these meetings	Meeting notes, schedule	Bi-monthly
Community meetings	# of community meetings, meeting notes	Meeting notes, schedule	Quarterly
Magnetic vehicle trackers	# of magnetic vehicle tracker bought, # of uses of magnetic vehicle trackers, dates, locations, and	Operations tracking sheets	Quarterly

	whether it resulted in an arrest		
Radios for retailers	# of radio given to retailer	Operations tracking sheets	Quarterly
Electronic evidence management system (Cellebrite Guardian)	Assess if software is successful installed and utilized	Interviews	Quarterly
Camera Integration platform software (FUSUS)	Assess if software is successful installed and utilized	Camera tracking sheet to see when cores are installed	Quarterly

Outcome Evaluation Method and Design

The outcome evaluation research will be using a mixed methods design with descriptive, quantitative, and qualitative analysis. Much of the descriptive analysis will be taken from the process evaluation such as the number of arrests and LPR reads/alerts. However, there will be a deeper quantitative evaluation to the amount of crime, investigative leads, and arrests within the targeted areas to before and after the program as well as similar untargeted areas (control areas). Some qualitative analysis will be conducted from the retailer and community meeting notes as well as the retailer and community feedback surveys.

See **Table 2** for the Outcome Evaluation Method and Design Matrix

The below outcomes evaluations are paired with one of three overall goals of the program.

Goal 1: Reduce ORT and MVAT and the fear of ORT and MVAT in the target areas

With this project, MPD has set off a goal to reduce ORT for the eight original retailers (Lowe's, Marshalls, Dicks, JCPenney's, Target Sisk Rd., Target McHenry Ave., Macy's, and SaveMart stores including Maxx value foods and Food Maxx) by 10% each year of the grant and reduce auto theft and auto accessory theft by 5% each year of the grant. This will be defined by identifying if there is reduction in the eight original retailer's shrinkage reports from prior to the program and after the program. For auto theft and auto accessory theft, it will be defined as reduction in report auto theft and auto accessory theft crimes in the target areas from before and after the program. They may also be a comparison between the target areas of the program and a similar retailer dominated, but untargeted area within Stanislaus County (control areas). The data sources for the ORT crimes will be from the eight original retailers' shrinkage reports as well as reported ORT crime. The data sources for the MVAT crime will be reported auto theft and auto accessory theft cases. City-wide trends and target area trends will be analyzed separately to assess the level of program impact. Official ORT and MVAT crime will be pulled quarterly while the retailer shrinkage reports will be gathered in accordance to reporting requirements that retailer maintains. All this information will be pulled together and transferred to RTI to monitor for trends and conduct analysis. RTI will also account for broader trends in 911 calls and reported crimes by monitoring shifts in other property crimes and test for any potential displacement effects. Depending on the availability of the data, we would seek to develop a quasi-experimental approach to evaluate MPD's goal of reducing ORT and MVAT by examining the number of ORT and MVAT events and retailer shrinkage reports before and after the program both within and outside of the target areas. We plan to conduct an interrupted time series to assess

the immediate impact and change in crime rates and shrinkage reports pre and post the ORT program.

While it is important to assess the impact of this program to reduce crime, it is also beneficial to assess how well the program leads to case clearances, arrests, and retailers losing less property. Three outcomes related to this would be to assess if the program leads to an increase in arrests of ORT/MVAT crimes, an increase in investigative leads for ORT/MVAT cases, and an increase in recovered property. For increasing more arrests, it would be defined as increasing the number of arrests for ORT/MVAT from before to after the start of the program. The data source for this would from the operations spreadsheets and arrests for ORT/MVAT for before and after the program. The operations spreadsheet will help distinguish how many arrests are coming from operations and will help distinguish if these operations are leading to an increase in arrests. The second part is having an increase in investigative leads for ORT/MVAT cases. This is defined as an increase in evidence such a LPR alert that lead to arrest for MVAT crime. This would be captured with operations spreadsheets as well as case reports from before and after the program. We plan to conduct descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations), paired t-tests to assess changes in outcome variables across timepoints, regression modeling to identify investigative leads associated with arrests. Lastly, an increase in recovering more property would be measured both by how much property retailers have lost to ORT crime and how much was returned to them after an arrest or crime interception. The data source for this information would be from the shrinkage reports from retailers before and after the program, ORT crime cases from before and after the program, and the operations spreadsheets. Therefore, it can be assessed how much retailers lost before and after the program, how much property was returned before and after the program, and how much property is returned just from the operations. We plan to conduct descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations), paired t-tests to assess changes in outcome variables across timepoints, and interrupted time series.

Goal 2: Build and strengthen communication and relationships with the business community and allied agencies as it relates to ORT and MVAT

One major goal of this project is to build a partnership with retailers and MPD. This evaluation will assess this partnership by implementing a survey that solicits feedback from the retailers about their experience and trust with MPD. The survey will ask retailers if prior to this project if they failed to report cases of ORT to MPD and then follow-up with the same retailers once the program in nearly complete to see if there is still ORT crime not being reported. This will serve multiple purposes. It will assess if the retailer is open to reporting more ORT crime and working with MPD. It will also allow us to test if there is an increase in ORT crime after the start of the program that it may be caused by increased reporting instead of an increase in crime. The survey will also solicit feedback about the successes and challenges around the program and how

retailers feel about MPD's response to ORT crime. These surveys will be administered during year 2 of the program and given at least one follow-up. They will be given during the bi-monthly retailer meetings by RTI. We plan to conduct some descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations), paired t-tests to assess changes in outcome variables across the different surveys, regression modeling to identify characteristics associated with stronger relationships. We also plan to conduct some qualitative analysis of any challenges and successes stated within the survey and with the retailer meeting itself.

Goal 3: *Improve communication to and education of the community related to ORT and MVAT and how to keep themselves and the community safe.*

Through the use of social media, informational pamphlets, and community meetings, MPD plans to help educate the community on how to prevent themselves from becoming victimized by ORT and MVAT crime and to inform them about the successes of the program. The data source of this information will be tracked by the Public Information Officer. The evaluation will assess the level of social media engagement with social media posts related to ORT/MVAT crime and compare to the rest of the posts on MPD's social media page. We will also assess if there is an increase in engagement at community meetings over the course of the project. Lastly, RTI will create and administer a survey to the community members who attend these meeting to assess their knowledge about ORT/MVAT crime and how they learned the community meetings. We plan to conduct social media metrics analysis around post engagement, descriptive statistics (e.g., means, standard deviations) for level of knowledge of ORT/MVAT crime through the survey and meeting attendance, and lastly do some qualitative analysis from the surveys of community feedback on MPD's ORT/MVAT program.

Outcome	Definition	Data Source(s)	Frequency of Data Collection
Reduce ORT crime in target areas	Reduction of ORT crime in target areas when compared to timeframes prior to the implementation of the program and to similar retail areas that did not additional help from the program	MPD's Record Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD) , retailer shrinkage reports	Quarterly
Increased arrests for ORT/MVAT crimes	Increase the number of arrests related to ORT/MVAT crimes from prior to the implementation of the program	MPD's Record Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), Operations tracking sheets	Quarterly
Increase in vehicles and goods recovered	Increase the number of vehicles and stolen goods to be recovered to the owner/retailer	MPD's Record Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD), Operations tracking sheets, retailer shrinkage reports	Quarterly
Increase in public awareness and knowledge of ORT/MVAT	Create educational social media posts about ORT/MVAT. Create and pass out an informational pamphlet. Educate the community at community meetings	Social media post tracking sheets; Community meetings; Community Survey	Quarterly
Increase investigative leads in ORT/MVAT through LPR and camera footage	LPR and Camera footage will allow for more evidence to be able to clear cases of ORT/MVAT	MPD's Record Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD)	Quarterly

Improved quality and timeliness of information sharing and relationships between law enforcement, DA offices, and local retailers	Through monthly retailer meetings sharing on trends and information about ORT/MVAT crime. Sharing evidence with the DA's office quicker and more reliability through electronic sharing	Bi-monthly retailer meetings, survey	Bi-monthly
Increase in reported ORT incidents from businesses/retailers	Increase in the number of ORT incidents reported/called in by businesses/retailers	MPD's Record Management System (RMS) and Computer-Aided Dispatch (CAD); Retailer surveys	Quarterly