

Place Network Investigations in Las Vegas, Nevada:

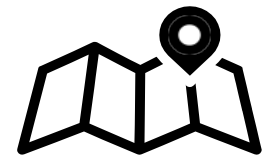
Program Review and Process Evaluation

This research study was conducted by the International Association of Chiefs of Police/ University of Cincinnati Center for Police Research and Policy (the IACP/UC Research Center) in conjunction with academic partners from the University of Nevada Las Vegas to evaluate a violence reduction strategy known as **Place Network Investigations (PNI)** or PIVOT (Place Investigations of Violent Offender Territories) in the city of Las Vegas. The PNI strategy helps police identify

and dismantle the infrastructures that support crime, operating on the theory that disrupting these types of places will effectively reduce violent crime. This theory comes from place-based criminology research that shows that crime is not random but occurs at specific locations for specific reasons.

The PNI strategy identifies components of criminal infrastructures such as:

1. **Crime sites** – locations where offenders and potential victims interact
2. **Convergent sites** – public places often used by offenders (such as parks, bars, and street corners)
3. **Comfort spaces** – private places controlled by offenders and associates
4. **Corrupting spots** – businesses that support offenders (for example, money laundering sites)



The PNI strategy was implemented with Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department (LVMPD)'s FLEX (Flexible Deployment) team. Researchers evaluated the process and observed the following:

1. **LVMPD used techniques such as** surveillance, intelligence gathering, external agency coordination, and partnership building to employ the PNI strategy. This helped effect changes to physical locations, place management practices, and law enforcement actions.
2. **Some essential steps for successful implementation of PNI** involve conducting additional analyses and intelligence gathering on sites before the full implementation of PNI, assigning additional personnel from a wide range of fields and occupations to the PNI investigative unit (legal, analysts, managers), and establishing a formal PNI Investigative Board with government representatives.
3. **Implementation of the PNI strategy showed a decreased in gun-related crime** in treated areas in Las Vegas. However, this finding was based on descriptive analyses that require further study to verify.

This study demonstrates that PNI may be a promising method of reducing violence. However, further research is needed to determine long-term impacts including crime displacement and the effect of PNI strategies in different contexts.

Police agencies should be cautious of generalizing these results and are instead encouraged to conduct their own process evaluations using this study as an example.

For more information, see Herold, T., Engel, R., Corsaro, N., & Clouse, S. (2020). Place Network Investigations in Las Vegas, Nevada: Program Review and Process Evaluation. Available at <https://www.theiacp.org/research>.

