

CASE STUDY:

HASTINGS POLICE DEPARTMENT STOPS BICYCLE THEFT WITH GPS TRACKING AND DISPATCH-READY INTELLIGENCE

City of Hastings, Minnesota “Bait Bike” Program

Overview

Bicycle theft was a growing concern across the City of Hastings, Minnesota. To address the problem, the Hastings Police Department launched a “Bait Bike” program built around a 3Si GPS tracker, supported by DirectToDispatch™. In under four months, the program led to two arrests, both involving suspects with extensive criminal histories, including one guilty plea that resulted in an 18-month prison sentence.

Category	Detail
Agency	Hastings Police Department, Hastings, Minnesota
Challenge	Rising bicycle theft across the city
Solution	A 3Si GPS tracker deployed in a donated electric bicycle, supported by DirectToDispatch™
Program launch	August 5, 2025
Arrests to date	2, within four months of launch
Outcome	Two arrests within four months of deployment, including one guilty plea resulting in an 18-month prison sentence.

The Challenge

Recurring bicycle thefts were creating an ongoing challenge for the Hastings Police Department, prompting the agency to explore new ways to support theft investigations and recover stolen bicycles. During the summer of 2025, an officer with the department began researching GPS tracking products to identify a solution that could help locate stolen bicycles and support investigations.

The Solution

After receiving strong reviews of the 3Si product, the officer developed a proposal, and the department purchased one GPS tracking unit.

The unit was installed in an electric bicycle donated by a local citizen for use in the program, and the department deployed the “bait bike” as a decoy to draw out thieves targeting the area. When the bike moved without authorization, the tracker sent officers a GPS activation alert.



The department also credits 3Si's DirectToDispatch™ with centralizing key evidence during the program, supporting officer situational awareness and response once officers were en route.

DirectToDispatch™ operates as a verified police dispatch pathway, delivering dispatch-ready intelligence, including verified alerts and actionable location intelligence, to support officers' situational awareness in the field. It is designed to work alongside a department's existing dispatch systems and workflows, preserving dispatch and agency decision-making throughout the response.

Technology in Practice

On August 5, 2025, the department deployed the bait bike in the historic downtown district. Four days later, on August 9, on-duty officers received an activation alert, tracked the signal, and apprehended a suspect after he placed the stolen bicycle into a truck for transport. He confessed to the theft, pled guilty in court, and was sentenced to 18 months in prison due to his extensive criminal history.

The department later redeployed the bait bike to multiple locations. On November 19, 2025, it registered a second activation. Officers tracked the GPS signal and made a second arrest. This suspect, who also had an extensive criminal history, had just left court for a separate theft case when he spotted the bait bike outside a Walmart, stole a pair of wire cutters from the store, and then stole the bicycle. At the time of the chief's letter, the second case was pending in court. The department reported that the evidence was strong and expressed optimism about a conviction.

Results & Benefits

- **Two arrests within four months:** A single GPS tracking unit supported two arrests following tracking activations and verified alerts with actionable location intelligence.
- **Suspects with extensive criminal histories:** Both arrests involved individuals with prior criminal records, reinforcing the value of actionable intelligence during crimes in progress.
- **One confirmed conviction outcome:** The first suspect confessed, pleaded guilty, and received an 18-month sentence.
- **Second arrest supported by documented evidence:** Hastings Police reported that the evidence in the second case was strong and expressed optimism about a conviction.
- **Consistent, reliable performance:** The Chief of Police reported that the GPS device "functioned reliably and responsively" during the program's initial deployments.



Law Enforcement Perspective

In a letter to 3Si dated December 23, 2025, the Hastings Police Department summarized its early experience with the Bait Bike program:

“The GPS device has functioned reliably and responsively. In a relatively short period, it has directly resulted in two successful arrests.”

“While it is still early to measure the program’s overall impact on bicycle thefts, we are confident that this initiative, supported by 3Si’s DirectToDispatch™’s ability to centralize key evidence for safer and more efficient responses, will contribute to a reduction in thefts within our community.”

Chief of Police, Hastings Police Department

What This Demonstrates

A single GPS tracking unit provided verified, actionable location intelligence that supported two theft investigations and arrests within approximately four months. In the first case, the suspect confessed, pleaded guilty, and was sentenced to 18 months in prison. At the time of the chief’s letter, the second case remained pending, with Hastings Police reporting strong evidence and expressing optimism about a conviction.

Together, these documented outcomes demonstrate how GPS tracking and dispatch-ready intelligence can support investigations into recurring property crime.

Benefits in a Broader Picture

The Hastings Bait Bike program shows how a targeted use of GPS tracking and verified, actionable intelligence can support law enforcement during thefts in progress. At the time of the chief’s letter, it was still too early to measure the program’s overall impact on bicycle theft; the department expressed confidence that the initiative would contribute to a reduction in thefts across Hastings over time.

For other agencies facing similar property crime challenges, Hastings provides a practical example of how GPS tracking and dispatch-ready intelligence can support situational awareness during crimes in progress while working alongside existing law enforcement workflows. By helping officers act on verified alerts with actionable intelligence, programs like this can support an agency’s broader efforts to protect property, address crime, and support their broader public safety mission.

Learn More

Learn how 3Si GPS tracking and DirectToDispatch™ can deliver dispatch-ready intelligence and improve situational awareness during verified crimes in progress.

[Contact 3Si](#) or visit our [DirectToDispatch™](#) page to learn more.



[3Si.com](#) | info@3Si.com | 800.523.1430 | © 2024 3Si. All Rights Reserved.

This document is proprietary and confidential. No part of this document may be disclosed in any manner without prior written consent of 3Si Security Systems