

2015 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing Nomination

Covington Police Department, Covington, Kentucky, USA

1. SUMMARY: WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

The Covington Police Department (CPD) is pleased to share our success in implementing the Westside Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative, a 20-year SARA problem solving approach rooted in community policing that has dramatically improved safety in the Westside neighborhood of Covington, Kentucky. Beginning in the mid 1990s, in response to residents' concerns about pervasive crime, Westside residents formed a neighborhood association (Westside Action Coalition, or WAC) with assistance from the Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington (CGN), a community development corporation. An intentional trust-building effort between Westside residents, CGN, and CPD allowed us to collaboratively analyze the causes of criminal activity and find mutually-beneficial ways to respond. Our analysis showed that years of disinvestment had created substandard, absentee-owned rental properties and blighted, vacant buildings that became havens for drug dealing and use, prostitution, arson, and theft. Analysis also showed that because of widespread crime, CPD was incurring increased expenses in devoting disproportionate police resources in the Westside. CPD realized that we could not arrest our way out of the problem. Our responses over two decades:

- CPD and the City's Code Enforcement Division placed nuisance liens on rental properties with code issues and problematic tenants, often resulting in eviction.
- The City and CGN acquired vacant, dilapidated buildings, 10 were razed while CGN rehabbed and sold 30 to owner-occupants. Acquisition price for 30 single-family homes

was \$834,146, while aggregate after-rehab sales price of these homes was \$5,316,993, more than a 6x increase.

- CGN and WAC activated vacant public spaces with community gardens, pocket parks, art installations, and urban farming.
- CPD, CGN, and WAC implemented CPTED, including rerouting traffic to discourage drug trafficking and prostitution and providing recommendations for CGN rehabs.
- CPD created a “77 car” to respond to quality of life complaints citywide.

Our assessment shows that between 2004 (first year comparable data is available) and 2014, there was a 54% decline in CFS, 43% decrease in individual arrests, 35% drop in total charges, and a 63% reduction in drug possession and trafficking arrests. This revitalization is happening despite the fact that Northern Kentucky is battling a heroin epidemic. Today, residents report an improved perception of safety: a 2013 survey showed that 65% of Westsiders feel safe in Covington all or most of the time and 72% feel that conditions on their street are getting better. The Westside is now a neighborhood of choice that residents are happy to call home.

2. DESCRIPTION: WESTSIDE NEIGHBORHOOD REVITALIZATION INITIATIVE

For 20 years, the Covington Police Department, Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington, Inc., and Westside Action Coalition have been implementing a SARA problem-solving and asset-based community development approach throughout Covington, Kentucky. Our particular emphasis has been in analyzing the connections between crime, vacancy, blight, and persistent disinvestment in the Westside neighborhood. Our coordinated long-term approach has reduced criminal activity while creating sustainable neighborhood revitalization and renewed economic vitality in the Westside.

About Covington, Kentucky

Covington, Kentucky, with 40,811 residents, is an historic urban city with 19 distinct neighborhoods located just south of the Ohio River in the Cincinnati metropolitan area. 82.2% of residents are Caucasian, 11.9% are African-American, 2.7% are of mixed ethnicities, and 3.6% are of Hispanic origin. Nearly 60% of all households have low or very-low incomes. 46.8% of individuals are below 200% of the poverty level. In Covington, 49.6% of all residences are owner-occupied, though in some neighborhoods the rate is as low as 30%. 21% of downtown retail spaces are vacant. Covington suffers from blight: 3,020 housing units (15.1%) are vacant and 60% of structures were built prior to 1939.

Covington Police Department

Today's Covington Police Department (CPD) consists of 108 sworn officers, led by a Chief and two Assistant Chiefs. These 3 executives oversee 5 separate bureaus throughout department. The last ten years have seen a major shift in the prevailing culture of the CPD with a concerted effort in establishing a solid organizational alignment with its adopted values of integrity, justice, professionalism, and compassion. These values have been ingrained in every facet of CPD, ranging from hiring standards to evaluations, discipline, promotion, and even retirement. The CPD is also dedicated to a deliberate investment in its leaders of tomorrow. CPD insists on maintaining supervisors who are well versed in emotional intelligence, situational and servant based leadership styles, and a strong adherence to their award-winning community-oriented philosophy of policing. It is this dedication that has created a renewed sense of pride within CPD and continued community support despite the current socio-political environment that exist in today's mainstream and social media outlets.

CPD demonstrates its commitment to cooperation with the community in many ways: CPD completely revamped our website (www.covkypd.org) to allow residents to file reports online about ongoing criminal activity and learn the names and faces of officers and their supervisors

who patrol their neighborhoods. Additionally, we have created a portal through our website which allows a citizen to officially file a police report for most minor offenses which do not require an active investigation. This can be completed at the convenience of the citizen, which allows for a more quality customer service based experience. Furthermore, Police Chief Bryan Carter and Fire Chief Dan Mathew host an open forum at the Center for Great Neighborhoods the first Thursday of each month in which residents can address concerns and ask questions. CPD also benefits from meaningful partnerships with local organizations and resident-led groups to improve the quality of life in Covington.

Scanning: Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington, Community Partner

Since 1976, the Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington (CGN) has been a vehicle and a support for community residents seeking to improve the quality of their lives and their community. CGN is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit community development corporation serving all of Covington. CGN's experience shows that individuals are most fulfilled when they are connected to their neighbors and have opportunities to share their gifts with others as they work together. In helping youth and adults realize that sense of fulfillment, CGN supports their efforts to build strong neighborhood associations and civic groups; develop effective leadership skills and practice wise stewardship for the community; maximize access to resources that improve the quality of their lives and health; benefit their personal, economic, civic, and social development; create effective community partnerships; and improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods. Finally, CGN engages in physical development, driven by resident-led groups and community plans, to reduce blight and improve the quality of life. CGN creates pocket parks, develops community gardens, rehabs historic buildings, and builds new construction homes in targeted neighborhoods.

Scanning: Westside Action Coalition, Community Partner

In 1995, residents in Covington's Westside neighborhood approached CGN for assistance in forming a neighborhood association in response to increased crime and disorder (drug-dealing, arson, prostitution, and intimidation), persistent blight, and vacancy. The Westside has traditionally been a very low-income neighborhood, with a core population of urban Appalachians and African-Americans, bounded by W. Robbins Street, 12th Street, Interstate 75, and an industrial rail corridor just east of Russell Street (approximately one square mile). In the Westside, the poverty rate is 28.5% and 30% of housing units are vacant, and most buildings were constructed between 1850-1890. Westsiders were scared for themselves and their homes, and did not trust their neighbors or police to help them. This was the first indication to CGN and CPD that there was a very serious problem in this neighborhood. CGN helped residents form the Westside Action Coalition (WAC) in order to improve their quality of life.

CGN's goal in the Westside was to help develop trust amongst neighbors and with institutions, build leadership within the neighborhood, and support WAC's capacity to address neighborhood concerns. CGN connected WAC with the CPD, the City, local businesses, schools, and churches. At the same time, CGN's headquarters in the Westside became home to one of CPD's first Community Oriented Policing and Problem-Solving (COPPS) offices. COPPS Officer Michael "Spike" Jones spent many hours riding his bike around the neighborhood, chatting with neighbors, attending WAC meetings/events, and rebuilding trust between residents and police. Even residents who did not like 'the police' warmed up to Jones as his patient, listening approach helped residents understand that if they wanted their neighborhood to feel safer, they needed to be an active part of the solution.

Analyzing the Connection Between Blight and Crime in the Westside

Next, CGN, WAC, and CPD analyzed the causes of criminal activity in the Westside. Together, we focused on the linkages between dilapidated and vacant properties and crime.

CPD's analysis showed that most criminal activity originated either in substandard rental units owned by absentee landlords or vacant, unsecured buildings. Drug use and dealing, prostitution, and intimidation were commonplace.

Another influence of blight on the neighborhood was the long-term political struggle over the widening of 12th Street, also known as State Route 1120, which borders the Westside. The Kentucky Transportation Cabinet (KYTC) decided in the mid-1980s that the route should be widened to accommodate increased vehicular traffic. KYTC's proposal called for leveling all of the buildings on the south side of 1120. However, the Kentucky Heritage Council (KHC) considered the area on the south side of 12th Street historic and did not want the buildings razed. For over 25 years, KYTC and KHC battled. Meanwhile, property owners on 1120 did not invest in their properties in fear that they would not see a return on the investment. Buildings decayed, property values decreased, and the corridor became a hotspot for drug use and sales. Indeed, a robbery and gruesome murder at a gas station on the corner of 12th Street and Holman Avenue in 2006 was a low point for the area.

Coordinated Response, Evolving Over Time

Beginning in the mid 1990s, CPD, CGN, and WAC developed a collaboration to implement a long-term SARA problem-solving approach to make the Westside less hospitable to criminal activity and more defensible for residents. Our multifaceted response has helped us achieve our common goal to make the Westside safe.

To address problematic tenants, the partners created a campaign to send letters to landlords of problem properties informing them of the criminal activity happening in their property. This resulted in several landlords evicting unruly tenants. We created "hot-spot cards" to allow residents to report ongoing criminal activity anonymously. Residents would complete the hot-spot cards and return them to CGN or have CGN staff assist them in filling out the cards; CGN would

then provide them to CPD. This was a key strategy before cell phones and when retaliation was high in the neighborhood.

To address vacant buildings that were havens for crime, WAC members took photos of each address to create an inventory. Next, WAC asked residents to vote on their “Top 10 Worst Properties” so that we could focus on top priorities. WAC and CPD worked to board up vacant buildings more securely to deter criminal activity while CGN worked with the City’s Code Enforcement Division to push for remediation. Over the years, many buildings were razed because they were structurally unsound.

Also in the 1990s, the partners worked with the Covington Fire Department and the City on a Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) strategy to address ongoing prostitution and drug-dealing on Banklick Street. CPD worked with WAC and CGN to study the traffic patterns of “johns” and drug buyers; soon we realized that Banklick was hospitable to these enterprises because it was very close to the Interstate 71/75 exit and easy for buyers to make a quick pick-up and get away. Over 3 years, we held numerous community meetings and worked with other first responders to ensure that they could retain access as we considered different proposals. We also took a field trip to Dayton, Ohio’s Five Oaks neighborhood, which had used barricades as a temporary CPTED approach to curb drug trafficking. Eventually, we changed traffic patterns so that Banklick north and south of 12th Street (the corridor connecting to Interstate 71/75) went one-way into 12th – thereby causing buyers to drive a larger circle to get in and out of the area. We also made 11th, 13th, and 14th Streets one-way either toward or away from Banklick, again making the area inhospitable to outsiders. Prostitution disappeared virtually overnight, and drug dealing decreased significantly. This CPTED strategy was implemented in June 1999 and is still in place today.

Beginning in 2004, 2 drug-related murders within a week at the corner of Locust and Orchard Streets caused CPD, WAC, CGN, and the City to take further action against blight and crime. This area of the Westside was nicknamed the “Fruit Farm” because it is bounded by Berry and Orchard Streets. In 2004, 54% of CFS regarding suspected drug activity in the Westside were focused in the Fruit Farm. WAC highlighted this negative activity on the annual Walking Tour of Neighborhoods with elected officials. In response, the City Manager ordered an aggressive acquisition of vacant and problematic properties in the area. The City acquired 25 single-family homes, with a total acquisition cost of \$814,000. Five buildings were in such bad condition that they could not be rehabbed and were soon demolished. However, many City-owned vacant buildings lingered and continued to host crime.

Next, CGN ramped up its rehabilitation of houses in the area as a long-term solution to stabilize the area. Since 2007, CGN has acquired 16 houses and 2 lots from the City and 18 houses from private owners (often rental properties post-foreclosure). CGN fully rehabbed and sold 30 homes to new homeowners of varied income levels, with total development costs over \$5.3 million. Included in this is Shotgun Row, CGN's transformation of six shotgun cottages into artist live/work homes for sale along Orchard Street. Shotgun Row was funded by The Kresge Foundation, City of Covington, Hubert Family Foundation, and LISC. In May 2015, CGN received the prestigious 2015 Ida Lee Willis Memorial Foundation Historic Preservation Award from the Kentucky Heritage Council for Shotgun Row. Six additional homes are currently under rehab (\$1 million in development); and CGN is continuing to acquire more properties.

In the early years of the KYTC/KHC battle over State Route 1120, WAC fought the widening because it would physically divide the community. Eventually, though, WAC supported the expansion because years of disinvestment had deteriorated conditions such that several key buildings had to be razed and crime was increasing. Finally, KYTC and KHC negotiated a deal

and 1120 was widened in 2012. At the same time, the local name of 1120 changed from 12th Street to Martin Luther King, Jr. Boulevard. WAC, CGN, and the City worked together to design landscaping within new medians on MLK Blvd (KYTC only planted grass). The landscaping follows a “waves of change” theme in honor of MLK’s legacy. CGN and the City raised \$150,000 to pay for the irrigation system and plantings, which send a positive signal that residents care about the neighborhood and inhibits illegal activity.

As of 2015, CGN home sales have ranged from \$90,000 for artist live/work cottages to \$210,000 for a 2.5 story new construction brick home. Homes are sold both to low-income buyers (subsidies are provided to make the homes affordable while pushing sales prices) and market-rate buyers, so that the Westside can benefit from a healthy mix of income levels. CGN encourages their homebuyers to become involved with resident-led associations such as WAC and “Grow the Cov” that are building social capital and activating vacant spaces to improve safety.

CPD uses mobile data computers in conjunction with the Neighborhood Initiative Program (NIP) to communicate hot-spot information received via the CPD website. The beta version of NIP was an innovative way for residents to communicate directly with officers that are specifically assigned to one of Covington’s 19 neighborhoods. This is in complete contrast to the traditional model of requiring a citizen to contact a police officer through a dispatch center. All a resident needs to do is navigate to the CPD website, click on a link to their neighborhood, and then be directed to an email portal where they can immediately begin noting their concern. Emails are received by the Patrol Bureau Commander as well as NIP officers. The Patrol Bureau Commander receives the email to allow for oversight and continual evaluation and assessment of the program above and beyond that of the street supervisors.

Just in the past year, NIP evolved when resource realignment dictated that CPD assign two officers who partner up as the full-time NIP response car. This greatly benefited the CPD for several reasons. First, the amount of email communication from the community came in at a manageable rate from nearly every neighborhood. Given the amount of communication, it was determined that these officers would be able to handle the workload if they were given the latitude to address the problems in addition to answering trouble CFS. These 2 officers are now known as the “77 car”. Next, this benefited both the patrol shifts and NIP and is a primary example of working smarter in an environment of limited resources. Emails from residents are now re-directed to the 77 car, the Shift Watch Commanders, and the Patrol Bureau Commander. This maintains supervisory oversight while allowing the 77 car to maintain a directed focus on neighborhood problem solving. Moreover, the 77 car has developed and established fruitful working relationships with other public and private resources within Covington. Beginning with the CPD’s close relationship with CGN, the 77 car officers stay apprised of changing trends in housing and citizen concerns in target areas.

Another leap in inter-agency cooperation was with the renewed relationship established with the City’s Code Enforcement Division. CPD and CE have made major strides in dealing with absentee or negligent landlords and their disorderly properties. By making use of several previously unused city ordinances, the 77 car and CE are holding absentee landlords accountable by placing liens on their properties if they are not brought to order. This typically involves the forced eviction of disorderly residents who are cited for a qualifying offense by the CPD. Since the revamping of this program in 2014, the City partners have held landlords accountable on 132 separate residential issues citywide. CPD has every intention of continuing this program for the foreseeable future.

Assessment: Systemic Change Improves Perception and Reality of Safety

While our approach has been long-term, we have continued to measure progress and recalibrate strategies as needed. Recently, CPD compared calls for service (CFS) and arrests from 2004 to 2014 in the Westside. During those years, there was a 54% reduction in CFS in the Westside (from 1,476 to 686), while citywide there was a 2.8% increase (from 56,541 to 58,449). The types of CFS in the Westside had to do with quality of life issues such as suspected drug activity, domestic violence, assaults, prostitution, criminal mischief, shots fired, theft, and so forth. In 2004, there were 37 CFS about alleged drug activity in the Westside, while in 2014, there were only 8 CFS regarding suspected drug activity. Also from 2004 to 2014, individual arrests in the Westside were reduced by 32.8% (from 146 to 98) and total charges were reduced by 35% (from 250 to 163). In 2004, there were 51 arrests for drug possession or trafficking drugs in the Westside; in 2014, this number dropped to 20. Finally, in 2014, there were 29 Part 1 crimes reported and 41 Part 2 crimes reported in the Westside target area.

Many of CGN's homes are now pre-sold due to heightened interest in the Westside's revitalization and positive image. The aggregate acquisition price of CGN-produced homes from 2008-2014 was \$834,146. The aggregate after-rehab sales price of these homes was \$5,316,993, more than a six-fold increase. This dramatic increase bolsters property values and helps existing owners build equity while boosting the local tax base.

As CGN has been rehabbing homes, CGN, WAC, and CPD continue to collaborate to improve security both during construction and for homeowners. WAC members monitor CGN properties during construction, notifying CGN and CPD of anything irregular. CPD inventories lighting and makes improvements where necessary and provides CPTED advice to CGN. CPD also increases patrol and has improved communication between officers working different shifts.

CGN conducts focus groups and social capital surveys every other year, in addition to its daily direct work with residents and resident-led groups, to gauge progress on community

concerns, attitudes, and perceptions. In the summer of 2013, CGN surveyed 966 residents, including 43 respondents were from the Westside. Responses show how economically diverse the Westside is today: 34.1% of respondents claimed household incomes below \$24,999 annually; 22.9% had income of \$25,000-\$49,999; 17.1% had income of \$50,000-\$74,999; and 25.7% had income above \$75,000. When asked about perceptions about the Westside and Covington, 65.2% said that they feel safe in Covington all or most of the time; 55.8% agree that people can depend on each other in the Westside; 72.1% feel that conditions on their street are either stabilized or getting better; and 72.1% agree that community organizations (such as CGN and WAC) keep them aware of what is going on in the community.

Today, WAC is planting new street trees and developing an urban greenway, building a sculpture park as part of Shotgun Row, and creating a butterfly garden on a vacant City-owned lot south of MLK. Grow the Cov has created an urban farm on vacant Fruit Farm lots; volunteers are raising chickens (for eggs) and growing vegetables to sell at the Covington Farmers' Market. The urban farm is located at Locust and Orchard, the epicenter of crime in the Westside for many years. Many Westside residents volunteer time to feed and water the chickens, and the site has become a hub for positive new connections between neighbors.

Moving Forward

As the Westside has become a noticeably safer neighborhood, there has been increasing focus on aspirational neighborhood revitalization and creative placemaking. The community dialogue has shifted - from one of desperation, fear, and minimizing liabilities, to one that is hopeful, empowered, and focused on better activating assets. As this momentum grows, CGN has developed a Creative Placemaking Initiative which benefits Westsiders by exposing them to creative ways of looking at their community and fostering social vibrancy. CGN was awarded a

\$1.45 million multi-year grant award from The Kresge Foundation in 2014 for this initiative. Today, the following projects are being implemented in the Westside:

Hellmann Lumber Creative Campus: CGN will transform a vacant, 13,500 square-foot former Mill on MLK into a creative commercial center that includes artist studios, community gathering space, and new offices for CGN. This will provide an anchor for the revitalization of the MLK corridor and spur additional development.

Creative Facades: CGN has created a design 'look book' and is commissioning local artisans to create design features that will be integrated into an exterior repair program for existing property owners. This creates additional equity for low-income homeowners, raises neighborhood property values by renovating exteriors, and reduces blight, while making the area less hospitable to crime.

Creative Community and Nano Grants: CGN is awarding grants between \$250 and \$5,000 directly to artists who work with resident-led groups to address neighborhood-identified issues such as safety, health, and so forth in a creative way that is embedded in the community. The first round of grants focused on safety. Funded projects includes construction of an analemmatic sundial on a vacant lot; a series of workshops teaching youth to create reflective, bike-friendly fashion and follow bike safety laws; and construction of an Art Wall on a vacant lot and pass-through which will be used to display a rotating selection of art.

Homes for Makers: CGN is acquiring 15 vacant homes and working with creative homebuyers to rehab them for their needs. Also, because the zoning in the Westside now allows live/work space, buyers can use the first floor for small-scale commercial activity, which can increase retail foot traffic and provide more eyes on the street.

Summary

Since the partnership between the Covington Police Department, Center for Great Neighborhoods, the City of Covington, and Westside Action Coalition began almost 20 years ago, it has morphed as together we have decreased crime, increased the perception of safety, built social capital, and transformed blight into owner-occupied homes and pocket parks. We did not find a 'silver bullet' to reduce crime and blight, and as a smaller city in a large metropolitan area, we did not have the financial resources that many cities have. Rather, we built trust amongst each other as partners and created a safe space in which we can share concerns, questions, and ideas. We shared success stories from our varied disciplines to build each organization's capacity.

Our partnership has flourished despite that fact that foreclosures increased significantly, residents have moved in and out of the Westside, neighborhood leadership has changed, public funding has become more scarce, heroin has become a debilitating epidemic in Northern Kentucky, and staff at the City and CPD has moved on (we have had five CPD Chiefs and numerous elected official and City staff changes since 1995). What has stayed the same, though, is our commitment to working together in a mutually beneficial way to make the Westside a place that all residents can proudly call home. We still have work to do, of course, but for a neighborhood that saw fifty years of crime, blight, and disinvestment, we have come a very long way in the last two decades.

Indeed, for our collaborative work in the Westside neighborhood, CPD and CGN were awarded a 2014 *LISC/MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Award for Excellence in Neighborhood Revitalization*. Over 600 nominations were received, and Covington was one of only 11 winners across the country. We celebrated this award with the city and Westside community. Now that the Westside is a safer place to live and work, the neighborhood is excited

to see additional investment that brings more amenities and continues to improve the quality of life.

3. AGENCY AND OFFICER INFORMATION

Key Project Team Members

Covington Police Department

Col. Bryan Carter

Lt. Col. Brian Steffen

Center for Great Neighborhoods

Rachel Hastings, Director of Neighborhood & Housing Initiatives

Westside Action Coalition

Faye Massey

Greg Paeth

Mark and Holly Young

City of Covington

Mayor Sherry Carran

Larisa Sims, Asst. City Manager

Project Contact Person

Bryan Carter

Chief, Covington, KY Police Department

1 Police Memorial Way

Covington, KY 41014

859-292-2220

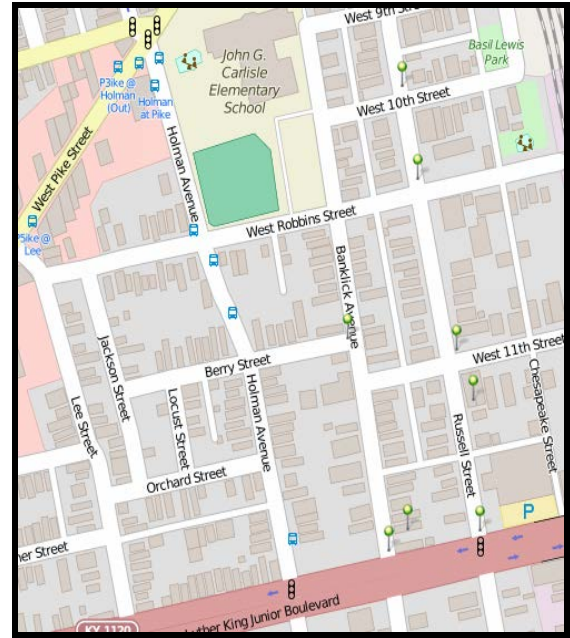
Bcarter@covingtonky.gov

4. APPENDICES

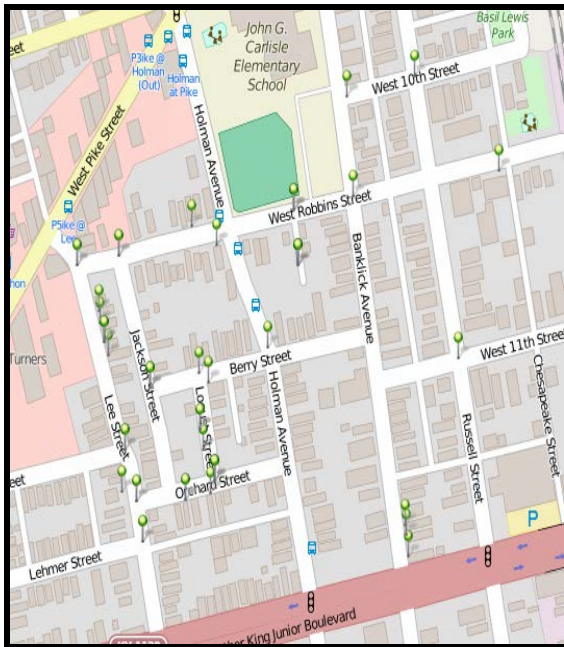




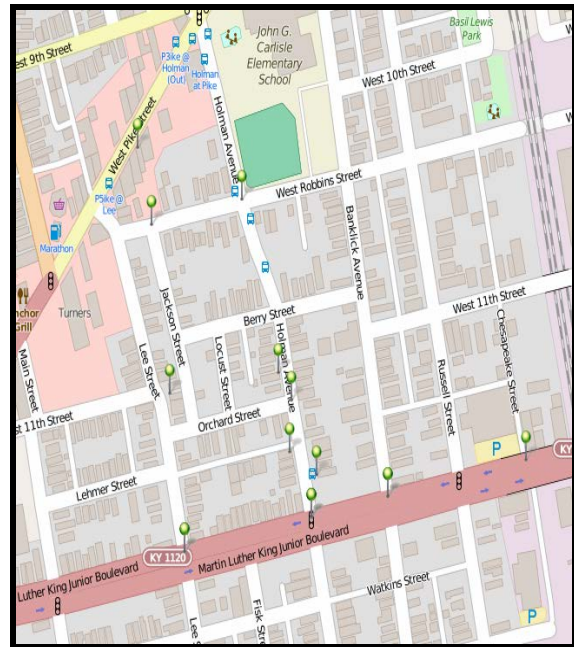
2004 Drug Related CFS



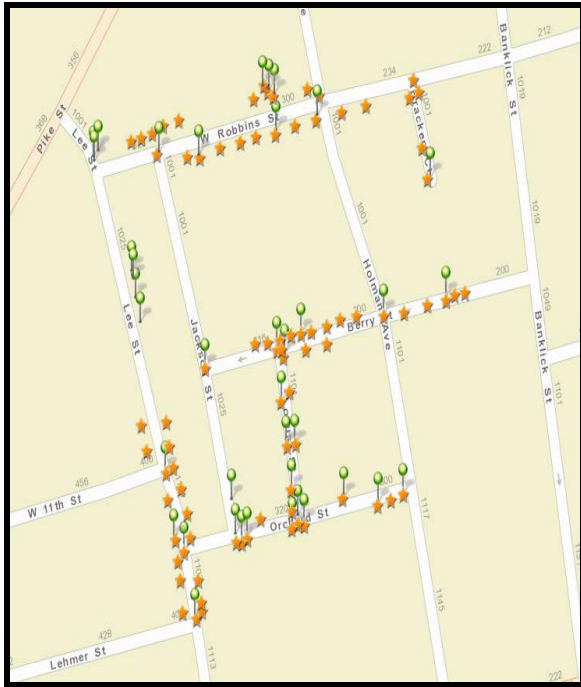
2014 Drug Related CFS



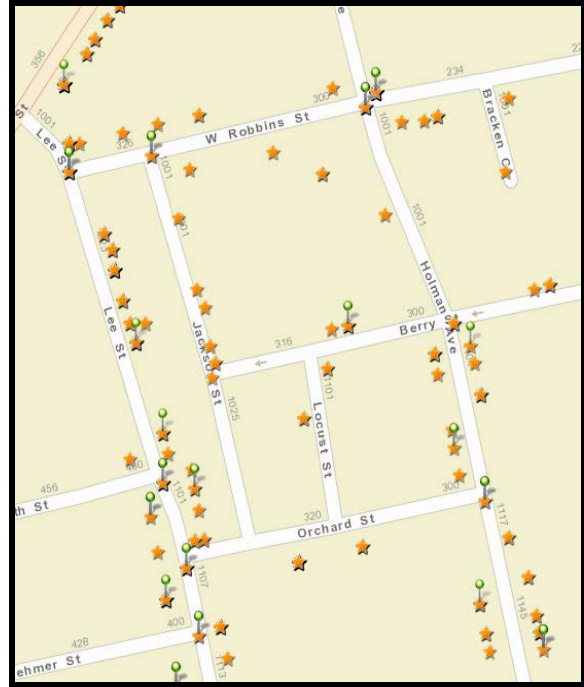
2004 Drug Related Arrests



2014 Drug Related Arrests



(2004)



(2014)

Maps show calls for service and arrests in 2004 and 2014, focused on the Fruit Farm Target area.

WESTSIDE ACTION COALITION COMMUNITY MURAL, 2000

This community mural was designed and painted by WAC members, neighbors, and CGN in 2000. The theme of the mural is “We are a proud people living together in community. Our strength comes from family, friendship, home, and from sharing joy, the struggle for health, safety, and unity, and an awareness of our history and roots.” Note that the mural references the Urban Appalachian heritage of many Westsiders, homes being rehabbed, a Covington police officer waving at neighbors, and a one-way sign referencing WAC’s Banklick Street CPTED initiative. This mural highlights the trust between the Westside and CPD and is still in place today.



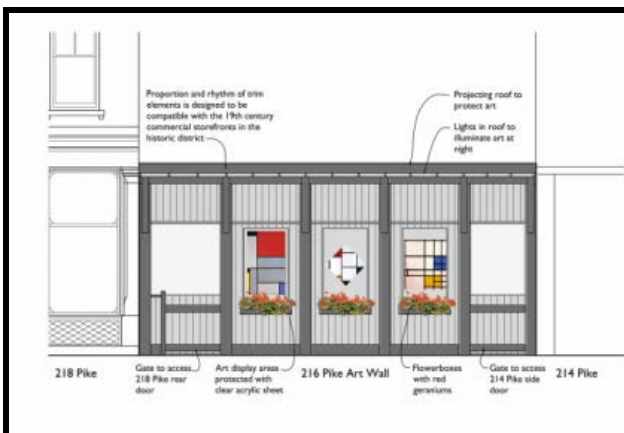
FARNY ART PARK, 2010

WAC volunteers created an art park in honor of Henry Farny, a painter of the American Southwest who lived on Banklick Street. The park reclaimed a vacant, pass-through lot into a neighborhood asset.



PIKE STREET ART WALL, 2015

A fire many years ago left an empty lot at 216 Pike. This pass-through lot has been the site of crime and trespassing for years. In fact, in 2014, a brutal fight left a man in a coma. As work begins on neighboring properties, the rear will be secured, but the sidewalk frontage would have been left open, unless the owner put up a fence. Instead of an unwelcoming fence, owner Chris Meyer is building the Pike Street Art Wall. The Art Wall will have 3 3' x 5' separate display areas for artwork. Each display area will be approximately 3" by 5' and will be covered by a 1/8" sheet of acrylic to protect the art from weather and vandalism. The Art Wall, currently under construction, will include an overhang to provide further protection from the elements and LED spotlights to illuminate the art at night.



SHOTGUN ROW, 2013-2015

The Center for Great Neighborhood's Shotgun Row project, which includes the rehab of five vacant shotgun cottages into artist live/work homes, an extensive façade treatment for long-time homeowners at a sixth cottage on Orchard Street, transformation of an abandoned dump (a brownfield) into a neighborhood parking lot, and creation of a new sculpture park on a vacant lot in the middle of the development.



OPENING & UNVEILING

DECEMBER 13, 2013
4:30-7:30 PM

Join us for the much anticipated completion of the first artist residence at Shotgun Row.

Enjoy some art and holiday cheer.
Food From A Truck, local crafted beverages
& art by Jens Jensen.

323 ORCHARD STREET IN COVINGTON
WWW.SHOTGUNROW.COM



Rebecca Weber
Senior Sales Executive, REALTOR®
Licensed in Kentucky and Ohio
889-878-5927
rebecca@rebeccaweber.com



center for great neighborhoods
of louisiana



HUFF
REALTY
A Berkshire Hathaway Affiliate

innovate
revitalize
transform
create

SHOTGUN
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Before: Abandoned Dump



After: Neighborhood Parking Lot



CPD officers take a look at new landscaping being installed by WAC volunteers at the Orchard Sculpture Park. A sculpture, created by a neighborhood artist, will be installed summer 2015.

CPD 77 CAR, 2014

CPD created a “77 car” power shift in 2014 to respond to residents’ quality of life concerns.



URBAN FARM, 2014

Grow the Cov's Urban Farm is located on formerly vacant, City-owned at the intersection of Locust & Orchard, site of two murders in 2004. Today, the corner is home to a Covington Bicentennial mural, new homeowners at Shotgun Row, and an urban farm with vegetable crops, compost piles, and chickens.



Abney property, 2004



Urban Farm, 2015





center for great neighborhoods
OF COVINGTON

May 27, 2015

RE: Letter of Support for the Covington Police Department's 2015 Herman Goldstein Award Nomination for Westside Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative

Dear Goldstein Award Committee Members,

The Center for Great Neighborhoods of Covington (CGN) is in full support of the Covington Police Department (CPD)'s 2015 Herman Goldstein Award Nomination for the Westside Neighborhood Revitalization Initiative. CGN has an almost 40-year history of bringing people and resources together to strengthen neighborhoods, resolve issues, and shape the future of the community. We equip residents with resources to improve their lives and neighborhoods through community organizing, leadership development, housing development, youth initiatives, financial education, and creative placemaking.

As you can see in the nomination, CGN has a long history of working with the Covington Police Department to solve problems related to community safety. When working with residents and neighborhood associations to solve problems of crime and blight that plague their neighborhood, CGN and CPD have been able to offer unique strengths of bringing residents to the table and identifying appropriate responses that discourage criminal activity and create defensible space. Over the last several years, CGN has acquired and redeveloped over 30 properties in Covington. The CPD has been a constant partner in helping to identify and eliminate threats to the safety of these properties both during and after construction. These properties are just a one part of the redevelopment momentum occurring in Covington's Westside.

We at CGN understand that our partnership with CPD and Westside neighbors has directly lead to the revitalization of the Westside neighborhood. As CPD and CGN have enhanced our partnership, more developers are also asking CPD to be an informed and educated part of the community conversation about how to create successful developments and catalyze an urban renaissance. Great momentum is building in Covington!

Thank you for your consideration of this nomination. Please feel free to contact me at tom@greatneighborhoods.org if you have any questions, ideas, or comments.

Sincerely,

Tom DiBello
Executive Director

May 28, 2015

To: Center for Problem-Oriented Policing

Re: Center for Great Neighborhoods/Covington Police Department Collaboration

Our names are Mark and Holly Young. We are residents of the Covington Westside and have been from 2000-2004, and from 2009 until the present. When we first lived here, large swaths of the neighborhood were widely considered to be unsafe--unsafe enough that walking in broad daylight was considered to be putting oneself in harm's way.

In 2007, after an extensive search from Ludlow, Ky. to Bellevue, Ky. for a suitable property to renovate. When Roger Bell, with the City of Covington contacted us about purchasing one of their properties on the Westside, we were initially skeptical of the advisability of buying here. Still, we were nothing if not thorough, and we revisited the neighborhood. The change even then was palpable. We could see how much the joint efforts of CGN and the Covington Police Department had already improved the safety. After a few days deliberation, we decided that we would renovate. We never had second thoughts.

Since then, property after property in our neighborhood has been renovated, many if not most by CGN. The number of new, engaged neighbors has swelled several fold. Foot traffic is markedly increased, as has the perceived safety. Drug activity is rarely observed. It is common to see young professionals (male and female) in the evenings walking pets or simply walking in areas where most might not have dared walk during daylight hours. We regularly witness impromptu gatherings of friendly, engaged neighbors discussing projects or just socializing literally on the spot where 12 years before there was the epicenter of crime on the Westside.

The Center for Great Neighborhoods and Covington's Police Department's efforts are the primary drivers of this change and we owe them a debt of gratitude.

Respectfully,

**Mark & Holly Young
Westside Action Coalition
228 Berry Street
Covington, KY 41011**