Balancing Trust and Tactics: A Smarter Approach to Community Policing

Moshe Binyamin
Patrolfinder *Director of Safety and Security*

In communities across the country, police departments face a familiar and complex challenge: how do we maintain public safety while also earning—and keeping—the trust of the people we serve?

Too often, efforts to reduce crime are perceived by residents as overly aggressive or inconsistent, especially when they're concentrated in neighborhoods already struggling with economic hardship, social disinvestment, and strained police-community relationships. Even well-intentioned patrol strategies can inadvertently damage legitimacy if they are not applied transparently, fairly, and predictably.

At the same time, we know from research that **hot spot policing**—focusing law enforcement resources in small geographic areas where crime is highly concentrated—can significantly reduce violence. But the real magic happens when we combine strategic presence with procedural fairness. Presence without transparency can breed resentment while visibility with fairness builds legitimacy.

The Challenge: Being Present, But Also Being Trusted

Residents want to feel safe, but they also want to feel respected. They want to know why officers are in their neighborhood, what they're doing, and whether they are being treated the same as residents in any other part of town. In hot-spot areas especially, officers must strike a delicate balance: deter criminal activity without alienating the law-abiding citizens they are trying to protect.

This is where the challenge intensifies. Departments must manage not only *where* officers are, but *how long* they stay, how often they return, and *how visible* and *consistent* their presence feels to residents. Without the right tools, this is nearly impossible to track—let alone optimize.

The Solution: Data-Driven Visibility and Transparent Patrol Management

Patrolfinder is a purpose-built tool for this new era of policing. It helps law enforcement agencies address both sides of the equation—**crime reduction and procedural justice**—by providing visibility into officer activity at a granular level.

Departments can define hot spot zones, assign "visit frequently" targets and ensure officers spend the right amount of time in those areas.

Supervisors can monitor real-time coverage and ensure that officers are rotating through neighborhoods in ways that align with the Koper Curve—a proven model for maximizing deterrence through short, frequent and unpredictable visits.

Just as important, **Patrolfinder brings clarity and accountability**. It shows exactly when and where officers were on patrol, and how long they stayed—giving departments a clear record they can share with city officials and the community to show that patrols are being done fairly and with purpose. It also tracks non-enforcement activities like securing community events or conducting property checks, so the data reflects all the ways officers are engaging with the public—not just responding to crime.

In today's environment, it's critical to be effective while also be equitable, data-driven and transparent. **Patrolfinder doesn't just help police cover more ground—it helps them do it in a way that communities can see, understand and believe in.**

>> Learn how Patrolfinder is helping law enforcement increase the safety of communities and officers by emailing **getpatrolfinder@transfinder.com**, calling **800-373-3609** or visiting **patrolfinder.com**.