



Ludington Police Department

Christopher Jones
Chief of Police

Michael Haveman
Captain

408 S. Harrison Street
Ludington, MI 49431
(231) 843-3425



News Release

Ludington Police Department 2025 Community Survey Results & Analysis February 14, 2025

In early January, the Chamber Alliance of Mason County collaborated with the LPD to distribute a community survey. The purpose of this survey was to gather feedback on the strengths and areas for improvement from the perspective of our community members. While we recognize that it is impossible to meet everyone's expectations, our primary objective is to be the best law enforcement agency we can be—willing to confront areas of weakness and build upon our strengths.

As part of our ongoing commitment to transparency, we have made the survey results publicly available. We have only redacted the personal information of respondents, such as names, addresses, email addresses, and phone numbers, to protect their privacy.

Survey Results – Summary

1. The Ludington Police Department's overall performance meets the needs of the community.
55% agree/strongly agree 15% neither agree/disagree 27% disagree/strongly disagree
2. I feel the Ludington Police Department treats everyone fairly, regardless of race, gender, sexual orientation, ethnic or national origin.
54% agree/strongly agree 10% neither agree/disagree 33% disagree/strongly disagree
3. I feel safe and secure in my community.
60% agree/strongly agree 13% neither agree/disagree 24% disagree/strongly disagree
4. I feel safe and secure in business areas of my community.
64% agree/strongly agree 11% neither agree/disagree 22% disagree/strongly disagree
5. How well do you feel the police department understands the unique needs and concerns of your community?
50% agree/strongly agree 14% neither agree/disagree 34% disagree/strongly disagree
6. If I contacted the Ludington Police Department for police assistance, I was satisfied with the service provided.
55% agree/strongly agree 28% neither agree/disagree 28% disagree/strongly disagree
7. How satisfied are you with the police department's communication and transparency with the community?
50% agree/strongly agree 13% neither agree/disagree 35% disagree/strongly disagree
8. The reduced lobby hours have impacted my ability to conduct business with LPD.
21% agree/strongly agree 30% neither agree/disagree 47% disagree/strongly disagree

9. I believe community outreach events help to strengthen relationships between the Ludington Police Department and the public. (e.g., Shop with a Cop - Shop with a Hero, Movies In The Park, Golf Cart Show, Senior Expo, Water Safety Day, etc.)
67% agree/strongly agree 10% neither agree/disagree 21% disagree/strongly disagree

Question #10 - Most Common Themes

What do you feel are the three (3) biggest law enforcement safety concerns for you (and/or your family) in Ludington?
(Please list/specify).

1. **Drugs** (including drug use, drug dealers, and drug-related concerns)
 - o Mentioned **35 times** or more (across various forms of drug-related issues such as drug activity, availability, drug use, and drug dealing).
2. **Homelessness** (homeless individuals, vagrancy, and lack of resources for the homeless)
 - o Mentioned **22 times**.
3. **Speeding** (speeding vehicles, particularly near schools, parks, and in neighborhoods)
 - o Mentioned **20 times**.
4. **Police Behavior and Accountability** (concerns about police corruption, abuse of power, lack of professionalism, and violations of rights)
 - o Mentioned **18 times**.
5. **Public Safety** (general safety concerns, including safety for pedestrians, mental health concerns, and societal safety issues)
 - o Mentioned **14 times**.
6. **Traffic Enforcement** (enforcement of traffic laws, such as stop signs, speeding, and general law enforcement)
 - o Mentioned **12 times**.
7. **Racism** (discrimination, biased treatment, and racist behaviors)
 - o Mentioned **8 times**.
8. **Sidewalks and Streets** (sidewalk maintenance, poor street lighting, and unsafe roads)
 - o Mentioned **8 times**.
9. **Youth and School-related Issues** (speeding near schools, violence among students, and general school-related concerns)
 - o Mentioned **7 times**.
10. **Violence and Abuse** (concerns about domestic violence, child abuse, and violence toward law enforcement)
 - o Mentioned **6 times**.
11. **Visibility and Police Presence** (lack of police presence, desire for more patrols, and effective community interactions)
 - o Mentioned **5 times**.

Summary:

- **Drug-related issues** topped the list, with a strong emphasis on illegal drugs and their impact on the community.
- **Homelessness** was also a highly cited concern, reflecting concerns about the visible homeless population and its impact on public spaces.
- **Speeding and traffic enforcement** came up frequently, especially around schools and neighborhoods.
- Concerns about **police behavior and accountability** ranked highly, with several individuals expressing dissatisfaction with law enforcement's treatment of the community.

Question #11 - Most Frequent Responses

Please provide any recommendations and/or suggestions for improving services to our community.

1. Foot Patrols

- Mentions: **5**
- Examples:
 - "Please put police back on the sidewalks/streets, either walking or riding bikes again."
 - "Foot patrols downtown."
 - "Would also like to see officers on foot downtown randomly in summer."
 - "More foot patrols."

2. Training

- Mentions: **5**
- Examples:
 - "More training and way more hangs on training."
 - "More training on de-escalation."
 - "More education about constitutional rights and how not to violate them."
 - "More training in handling mental health issues."
 - "More sensitivity training."

3. Officer Presence

- Mentions: **4**
- Examples:
 - "Please put police back on the sidewalks/streets, either walking or riding bikes again."
 - "I've seen the PD at events and they are always at the ready and keep watch."
 - "More patrol at the park."
 - "Officers should be seen more regularly in the community."

4. More Officers

- Mentions: **4**
- Examples:
 - "Increase the number of officers and provide needed training/equipment."
 - "We need more personnel, specifically in the detective bureau."
 - "More officers."
 - "More officers, especially for traffic control."

Frequent but with Slightly Lower Mentions:

5. Community Outreach/Engagement

- Mentions: **4**
- Examples:
 - "More community outreach to get to know on personal level."
 - "Continue communicating with the community and schools."
 - "More outreach, be available to the city for office hours."
 - "LOVE all community outreach. Whether being visible and passing out candy on Halloween or helping fund community projects."

6. Enforcement/Traffic/Speeding

- Mentions: **4**
- Examples:
 - "More use of traffic speed monitors."
 - "Give a warning for a first traffic offense Vs an expensive ticket."
 - "Ticket speeders!"
 - "Enforce crosswalk rules."

7. Respect and Transparency

- Mentions: **3**

- Examples:
 - "Be more approachable."
 - "Be more open and transparent."
 - "Officers shouldn't be dismissive of public complaints on safety issues."

8. Homelessness and Social Services

- Mentions: **3**
- Examples:
 - "Help for the homeless population."
 - "We need more homeless shelters."
 - "Provide a safe place for people who live in their cars to sleep overnight."

Other Notable Mentions (Each Mentioned Twice):

- **Mental Health Support**
 - Examples: "Better sensitivity training on those with mental health disorders," "Our officers need a safe space to talk about their mental health."
- **De-escalation**
 - Examples: "More training on de-escalation," "Try actually training your officers in laws and not feelings."
- **Fireworks Enforcement**
 - Examples: "Fireworks shouldn't be in residents' hands, in residential neighborhoods," "All fireworks should be in a designated area."

Less Frequent or Single Mentions:

- **Police Chief/Leadership Issues**
 - Examples: "Sack the police chief," "Find a different police chief."
- **Officer Appearance**
 - Examples: "Shave the damn beards!"
- **Public Safety Concerns**
 - Examples: "Worry more about child molesters as you do addicts," "Address traffic near the schools."

Summary:

- **Foot patrols** and **training** are the most frequently mentioned topics, with **community outreach** and **more officers** being prominent as well.
- **Mental health** and **de-escalation training** have been emphasized multiple times as areas of concern or improvement.
- There is a noticeable amount of feedback regarding **police visibility** and **officer presence**, signaling a desire for more active, approachable police interactions.

Initial Assessment of the Survey Results

The survey analysis was two-fold: a review of the statistical results from the first nine questions, including a comparison to the 2023 survey, and an evaluation of responses to questions #10 and #11. Overall, the 2024 survey showed improvements in four categories and less favorable results in four others.

Improvements from 2023 to 2024:

Areas with decreased favorability compared to 2023:

-LPD's overall performance

-Residents feel safe in their neighborhood

-LPD treating people fairly

-Residents feel safe in the business community

-LPD understanding community needs

-Communication and transparency

-Satisfaction with services

-LPD outreach strengthening relationships

These mixed results highlight progress but also indicate areas that still require improvement.

Initial Assessment of Written Responses

Common themes from the open-ended responses included concerns about drugs, speeding, transparency, officer training, and police interaction with people with mental illness, among others. We have already addressed many of these concerns through increased training. In 2024 and 2025, LPD officers have undergone significant cultural competency and anti-bias training, including sessions on mental health, Autism, and Alzheimer's. Additional training is planned for 2025.

Drug Enforcement: LPD is committed to addressing the drug issue in our jurisdiction. Officers work proactively every day, and we partner with the Mason County Sheriff's Office and other agencies as part of the State, Sheriff's, Chief's Enforcement of Narcotics Team (SSCENT) to combat the impacts of drugs.

Homelessness: We recognize that homelessness is a complex issue. While being unhoused is not a crime, LPD is committed to offering assistance to the unhoused, when possible, without violating their rights. We regularly engage with this community and provide help where it is accepted.

Traffic Enforcement: Speeding was mentioned 32 times in the survey. LPD uses data from speed-monitoring devices to assess actual speeding concerns and has conducted targeted enforcement in areas where speeding is confirmed. Priority areas, like around schools, will always have traffic enforcement.

Police Accountability: Police behavior and accountability were mentioned 18 times. In 2024, LPD received four complaints, all of which were investigated. In each case, the officers acted lawfully, professionally, and within policy. In addition to investigating citizen complaints, LPD staff review random body-worn camera videos, from each patrol officer, on a quarterly basis. These reviews have found no unprofessional or unlawful behavior by LPD officers. We will continue to hold officers accountable for their actions while defending them when they operate within the law and policy.

Community Issues Beyond Police Control: Several survey responses focused on issues like roads and sidewalks, which are outside LPD's jurisdiction. We regularly collaborate with other agencies, including the DPW, CMH, and DHHS, to address these concerns. LPD is also spearheading The HUB program, in partnership with CMH and the Criminal Justice and Behavioral Health Collaborative, to better support those with mental health and addiction challenges.

Police Presence & Visibility: LPD typically schedules two officers per shift. Due to limited staff and increased complaint load, there is less time for patrols. However, we strive to allocate time for community engagement once fully staffed. Additionally, in response to concerns, I have decided that we will no longer install "ghost markings" on patrol cars. All new vehicles will feature traditional reflective markings, beginning with the patrol vehicle put into service in 2024.

LPD remains dedicated to improving service, building trust, and maintaining transparency with our community. Our officers are committed to continuous improvement and professional law enforcement. We appreciate the community feedback, and we look forward to working with you to meet our community's public safety needs.

LPD VALUES STATEMENT / CORE VALUES

THE LUDINGTON POLICE DEPARTMENT IS PROUD OF OUR DEDICATED AND PROFESSIONAL LAW ENFORCEMENT TEAM, WHO ARE COMMITTED TO THIS COMMUNITY AND FOCUS ON CREATIVELY SOLVING PROBLEMS. WE BELIEVE IN:

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INTEGRITY IN ALL ASPECTS OF OUR WORK.

•

RESPECT FOR ALL PERSONS WE ENCOUNTER.

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COMMITMENT TO OUR COMMUNITY.

•

THE PURSUIT OF JUSTICE WITH COMPASSION.

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THE COURAGE TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT, EVERY TIME.