

HACKATHON

#SaferStrongerSmarterDC

Event Summary

March 16, 2017



OVERVIEW



How do we make our city safer and our residents and businesses more informed on public safety issues in the District? How can government better listen and receive feedback from residents and businesses and provide tips quickly and easily to help keep our neighborhoods strong and thriving? How can smart technology play a role in making our neighborhoods safe and strong?

These are a few of the questions more than 90 residents, business and community leaders, and DC Government employees hoped to begin to answer at the all-day #SaferStrongerSmarterDC Hackathon held on March 4, 2017 at MakeOffices at K Street.

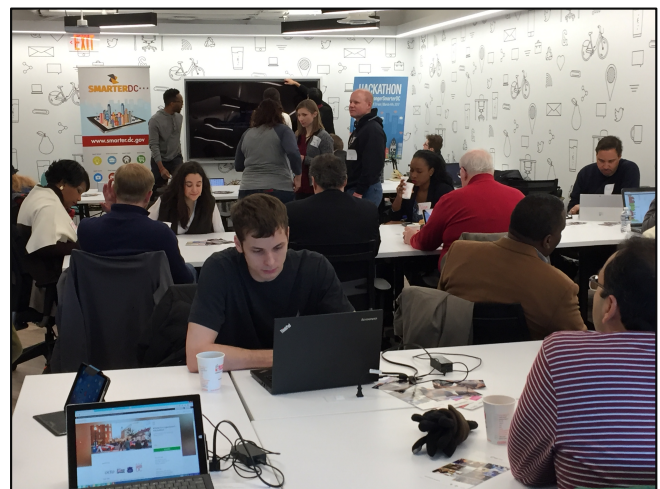
The event was hosted by the **Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO)**, the **Metropolitan Police Department (MPD)**, and the **DC Department of Transportation (DDOT)**.

Participants got the first glimpse and provided feedback on DC's soon-to-be-released interactive crime map (May 2017), were able to make recommendations to the District's public safety communicators, and were able to share concerns and make recommendations on how and when they want new information. Participants were also able to share their excitement and concerns about how technology is used to make neighborhoods safer, stronger and smarter.

This document is summary of the discussion and outcomes of the event.

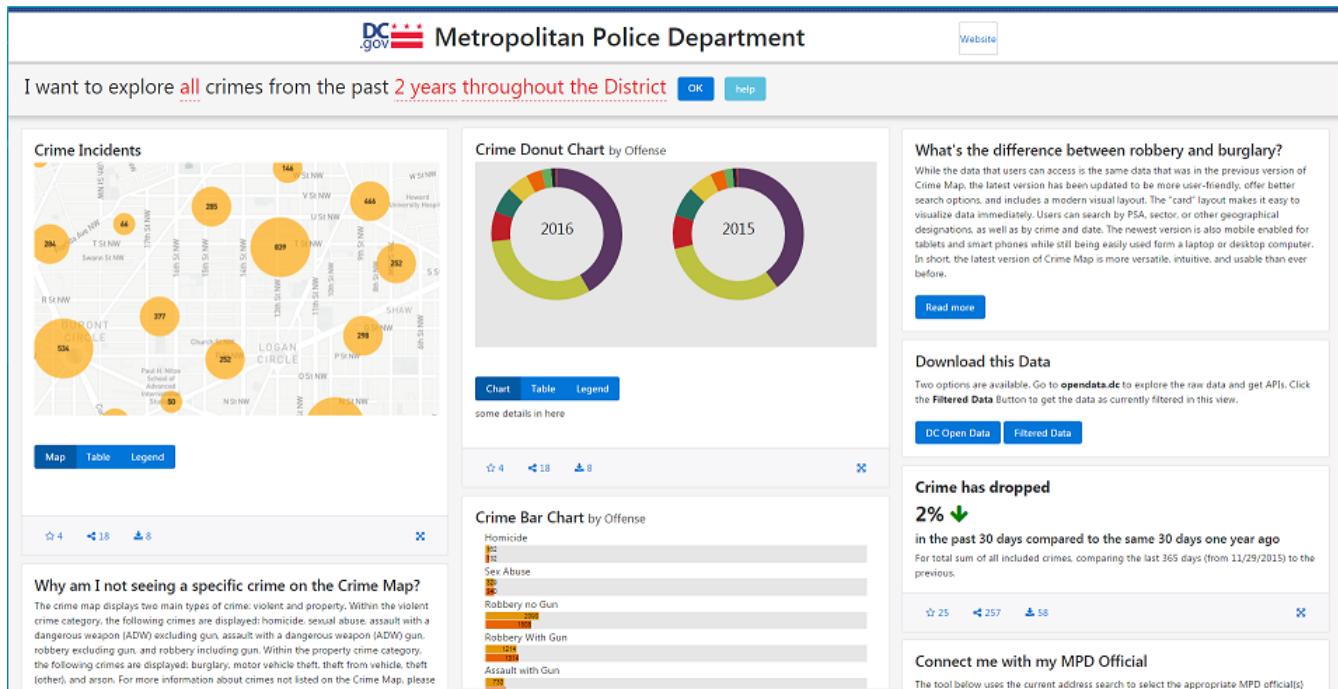


From Left to Right: DDOT Director Dormsjo, CTO Vemulapalli and Acting Chief Newsham



Hackathon Participants get work at the MakeOffices at K Street.

OUTCOMES



Screenshot of the new DC Crime Map expected to be released in May 2017.

User Testing of Beta DC Crime Map

The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO) did a demonstration of the new DC Crime Map (now more of a dashboard), and posed a series of design problems for the participants.

Through a roundtable discussions, participants were prompted to think through scenarios and offer solutions. The design was well received and the conversation was stimulating, fun, and useful. **The participants helped evolve the design in three key areas:**

- User understanding of and interaction with the goal sentence at the top (example: cues to highlight its importance and indicate that it is interactive)
- Better connection between user questions and design of charts and maps (example: start map and related charts and tables at “my location” instead of full district)
- Accessibility design and testing, especially for the vision-impaired (example: test with JAWS, the most commonly used screen-reader and provide a screen-reader-accessible summary that is useful)

The still-in-draft Crime Map is anticipated to be released, after additional testing, in May 2017.

OUTCOMES



What Data Do You Want?

One session was designed to solicit ideas for what new datasets residents and businesses believe would help them better understand public safety information. Residents shifted the focus of the discussion on how best to balance openness and privacy.

Among many ideas shared include:

- **DATA OPENNESS** is critical for information sharing and public transparency.
- **PRIVACY** was highlighted area of concern. One citizen said open data scares them and is concerned about being tracked. OCTO official said DC Government doesn't track individuals. For example, OCTO's free Wi-Fi and DC One Card programs do not track users.
- **POLICY** was another key area discussed. OCTO discussed the **District's Draft Data Policy** and how it is attempting to balance openness with privacy, safety, and security. Several key ideas emerged:
 - Residents supported inventorying and classifying data for sensitivity
 - MDP privacy officer participated in the conversation and offered insight and feedback on how the Department balances privacy consideration and public transparency.
 - A DCRA representative spoke about the wide variety of data the agency collects and how it is made available.
 - Data users spoke about the difficulty of comparing data from agency with data from another. For example, ABRA licenses vs DCRA Business License.

How Can We Communicate Better?

Another session focused on how well government communicates alerts and other critical public safety information and the ways residents can better provide and receive feedback.

- **SPEED** of updates was a major discussion point. Residents are accustomed to putting in a few search terms in Twitter and finding details of an incident within minutes of seeing sirens. While MPD works to get information to the community as timely as possible, they prioritize accuracy to prevent the spread of misinformation. That said, MPD is consistently trying to improve the speed in which they give updates.
- **IN-PERSON INTERACTIONS** are just as important to residents and businesses despite the focus on social, online interactions. Participants said they feel safer when they see officers on bikes or walking through their neighborhoods.
- **CREATING DEMAND** for information is an on-going focus area for public safety officials. Residents often do not want or feel they have a reason to engage until after an incident occurs. Public safety officials indicated that programs, tip-lines, and meetings exist to proactively engage the community and officials need to ensure those initiatives align with community needs and expectations.

OUTCOMES



What is a Smart Neighborhood?

The afternoon session focused on how residents believe technology can play a role in improving public safety in District neighborhoods and what ideas and concerns they had going forward.

Among many ideas shared, key ideas emerged including:

- **PERCEPTION vs. REALITY** Government needs to do a better job of addressing perceptions using data and more frequent and easy-to-use feedback loops.
- **COMMUNITY POLICING** was a major practice participants wanted to be sure was continued. If technology began replacing law enforcement duties for certain tasks, the trust that has been built between the community and police could suffer. Balancing the efficiencies and accuracy of technology with the daily human interactions of community policing was extremely important.
- **REPORTING TOOLS** were another area of discussion. Participants recommended more mobile-friendly options for public safety awareness and/or an expansion of the 311 application. Features would include:
 - Simple interface with three questions
 - Geotagging and timestamp
 - Photo option

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NEXT STEPS



What's Next?

The Office of the Chief Technology Officer (OCTO), the Metropolitan Police Department (MPD), and the DC Department of Transportation (DDOT) and other agencies are currently using feedback from the first event to integrate into existing programs and pilots.

The number one insight from this event was that residents and businesses from all Wards are extremely invested in making the District a safer, stronger and smarter place to live and ready to roll up their sleeves and help.

The District is considering more events like this to demonstrate and test new applications and products, test new communications strategies, and most important collaborate on new policies and procedures around how technology gets integrated with our everyday lives.

If you have ideas or comments on the event or this summary report, please email octo.communications@dc.gov or call 202-724-5178.

For more #SmarterDC events and updates, follow @octodc on Twitter.

Thank You!