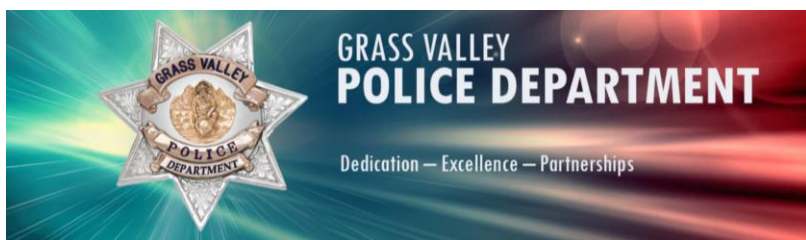


California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CaVIP)

Grass Valley Police Department | Foothill House of Hospitality



**Year 2 Process Evaluation
Report Draft: March 8, 2022**

Foothill House of Hospitality Agreement Executed October 1, 2020

Prepared By:
Becky Garrow, MPH
Garrow Consulting, Inc.
PO Box 2545 Sacramento, CA 95833
www.garrowconsulting.com
(916) 359-9631
info@garrowconsulting.com

Table of Contents

Methods	5
Background	5
Results	5
Process Evaluation Short-Term Outcomes	6
Recommendations for the Future	7
Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Program	8
Characteristics of Grass Valley	8
Impact of CalVIP Funding	9
HOT Program Model	10
Trainings	13
PERT Trainings	13
POST Trainings	13
Other Trainings, Credentials, and Certifications	14
Challenges	15
COVID-19	15
Funding, Capacity, and Resources	16
Referrals	17
Staff Attrition and Turnover	17
Successes	18
Client Successes and Outcomes	18
Strengthening Community Relationships	20
Flexibility and Responsiveness of the HOT Team and Program	20
Organizational Partnerships	21
Improved Inter-Agency Collaboration and Understanding	21
HOT Staff	22
Recommendations	23
Additional Funding and Resources	23
Safe Spaces for Adults Experiencing Homelessness	23
Additional HOT Teams and Staff	24
Increased Availability and Presence of HOT	24
Appendix	26

Key Informant Interview Guide 27

Methods

Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted with staff from Grass Valley Police Department (GVPD) and Foothill House of Hospitality (HH) from October 2021 – January 2022. Please see the appendix for the key informant interview guide. Qualitative data (notes from interviews) were analyzed with Provalis Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) Miner utilizing an inductive approach to thematic categorization.

Some quotes have been edited for length and clarity.

Background

The City of Grass Valley Police Department (GVPD), in partnership with Foothill House of Hospitality (HH), are implementing a violence reduction initiative as a part of CalVIP. The target population of this program are adults experiencing homelessness in Grass Valley, California. The primary function of the program is to identify, engage, and provide case management and housing support to vulnerable individuals experiencing homelessness in Grass Valley, with a specific focus on trust and relationship building activities with GVPD and HH, and referrals for mental health services, substance abuse treatment, medical treatment, and navigation for housing services.

GVPD and HH have a history of working together to support highly vulnerable homeless individuals. For example, HH worked in partnership with GVPD to develop a Commission on Police Officer Standards and Training (POST) curriculum on de-escalation of use of force utilizing an approach that includes officers partnering with social service providers in addressing homelessness and the potential for use of force in interactions with police and the homeless population.

GVPD and HH have formed a Homeless Street Outreach Team (HOT) consisting of a dedicated police officer and licensed clinical social worker (LCSW). The LCSW, an employee of HH, is embedded full time with the police officer, riding in the patrol vehicle, and present in responses and outreach activities, such as visiting camps and other areas to build connections/relationships and provide support items such as food, clothing, and hygiene kits.

As a part of the CalVIP approved evaluation plan, one process evaluation activity included conducting KII with the Homeless Outreach Team to gauge the effectiveness of the program. In conjunction with all partners and funders, the goal of process evaluation activities are to modify protocols and outreach plans for HOT as allowable and appropriate.

Results

Themes that arose from the KII's included:

Thematic Category 1: CalVIP HOT Program Characteristics

1. Characteristics of Grass Valley
2. Impact of CalVIP Funding
3. Characteristics of the GVPD/HH HOT Program Model

Thematic Category 2: Training of Staff

1. PERT Training (Psychiatric Emergency Response Team (PERT) Training)
2. POST Training (Peace Officer Standards Training (POST))
3. Other Trainings, Credentials, and Certifications

Thematic Category 3: Challenges

1. COVID-19
2. Funding, Capacity, Resources
3. Referrals
4. Staff Attrition and Turnover

Thematic Category 4: Successes

1. Client Successes and Outcomes
2. Strengthening Community Relationships
3. Flexibility and Responsiveness
4. Organizational Partnerships
5. Improved Inter-Agency Collaboration and Understanding
6. HOT Staff on Project

Thematic Category 5: Recommendations

1. Additional Funding and Resources: Additional funding and resources.
2. Safe Spaces (Shelter) for Adults Experiencing Homelessness
3. Additional HOT Teams and Staff
4. Increased Availability and Presence of HOT

Process Evaluation Short-Term Outcomes

Summary of Modifications Made as of February 2022

As of February 2022, the following modifications have been made to the original evaluation plan and/or grant application:

1. Data is being gathered in SurveyMonkey Pro, rather than HMIS, to allow for accurate capturing of activities for evaluation reporting requirements as well as CalVIP-required race/ethnicity variables.
2. Data collection has been expanded to include service partner referrals.

Recommendations for the Future

Based on the feedback, experiences, and ideas from the KIIs, the following recommendations are provided for future consideration for the current grant period or future funding opportunities:

1. **Continue funding** for a law enforcement officer and social worker team to conduct proactive and rapport-building activities with adults experiencing homelessness.
2. **Expand funding** so that additional teams are available for service outreach and proactive rapport building.
3. **Increase the presence** of the HOT by increasing the number of days, and the hours in a day, that proactive activities and outreach are occurring. This can be accomplished in conjunction with Recommendation #2.

Recommendations outside the scope of CalVIP funding that would enable the GVPD/HH HOT program to more effectively serve people in their communities include:

4. **Increased safe spaces** for adults experiencing homelessness to sleep, including but not limited to shelters, temporary shelters, motel/hotel room vouchers.
5. **“Sobering Centers”** or other safe spaces that do not include jail for individuals to detox and/or sleep when they are high or drunk.
6. **Affordable housing** options inclusive of Housing First principles.

Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) Program

Key Informants described the general program implementation progress, as well as unique factors of their service area in Grass Valley. Program themes included:

1. **Characteristics of Grass Valley**
2. **The impact of CalVIP funding on services that GVPD and HH were able to proactively provide, and**
3. **Characteristics of the GVPD/HH HOT model.**

Characteristics of Grass Valley

Key Informants discussed the unique characteristics of Grass Valley, such as its smaller population size and rural, small-town atmosphere.

Grass Valley is a small town in the Sierra foothills. We have about 13,000 people [and] a large percentage of retirees and elderly folks.

Grass Valley has a gap in family rearing years, then a younger blue-collar service-oriented population.

Due to staffing of a smaller city, county, it's difficult or even impossible to provide 24/hour services for this [CalVIP] program.

There are so many types of people who fall in the "homeless" category. Maybe their house burnt down in Paradise, maybe they're living in a car, maybe they're living on the street, maybe they have substance abuse problems. Maybe someone had a totally normal life, maybe a history of abuse, or mental health issues. Later in life, maybe you have a chemical imbalance, and your spouse kicks you out, and now you're homeless and you have nobody. It's interesting how diverse the population is. It could happen to anybody.

Unique circumstances of adults experiencing homelessness in a rural, wildland/urban interface were mentioned frequently. This included a large proportion of adults experiencing homelessness frequently camping in the forest and trespassing or camping on private property (large properties with areas for concealment).

We have a lot of camping issues. Camping on private property, specifically, and risks during fire season.

With private property, we go out and do enforcement, but mostly what we do is warn people, inform people that they're trespassing, we'll go out and engage them, find out who they are, and find an alternative place for them

to go so it doesn't end up in an arrest. Any avenue we can do resolve an issue without an arrest or pressing charges.

The city center leads to heavily wooded areas, which offers concealment for those who want to camp in the woods.

Many Key Informants discussed the unique challenges a wildland/urban interface brings.

Up here you have to account for bears, poison oak, bees, sunburns.

The threat of wildfire is a serious issue in Grass Valley during the warmer months. This is especially important with adults experiencing homelessness, who may be starting fires for warmth and/or cooking throughout the year.

We're in a densely forested area. We go out into the woods and hike around and bounce around to all the different homeless camps, find who's out there, literally put out fires.

Impact of CalVIP Funding

The CalVIP grand award dollars have helped increase the impact of service offerings for GVPD and HH, most significantly, being able to proactively outreach to adults experiencing homelessness, providing time to build rapport, and deepening the understand for staff and service agencies on how to best locate and serve this population.

We've been able to increase our ability to engage with those experiencing homelessness. When the community needs referrals, we can provide them and engage with individuals.

Just knowing where the camps are and where people hang out through so much proactive engagement, we can assist them proactively and help other social service agencies find these people. If there's housing or drug treatment available, we help the case managers find their clients. We know where people are and can help direct them there, connect them with case managers and their resources – often these people don't have a watch, no cell phone, no internet, and miss appointments

Some Key Informants also mentioned the benefit that program flexibility gave the team in tailoring their approach to best meet the needs of adults experiencing homelessness.

I've appreciated CalVIP in that we developed a unique program that would work for us. We're allowed freedom, within appropriate boundaries, to adjust in a way that works for us.

We feel fairly autonomous [with CalVIP] in that we have the freedom to make it work for our community. I've worked with other programs that are strict in implementation, there's a script to follow, the program is rigid, and sometimes that is OK but sometimes it doesn't work for our community.

This was a benefit, especially for law enforcement officers, who are often not provided adequate time for rapport building with community members.

CalVIP has been a tremendous thing for us – it has enabled us to address, in a unique way, the target population, which is a population that gives us the most concern and gives Grass Valley the most opportunity for catastrophic damages.

On regular duty: You try to assess the situation, fix the problem right then and there, but there's a lot of other calls for service too. The 911 calls stack up, and Grass Valley only has four people working patrol. So, you need to handle a call as efficiently as possible. You don't have time to build rapport or understand someone's trauma. You have another service call in the queue, another situation waiting for you to show up. You need to be efficient.

In this role (with CalVIP) it's different. Now, I'm not handling "a beat". I don't have a specific geographical area – I have the freedom to be proactive...

HOT Program Model

Many Key Informants spoke specifically about the model the Homeless Outreach Team (HOT) is implementing under CalVIP to proactively outreach to adults experiencing homelessness. The program model consists of a police officer and a social worker working collaboratively to proactively outreach to the Grass Valley area, with a specific focus on adults experiencing homelessness. Themes included the pairing of law enforcement and social work skills sets and staff, as well as the relationship building efforts between these agencies and with the community. Care coordination is a large

component of service provisions – the HOT is actively engaging with other partner agencies to identify other services to help support community members.

This model, this program, of pairing officers and non-officers, is important.

We work as liaisons for people who have fallen through the cracks with their case managers... A lot people have their phones get lost or stolen, numbers change, maybe they're no longer an active client. We try to get them reconnected with services and a case manager.

The program model includes interacting with community members not to respond to service calls or active requests, but also, to check in on the well-being of the community.

"I stopped because I wanted to check on you because it's really cold" rather than "I stopped because there was a report of a crime". [We try to ask our community] What can we do to help get you in to a shelter? Would you be interested in connecting with a case worker? Can we find resources available to you for future housing or treatment?

There is a heavy emphasis on the program model in building rapport and trust with the community, which takes considerable time.

We're building rapport. You can't rush rapport.

Engagement is different with each individual. Some are easier, some barely talk to me... It's the slow building of rapport and a relationship – it takes a lot of time.

When we first started, and people would see a plain-clothed person jump out of a cop car and wondered, "Who is this? Are they undercover?" Now, because of our relationship building efforts, the community knows [social worker] and [law enforcement officer] by name.

The HOT Program, which was modeled after the model described in the PERT training that several program members attended in San Diego, was able to demonstrate the value of a similar, tailored approach to the residents of Grass Valley

PERT showed us there was value to the pairing [of a social worker and law enforcement officer] model... we may not have similar populations, but

we believed that modeling their program, and tailoring it for our community, was a strategy that could work and was something we wanted to implement in Grass Valley.

...this type of program, this is what the community wants, it is what society wants. They want less use of force, less people struggling with mental health and drug addiction. I'm not saying law enforcement is wrong in all those situations – the community doesn't always get it right, but the PD doesn't always get it right either – but we all want to do whatever we can to minimize instances when cops are using force.

The inclusion of a non-law enforcement officer in proactive outreach to the community was mentioned by Key Informants as a valuable way to build trust and rapport, but also to deescalate situations that may not otherwise be possible.

Non-officers are able to deescalate in a way that an officer cannot. Some people just do not respond to authority figures, uniforms, so a social worker in plain clothes, not seen as an authority, is able to make progress or deescalate in a way that PD may not be able to.

Key Informants felt positive about the model's strategy of pairing social workers with law enforcement officer for proactive outreach and rapport building.

The program works! It's not just an idea that people threw together to get money. This program helps people, both people experiencing homelessness and the inter-agency team itself – there's a rewarding feeling staff tell me about helping people. It's a good thing.

It can be done! Especially in this community! We can do it and we can do it really well.

We have committed to this model. Regardless of CalVIP funding, we're going to find a way to do this for the foreseeable future. Because it works. It's a good way to do things.

Trainings

Several Key Informants completed trainings prior to the tenure with the HOT program. This included:

1. **PERT Training (Psychiatric Emergency Response Team)**
2. **POST Training (Peace Officer Standards Training)**
3. **Other trainings, credentialing, or workshops that Key Informants felt were useful to their duties with the HOT program.**

PERT Trainings

For those who had completed a PERT training, many Key Informants indicated this was the impetus for their desire to implement a similar program in Grass Valley. Some Key Informants were unable to complete a PERT training and mentioned difficulties enrolling in the courses, as well as limited PERT training offerings due to COVID. (Note: as of March 2022, all HOT staff have attended and graduated from the PERT training).

[PERT] was the inspiration for pursuing a semi-similar program at HH and GVPD. We had a meeting with San Diego Police Department to interview their strategy and learn more.

The meeting included Nevada City PD, the Director of Nevada County Behavioral Health, Nevada County Sherriff, Grass Valley Police Department, and Hospitality House. This “meeting of the minds” facilitated a roundtable discussion with all agencies, and generated interest.

POST Trainings

The Peace Officer Standards Training (POST) includes de-escalation and use of force trainings geared towards adults experiencing homelessness. This 16-hour workshop curriculum was written by HH and GVPD, is certified, and is delivered by HH. Partnering to develop the curriculum provided an added relationship-building benefit for GVPD and HH.

The best thing I got out of the POST training is a greater appreciation for the police officers. Was interesting to hear their feedback, their views. As a civilian it was eye-opening. Law Enforcement is more introspective than I thought.

Social workers and cops think differently! So developing the curriculum together, was making sure it that was legitimate, real-world, was important.

Key Informant felt the training was a positive experience and valuable skillset for their respective teams.

[POST is a] really valuable tool! That's the most specific training and program that I've been through that's relevant to CalVIP.

All of our officers have been through this training – we mandated it – as well as the majority of Nevada City Police Department, Nevada County Sheriff's Department, and Hospitality House staff. So we're all using the same playbook - there's common ground.

Other Trainings, Credentials, and Certifications

As a course of their regular job training, educational attainment, or licensing requirements, several Key Informants mentioned other trainings they had completed that were complimentary to the work they were doing with HOT, including Motivational Interviewing, Trauma-Informed Care, Housing First, De-Escalation, Licensed Clinical Social Worker ongoing professional development requirements (Continuing Education units), Psychopharmacology, Homelessness, Harm Reduction, Emotional Intelligence

The more tools and options you have as an officer, the better.

Challenges

Key Informants were asked to describe services or outreach efforts that the CalVIP program was conducting that were not working as intended, including challenges or barriers engaging with adults experiencing homelessness.

The primary themes that arose regarding challenges to implementation and service delivery included:

1. **COVID-19**
2. **A lack of funding, capacity, and/or resources for adults experiencing homelessness**
3. **A lack of referral resources, and**
4. **Internal staff attrition and turnover.**

COVID-19

Many governmental and nonprofit organizations faced extremely difficult challenges delivering services for their target communities as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. The HOT program was unable to deliver some of their planned services due to COVID-19.

We had planned on doing a few camp cleanups and other outreach events. We haven't had a chance to do that because of COVID...

Some Key Informants were unable to participate in trainings due to COVID-19.

I was unable to register for the PERT training – they had to push it off due to COVID.

However, a major challenge that HOT faced was a loss of funding provided during COVID-19 for adults experiencing homelessness. Through most of 2020-2021, funding and additional resources were made available due to COVID. This included dollars for motel rooms to help provide housing for adults experiencing homelessness.

Now, we've run out of rooms and the money is gone. We're struggling – we used to be able to get someone out of a bad situation, into a hotel or shelter, now, there is no availability and we're not able to be as effective in removing people from bad situations. People return to settings where they have conflicts with others.

Funding, Capacity, and Resources

Many Key Informants mentioned a lack of funding, capacity, shelter, referral resources, or physical resources or options to provide to community members and adults experiencing homelessness.

When a community member or adult experiencing homelessness is amenable to receiving treatment or other mental health or substance abuse disorder services, the wait times for referrals are often prohibitive to provide effective and timely treatment.

We do have facilities in our area, but waiting lists are usually a minimum of 4 weeks. For many chronically homeless people who have been doing drugs for years, decades, for those who are finally ready to get help, that's a critical moment... so ideally, when they're ready, we want to get them in to treatment immediately. We want to be able to say "Hop in – we'll take you there right now!" because they're ready. What happens is we say oh hey that's great, we take their name down, and call the appropriate people, but four or five weeks have gone by and by that time they've often relapsed, and they're no longer ready to seek treatment.

The wait list is 6-8 weeks for some services. Pretty much no on-demand (immediate) services.

[I would like to see] more resources for the team. I hear frequently is that it's frustrating when they're interacting with the same people every day. They're building rapport, but, these individuals are not getting the services they need. When it's snowing and raining and all we can offer is a warming shelter, and it's not helping.

Providing a safe place for people to sleep was one of the most important stated challenges for the HOT team.

We need a safe place for people to sleep.

There were a lack of hotel and motel rooms and shelter options for adults experiencing homelessness, especially after the funding the team received as a result of COVID-19.

Only a few hotel rooms are affordable AND will take our population. In the beginning we could put people in rooms, but the COVID outbreak has made that difficult - we can't refer people to the shelter. We can't offer hotel rooms.

We have nowhere for people to go. Small amount of hotel rooms. The funding to keep people in those is pretty much gone [COVID-19 related funding]. At the beginning of 2020 it was easy to get people off the street. Some of our patrol officers would call me and ask me to help the client secure a hotel room, we'd pack them up and get them in a hotel room, but that's no longer the case. Shelters are full. We have a lack of housing and places for people to go.

Everyone wants a hotel room, and we can't always provide that.

Referrals

A lack of referral resources available, especially a lack of options for adults experiencing homelessness, such as sobering centers, shelter, substance abuse treatment centers, were a frequently mentioned challenge to delivering effective services to the community.

We have the CSU (Crisis Stabilization Unit), people can stay there for 23 hours max. Even something like that, for those who are not experiencing a mental health crisis, but somewhere for someone to go and sleep and feel safe would help with a lot of these problems. The main problem is that people don't have anywhere to go.

We don't have a place where someone can detox that's not jail.

Staff Attrition and Turnover

In the initial quarters of the grand period, staff turnover and staff attrition occurred, which led to knowledge gaps and challenges in cross-agency collaborative efforts.

It's been a struggle to have the turnover... and to have changing roles and responsibilities. It's a partnership... [would be helpful if there were] consistency in the roles that everyone plays.

We've lost some key positions and they've been backfilled... there were knowledge gaps.

Successes

Themes centered around program successes included the following:

1. **Client successes and positive client outcomes**
2. **Strengthening community relationships**
3. **Flexibility and responsiveness of the HOT staff and program**
4. **Organizational partnerships**
5. **Improved inter-agency collaboration and understanding, and**
6. **HOT Staff**

Client Successes and Outcomes

Key Informants shared multiple success stories from client interactions and positive outcomes as a result of the CalVIP funding and HOT program.

The ability to build rapport and relationships proactively was meaningful to many community members.

I overheard on the police radio that a car drove off a cliff and was at the bottom of a canyon and had rolled over. After listening to the description, I knew which of our homeless people owned that car. I gave them a call, on their cell, left a message. Later, they called and were crying – they couldn't believe I called to check in on them to make sure they made it out OK. [That's] the power of this program, being able to engage with people.

There was a veteran who had been living in his car for 2 years – they got him housing – he couldn't even stand, his legs had atrophied from being in a car, now he's living in a halfway house.

One of our people was living out in the woods – we went out there and there was bear scat all around her camp – she's sitting quietly while the bears are going through her garbage, her stuff. We worked with behavioral health to get her a hotel room – a success! Getting someone out of that environment – we were afraid we'd find her mauled.

[In December of 2021, Grass Valley had] a winter storm, there was snow, we drove up to a homeless guy we knew who lives in a minivan. He started complaining how no one helps him, how no one cares about him... he was trying to go to the warming shelter and had been driving people there – but his tires were bald. We got back in the truck, visited three shops, and finally found a tire shop with the right size tires, and got some used tires in his size. After the client got everything taken care of, the tire shop ended up just donating the tires and the service to him for free. It worked out so well. The guy was so thankful, overwhelmed that we were

*able to procure him tires, it was great to tell him the tire shop [donation].
Changed his perception from “Nobody likes me, no one wants me to here”
to “Wow, people are looking out for me”.*

Several examples of positive rapport and trust that have been built with the community, especially with adults experiencing homelessness, were shared by Key Informants.

*They (the population we proactively outreach to) will wave to police now,
ask them to stop and get out and talk.*

*We’ve had a few 5150 calls, and the person will state they don’t want to
talk to anyone unless I’m [HOT team member] there... shows a level of
trust from people who are otherwise often anti-law enforcement or
distrustful of police officers.*

*We’re building rapport. People know about us in community. We’ll meet
someone and they’ll say “I heard about you!” We have a reputation with
the clients...*

The program impact was felt to have significant trickle-down effects in reducing crime, calls for service, and the ability to respond to cases with an “upstream” demeanor – understanding the true intention behind behavior and helping community members resolve conflicts and avoid future issues proactively.

*Every time we get someone in a hotel room or go out and diffuse a
situation, we’re reducing calls for service and potentially violent crimes.
Intervening with people who are distraught.*

*...it’s [CaVIP] allowing us to better respond to criminally with a
compassion. We can do a deeper dive – why are you breaking the law?
What are the underlying issues? How can we prevent the crime? The
program is having downstream effects.*

*When I think back over the last year, and how many people the team had
interacted with, what would have happened if they didn’t? How many
crimes did we prevent?*

Strengthening Community Relationships

The increased ability to build positive relationships with communities included not just adults experiencing homelessness but also residents of Grass Valley who were not experiencing homelessness.

Many community members got excited about this program, reading about it in the paper. People drop off bottles of water for us to distribute to people. I have warm beanies and scarfs, ponchos, protein bars, water, in my truck and all contributed by the community.

It's a success. The team sees it, the officers see it because their calls for service are reduced, and the community sees it as we continue to see good press.

Flexibility and Responsiveness of the HOT Team and Program

The ability of the HOT to be flexible, responsive, nimble, and agile to changing needs and demands of the community was recognized as a strength by several Key Informants. The CalVIP funding provides and opportunity to be responsive to community needs and priorities as they shift and evolve

Today, the highest priority for our community may be different than yesterday.

We're constantly changing and adapting. As the world changes and the availability of services change – our team is always adapting.

I appreciate how [HOT Staff] has shifted their focus and mindset towards success. For instance, we had an individual with 30 calls for service in a month, anything from low level quality of life crimes to assaults. If we get this person in to rehab, whether they maintain sobriety or not, 30 days without 30 calls for service is a win. [HOT Staff is] saving police resources for other things. [Staff has adjusted] their measure of success and realized that not everyone is going to be a permanent fix on the first try.

[CalVIP allowed us to develop] a unique program that would work for us. We're allowed freedom, within appropriate boundaries, to adjust [the program] in a way that works for us.

Organizational Partnerships

Several Key Informants mentioned knowledge of local partnerships and referral resources for other service agencies in Grass Valley as a success of the HOT program.

[HOT Staff] knows the clients, and can help other agencies find these people, coordinate wraparound services.

A lot of calls for service are generated by folks in crisis. There are more upstream services available. Our team needs to be able to navigate the local system for these community members. Communication and relationship building with other agencies is key to understand how to best serve the community.

Improved Inter-Agency Collaboration and Understanding

“Bridging the gaps” between law enforcement and social services with respect to organizational and cultural differences was a frequently mentioned topic by Key Informants. All Key Informants positive feedback for their collaborating agency.

Working with PD is great!

Some Key Informants shared that the felt uncertainty about the ability for a social service agency and law enforcement agency to be able to effectively collaborate, due to different cultures, staff skillsets, and agency and employee backgrounds. However, each Key Informant mentioned that their earlier doubt was unwarranted and that collaboration between agencies, especially with the HOT street team, was exceptional.

I’m stereotyping here, but social workers are typically left-leaning, and law enforcement is typically right-leaning, and we were concerned there would be a red versus blue situation, but, we learned we can become purple really quickly. It’s not as difficult as we thought and it’s becoming easier.

We had to find the RIGHT OFFICER. Some other departments [who want to implement a similar program or initiative] may need to assign someone [instead of] utilizing a volunteer who’s excited. We were fortunate to find the right officer with the right attitude and focus.

The PD and LCSW work really well as a team!

I hear people talk about stuff that I don't agree with, but it's really good for me to hear other viewpoints.

Many expressed gratitude for the ability to understand a different service agency culture and viewpoint.

[I have a] deeper understanding of the challenges that law enforcement faces with respect to scrutiny, from both political and community standpoints.

Policing is its own subculture. These are very brave people. The police are the first responders to fires and emergencies – they don't have to get suited up so they get there first – they see dead people, injured people, grotesque injuries, it's very intense. Knowing this helps me understand why they [sometimes] sound jaded – it's a coping mechanism for all that they see. Law enforcement does not get the same psychological training that LCSW's get, yet they have way more exposure.

[It is] useful to understand why people don't support social programs. If you want to make a change in the world, you need to understand everyone's viewpoint.

HOT Staff

The strength of the Hospitality House and Grass Valley PD staff on the program was frequently mentioned by Key Informants.

...in my career, we've tried this collaborative effort in various ways. CalVIP's success is dependent on the personalities of the people involved. [HOT Staff] and [HOT Staff] – who are paired – are the right people for this program. They get along, they work well together, they are committed to the cause, and because of that we're seeing good results.

You can write up a great project plan or program, but if you don't have the right people, it won't work. Our HoT is amazing – we have the perfect two people to do this gig.

Recommendations

Key Informants were asked about their recommendations to improve the program. Thematic categories included:

1. **Additional funding and resources**
2. **Safe spaces for adults experiencing homelessness**
3. **Additional teams and staff**
4. **Increased availability and presence of HOT**

Additional Funding and Resources

Additional funding and resources were mentioned by every single Key Informant as a recommendation to improve services, expand their reach, and successfully address the unique barriers that adults experiencing homelessness face in Grass Valley and Nevada County, California. Resources and/or funding recommended included more law enforcement officers and social workers, additional case managers, increased dollars for temporary shelters, and the ability to expand services behind Grass Valley. Many key informants mentioned that additional funding would help increase the amount of proactive, rather than reactive, outreach that the HOT program is able to provide.

Expansion beyond Grass Valley. The grant was awarded to the city, so we're a little limited in our reach. Going out to other places in the county would provide additional opportunities to help people in crisis.

Safe Spaces for Adults Experiencing Homelessness

Key Informants frequently mentioned that increasing available temporary shelters, hotels, motels, or housing would seriously help address many of the issues the HOT team faces.

...a sobering center, somewhere we could take people...if someone is not creating a violent disturbance or totally passed out, but are high or drunk, would be nice to have somewhere to take them just so they could have safe somewhere to sleep. Many people can't sleep because they're scared, it's cold, it's uncomfortable, so they stay awake and take drugs and then pass out in front of a business, and the business calls law enforcement.

If we had somewhere they [adults experiencing homelessness] could go, that would be a huge help.

Another benefit [of sobering centers/temporary shelters] would be that case managers and service providers would be able to find these people. We need a safe place for people to sleep.

We have the CSU (Crisis Stabilization Unit), people can stay there for 23 hours max. Even something like that, for those who are not experiencing a mental health crisis, but somewhere for someone to go and sleep and feel safe would help with a lot of these problems. The main problem is that people don't have anywhere to go.

Additional HOT Teams and Staff

Additional staff and additional teams available for service outreach and proactive rapport building was recommended as a strategy to help increase effective service provisions. Additional law enforcement officers and social workers were mentioned, but also, expanding the team to include mental health providers and medical providers who can help with wound care, medical care, and/or first aid was suggested as a strategy to strengthen the program and better meet the needs of the community.

A mental health crisis nurse who could provide mental health care about also medical care, first aid, wound care, would be beneficial. There is another outreach team that has this role and we've seen its impact. There's a need for this with the population we serve.

More officers, more social workers, more case managers, more funding!

Increased Availability and Presence of HOT

Currently, the HOT is present during select weekdays during daylight hours. Increasing the number of teams so that there was an ongoing, consistent presence of proactive outreach was mentioned as a strategy to help improve services.

Would like more hours in the day, more days "on". We only have one team that works a 40-hour week.

However, it was noted that social services are not available during other times of the day. Until a lack of temporary shelter, sobering centers, treatment centers, and other social services are addressed in Grass Valley, HOT outreach during non-business hours would be limited to rapport building only, as service referrals would not be possible 24/7.

Challenge with that is that there's no social services or resources at night. Only benefit is some sort of relationship building. That's it. I can't call anyone at 3AM.

*7AM-5PM four days a week is great, but of course there are gaps!
Augmenting those times, like in the summer, when it's lighter later.*

The reachable population during non-business hours is smaller, however, this population may be requiring additional calls for service that could be proactively addressed with additional HOT staff and referral resources. One HOT staff member offered to switch the single-HOT schedule for the current program to outreach to people who are often not available during normal business hours.

A couple times per year, I'd like to switch the schedule – pulling a swing shift, or coming in early, or staying late. Only because certain people are different during the day than the night. My experience working night shift, if you contact [the target population], there is a maybe bad perception or reputational risk of being seen with law enforcement. Some are using drugs, so they're sleeping during the day, and really don't like being woken up [for rapport building].

Again, it's not a huge number of people that this would be super effective for, there's just a few people I'm thinking of specifically... Some of these people [who are not responsive to interacting during the day], if I'm at a gas station getting coffee at 2AM, they'll sit and talk with me - happy as can be.

Appendix

Key Informant Interview Guide

Key Informant:

Organization:

Date of Interview:

Intro Text

Hi {Name},

Thank you again for taking the time to speak with me today. As we discussed, the goal of these key informant interviews is to check in on the implementation of the CalVIP Homeless Outreach Team (HoT) program. Specifically, I'd like to learn more about any adjustments that may be helpful to consider, program strengths, success stories, or barriers that you or your team may be facing.

As a reminder, your name and organization will not be associated with any of your answers and your responses will be combined and summarized with the other key informants.

Is it OK if I record this call? The recording will be deleted six months after the end of the grant period, will not be shared with anyone outside of Garrow Consulting, LLC, and will be used only to verify the notes I'm taking during the call and to capture any important quotes accurately.

Do you have any questions for me before we begin?

[begin recording]

I'm excited to learn more about your experiences with this project.

Role on CalVIP Project

1. I'd like to learn a little more your efforts with the CalVIP program with Hospitality House and the Grass Valley Police Department. Can you describe to me your role on the project?

Trainings Completed for CalVIP Project

2. Did you attend any trainings as a prerequisite for your role on this project? (Peace Officers Standards Training (POST)? PERT?)

If yes:

- a. How did the training help enhance your work on this project? Your team's work on this project?

CalVIP Program

Now I'd like to ask your opinions about the CalVIP HoT program.

3. Are there any services or outreach efforts that the CalVIP program is conducting that are working really well? (*Or/Probes: What does the CalVIP program do uniquely well?*)
4. Are there any services or outreach efforts that the CalVIP program is conducting that are not working as intended? (*Or/Probes: Are there any barriers you are facing to implementing the program as intended? What would you suggest the CalVIP program do differently or better that is most pressing? What are some barriers or challenges you've faced, if any, at your organization/department?*)
5. Are there any immediate modifications or strategies for improvement you would suggest for the CalVIP program?
6. Any lessons learned so far with the CalVIP program that you'd like to share?

Serving Adults Experiencing Homelessness

I'd like to learn more about how the program has impacted your/your organization's ability to serve the homeless population and proactively reduce violent incidents in Grass Valley.

7. In your opinion, is the CalVIP achieving these goals? (*Or/Probe: For example, serving those experiencing homelessness/reducing crime among the homeless population?*)
8. Is there anything the CalVIP program should change about how it involves and engages adults experiencing homelessness? (*Or/Probe: What is your sense of what your organization most needs to get better at supporting adults experiencing homelessness?*)
9. Are there concerns about providing or referring clients to appropriate services AFTER a CalVIP interaction or screening is provided? Please describe.

Lessons Learned and Recommendations

10. What key lessons has your department or organization learned so far as a result of this project?

Final Thoughts

11. Is there anything we haven't talked about or that you would like to add to any of your earlier answers?