

CASE STUDY

DAVENPORT, IOWA



In 2019, the US Department of Justice (DOJ) selected Davenport, Iowa, to join the National Public Safety Partnership (PSP). PSP is a DOJ-wide program that enables participating sites to receive expedited, coordinated training and technical assistance (TTA) and an array of resources from the DOJ to enhance violent crime reduction strategies tailored to each site's needs. The Davenport PSP site participated in the PSP initiative through September 2023.

ABOUT DAVENPORT

With a population of more than 100,000, Davenport is the regional epicenter of the metropolitan Quad Cities (population 400,000) and the third-largest city in Iowa. The Davenport Police Department (DPD) has an authorized strength of 167 but reports having 158 sworn employees and 24 civilian employees. DPD handles more than 94,000 calls for service annually and has an advanced computer dispatch system, integrated in-car computers, and an enhanced 911 service supported by an outstanding, professional, and dedicated group. At the beginning of Davenport's PSP engagement, its violent crime rate was 183 percent above the national five-year average. The department identified several areas of focus for its engagement: increasing crime analysis capabilities, improving gun crime evidence processing, and enhancing operations.



LOCAL AND FEDERAL PARTNERS

PSP began in Davenport under the leadership of Chief Paul Sikorski. DPD changed leadership in August 2022 when Chief Paul Sikorski retired, and Major Jeffery Bladel succeeded him. The chief's command staff and numerous DPD employees demonstrated commitment to the PSP initiative. Their contributions were integral to the success of the engagement.

Many committed partners also supported the success of PSP. The following agencies collaborated to reduce gun violence in Davenport throughout the PSP engagement:

- Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives (ATF)
- City of Davenport
- DPD
- Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Iowa Department of Corrections
- Iowa National Guard
- Scott County Attorney's Office
- Quad Cities partner law enforcement agencies
- US Attorney's Office–Southern District of Iowa
- United States Marshals Service

PSP TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

Through this concerted effort of TTA delivery, PSP helped DPD advance its crime analysis capabilities, gun crime investigations, and supporting technology. Each of these advancements is further discussed below.

CRIME ANALYSIS

With help from PSP, DPD gained the ability to analyze available data holistically, which expedited data-driven decisions to inform its crime reduction strategy. In 2020, PSP assisted DPD in identifying opportunities to improve its crime analysis capacity. With support from the PSP Grants Landscape Review, DPD sought to expand its very limited analysis capacities by applying for and receiving a Bureau of Justice Assistance Smart Policing Initiative grant for \$750,000. The grant allowed DPD to hire a crime analyst and partner with a crime analysis consulting firm to maximize the development of its Crime Analysis Unit. Establishing a Crime Analysis Unit enables department command staff to make data-driven decisions in real time that directly affect gun violence reduction in Davenport and the Quad Cities. In addition, the Iowa National Guard provided a full-time analyst to work with DPD to enhance its analytical capacity. PSP also supported DPD's participation in several trainings for the analysts, including online courses through IACA and attendance at the IACA annual conference. In 2019, the chief and the newly hired crime analyst attended the PSP Enhancing Crime Analysis Capacity Conference in Chicago with a focus on understanding social network analysis and using it in a violence reduction strategy. Finally, the agency engaged in a peer exchange in Denver aimed at informing personnel about Place Network Investigations and expanding upon traditional police responses.

PSP crime analysis technical assistance also helped DPD understand how to improve its crime analysis function, which led to the creation of new products to target violence. For example, the Crime Analysis Unit produces and disseminates analytical products to field personnel, including criteria for a list of prolific offenders and for chronic crime issues (e.g., catalytic converter thefts) and spatial geographic information system products for weapons crimes and shots fired calls. Under the PSP program, DPD obtained a Magnet (Computer) Forensics Training Annual Pass for two years, which helped prepare interested personnel for a future as a Certified Forensic Computer Examiner at DPD. The training and certifications obtained through this experience enabled the agency to use the tools necessary for forensic examination of computers, cell phones, and technology related to gun violence.



DPD staff review department crime analysis products.

EXAMPLES OF TRAINING AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROVIDED TO THE DAVENPORT PSP SITE

Peer Exchanges

- DEA El Paso Intelligence Center
- Milwaukee Shoot Review
- Oakland GVI and Focused Deterrence
- Indianapolis and Phoenix CGIC

Training

- Group Violence Intervention
- Crime Analysis Online Courses and Conferences
- ArcGIS and Magnet Computer Forensics
- Gangs and Guns
- Place Network Investigations
- Social Network Analysis

Technical Assistance

- Strategic Messaging
- Grants Landscape
- Nonfatal Shootings

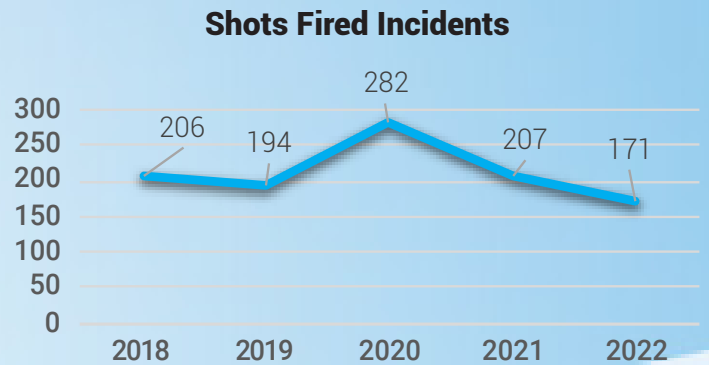


DPD staff presented at the IACA Conference in Chicago in August 2023.

GUN VIOLENCE

At the start of the PSP engagement, gun violence was increasing in Davenport. DPD sought opportunities to collaborate with partner agencies and create a strategic gun violence reduction plan. The PSP program provided numerous opportunities to assist DPD in its top priority of reducing gun violence, including participation in peer exchanges, technical assistance, and training opportunities. These resources contributed to the decreases in gun violence in Davenport. From 2020 to

2022, DPD experienced a 39 percent decrease in shots fired incidents. There was also a 49 percent decrease in shots fired in the first half of 2023 (January 1, 2023, to June 14, 2023) compared to the same time period in 2020.



Gun Crime Evidence Processing

DPD also received nonfatal shooting technical assistance during its PSP engagement to help improve the investigation of gun crimes. As a result, DPD-recovered crime guns are now processed for DNA and fingerprints, test-fired, and uploaded into the NIBIN, typically within 24 hours.

In 2019, DPD purchased a NIBIN system to assist in the investigation and prosecution of crimes involving firearms. Before purchasing the system, DPD had to send evidence to a state lab run by the Division of Criminal Investigation in Des Moines to be processed. It often took 6 to 12 months to receive information from the state lab, which slowed DPD's ability to quickly investigate firearm incidents. In addition, in 2021–2022, PSP provided CGIC/NIBIN technical assistance. Before PSP support, DPD's entry of evidence into the NIBIN system could take weeks or months (in addition to the processing time). Davenport has since decreased this time to a week or less, with results from high-priority cases turned around within a few days. DPD can now follow up on leads more efficiently and track them across jurisdictions.

With city funds, DPD also hired a civilian crime gun analyst in October 2022 to collect, analyze, and disseminate gun crime and NIBIN information. As part of the PSP program, three individuals from DPD attended a peer exchange in Phoenix in April 2023 to learn about Phoenix's CGIC program. While in Phoenix, the DPD team learned how partner agencies leverage technology across multiple platforms to combat gun violence.

Gun Violence and Investigations

In September 2020, DPD participated in a virtual peer exchange with the Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) to learn about MPD's firearms case processing and attend a shoot review. With the assistance provided by MPD, DPD established weekly shooting review meetings to identify variables associated with local gun violence and ensure a standard and coordinated response to shooting incidents. In April 2022, PSP sponsored a Gangs and Gun Training, a two-day class that included about 20 people, including members of DPD's Gun Investigations and Narcotics Units. The training helped the department refine its gun and narcotics investigations to make them more successful. During the training, DPD also learned a new process for collecting evidence to mitigate cross-contamination of DNA and fingerprints. The new process was added to DPD's evidence-collecting practices for the Gun Investigations and Narcotics Units, improving the quality of investigations. In addition, an ATF member provided relevant background on straw



DPD members and partners engaged in a weekly shooting review.

purchasing and other gun-related information, including Glock switches made from a 3D printer, helping DPD know what to look for during the investigations process.

As part of its PSP strategy to reduce gun violence, Davenport expanded its approach to gun crime by including the NIBIN Quad Cities region (comprising five cities located on the Illinois and Iowa border: Davenport; Bettendorf, Iowa; and Rock Island, Moline, and East Moline in northwestern Illinois) by enabling them to use Davenport's NIBIN technology. Since DPD implemented the NIBIN technology in 2019, it has triaged 4,801 cartridge cases, conducted 987 test-fires, and entered 1,109 cartridge cases, many of which have led to the successful state and federal prosecutions of high-end offenders. The department's NIBIN technology helped generate approximately 1,130 leads in DPD cases and 704 leads in partner agency cases.

Group Violence Intervention

Throughout PSP, DPD explored developing a GVI strategy to address gun violence in the community. The GVI strategy ties directly to the PSP focus of enhancing violent crime reduction strategies and community initiatives within DPD. PSP sponsored four DPD members' attendance at a peer exchange in Oakland, California, in June 2022 to learn about the Oakland Police Department's GVI strategy. Staff met with Oakland's command staff and observed the department's weekly shooting review meeting. In addition, staff from Oakland's GVI program, Ceasefire, met with peer exchange participants to discuss the importance of community partnerships in the GVI strategy. As DPD moved closer to implementing its GVI strategy, the PSP program provided funding for City of Davenport personnel to attend the National Network for Safe Communities: Group Violence Intervention University in March 2022. The event focused on ways to reduce homicides and gun violence, minimize harm to communities by replacing enforcement with deterrence, and foster stronger relationships between law enforcement and the community. GVI University informed DPD's inclusion of community members, service providers, and law enforcement in a violence reduction plan. To date, a combined community initiative (involving Davenport government, DPD, not-for-profit organizations, and community members) has implemented the GVI strategy. Of the more than 90 custom notifications DPD has conducted, only 5 individuals have reoffended with a firearm.



DPD members and partners engaged at GVI University in March 2022.

KEY LESSONS FOR SUCCESS

Data for decision-making. DPD's newly formed Crime Analysis Unit proved its value and importance. With dashboards available for DPD command staff, commanders can better understand crime and how data can inform decisions and resource allocation.

Collaboration. PSP allowed for collaboration built on existing relationships with local and federal partners. As a result, DPD enhanced relationships with both local and federal partners through regular meetings, which allowed the gathering of actionable intelligence and improvements in its investigative capacity. This broad support and communication across agencies made change and tangible results possible. DPD recognizes the importance of maintaining engagements and collaborations with partners to sustain effective strategies for reducing violent crime.

PSP support and assistance. PSP was instrumental in supporting the creation of an effective Crime Analysis Unit. Creation of this unit was accomplished with resources and training identified by PSP, which focused and coordinated efforts across the department to make the Crime Analysis Unit a reality.

Leadership and implementation. DPD command staff and personnel embraced PSP goals, took ownership of PSP meetings, and followed through with action. Their strong leadership and belief in PSP goals ensured that the efforts were successful.