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# BSCC ORT Prevention Grant Project Local Evaluation Plan

*Project Period: October 1, 2023 - December 31, 2026*

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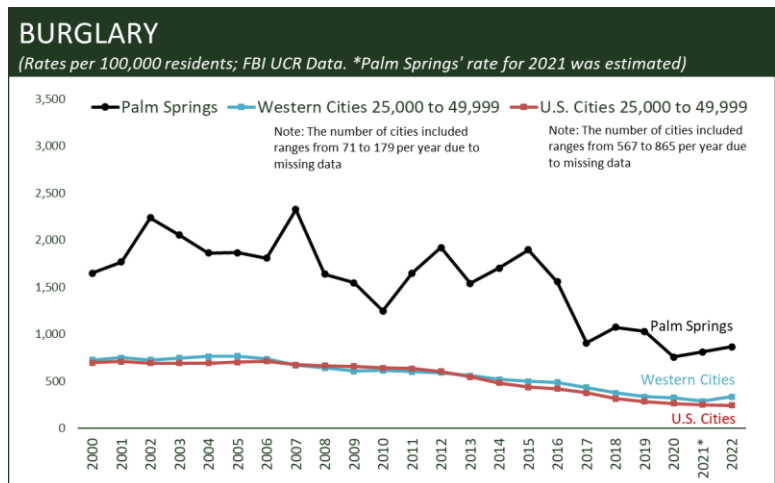
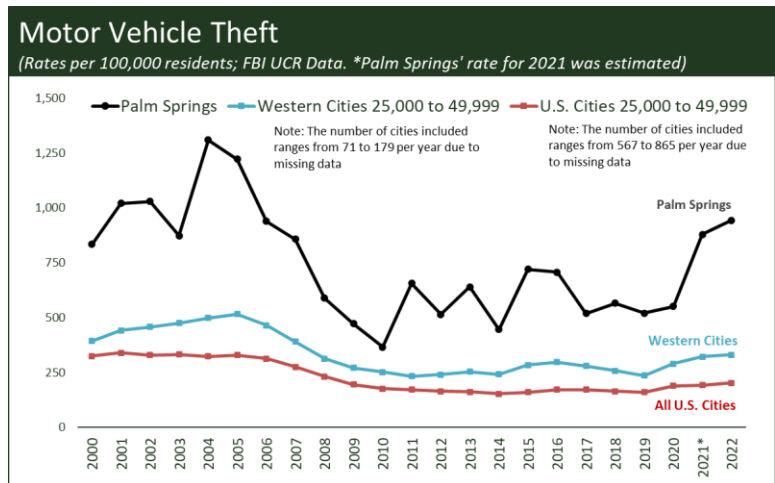
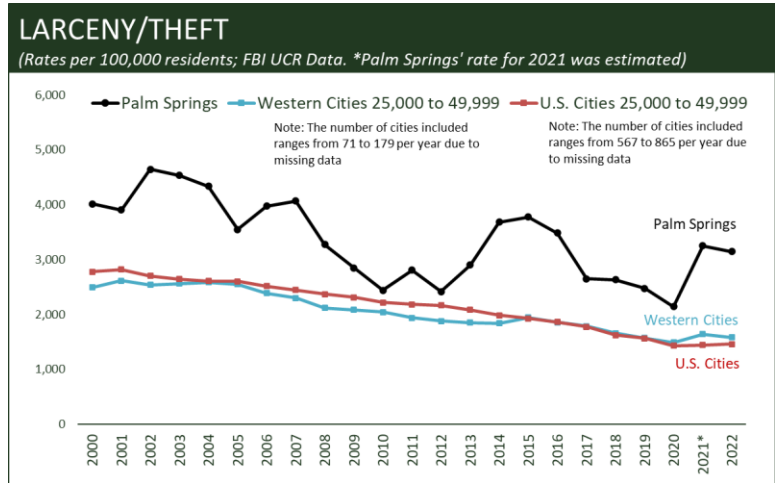
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## Project Background

Palm Springs is a vibrant community located southeast of Los Angeles in Southern California. The U.S. Census Bureau reports the residential population base for the city was 45,223 people in 2022, with more males (60.4%) than females (39.6%) and fewer inhabitants under the age of 18 (8.2%) as compared to age 65 or older (33.2%)<sup>1</sup>. Residents are primarily White (alone; 70.7%), Asian (16.3%), or Black/AA (6.5%) and 40.3% are of Hispanic origin.

Property crime, the primary focus of the current grant, has been a longstanding problem in Palm Springs and accounted for 58.4% of all offenses reported to the police between 2019 and 2023. The three charts to the right show the offense rates for larceny/theft (e.g., shoplifting, theft from a motor vehicle [MV], theft of MV parts), MV theft, and burglary. The rates for Palm Springs are compared to those for similarly sized cities in Western states and the U.S.

The crime rates for Palm Springs were significantly higher than the comparison locations for every year examined. The data also reveal recent increases in all three offense categories from 2020 to 2022.



<sup>1</sup> This compares to 21.8% and 15.8% respectively for California.

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

We have several hypotheses regarding the city's higher-than-average rate of property offending. First, Palm Springs is a resort community that draws high numbers of "snowbirds" during the winter months, and a significant number of overnight guests visit the region throughout the year. Housing options for short-term residents and tourists are plentiful, including 125 hotels/motels (estimated 6,750 rooms) and 2,861 registered vacation rentals (8,874 bedrooms). Day visitors are even more common given the city's central location in Riverside County and the broader area's many attractions. The Palm Springs International Airport served nearly three million passengers in 2022, and Interstate 10 provides easy access to visitors from the greater Los Angeles metropolitan area with a population of roughly 13 million.

The accessibility and attractiveness of Palm Springs mean that the city's ambient population can easily double or triple on any given day. This provides would-be offenders with a high number of potential targets, many of whom are concentrated downtown or in locations catering to tourists. Visitors may be unfamiliar with their surroundings and unaware of the city's high risk for property crimes like thefts of/from an MV. As such, they may fail to take necessary precautions to safeguard their property. Likewise, some offenders are emboldened by the belief that out-of-towners will be less likely to report crimes to the police and/or bear witness against them in criminal proceedings.

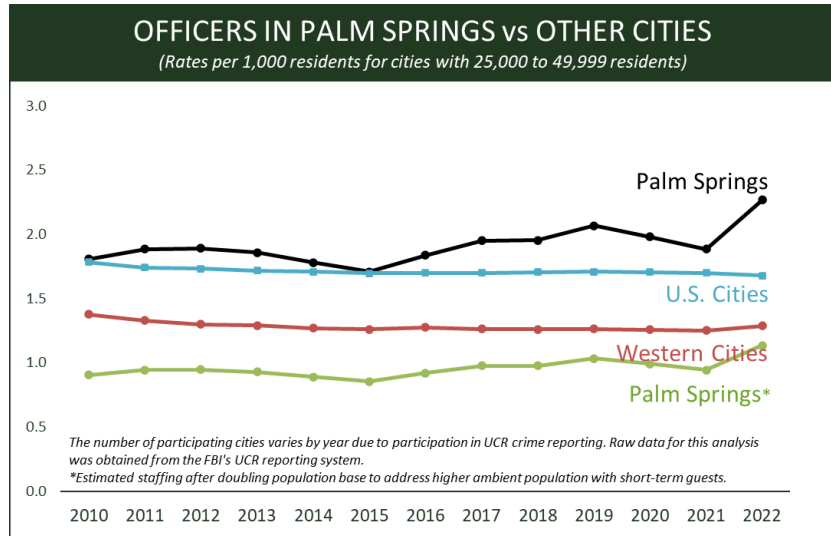
Consistent with this, we estimate that non-resident victims accounted for 22% of all MV thefts, 35% of thefts from an MV, 13% of thefts involving MV parts (e.g., catalytic converters). Non-residents also accounted for 25% of burglary victimizations and 19% of "other" larcenies in 2023. Similarly, more than one in ten (12%) property crimes reported to the police from 2019 to 2023 were in, at, or adjacent to a hotel/motel. This includes one out of five (20%) thefts from an MV and 16% of all MV thefts.

A second factor that contributes to property offending in Palm Springs, particularly organized retail theft (ORT), is the city's unusually high number of retail establishments. This includes approximately 1,600 businesses, many of which are densely packed into the downtown core and adjacent neighborhoods. Businesses and their adjacent parking areas, excluding hotels/motels, accounted for over 2,700 offenses between 2019 and 2023 for an annual average of 550 incidents. In other words, businesses account for roughly one-third (35%) of the city's recorded property crimes, including 100% of shoplifting offenses, 67% of thefts from a building, 53% of "other" larcenies, 42% of vandalisms, 38% of thefts involving MV parts, 36% of thefts from an MV, 36% of MV thefts, and 28% of burglaries. The high number of local business properties and parked cars provide thieves with many criminal opportunities. Offending strategies seen in recent years include conspiratorial distractions, smash and grabs (~20%), and nighttime access (~31%).

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

The Palm Springs Police Department's (PSPD) staffing ratio presents a third challenge to local crime control efforts. The department reported 103 sworn officers in 2022 for a staffing rate of 2.27 per 1,000 residents which exceeds the U.S. "average" rate for similarly sized cities (1.68) and the rate for Western agencies (1.29).

This comparison fails to take into consideration the large number of part-time residents in the city. Nor does it address the fact that the ambient population often doubles or triples due to the region's active tourism industry. Doubling the base residential population yields a very different picture, wherein PSPD is understaffed relative to less tourist-oriented locations (see figure). This makes it difficult for the local police to respond to crime effectively and proactively.



Finally, Palm Springs has several "big box stores" (e.g., Walmart, Home Depot, Lowe's) that are spread across the cityscape. These locations attract thieves, many of whom collaborate in retail thefts at these sites or in the resale/redistribution of stolen goods. Although most of these businesses have in-house security and loss prevention specialists, efforts to coordinate crime control across stores are limited. Similarly, communication and joint crime prevention activities with smaller retail establishments adjacent to the large stores remain limited.

## Project Scope

The PSPD will implement a comprehensive crime prevention program designed to address three specific crime problems: 1) theft from retail establishments (including organized retail theft), 2) theft of motor vehicles (MVT), and 3) theft from motor vehicles (MVAT; specifically catalytic converters). This initiative incorporates a range of activities, services, and interventions aimed at reducing these crimes and enhancing community safety while not relying solely on the criminal justice system. PSPD views apprehension as a short-term strategy. However, prevention through problem-solving and situational crime prevention is a long-term, evidence-based approach to crime control.

The primary strategies PSPD will use to address the three target offenses are documented below.

### 1. Situational Crime Prevention at Retail Establishments

PSPD will work to reduce theft at retail establishments in the city's central business district. One strategy for achieving this goal is to **increase the effort** required for offenders to successfully carry out these crimes. Because many of the commercial burglaries involve forced entry or "smash and grab" thefts, PSPD will purchase and install protective glass tape for interested businesses. The tape allows retailers to protect merchandise by making plate glass windows more difficult to penetrate while sustaining the benefits of natural surveillance.

A second strategy focuses on **increasing the perceived risk** to those committing crimes at retail stores. PSPD will collaborate with local businesses to purchase and install CCTV cameras, alarm systems, license plate readers (LPRs), and other electronic surveillance technologies. These systems will be actively monitored by PSPD with the goal of rapidly dispatching officers to the scene following an alert. Aerial drones will be purchased and used to supplement these deployments. Efforts will be taken at target locations to maximize deterrence by warning potential offenders of the enhanced surveillance being used.

### 2. Situational Crime Prevention Focusing on MV Theft and Theft from MVs

Four crime prevention efforts will target thefts of or from motor vehicles (i.e., MVT/MVAT). First, PSPD will identify locations in the city with increased risk for these offenses. The agency will then conduct audits of these areas to identify physical design (e.g., CPTED), social, and place management factors contributing to the problem. From there, PSPD will work with local stakeholders to implement crime prevention strategies that **increase the perceived risk** to would-be offenders. This might include the deployment of LPRs, installment of CCTV cameras, enhanced access control, improved lighting, and additional police patrols.

Second, attempts will be made to **increase the effort** needed to commit these offenses (i.e., target hardening). This includes encouraging vehicle owners to consistently lock their doors, immobilize their steering wheel using a club or other device, park indoors when possible, and avoid leaving their keys in the car and/or their car running.

Third, vehicle owners will be advised via signage and other communications to **reduce the reward** associated with this crime by removing valuable items. A fourth initiative will involve identifying vehicles at high risk for catalytic converter theft and offering the owners free engraving. This will be paired with outreach to local metal recyclers to encourage them to report suspicious activity involving engraved items.

### 3. Focused Deterrence – Prolific Offenders (i.e., Catalytic Converter Thieves, MV Thieves, etc.)

The majority of property crimes in Palm Springs, like most communities, result from the actions of a small number of chronic offenders. This is particularly true for crimes like catalytic

converter theft, given that the item itself has no practical value for the thief. The only value comes when the item is converted into cash at a business that extracts the precious metals or resells the object in the used parts marketplace. It seems likely, therefore, that local thefts involving this item are the work of a small number of people. PSPD will use various investigative strategies (e.g., sting operations, analysis of criminal records) to identify prolific offenders and then use focused deterrence to reduce recidivism among this group. This may include meeting with the offenders and warning them about the consequences of continued offending, increasing surveillance and monitoring of this group, and facilitating access to rehabilitation and diversion resources that are delivered by local treatment providers.

### Target Locations

The city's central business district, shopping plazas, and "big box" stores will be the primary foci for efforts to reduce retail theft. PSPD's CAD and RMS data will be analyzed to identify "hotspots" for MVT and MVAT. Because high-risk locations can change over time, these analyses will be updated each year to ensure accurate delivery of crime prevention activities.

### Goals and Objectives

The PSPD will use grant funds to address three distinct goals.

#### **Goal 1: Reduce ORT and other forms of retail theft at businesses.**

- Objective 1: Install window security film at 200 stores to reduce smash & grab thefts.
- Objective 2: Install cameras at high-risk theft locations, monitored at a real-time crime center, to detect suspicious activity and expedite the arrival of officers.
- Objective 3: Implement a drone program to increase the apprehension of suspects.
- Objective 4: Create free crime prevention materials (e.g., flyers, handouts, pamphlets, signs) addressing retail theft and deliver them to local businesses via mailings, in-person business checks, and/or a dedicated website.
- Objective 5: Develop a training program for retail theft prevention and deliver it to 40 businesses via in-person sessions or online.
- Objective 6: Work with business owners/managers to increase their use of situational crime prevention strategies targeting retail theft.

#### **Goal 2: Reduce MV thefts, thefts from an MV, and theft of MV parts in hotspots of these crimes.**

- Objective 1: Use CAD/RMS data to identify geographic and temporal hotspots of these crimes, the types of vehicles involved, and the modus operandi (MO) of the offenders.
- Objective 2: Conduct on-site reviews of hotspots to document contributing factors.
- Objective 3: Provide additional police patrols to increase visibility in hotspots for these crimes.

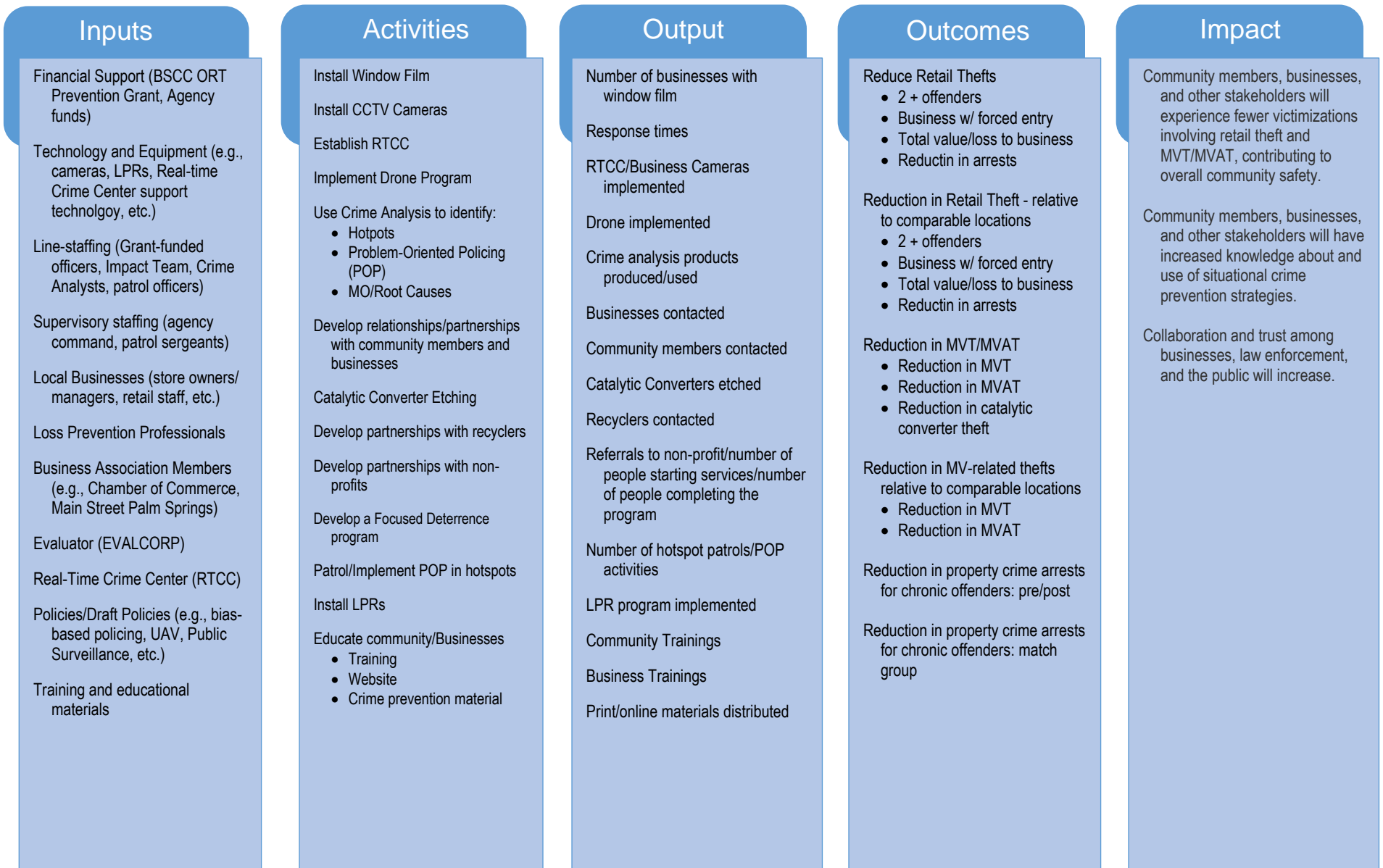
## ORT Prevention Grant Program

- Objective 4: Implement license plate readers (LPRs) and stationary security cameras to increase the perceived risk of committing these crimes and the recovery of stolen property.
- Objective 5: Identify owners of high-risk vehicles and/or those who regularly park in hotspots and provide a free catalytic converter engraving service.
- Objective 6: Meet with local metal recyclers to request notification when someone attempts to sell a marked converter.
- Objective 7: Design and deliver a web-based educational campaign for community members and neighborhood watch groups addressing the prevention of MV-related property crimes.
- Objective 8: Work with high-risk businesses, businesses catering to tourism, and city residents to increase their use of situational crime prevention strategies applicable to MV-related thefts.

### **Goal 3: Reduce re-offending among prolific vehicle-related and retail theft offenders.**

- Objective 1: Identify 25 repeat offenders engaging in the focus crimes using various investigative strategies (e.g., stings; analysis of criminal records).
- Objective 2: Collaborate with a non-profit, anti-recidivism organization to create a plan for repeat offenders to succeed in life and to avoid criminal activity.

**Project Logic Model**





## Local Evaluation Plan

The City of Palm Springs has retained EVALCORP to conduct a comprehensive assessment of the PSPD’s ORT grant initiative. This includes a **process** evaluation documenting the delivery of the crime prevention activities and services discussed (i.e., outputs in the logic model). Additionally, an **outcome** evaluation (also referred to as an impact evaluation) will assess whether these activities produced measurable impacts on crime, victimization, and community sentiments regarding public safety.

		PROCESS EVALUATION	
		Activities & Services Delivered as Planned (High Fidelity)	Activities & Services NOT Delivered or Modified Significantly (Low Fidelity)
IMPACT EVALUATION	Target Problem(s) Declined*	Strong Evidence that the Intervention was Successful	Change in Problem(s) Due to Other Factors; Intervention Unlikely to be Cause of Change
	Target Problem(s) did NOT Decline*	Intervention was Not Successful; Activities & Services Insufficient to Reduce Problem(s)	Intervention Might Have Been Helpful if Successfully Implemented

\*Relative to the pre-intervention period in the target location and/or relative to change in comparison location(s).

Process and outcome evaluations, when combined, improve the causal inferences that can be made regarding an intervention and its targeted outcomes (see figure above). Details on each evaluation are provided below.

## Process Evaluation - Method and Design

The process evaluation will employ a mixed methods approach, using a combination of quantitative and qualitative data obtained from surveys, a tracking log of activities, crime data, call for service data, and stakeholder interviews. Quantitative data analysis will vary based on the goals and objectives of the grant-funded program or activity. The specific types of data collection activities and analyses are broken out by objective in the following sections. Generally, a mixture of descriptive statistics such as means testing (i.e., significance testing), time-series analysis, geographic analysis, and effect sizes, will be used to report outputs/outcomes.

The PSPD’s project coordinator is Captain Mike Kovaleff. He will oversee day-to-day operations and will be assisted by a grant-funded officer. Chief Andrew Mills authorized the project and will provide strategic guidance for the project.

The EVALCORP project team consists of the following members/responsibilities:

1. Dr. Stacy Metcalf – Project Coordinator
2. Julie Wartell – Project lead and geographic analysis
3. Dr. Kris Henning – Quantitative analysis and data management
4. Greg Stewart – Qualitative analysis and report compilation

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

Captain Kovaleff (or his designee) will coordinate day-to-day operations with Ms. Wartell and Dr. Metcalf. Project-related decisions will be made collaboratively by the team. Decisions that impact the overall strategy or focus of the grant will be approved by Chief Mills (or his designee). Any changes requiring approval by the Board of State and Community Corrections (BSCC), the granting agency, will be forwarded to the appropriate party before implementation.

At a minimum, regular meetings (e.g., monthly or as needed) between PSPD and the EVALCORP team will ensure issues are addressed as they arise. Data collection activities will be coordinated between the EVALCORP team, the PSPD grant-funded officer, and the PSPD crime analyst.

The process evaluation is structured around the PSPD's goals and objectives. These are detailed below:

### **Goal 1: Reduce ORT and other forms of retail theft at businesses.**

As described in the Project Background, Palm Springs has high rates of theft. Retail theft, including ORT, drives a significant portion of this problem. To meet this goal, PSPD has three objectives.

#### ***Objective 1: Install window security film at 200 stores to reduce smash & grab thefts.***

The first objective consists of helping local businesses conduct target hardening. Target hardening creates or strengthens physical barriers to prevent a thief from gaining entrance, thereby preventing theft or other crimes<sup>1</sup>. PSPD believes that using window film (also called glass protection tape or glass break tape) will increase the effort needed to gain access to the business. This will make thieves less likely to gain entry, and even if they are successful, it should increase the time necessary to commit the crime. This may also increase the effectiveness of other measures proposed in this project (see the section below regarding implementing drones).

#### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will secure a vendor to install window film on businesses at risk of smash-and-grab-type burglaries/thefts.

#### *Outputs/Targets*

1. 200 businesses have window film installed.

#### ***Objective 2: Install cameras at high-risk theft locations, monitored at a real-time crime center, to detect suspicious activity and expedite the arrival of officers.***

Real-Time Crime Centers (RTCCs) leverage the ubiquity of video and other information-based technologies to provide police with timely and actionable intelligence. This may

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

improve response times, investigations, and tactical responses. Given the size and staffing of PSPD, the RTCC will likely be smaller and not operate 24/7.

Functionally, RTCCs leverage technology like the type this grant proposes to deploy. Many typically employ CCTV, LPR, sometimes drones or other forms of mobile video, and other data-related software. Proponents of these centers claim they can help police be more precise in their efforts instead of engaging in counter-productive activities (i.e., mass stops of people and/or cars, stopping the wrong individuals, etc.). As with other emerging technologies, there is limited research on the impact of RTCCs. A few studies have found evidence that RTCCs may result in improved case clearances<sup>ii</sup> and/or crime reduction<sup>iii</sup>; however, these studies focused only on two larger cities (Chicago, IL and Miami, FL).

A significant program component involves purchasing and installing 300 cameras to be monitored by the RTCC (although the agency hopes to install more). These cameras will function like closed circuit television (CCTV). CrimeSolutions.gov, a website sponsored by the National Institute of Justice that provides information on the evidence base for different crime prevention and reduction programs, rates the use of CCTV as “promising.”<sup>iv</sup> In this context, “promising” means that the existing evidence suggests the strategy is effective at reducing crime but that the evidence is limited and would benefit from additional research.

### *Inputs/Activities*

One input will be the purchase and installation of surveillance cameras, and the second input will be the establishment of the RTCC.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. 12 high crime areas have CCTV cameras installed.
2. PSPD has an operational Real-Time Crime Center.
3. Response times for retail burglaries/alarms drop post-intervention.

### ***Objective 3: Implement a drone program to increase the apprehension of suspects.***

One approach for reducing crime includes increasing the risk associated with committing the crime<sup>v</sup>. According to the Center for Problem-Oriented Policing and other research, offenders are generally more concerned about the risk of apprehension than the costs of being apprehended. One method of accomplishing this is by increasing formal and informal surveillance. Another potential approach may be through decreasing response times by law enforcement. However, the research supporting the latter is mixed.

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

Using drones may increase potential criminals' perceptions of surveillance and risk in the area, particularly if advertised. It may also increase the likelihood of apprehending criminals through quicker identification of the crime committed and the direction in which the offenders fled, leading to decreased response and potential apprehension. Finally, there may be the potential for a synergistic effect between the deployment of window film, increasing the time it takes to commit a burglary, and drone usage, decreasing response time.

That said, drone technology is new and understudied. While there are theoretical reasons to believe it may impact crime, research on the topic is limited.

### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will purchase drones and supporting services and equipment.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. A functioning drone program.
2. Apprehensions of suspects for grant-focused crimes increases post-intervention.

***Objective 4: Create free crime prevention materials (e.g., flyers, handouts, pamphlets, signs) addressing retail theft and deliver them to local businesses via mailings, in-person business checks, and/or a dedicated website.***

A primary goal of PSPD's efforts will be to more broadly engage community members and other stakeholders around the grant's focus crimes. Central to these efforts will be crime prevention materials to help better inform the public of steps they can take to reduce these crimes in their community. This objective represents one of multiple efforts to meet this goal.

### *Inputs/Activities*

The grant provides funds for the development and delivery of these materials/courses/online materials, free of charge to the community. PSPD will provide personnel to deliver the materials.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. Crime prevention materials developed and shared, such as PowerPoints, handouts, and other materials.
2. The number of businesses contacted.
3. Website use statistics.

***Objective 5: Develop a training program on retail theft prevention and deliver it to 40 businesses/associations/people via in-person sessions or online.***

In addition to delivering more generalized crime prevention courses, PSPD intends to develop and deliver a specialized course focusing on theft prevention to 40 businesses/associations/people.

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

### *Inputs/Activities*

The grant provides funds for developing and delivering these courses free to businesses. The course will take PSPD personnel time to develop and deliver.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. The training material developed and published, such as PowerPoints, handouts, and other materials.
2. The number of courses delivered.
3. The number of businesses and individuals receiving training.

### ***Objective 6: Work with business owners/managers to increase their use of situational crime prevention strategies targeting retail theft.***

Through Objectives 4 (crime prevention materials) and 5 (training), PSPD will collaborate with businesses using situational crime prevention strategies for reducing and preventing retail theft.

### *Inputs/Activities*

Materials will be developed, and partnerships established. PSPD personnel will work on these efforts.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. The number of businesses working with PSPD to implement crime prevention strategies.
2. A survey of businesses will determine the effectiveness of these efforts.

### **Goal 2: Reduce MV thefts, thefts from an MV, and theft of MV parts in hotspots of these crimes.**

As described in the Project Background, Palm Springs has high rates of theft of motor vehicles, theft from motor vehicles, and theft of motor vehicle parts (i.e., catalytic converters).

### ***Objective 1: Use CAD/RMS data to identify geographic and temporal hotspots of these crimes, the types of vehicles involved, and the M.O. of the offenders.***

PSPD will use crime analysis to identify the geographic areas with the highest concentration of MVT and MVAT. Crime analysis will also identify the temporal patterns and explore the characteristics of these offenses to identify factors that may contribute to these crimes, identify the types of vehicles targeted, and the MO of the thieves. This analysis will drive the choice of strategies to implement.

There is little research into the direct impact of crime analysis; however, crime analysis is linked to numerous evidence-based/informed practices, such as hotspots policing,

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

problem-oriented policing, focused deterrence, etc. The analysis is only helpful in so far as it is used in support of a tactic or strategy. The benefits of using crime analysis have been researched, with some finding that it is key to developing successful interventions.

Hotspot policing is a crime control tactic that leverages the law of crime concentration to focus police resources on geographic areas with disproportionate volumes of crime. The tactic has been deemed “effective” at overall crime prevention and “promising” specific to property crime<sup>vi</sup> by CrimeSolutions.gov. A key element in addressing hotspots is to accurately identify them. This allows for a range of potential solutions—including crime prevention, additional patrols, and POP—to be implemented in the hotspots.

### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will use CAD and RMS data and GIS technology to identify hotspots of vehicle-related thefts.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. Crime analysis product(s) developed by PSPD.

### ***Objective 2: Conduct on-site reviews of hotspots to document contributing factors.***

After identifying hotspots, on-site reviews will be conducted to document factors that may contribute to crime in these locations. These reviews will inform subsequent efforts at mitigating motor vehicle theft and theft from motor vehicles in these hotspots. These efforts may inform future responses (dependent on the review results), including potential efforts to reduce the underlying issues using POP.

The PSPD approach will also involve engaging with stakeholders in the hotspots, such as business owners, to develop responses to impact the issue (see Goal 2, Objective 4 below).

### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will use hotspot locations identified in Objective 1. Officers and/or crime prevention personnel will conduct the reviews and contacts with stakeholders.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. Site reviews conducted as a part of the grant program.

### ***Objective 3: Provide additional police patrols to increase visibility in hotspots of these crimes.***

Increased police presence can reduce crime in hotspots. These patrols do not need to be elaborate or even overly time-consuming. A study in Sacramento found that 15 minutes in a hotspot can reduce crimes and calls for service<sup>vii</sup>. PSPD will conduct enhanced patrols in hotspots for crimes consistent with the grant’s focus.

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will use patrol officers, the Impact Team, and others to provide increased patrols in hotspots identified through crime analysis.

### *Outputs/Targets*

1. The number of additional patrols conducted by PSPD.

### ***Objective 4: Implement license plate readers (LPRs) and stationary security cameras to increase the perceived risk of committing these crimes and the recovery of stolen property.***

Another relatively new technology PSPS will implement is License Plate Readers (LPRs). LPRs consist of a combination of hardware and software used to collect, analyze, and store data related to vehicle license plates. They can be deployed from fixed (i.e., telephone or light poles), mobile (i.e., mounted on a vehicle), or portable (i.e., mounted on a trailer) locations. LPRs can identify and help recover stolen cars or produce investigative leads by capturing license plates (for instance, leaving the scene of a recent crime) that can be linked to crimes.

As with other new technologies, research in this area is limited. That said, a small trial by Betagov and the Vallejo (CA) Police Department showed some promise<sup>viii</sup>. Other studies have noted that while potentially cost-effective and correlated weakly to investigative leads and vehicle recoveries, the relationship was not necessarily causal<sup>ix</sup>. A peer-reviewed study<sup>x</sup>, based on an experimental design, found that LPRs greatly increased the number of license plates scanned and “hits” (identifying a plate of interest). However, in terms of reduced motor vehicle theft, a specialized unit focusing on the activity (without LPR systems) was associated with a reduction in actual theft. Ultimately, the system did produce more scanned plates, hits, arrests, and recoveries of stolen vehicles. Factors such as these would indicate that while promising from a crime control standpoint and certainly worth pursuing, there is insufficient evidence to state that the technology substantially reduces MV theft.

Its impact on other crimes, such as retail theft, is untested. However, these technologies offer potential investigative leads, which could lead to increased apprehension of suspects. As with other strategies, it may be possible to increase the crime prevention benefit of this technology by ensuring that potential offenders are aware of the increased likelihood of arrest.

### *Inputs/Activities*

As a part of this proposal, PSPD intends to purchase license plate readers and supporting services and equipment.

### *Outputs/Targets*

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

1. Successfully implementing an LPR program (i.e., purchasing and installing the systems).
2. Hits (i.e., suspicious license plates identified by the system) produced by the system.
3. Number of apprehensions as a result of LPR systems.

### ***Objective 5: Identify owners of high-risk vehicles and/or those who regularly park in hotspots and provide free catalytic converter engraving service.***

PSPD proposes to implement a program where they assist the owners of vehicles at an increased risk of experiencing catalytic converter theft (due to the parking location) by etching identifying numbers into the vehicle's catalytic converter. This will include purchasing the necessary equipment and developing the program. Other California police agencies have employed similar programs.

Identifying these vehicles will occur via crime analysis, site reviews, and during increased patrols. When officers/crime prevention personnel observe at-risk vehicles, they will offer this service.

#### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD intends to purchase etchers. The efforts will also require personnel. However, this effort will leverage the existing patrols and crime prevention efforts related to the above objectives.

#### *Outputs/Targets*

1. The number of catalytic converters etched.

### ***Objective 6: Meet with local metal recyclers to request notification when someone attempts to sell a marked converter.***

Building partnerships with local recyclers will be integral to the success of the catalytic converter etching program. To help improve compliance with the program, PSPD personnel will meet with area recyclers to inform them of the program and its goals.

#### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD intends to notify retailers of their efforts regarding catalytic converters and ask for their assistance, notifying the police if someone attempts to recycle one. This will require personnel, time, and, potentially, print materials.

#### *Outputs/Targets*

1. The number of recyclers contacted.
2. The number of contacts by recyclers regarding etched catalytic converters.

### ***Objective 7: Design and deliver a web-based educational campaign for community members and neighborhood watch groups addressing the prevention of MV-related crimes.***



## ORT Prevention Grant Program

PSPD intends to develop a website with MV-related crime prevention materials. This will be available to community members and businesses as a resource. PSPD intends to purchase software tools to bolster its efforts on social media, potentially driving users to the website.

### *Inputs/Activities*

The grant currently provides funds for developing and delivering professional marketing materials. While many of these will be printed, they will be able to use them on the web as well. PSPD also intends to purchase software tools related to developing social media content and increasing website visitors.

### *Outputs/Targets*

The number of visitors to the website.

## **Objective 8: Work with high-risk businesses, businesses catering to tourism, and city residents to increase their use of situational crime prevention strategies applicable to MV-related thefts.**

PSPD will work collaboratively to educate and encourage community members, and businesses to increase the use of situational crime prevention strategies aimed at reducing motor vehicle-related thefts.

### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD will need personnel versed in situational crime prevention. The agency already has personnel with appropriate skills, such as the Impact Team Community Service Officer.

### *Outputs/Targets*

The number of contacts/meetings/trainings with community stakeholders focused on this topic.

## **Goal 3: Reduce recidivism of prolific vehicle-related and retail theft offenders.**

Focused Deterrence was initially developed for violent individuals as a crime control strategy. The strategy, also called “pulling levers,” uses a mixture of specific sanctions for prolific offenders (for instance, increased prosecution) while offering potential benefits for those voluntarily desisting from criminal behavior (for instance, access to social services). The goal is to influence prolific offenders and reduce the volume of their criminal behavior.

The strategy has been modified to encompass other non-violent crimes. The strategy may be effective when the nature of the crime is such that prolific offenders can be identified and are subject to influence (punitive and beneficial). In the context of high-risk offenders (and particularly violent offenders) the practice is rated as promising by

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

CrimeSolutions.gov.<sup>xi</sup> More recent research supports the practice<sup>xii</sup>, with the caveat that most interventions focus primarily on violent crime.

### ***Objective 1: Identify 25 repeat offenders engaging in the focus crimes using various investigative strategies (e.g., stings; analysis of criminal records).***

PSPD seeks to identify 25 repeat/prolific offenders engaging in criminal activity consistent with the grant's focus. This may be accomplished via sting/reverse-sting operations or through other means, such as reviewing criminal histories, working with store security to identify ORT crews, etc. PSPD and its partners will then use a focused deterrence strategy with the aim to reduce the prolific offenders' criminal behavior.

#### *Inputs/Activities*

A combination of crime analysis, working with criminal history records, and/or other PSPD personnel working with stakeholders. It will require access to criminal histories and partnerships with other governmental agencies and community/business owners.

#### *Outputs/Target*

A list of 25 prolific offenders.

### ***Objective 2: Collaborate with a non-profit, anti-recidivism organization to create a plan for repeat offenders to succeed in life and to avoid criminal activity.***

As a part of focused deterrence, PSPD will attempt to offer service to as many as 20 prolific offenders. PSPD will identify and retain a non-profit partner capable of working with this population in an attempt to reduce recidivism by specific offenders and overall criminal activity.

#### *Inputs/Activities*

PSPD must identify a partner who can assist prolific offenders in developing the life skills necessary to reduce or stop their criminal activity. PSPD proposes to partner with a non-profit that will provide services likely to reduce recidivism.

#### *Outputs/Targets*

1. A contract for services with a suitable non-profit partner and a list of individuals referred to services.
2. The non-profit partner will report the number of repeat offenders accepting services and act as a process measure.
3. The non-profit partner will report the number of repeat offenders who successfully graduate/complete the program.

### **Additional Analysis**

Stakeholder interviews will be conducted periodically throughout the grant implementation period. These interviews will seek to identify unexpected challenges or unanticipated benefits encountered by PSPD personnel and community members

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

during implementation. Additional qualitative data sources may include training surveys. These data will help provide context for the process evaluation findings.

### Data Collection

A series of data collection tools and standardized processes will track and monitor the project's success. Primary data collection tools will be developed to collect information specific to grant activities and secondary data (i.e., data already collected for another use) will be used, when possible, to reduce the burden on staff.

### Data Sources

- *Palm Springs Tracking Log (Tracking Log):* EVALCORP, with input from the PSPD, will develop a tracking log containing specific data elements not available elsewhere. The Tracking Log will be designed to minimize its operational impact on the PSPD, while still gathering information necessary for the evaluation.
- *Personnel Records:* Personnel records will be used to determine the number of FTE staff assigned to various grant activities. This may include payroll records, rosters/daily assignments, timesheets, etc.
- *Law Enforcement Data:* The PSPD's Record Management System (RMS), including incident and arrest data, as well as Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) System will be used to assess calls, incidents, arrests, and referrals related to ORT, MVT, and MVAT.
- *Source Materials:* Some measures will utilize copies of materials developed for the grant. This may include crime prevention materials, training materials, analytic materials, etc. when those materials are the outputs of specific goals/objectives.
- *Administrative Records:* Administrative records will be used to document the planned ORT strategies implemented (e.g., LPRs), partnerships established, levels of partnership agency participation, and attendance at training sessions.
- *Surveys:* Surveys of businesses will be used to collect relevant information when appropriate.
- *Other sources:* In some instances, financial records may be used to demonstrate meeting a specific objective. In other instances, EVALCORP and the PSPD will work with partner organizations, such as the to-be-identified non-profit partner, to collect the necessary data.

The evaluation team will collaborate with PSPD personnel to ensure all requisite data are obtained, maintained, and reviewed for accuracy/validity on a consistent basis.

ORT Prevention Grant Program  
**Process Evaluation Data Matrix**

Metric	Data Source	Goal(s)	Frequency
Number of businesses with window film installed	Tracking Log	1	Ongoing
Number of high crime locations with CCTV installed	Tracking Log	1	Once in Year 2
PSPD has an operational Real-Time Crime Center	Personnel Records	1	Ongoing
Response times for retail burglaries/alarms decrease post-intervention	CAD Data	1	Quarterly
PSPD has an operational Drone Program	Personnel Records	1	Ongoing
Apprehension of suspects in grant-focused crime increases post-intervention	Arrest Records	1	Quarterly
The crime prevention material developed.	Source Material (Crime Prevention Materials)	1	Once in Year 2
Number of businesses receiving crime prevention materials.	Tracking Log	1	Ongoing
Number of courses delivered.	Tracking Log	1	Ongoing
Number of individuals receiving training.	Tracking Log	1	Ongoing
Business Survey	Survey	1	Once in Year 1
Number of crime analysis products	Source Material (CA products)	2	Annually
Number of hotspot site visits documented	Tracking Log	2	Ongoing
Number of extra patrols at hotspots	Tracking Log/CAD data	2	Ongoing
Number of LPR systems installed	Administrative Records	2	Quarterly
Number of hits produced by the LPR system	Administrative Records	2	Quarterly
Number of apprehensions because of LPR systems	Administrative Records	2	Quarterly
Number of catalytic converters etched	Administrative Records/Tracking Log	2	Year 2/Ongoing
Number of recyclers contacted	Tracking Log	2	Ongoing
Number of contacts to PSPD by recyclers regarding etched catalytic converters	Tracking Log	2	Ongoing
Number of prolific offenders identified	Administrative Records	2	Once in Year 2
Number of visitors to the PSPD MV crime prevention website/page	Administrative Records	2	Quarterly
Number of contacts/meetings/training with stakeholders on MV crime prevention	Tracking Log	2	Ongoing
Contract with a partner capable of serving prolific offenders	Financial Records	3	Once in Year 2-3
Number of prolific offenders accepting services	Non-Profit Partner	3	Once in Year 3
Number of repeat offenders who complete the program	Non-Profit Partner	3	Once in Year 3
Unanticipated findings/benefits/challenges	Stakeholder Notes/Surveys	1, 2, & 3	Once in Year 3

## Outcome Evaluation - Method and Design

The outcome evaluation seeks to determine whether PSPD's grant succeeded in achieving its longer-term goals. Because outcome evaluations assess whether activities and objectives produced measurable impacts on the goals of the program, this portion of the evaluation is structured around those goals.

Each goal will be assigned a primary outcome measure for the outcome evaluation. For instance, in Goal 1: Reduce ORT and other forms of retail theft at businesses, the primary outcome measure will be the "Reduction in retail thefts in PS (all applicable crime types)" (see the Outcome Evaluation Data Matrix on page 25). Primary goals include broad crime categories, that are widely available.

Goals may also have secondary measures, such as the "Reduction in thefts at businesses involving forced entry" (see Outcome Evaluation Data Matrix on page 25). Secondary outcome measures are more specific. These data may not be available, particularly for comparisons with other jurisdictions.

The planned research methodology that will be used for assessing change in each of the project's four goals is summarized below.

### **Goal 1: Reduce ORT and other forms of retail theft at businesses.**

The comprehensive nature of PSPD's crime prevention activities and the citywide focus of the grant requires relying on pre-post design wherein outcomes for the city will be compared across periods before and after the initiation of grant activities. The specific criminal offenses that will be used for this comparison are documented in the table below. The inclusion of vandalism, burglary, and robbery reflects the fact that retail thieves are sometimes unsuccessful in gaining access to the business (e.g., window smashed but no entry or theft), that some thefts at a business involve illegal entry to a building, and that shoplifting may escalate to robbery if the thief threatens/uses physical force against a store employee or customer.

RETAIL THEFT/ORGANIZED RETAIL THEFT (NIBRS codes: 120, 220, 290, 23C, 23D, 23H)	
CA Code Section	CA Offense Description
211*	Robbery (First Degree; Second Degree)
459*	Burglary (First Degree; Second Degree)
488*	Petty Theft
459.5(A)	Shoplifting
460(A)*	Burglary (First Degree)
460(B)*	Burglary (Second Degree)
484(A)*	Theft of Personal Property; Petty Theft; Grand Theft
487(A)*	Grand Theft:Money/Labor/Property
490.4(A)(1)	Organized Retail Theft with Intent To Sell/Exch/Return
490.4(A)(3)	Organized Retail Theft Act As Agent For
490.4(A)(4)	Organized Retail Theft Organizes Others To Undertake
594(A)(1)*	Vandalism:Deface Property
594(A)(2)*	Vandalism:Damage Property
594(A)(3)*	Vandalism:Destroy Other'S Property
594(B)(1)*	Vandalism (\$400 Or More)
594(B)(2)(A)*	Vandalism Less Than \$400

\* Restricted to offenses involving a business as the victim in NIBRS data.

Additional metrics for assessing progress on this goal will depend on the availability and quality of data in PSPD’s records management system (RMS). Ideally, this would include the following pre-post analyses:

1. Thefts at business involving two or more offenders acting in concert
2. Thefts at businesses involving forced entry
3. Total value of items stolen from businesses
4. Arrests for thefts at businesses

Case studies involving a pre-post design with a single location are strengthened by including a comparison location(s) that is not receiving grant-related crime prevention activities. The evaluation team will work with PSPD to identify comparable cities in the region that were not awarded a BSCC ORT grant and use these as comparison sites for the outcome evaluation. Doing so helps improve the evaluations’ internal validity (i.e., the probability that observed changes are due to the intervention).

**Goal 2: Reduce MV thefts, thefts from MV, and theft of MV parts in hotspot areas.**

The pre-post case study design described above, including comparable cities where possible, will be used to evaluate changes over time in motor vehicle-related thefts in Palm Springs. This includes a global assessment of changes in MV-related thefts along with separate analyses addressing 1) MVT and 2) MVAT. One additional analysis for Palm Springs alone will examine

changes in the theft of catalytic converters. However, NIBRS data does not track catalytic converters specifically. Instead, NIBRS tracks these offenses under the Theft of Motor Vehicle Parts category. The specific offense codes that will be analyzed include the CA criminal codes shown in the following table.

MOTOR VEHICLE-RELATED THEFTS (NIBRS codes: 240; 23F, 23G, & 23H)	
CA Code Section	CA Offense Description
<b>MOTOR VEHICLE THEFT</b>	
487(A)	Grand Theft:Money/Labor/Property
487(D)(1)	Grand Theft:Auto
10851(A)	Take Vehicle without Owner's Consent
<b>THEFT FROM A MOTOR VEHICLE / THEFT OF MOTOR VEHICLE PARTS</b>	
459*	Burglary (First Degree; Second Degree)
484(A)*	Theft Of Personal Property; Petty Theft; Grand Theft
487(A)*	Grand Theft:Money/Labor/Property
488*	Petty Theft
10852	Tamper with Vehicle

\* Restricted to offenses involving a MV as the property type targeted in NIBRS data.

**Goal 3: Reduce re-offending among prolific vehicle-related and retail theft offenders.**

PSPD intends to identify up to 25 repeat property offenders and use a focused deterrence strategy to reduce recidivism in this group. This includes warning them that reoffending will not be tolerated, increasing various forms of supervision over group members, and facilitating rehabilitation services via community partners. The impact of these efforts will be evaluated by counting the re-arrest rates for the participants. This includes the number of new property crime arrests within 12 months of entering the program.

To determine whether re-arrests among participants are **lower than expected**, one or both of the following methodologies will be used. First, we will compare the applicable 12-month “post-treatment” arrest count for each participant with their count of arrests in the preceding 12 months. Second, if the frequency of repeat property offenders in Palm Springs is sufficiently high, we will include a matched comparison group. An additional set of offenders not engaged in programming will be identified and matched on the date of their initial arrest (i.e., the date they are arrested) along with their age, sex, and number of prior arrests. This helps ensure that the treatment and comparison groups are as similar as possible.

**Data Sources**

The outcome evaluation will utilize the same data sources as the process evaluation, with the addition of National Incident-Based Reporting System (NIBRS) data. The Federal Government uses NIBRS to collect uniform crime data throughout the United States.

## ORT Prevention Grant Program

In California, the system is called CIBRS (e.g., California Incident-Based Reporting System). While these data have notable limitations (i.e., inability to specify ORT, catalytic converter theft), they allow for comparison groups.

The system also collects data that, while not precisely consistent with the legal definition of ORT, includes elements of the crime. These data can be used as proxies for ORT.



ORT Prevention Grant Program

**Outcome Evaluation Data Matrix**

<b>Metrics<sup>a</sup></b>	<b>Data Source</b>	<b>Type</b>	<b>Goal</b>	<b>Frequency</b>
<b>Reduction in retail thefts in PS (all applicable crime types)</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Primary Outcome	1	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in thefts at a business involving 2+ offenders acting in concert</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	1	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in thefts at businesses involving forced entry</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	1	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in the total value of items stolen from businesses</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	1	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in arrests for theft at a business</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	1	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in retail theft in PS relative to comparable location(s)</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Primary Outcome	1	Year 3
<b>Relative reduction in thefts at a business involving 2+ offenders in concert</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	1	Year 3
<b>Relative reduction in thefts at businesses involving forced entry</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	1	Year 3
<b>Relative reduction in the total value of items stolen from businesses</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	1	Year 3
<b>Relative increase in arrests for thefts at businesses</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	1	Year 3
<b>Reduction in MVT/MVAT in PS</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Primary Outcome	2	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in MV thefts</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	2	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in thefts from an MV/theft of MV parts</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS)	Secondary Outcome	2	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in the theft of catalytic converters</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS) and standardized text query	Secondary Outcome	2	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in MVT/MVAT in PS relative to comparable location(s)</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Primary Outcome	2	Year 3
<b>Relative reduction in MV thefts</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	2	Year 3
<b>Relative reduction in thefts from an MV/theft of MV parts</b>	PS Crime Data (RMS); FBI or direct request from agencies	Secondary Outcome	2	Year 3
<b>Reduction in property crime arrests for chronic offenders: prior 12 months vs. 12 months post start of intervention</b>	PS Arrest Data (RMS)	Primary Outcome	3	Quarterly
<b>Reduction in property crime arrests for chronic offenders: relative to matched comparison group</b>	PS Arrest Data (RMS)	Primary Outcome	3	Year 3

<sup>a</sup>As noted in the text, some of these metrics may not be possible with the existing data system.

## Appendix: End Notes

<sup>i</sup> Step 39: Increase the effort of crime. (2020, May 17). ASU Center for Problem-Oriented Policing. <https://popcenter.asu.edu/content/step-39-increase-effort-crime>

<sup>ii</sup> Arietti, R. (2024). Do real-time crime centers improve case clearance? An examination of Chicago's strategic decision support centers. *Journal of Criminal Justice*, 90, 102145. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcrimjus.2023.102145>

<sup>iii</sup> J.S. Hollywood, K.N. McKay, D. Woods, D. Agniel

Real-time crime centers in Chicago: Evaluation of the Chicago police department's strategic decision support centers

RAND Corporation, Santa Monica, CA (2019)

<sup>iv</sup> Practice profile: Closed circuit television (CCTV) surveillance. CrimeSolutions, National Institute of Justice. (2014a, June 9). <https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/ratedpractices/25>

<sup>v</sup> Step 40: Increase the risks of Crime. ASU Center for Problem-Oriented Policing. (2020b, May 17). <https://popcenter.asu.edu/content/step-40-increase-risks-crime>

<sup>vi</sup> Practice profile: Hot spots policing. CrimeSolutions, National Institute of Justice. (2013b, September 13). <https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/ratedpractices/8>

<sup>vii</sup> Cody W. Telep, Renée J. Mitchell & David Weisburd (2014) How Much Time Should the Police Spend at Crime Hot Spots? Answers from a Police Agency Directed Randomized Field Trial in Sacramento, California, *Justice Quarterly*, 31:5, 905-933, DOI: 10.1080/07418825.2012.710645

<sup>viii</sup> Automatic License Plate Readers (LPR) - [betagov.org](http://betagov.org). (n.d.). <https://www.betagov.org/completed-trials/Vallejo-LPR-snapshot.pdf>

<sup>ix</sup> Hofer, J. (2022, August 3). Efficacy of automated license plate reader hits in ... [https://www.independent.org/pdf/research\\_articles/2021\\_11\\_30\\_LPR.pdf](https://www.independent.org/pdf/research_articles/2021_11_30_LPR.pdf)

<sup>x</sup> Taylor, B., Kopper, C., Woods, D. (2011). Combatting Vehicle Theft in Arizona: A Randomized Experiment With License Plate Recognition Technology. *Criminal Justice Review*, 37 (1), 24 – 50.

<sup>xi</sup> Practice profile: Focused deterrence strategies. CrimeSolutions, National Institute of Justice. (2013, September 11). <https://crimesolutions.ojp.gov/ratedpractices/11>

<sup>xii</sup> Braga AA, Weisburd D, Turchan B. Focused deterrence strategies effects on crime: A systematic review. *Campbell Syst Rev*. 2019 Sep 9;15(3):e1051. doi: 10.1002/cl2.1051. PMID: 37133287; PMCID: PMC8356499.