

## **Elucd: Including Everyone's Voice in City Management**

In 2018, Grand Rapids Police Chief David Rahinsky wanted to reduce crime while improving community relations. Following incidents that generated national headlines and charged public meetings, Chief Rahinsky looked for new ways to gauge public sentiment and strengthen trust in the police. He considered commissioning a professional study, inserting a mailer with local water bills, even going door-to-door – all one-time snapshots the Chief knew wouldn't solve his problem.

The Chief learned about Elucd through Grand Rapids Mayor Rosalynn Bliss and persuaded the City Council to hire Elucd to provide ongoing data about community sentiment. Elucd's tools provide information about what residents in each neighborhood think and want in real-time on a monthly, weekly, even daily, basis. The Chief recognized that, for the first time, he could get actionable data that is reliable, not just anecdotal, on a neighborhood level. The tools could help him identify neighborhoods that had weak trust and safety scores so he would know where to allocate limited resources and be data-driven in his efforts to improve trust.

Elucd worked with GRPD command staff to provide granular data to aid decision-making processes and create new opportunities to strengthen policing and community-building efforts. Elucd measured sentiment at the neighborhood level to give a more nuanced way to identify patterns and understand how sentiment varied across the city. GRPD wanted to know if changes in overall sentiment were driven by changes among specific demographics, so Elucd built tools to further drill down and analyze the results to see where the department should be allocating its resources.

Like most police executives, Chief Rahinsky received lots of feedback from the same few people in his city. To reach a wider pool of people, Elucd asked residents to share specific concerns anonymously. In many cases, residents provided specific, actionable feedback that drew attention to safety-related problems in their community, enabling leaders to tackle specific issues before they morphed into larger problems.

With the support of the Mayor, the department launched a pilot project with Elucd. Led by the Chief of Police, GRPD then put the data and tools in the hands of those in the best position to make a difference: command staff, police captains, crime analysts and community engagement staff. They were not overly prescriptive with how this data should be used, encouraging officers to try different things and generally embrace a spirit of data-driven experimentation and innovation. Elucd's project did not require massive changes in staffing, training, or other management or administration practices. Instead, it involved injecting new data made available through cutting-edge technology into existing structures and processes in a way that unlocked new possibilities.

*Information on Elucd's Grand Rapids project is available from the City's Project Manager, former Police Chief David Rahinsky, at [daverahinsky@yahoo.com](mailto:daverahinsky@yahoo.com), or Elucd's Project Manager, Sujeet Rao, Strategy & Partnerships, Elucd, at [sujeet@elucd.com](mailto:sujeet@elucd.com) or 646-741-8973.*