



Proactive Policing at DRPS:

**Confronting the realities of de-policing and
charting a strategic path forward**

Setting the Context

- Board-level concern: Is de-policing happening at DRPS?
- Street check data
- Growing public attention on police visibility and accountability
- Need to clarify, reframe, and strengthen proactive policing



What is De-Policing?

- Intentional reduction in discretionary, proactive activities
- Linked to scrutiny, fear of complaints, burnout
- Documented in both U.S. and Canadian research

The 2020 De-Policing: An Empirical Analysis

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Abstract

In 2020, police activities decreased substantially across large U.S. cities in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and the killing of George Floyd by a police officer. Less well understood are when and where the de-policing phenomenon took place. Using NYC panel data from 2017 to 2022 at the census tract level, the study found significant declines in proactive policing, immediately subsequent to the stay-at-home order and/or death of George Floyd. However, all police activities began increasing during the summer of 2020 and ultimately returned to the pre-intervention level and afterwards above it in early 2022. In addition, there is evidence that both the pandemic and BLM protests interact with neighborhood factors in affecting police activities, but not in the same direction. The results are robust across a range of model specifications. Finally, research and policy implications are discussed.

To Swerve and Neglect: De-Policing Throughout Today's Front-Line Police Work

[Public](#) [Deposited](#)

Resource Type
Thesis

Creator
[Brown, Gregory Roy](#)

Abstract
This mixed methods study investigates how American and Canadian front-line police officers are responding to policing's new visibility, which implicates citizen-generated mobile device and CCTV footage and concomitant online interconnectivity and social media discourse, and to intensified scrutiny of officers' actions by a more critical public audience. Quantitative and qualitative data was collected from 3,660 rank-and-file officers at 23 police agencies across Canada and throughout the State of New York. This study finds that a substantial majority of today's rank-and-file officers in the 23 jurisdictions across both countries (72%) are intentionally reducing, or eliminating, proactive interactions in the community, in response to officers' perceptions that such discretionary initiatives are unnecessarily risky. Little variation was found across location and agency variables (country,

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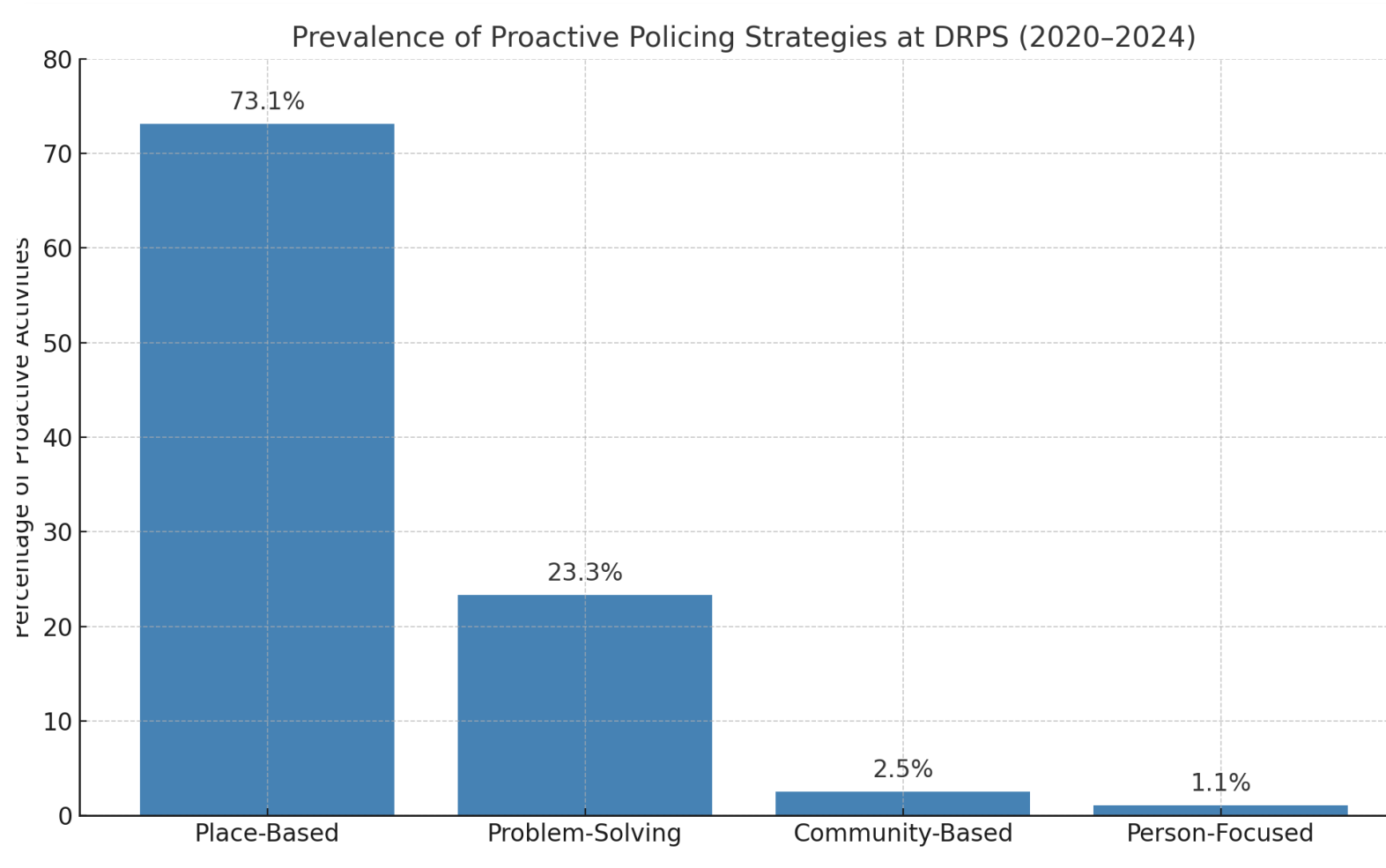
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What is Proactive Policing

- Preventative, data-informed, future-oriented
- Includes place-based, person-focused, problem-solving, and community-based strategies
- Focused on deterrence, not just response



Proactive Strategies at DRPS



Tracking Proactive Activity



- Tracked using PRONE and Versadex platforms
- Place-based strategies = 73% of entries (2020–2024)
- Significant drop in reported activity post-2022
- Inconsistent reporting across divisions
- Gaps in capturing community-based engagement
- Tracking does not always reflect reality



Next Steps

- Unified definition of proactive policing
- Standardized, transparent tracking
- Strengthen community-based and person-focused strategies
- Celebrate proactive officers
- Invest in training and leadership support



Final Thoughts

- DRPS is evolving, not retreating
- Proactive policing must be intentional, visible, and valued
- Opportunity to lead with clarity, care, and courage

