Financial Investigations in Criminal Conspiracy Cases

# Sections E & F: Strategic Buildout and Case Theory

## SECTION E: STEP-BY-STEP FINANCIAL BUILDOUT

Overview:  
Once probable cause has been established for the originating felony, financials become the structure behind the crime. This section provides a practical roadmap for tracking and proving the flow of criminal proceeds through methodical investigative steps.

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| Phase | Tactical Action | Purpose & Outcome |
| 1. Identify Nexus | Connect felony conduct to suspect(s) through surveillance, social media, CIs, or victim statements | Establish legal standing to request digital, financial, and property records |
| 2. Serve Traditional Warrants | Begin with phone records, social media platforms, and app providers like Cash App or Uber | Build timeline of activity and identify likely financial conduits |
| 3. Hit Known Financial Accounts | Use warrants or subpoenas for banking data, app transaction histories, and linked email/phone identifiers | Trace cash flow, identify co-conspirators, and highlight patterns of deposits/spending |
| 4. Expand via KYC Data | Use “Know Your Customer” documents from banks/apps to identify additional names, addresses, phones, and IPs | Expose shell accounts, ghost names, and asset holders in the conspiracy |
| 5. Subpoena or Warrant for Assets | Pull DMV, property title, lease, utility, or insurance records under suspect names or aliases | Tie physical assets (cars, homes) to criminal proceeds or laundered identities |
| 6. Engage Asset Forfeiture/DA Investigator | Bring in local or state forfeiture partners for guidance and federal elevation | Preserve evidence for asset seizures and build leverage to flip lower-level actors |
| 7. Use Financial Pressure for Leverage | Use asset ties in warrant affidavits, arrest reports, or proffer conversations | Encourage cooperation and weaken the conspiracy’s operational structure |

## SECTION F: CASE THEORY — “IF IT DON’T MAKE DOLLARS...”

Concept:  
Organized criminal conspiracies are like small corporations. The product (dope, bodies, cards, sex) may change—but the objective is always profit. Understanding the financial motive reframes your case from reactive enforcement to proactive disruption.

### Key Investigative Questions:

* Where is the money coming from?
* Where is it going?
* Who controls it?
* Who benefits from it?
* What assets don’t match their legitimate income?

### Actionable Indicators of Illicit Proceeds:

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| Behavior | Financial Red Flag |
| Flaunting cash on social media | Unexplained income |
| Renting high-end vehicles | Concealed wealth or front usage |
| Unbanked lifestyle but heavy Cash App use | Under-the-table transactions |
| Regular travel with no visible employment | Illicit funding |
| Prepaid debit cards, gift card hoarding | Money laundering techniques |

### Recommended Documentation Methods:

* Screenshot and preserve social media evidence of lifestyle or cash
* Use visual asset charts to track cars, properties, bank accounts
* Include summary timelines linking felony conduct to transactions
* Annotate financial records with labels (dope money, payout, laundering)

### Strategic Goal:

Build a case where the jury, DA, or supervisor can see that this wasn’t just criminal behavior—it was a structured enterprise, and the money proves the scale, roles, and intent.

Closing Thought:  
“Don’t chase the dope. Chase the dollar.”  
Dope disappears. Witnesses disappear. Phones get dumped.  
But bank logs, bail receipts, and Lexus registrations?  
Those stay. And they speak.