CINCINNATI POLICE DEPARTMENT

Problem Solving Project Review:
McMicken PATH Project

October 19-21, 2015

Captain Michael John
Police Specialist Nate Young
MCMICKEN PERSONS AGAINST TRAFFICKING HUMANS (PATH) PROJECT

Goal: To reduce number of women involved in open-air prostitution market on McMicken Avenue – a street segment connecting two police districts – in Cincinnati, Ohio
Most prolific open-air prostitution market is two miles northwest of downtown core business district.
Analyze

- Prostitutes identified through arrests, observation and community engagement
- CFS, environmental, and placed-based influences analyzed to determine why area conducive to prostitution
- Lack of guardianship, ease of vehicular access provided anonymity to offenders
- Graffiti, litter, abandoned buildings, and overgrown foliage as contributing factors
**Respond**

- High-visibility patrols at specific intersections using 15-minute patrol practice (Koper curve strategy)
- Explored feasibility of disrupting traffic patterns
- Cemented relationship with Hamilton County Municipal Court to curtail revolving door of justice
- Ceased issuing “re-cites” to provide relief to community and opportunity to “reclaim” neighborhood
Assessment

• Analysis of CFS pre- and post-intervention
  o 17% decrease in prostitution-related runs
  o 67% decrease during “no re-cite” period (Monday to Friday 0800-1600 hours)
January 2014

• CPD hosted series of “Town Hall Meetings” to include community in identifying issues
• January 2014 known prostitute murdered with no apparent motive
• District One hosted Town Hall Meeting that evening
• Jessica’s death made prostitution most discussed issue
• Traditional responses to prostitution:
  o Dispatch uniform officers to area
  o Undercover “sting” or “reverse sting” operations
  o In January 2014, obvious this approach was not effective
• Focus area of complaints was 2.3-mile segment of McMicken Avenue
• Area is mixed-use: commercial, residential (single-family & multi-unit apartments)
• Many residents renters, with frequent turnover
• Significant portion of street is “unguarded” due to unoccupied buildings
- 2009-2013: 1476 CFS on McMicken for prostitution
- No other area shows this concentration
- CPD expert estimates 90% of prostitutes in Cincinnati have some association with McMicken
Analyze

- Long-time problem for residents and businesses; many stopped calling police
- Lack of guardianship along McMicken provided “johns” easy access and anonymity
- 40% of area no guardianship – abandoned buildings & vacant lots
- Other locations had intermittent oversight during business hours only
- During daytime, residents not home to provide guardianship
- CPTED analysis conducted on multiple locations
- Service requests:
Analyze
• Quality-of-life issues reported through customer service request system
• Comfort spaces providing places to eat, rest, or sleep

Food prep area

Service Window

Water Supply
Analyze

- Traditional responses: Sting and reverse-sting operations, and civil penalties to impound vehicles
- Recidivism by prostitutes overwhelming
- No repeat offenders among “johns” arrested
Respond

- Two officers selected to form new response:
  - **Specialist Nate Young** – 22-year veteran, 11 years in Vice section
  - **PO Katie Werner** – 15-year veteran, 8 years in Crime Analysis and Problem Solving Unit
  - **PO Lisa Johnson** was in-house expert: 5 years working with trafficked women on McMicken

**Project Goals**

- Decrease number of women loitering to solicit on McMicken
- Collaborate with community to increase awareness through CFS
- Encourage women to enter CHANGE court
- Decrease “john” traffic through the corridor
Respond
Introductions
• Officers met residents, businesses and commuters
• Consensual contacts with 3-4 prostitutes daily
• Drug addiction, abuse, failed rehab commonplace
• Many were mothers who had lost child custody
• McMicken was place to score drugs and easy access to clients
• Almost everyone had known Jessica
• Women told police what they needed to break the cycle
• Both women and police frustrated with CJS: missed court dates, re-cites common, returning women to street before intervention could work

15-minute patrols
• To gather information/be seen/assure community/conduct interviews/testify to observations
Respond

Holistic Approach

• CPD teamed with multitude of social-service providers; assessed potential of each program
• Some overlapping services, budget/space/time limitations
• Services ranged from abuse and addiction treatment, homelessness, medical care
• Incarceration was barrier to assistance
• “Catch-and-release” strategy had to change
• Officers reached out to Municipal Court Judge Heather Russell
• Establish CHANGE court (Changing Habits of Addiction and creating New Goals is Empowering)
Respond

Process to identify potential candidates for CHANGE court – 3 means pathways:
1. Officer makes prostitution arrest OR contacts woman with prostitution-related warrant
2. Pre-trial review of women’s docket for specified offenses
3. Pre-trial review of residents of Talbert House (Rewards Jail Intervention Program)

- Selected women offered appearance before Judge Russell
- Court environment more conducive to long-term rehabilitation
- **Two-year** process involves Sheriff, electronic monitoring unit, probation, medical professionals, and social-service agencies
Respond

Situational crime prevention
• “Johns” cruised McMicken: several “escape” routes
• Idea: close portions of street to interrupt cruising
• Partners
  o Department of Transport and Engineering
  o Cincinnati Fire Department
  o Metro Bus Service
  o Community Councils
  o Residents and Businesses
  o City Council and Manager

• Proposed experiment of strategically placed barricades
Respond

*Situational Crime Prevention - Barricades*

- Barricades drew attention and introduced with media blitz
- Coincided with doubling civil fines of “johns”
- Cincinnati City Councilmembers Yvette Simpson and Amy Murray led barricade and CHANGE court plan
Respond

Situational Crime Prevention - Barricades
April, 2014 – Barricades erected.........

But......We forgot about school buses!

Fixed – Moveable portion plus manpower
Respond

Situational Crime Prevention - Barricades
• Despite overwhelming community support, not all were happy
• Some publicly demanded barricades be removed and filed court action for disruption of bus service
• Meeting with lead opponent to explain project: spokesperson had demanded police response to prostitution
• Limited-mobility bus service never interrupted
• Other community group offered to establish “Ride Share” – offer declined
• No bus stops were more than 400 yards from any stop on McMicken
Respond

Situational Crime Prevention - Barricades
• Neighborhood most impacted by prostitution supported barricades
• Testified on their effectiveness at City Hall
• 30-, 60-, and 90-day assessments
Respond

What the “johns were saying”

Garyhb

Roadblock

There's a channel 19 satellite truck on McMicken near straight street I'm sure that has something to do with the roadblocks that are coming later this week. There isn't a single girl on the streets anywhere on McMicken either.

Garyhb

Mr Boombastic


If this is true then lets understand somthing. There is a Huge difference from East, Central, West McM. If you are Cruising pass McMillian towards Marshal the residents want the SW & Drug Dealer action moved from area all the way to MLK.

The residents Central McM from Brighton Approach down to Vine are use to the daily action. People Come & Go.

East McM from Vine to Main is a Haven for Dealers. Not much real SW action, but sometimes.

So if residents are writing down license then it will be up Marshall that are and by Straight St. I can see their point.

I Never Liked Cruising That Area Even When I Lived Over There.

Pay Attention!

-----Original Post by DickHerDown [View Original Post]-----

Stay away from McM for the next several months fellas. I was told by a source that they are about to do some heavy clean up in that area and that residents will video tape the cars SW are getting into and call in to report license plate numbers and automobile description.
Respond - What the “johns were saying”

**GNW20**
Senior Member
Reports: 33

I would think not

Hopefully no one is stupid enough to go to MCM but you never know. Wonder where everyone will go to since the ole stomping grounds are done for the summer.

**CockNumb**
Senior Member
Reports: 45

SW

You mean those highly touted street barriers aren’t fixing the apparent SW problem? Sarcasm.

They all left the mcm area and are in plenty on this side of town none where the barriers are LOL.

**WyldeChild99**
Senior Member
Reports: 63

McMicken

This whole thing blows. I live off McMicken, and used it as my main thoroughfare to get downtown. Those dickheads have ruined my summer in two ways now.

**Unfortunately**

One of the regular girls down there & one of Sweets friends told me Sweets did overdose. It is sad to post this, she was a great girl lost in her addiction.
Respond

**Customer Service and Quality of Life**

- Officers initiated service requests for litter, weeds, overflowing trash, graffiti, illegal dumping, etc.
- Requests logged and tracked

- Problem apartment complex on McMicken identified: known for housing prostitutes and as drug shooting gallery and sex site
- Building owner agreed to establish “no-guest” policy
Respond

Stings

• More than dozen sting operations conducted (4 solicitations stings, 3 three reversals)
• About 65 arrests
Assessment
• **Prior** to barricades (March 2014) – **10 arrests** of “johns”
• Reduced to 6 during 90-day period
• Foot patrols caused significant decrease in number of women observed on McMicken
• Vice unit attempted 2 stings during this period with **zero arrests**
• Residents’ personal observations confirmed minimal illicit activity
• Sweep of area during 90-day period netted just 1 arrest
• Final sweep in December 2014 netted just 2 arrests
• Officer Werner transferred to another district
• Specialist Young continued high-visibility patrols and established community trust and legitimacy
• **Overall calls related to prostitution decreased 67%**
• Diffusion of benefits within 1000 feet of target area
Assessment

Review of weekly CFS
Prostitution
Disorder
Drugs
Combined*

Assaults, drugs, criminal damage, guns, noise, person down, prostitution, robbery, weapons, place found open
Assessment – Prostitution Runs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AvgPre</th>
<th>Avg15MinHSE</th>
<th>AvgBarricade</th>
<th>AvgNoReCite</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>%Δ</th>
<th>Pre-Post T-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>1.52</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>2.85</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-67.0%</td>
<td>0.0065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000' Buffer</td>
<td>1.17</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>2.08</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-57.4%</td>
<td>0.0377</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500' Buffer</td>
<td>1.07</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>1.85</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>-53.2%</td>
<td>0.0564</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Weekly Prostitution Runs (Mon-Fri 8a-4p only)**

- AvgPre
- Avg15MinHSE
- AvgBarricade (-53.2%)
- AvgNoReCite
- Post
Assessment – Disorder Runs

**DISORD RUNS-Target Times (Mon-Fri 8a-4p)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AvgPre</th>
<th>Avg15MinHSE</th>
<th>AvgBarricade</th>
<th>AvgNoReCite</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>%Δ</th>
<th>Pre-Post T-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>All</strong></td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-41.2%</td>
<td>0.0588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1000' Buffer</strong></td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-41.2%</td>
<td>0.0588</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>500' Buffer</strong></td>
<td>1.28</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>0.83</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>-41.2%</td>
<td>0.0588</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Average Weekly Disorder Runs (Mon-Fri 8a-4p only)**

-41.2%
## Assessment – Drug Runs

### Drug Runs - Target Times (Mon-Fri 8a-4p)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AvgPre</th>
<th>Avg15MinHSE</th>
<th>AvgBarricade</th>
<th>AvgNoReCite</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>%Δ</th>
<th>Pre-Post T-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>10.52</td>
<td>9.79</td>
<td>13.00</td>
<td>13.13</td>
<td>9.50</td>
<td>-9.7%</td>
<td>0.2570</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000' Buffer</td>
<td>2.31</td>
<td>1.86</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>2.30</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>-35.1%</td>
<td>0.0877</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500' Buffer</td>
<td>0.93</td>
<td>0.50</td>
<td>1.69</td>
<td>1.23</td>
<td>0.25</td>
<td>-73.1%</td>
<td>0.0033</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Average Weekly Drug Runs (Mon-Fri 8a-4p only)

-73.1%
Assessment – Combined – Assaults / Criminal Damaging / Disorder / Drug / Gun / Noise / person down / prostitution / robbery / weapons / place found open

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>AvgPre</th>
<th>Avg15MinHSE</th>
<th>AvgBarricade</th>
<th>AvgNoReCite</th>
<th>Post</th>
<th>%Δ</th>
<th>Pre-Post T-Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>48.72</td>
<td>41.93</td>
<td>53.54</td>
<td>45.97</td>
<td>45.5</td>
<td>-6.6%</td>
<td>0.2683</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1000' Buffer</td>
<td>10.59</td>
<td>8.79</td>
<td>12.15</td>
<td>9.03</td>
<td>7.75</td>
<td>-26.8%</td>
<td>0.0026</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>500' Buffer</td>
<td>5.83</td>
<td>4.64</td>
<td>6.31</td>
<td>4.77</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>-52.8%</td>
<td>0.0004</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The table shows selected runs-target times (Mon-Fri 8a-4p) for various assessments. The graph indicates a decrease of -52.8% in the average weekly selected runs (Mon-Fri 8a-4p only).
Assessment

CHANGE Court:
• 22 women embraced opportunity: Several relapsed and re-introduced
• 13 various stages of process – 1 removed (at request of a defense attorney)
• Only 5 CPD officers involved in initial stages of CHANGE process
• Police Department continues to assess court’s success before implementation department-wide

Lessons Learned
• Project success relied on momentum and cooperation of involved community councils (especially West McMicken Improvement Association)
• Persistence, collaboration, support, with police and city was immeasurable
• Most successful intervention was close relationship maintained with City through neighborhood officers
Agency and Officer Information

Key Project Team Members:

• Captain Mike John, District One Commander

• Specialist Nate Young, Vice Section

• Officer Katie Werner, Quality of Life Enforcement Team

• Hamilton County Municipal Court Judge Heather Russell