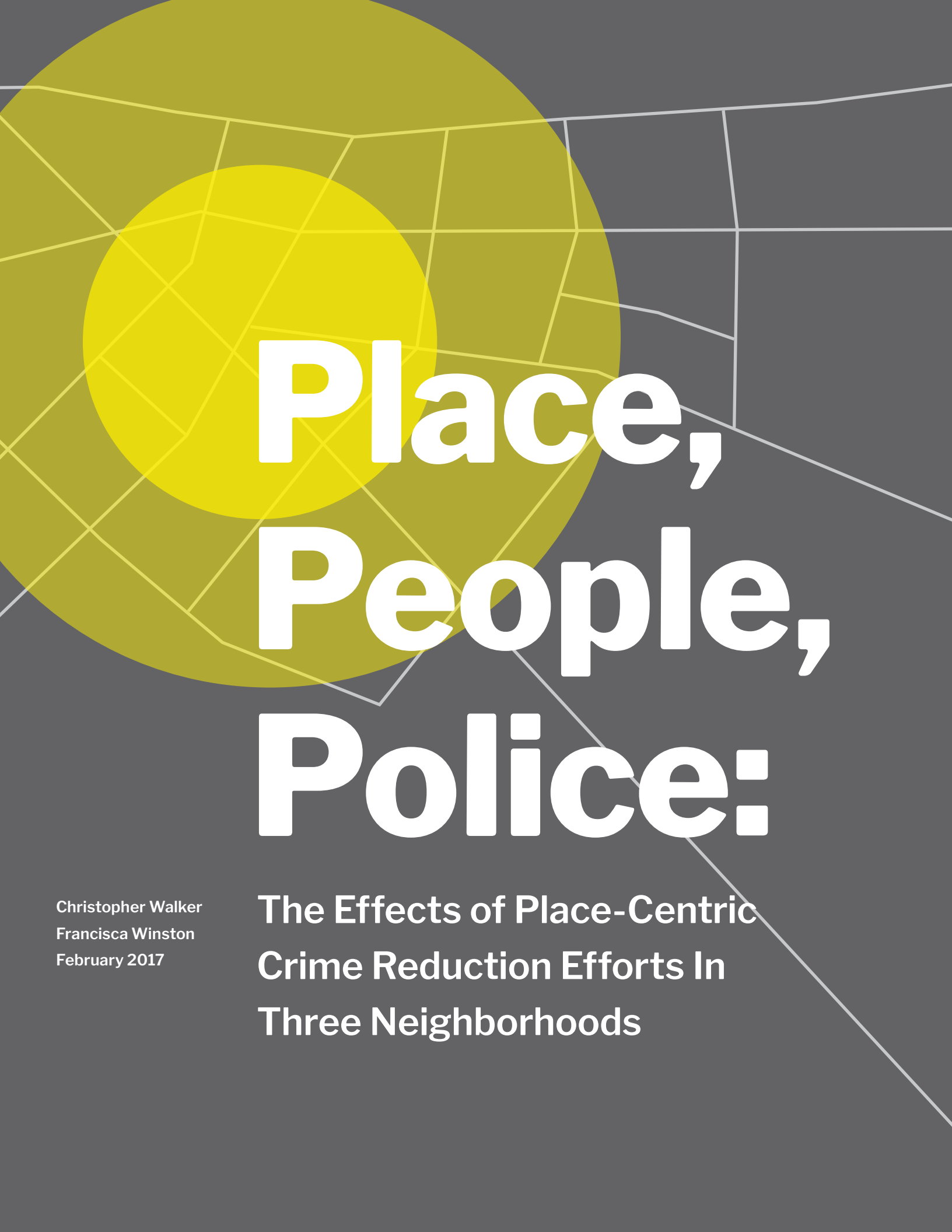

Place, People, Police:

The Effects of Place-Centric Crime Reduction Efforts In Three Neighborhoods

Christopher Walker
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Message from the president & CEO

Ensuring that all Americans live in a place where they can make the most of their opportunities–without barriers such as high rates of crime–is a fundamental building block of the American experiment. But there is no straight line to create safety where and when it doesn't exist. While some may look at places that have seen persistently high crime and conclude that they are hopeless, at LISC we embrace complex challenges and deploy multi-faceted solutions.

Our approach to community safety is based on what we have learned in the more than 35 years LISC has spent working with determined and resourceful residents and partners to bring opportunity to hundreds of urban neighborhoods and rural areas across the country. In this report, we are presenting quantitative findings to demonstrate the efficacy of the model: after assessing data across program sites in three cities, we found crime decreased by as much as 41%.

Why does the model work? To reduce crime in a way that lasts, it's not enough just to focus on the offenders. The physical condition of a place has an impact. Dilapidated properties, trash, and graffiti invite crime and disorder, and contribute to a pervasive feeling of a community left behind. The quality of the connections between people in a community also matters. Neighbors who keep their heads down and live in fear are less able to get to know one another and look out for each other. When these relationships deteriorate, crime flourishes. Finally, the bond between local law enforcement and the people it serves has a critical impact on crime. When police officers and residents view each other with suspicion, there is little room for collaboration, and it is easy to see how interactions can take a tragic turn.

Sustainably deterring crime makes it possible to attract investments–to fill vacant storefronts with viable businesses and turn dilapidated properties into quality affordable homes. In addition, when hope defeats fear, people more easily emerge from behind closed doors and work together on the many small things that add up to create safe and healthy neighborhoods–such as mowing grass on vacant lots or organizing block parties where kids can play outside. Even bigger improvements are possible when local law enforcement and neighbors build a respectful, collaborative relationship–like closing down a drug market or rebuilding a community center. When these things are in play, we see crime go down–and stay down.

So when fixing one thing seems to depend on fixing something else, where do we start?

First, people: We support direct engagement with residents who understand the local dynamics and can help identify the source of problems. Second, place: we tackle blight and lack of economic opportunity, bringing resources to local partners who have the capacity to change the environments of high crime places. Finally, policing: the actions of law enforcement are more effective–and often more efficient–when they are shaped by the community's understanding of problems and backed by an effort to change the spaces that encourage and motivate crime. When these com-

ponents come together, both officers and residents come to see police as more than enforcers. They are keepers of a safety that is stewarded by the community.

There is still work to be done to make our justice system fair and effective for all Americans and to address the issues of health, economic opportunity, and education that are inextricably tied to poverty and crime. But across the country–in the 66 places where LISC is supporting safety work–we have seen remarkable progress. We've seen neighbors collaborate to make their children's walk to school safer; we've seen a sheriff's department sponsor an urban farm in an area where liquor stores are many but fresh food is scarce; we've seen neighbors chat on their stoops after work instead of hurrying into their homes; and we've seen government officials step up to finance important projects at just the right moment.

Most impressively, we've seen the kind of resilience and promise that makes us believe there is much more that can be done using the LISC model to foster vital, stable communities in the future.

Join us as we refine and expand our work in the years ahead. The violence and conflict between community and police that we have witnessed with heavy hearts in recent years is a reminder that the stakes are high. But this approach to reducing crime and building community-police partnerships isn't just a moral imperative or a response to a crisis. It's smart strategy, and it's critical because it allows all Americans to share in the country's prosperity.

Maurice Jones

Introduction

If police, community organizations, neighborhood residents, and businesses cooperate with one another to solve public safety problems, they can accomplish substantial and durable reductions in crime. In this paper, we present and analyze three examples of successful, cooperative crime prevention efforts supported by the Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC), finding as much as a 41 percent decline in crime incidents compared to what they would have been without our coordinated, multi-sector strategy.

LISC employs place-centric crime reduction to help police, community developers, partner city agencies, community organizations, and resident leaders work through the public safety challenges posed by a difficult physical and social environment. The work is place-centric because this environment varies considerably from place to place within and across communities. Efforts to reduce crime–through prevention or enforcement–must be customized accordingly.

In the places we selected to study the effects of this work, these efforts indeed led to reductions in crime. We know this because we analyzed the number of crimes on individual street segments within our community focus areas before, during, and after these initiatives and compared them to segments outside these areas. In the two communities where circumstances permitted, our analysis examined crime levels compared to what they would have been otherwise using a technique known as negative binomial regression. In the third community, simple inspection of crime trends showed sharp reductions compared to surrounding areas.

Reductions in crime have taken place in other communities using traditional policing methods, but we believe that a combination of physical renewal, social capital formation, and problem-oriented community policing is a particularly good way to create durably safe communities.

In Providence, the Part II crime most of concern to the Olneyville community where our project was based, dropped 41 percent–compared to what it would have been–after police and community developers worked together to renovate and program a new riverside park, construct new affordable housing, renovate blighted structures, and introduce more active policing. In Milwaukee's Washington Park neighborhood, concentrated housing development and community police work, together with an actively engaged corps of residents, helped produce Part II crime reductions of 16 percent throughout the neighborhood compared to what it would have been. In the Eastern North area of Philadelphia, park renovation, police enforcement, and community-organizing to increase stewardship of a local park led to a 40 percent reduction in Part I crime compared to a mere 3 percent reduction in the surrounding neighborhood.[1]

1 We did not examine Part II crime in Philadelphia.

Background

These results help validate the place-centric approach to community change that asks police, community developers, and residents to solve multiple and inter-related problems specific to those parts of the community where most crimes occur.

For just over 20 years, LISC's national community safety program has supported community developers and their partners in police departments as they pursue joint strategies to solve crime problems in low-income neighborhoods. This emphasis on community-level cooperation among city agencies, residents, and community organization executives and staff is a crucial aspect of LISC's comprehensive approach to community development. Our approach recognizes that the problems bedeviling low-income communities are chronic, multifaceted, and intertwined; which means that their solutions must be sustained, multi-sectoral, and interwoven.

Our community safety work is informed by this understanding, and indeed, is often carried out within an overall framework of community-level inter-sectoral cooperation. For some years now, LISC has supported extensive community organizing and planning in over 100 low-income neighborhoods, aiming to create durable collaborations through which cooperative approaches to community problems are forged, implemented, monitored, and assessed.[2] Although LISC's safety-related training and technical assistance have been extended to many communities, some of the best work has taken place under the aegis of these community-based collaborations.

LISC's place-centric crime reduction efforts ultimately are rooted in a decades-old but still evolving approach called Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED).[3] At the core of this strategy is the well-founded belief that characteristics of the physical environment act to abet or deter criminal activity, and that changes in the way places function as places are among the most important levers available to those who would drive down crime where it is highly concentrated. By implication, one of the most valuable allies to police departments are organizations that specialize in redevelopment and revitalization of the physical environment in low-income communities. Many of these are community development corporations long supported by LISC.

In addition, over the past 20 years, CPTED practitioners have broadened their view of the drivers of crime to include social attributes of poor neighborhoods[4] as well. In particular, police departments and their development partners have turned their attention to the strength of social ties among community residents, who under the best circumstances, are the arbiters of community norms of acceptable behavior and informal enforcers of these norms. Communities where these bonds are strong

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2 This is described more fully in Chris Walker, Francisca Winston, and Sarah Rankin, *New Approaches to Comprehensive Neighborhood Change: Replicating and Adapting LISC's Building Sustainable Communities Program*, Local Initiatives Support Corporation, May 2010.

3 See Paul Cozens and Terence Love, "A Review and Current Status of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED)" *Journal of Planning Literature* 2015, Vol. 30(4) 393-412.

4 Gregory Saville and Gerard Cleveland (2013) "Second Generation CPTED: The Rise and Fall of Opportunity Theory" in R. Atlas, *21st Century Security and CPTED, Second Edition.* New York: CRC Press, pp.91-104.

become active partners in efforts to identify conditions that incubate crime and help remediate them. From the earliest days of CPTED practice, police and their partners have enlisted community participation in developing physical revitalization strategies. More recent approaches now call for also strengthening the social fabric itself.

A place-centric approach to crime reduction is thus grounded both in a body of accumulated practice and in evolving theories of criminology. Weisburd and his colleagues usefully distinguish between *opportunity* theories and *social disorganization* theories of crime; his pathbreaking analysis of the hyper-local factors associated with chronic hot-spots in Seattle validates both of these theories.[5]

Opportunity theories encompass routine activities theory, situational crime prevention, and crime pattern theory which "all place great emphasis on the specific opportunities offered by specific places and situations."[6] Strategies informed by opportunity theory aim to disrupt crime drivers associated with urban design by making physical changes to enable more effective surveillance of public spaces, reduce permeability of these spaces to potential perpetrators, and enhance territoriality–marking spaces as "owned" or controlled by the law-abiding. These strategies increase the likelihood of crime detection and apprehension of suspects, and important to the next set of strategies, the perception of control among potential perpetrators, the community, and the police.

Social disorganization theory entails a set of strategies to increase *collective efficacy*, which consists of social cohesion accompanied by shared expectations for social control.[7] Social cohesion refers to the sense of belonging and feelings of morale that help form people's positive attachments to others.[8] Shared expectations for control refers to a collective pursuit of shared values that are rewarding and meaningful.[9] This includes a willingness to observe and enforce generally-accepted public norms of civility, decency, respect for others, tolerance of disagreement, and law-abidingness.

Weisburd shows that indicators of the lack of social cohesion and social control–such as chronic school absence among young people and poor school performance–vary at micro-community levels and are, in fact, associated with block-to-block variations in crime. These variations are also associated with attributes of the physical environment, such as blight, types of land use, and presence of transportation nodes. Practitioners of place-centric crime reduction strive to redesign public spaces and introduce more active uses of those spaces that preempt certain types of crime, while at the same time investing in community activities, like youth programming, recreation, public expressions of arts and culture, community events, organizing, and shared problem-solving that strengthen the social order.

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5 David Weisburd, Elizabeth Groff, and Sue-Ming Yang, *The Criminology of Place: Street Segments and Our Understanding of the Crime Problem* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012.)

6 Weisburd, Groff, and Yang, op cit. p.43.

7 Robert Sampson, *Great American City: Chicago and the Enduring Neighborhood Effect* (Chicago, Chicago University Press, (2012), p.27.

8 Kenneth A. Bollen and Rick H. Hoyle, "Perceived Cohesion: A Conceptual and Empirical Examination" in *Social Forces* (1990) 69 (2): 479-504.

9 Robert Sampson and Byron Groves, "Community Structure and Crime: Testing Social Disorganization Theory" in *The American Journal of Sociology*, 94:4 (Jan, 1989), pp. 774-802. Page 777.

Over 20 years of LISC community safety work, we have assembled mostly anecdotal evidence of success, in some few cases backed by analysis of crime incident data that appears to confirm the merits of our approach. In recent years, however, increasing availability of crime data makes more extensive analysis possible. In this paper, we analyze newly available data on crime levels and trends in three neighborhoods where we believe our efforts have made a difference. Our objective going forward is to ramp our capacity to carry out this kind of analysis routinely and assess the effects of our work.

Research Questions and Methods

What are crime levels and trends before, during, and after place-centric crime reduction interventions in our focus neighborhoods? Is there any statistical evidence to show that our interventions have produced the anticipated reductions in crime?

To answer these questions, we often have to do more than simply examine whether crime numbers declined in the area where our interventions took place. After all, crime may have declined in many neighborhoods, not just the area we emphasized. In addition, crime doesn't increase or decline month-to-month in a step-wise fashion; it is common for there to be wide swings that produce peaks and valleys in the data, especially in the small areas we study, which make trends difficult to discern without statistical help.

To correct for these effects, we used a multivariate regression model that estimates the effect of the intervention on crime levels after adjusting for season, year, and the levels of crime nearby, but outside, our focus areas. We distinguish between Part I and Part II crimes as defined by the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting System:

- Part I crimes consist of homicide, forcible rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson.
- Part II crimes consist of simple assaults, vandalism, weapons violations, drug violations, prostitution, public intoxication, disorderly conduct, sex offenses, and others.

It is important to note that, in order for our strategy to work, it is often crucial for us to understand where incidents of Part II crime are taking place and why, then focus on reducing their number. Though Part I crime may be viewed as more extreme, Part II crimes, damaging in themselves, contribute to making a place feel less safe—heightening community mistrust and undermining strong, safe communities. Moreover, Part II crime contributes to outsiders' perceptions of a place as rundown, unsafe and troubled–which deters investment. Reducing this type of crime interrupts this cycle.

The result of the type of data analysis we conducted is an estimate of the change in crime counts for focus area street segments compared to what they would have

been had they simply mirrored crime levels and trends in comparison areas. This type of result is very similar to those obtained using differences-in-differences methods, which are common in the literature analyzing neighborhood effects.[10]

To make these estimates, we:

- Obtained municipal police department data on reported numbers of crimes by type of crime and location, usually an address but sometimes the nearest reported intersection. We then geocoded these data to their corresponding street segment or face-blocks, and aggregated them to arrive at quarterly Part I and Part II crime counts per segment.
- Drew on information provided by community leaders and police officials to draw focus area boundaries corresponding to the areas where the interventions occurred.
- Established time periods that defined (a) a pre-intervention period occurring prior to initiation of activities, (b) an interim-intervention period occurring during the implementation of activities, and (c) a post-intervention period after the intervention, during which time there were usually fewer efforts to transform the physical environment, though community organizing and policing activities typically continued. We distinguished an interim-intervention period to take account of any temporary increase or decrease in reported crime produced by construction and more intensive policing. It should not go without saying that effects recorded in the interim period by physical investments with a many-year lifespan should be expected to continue into the post-intervention period.
- Our pre- and post-intervention periods were at least four quarters long, which enables reasonably robust statistical modeling. Because we are analyzing crimes quarter-by-quarter for each street segment, the minimum total number of post-intervention observations for analysis is the number of street segments in each of the intervention and comparison areas times four.
- Identified comparison geographies that matched, to the extent possible, the social and economic characteristics of the focus areas and were located either in the same police district or nearby.

Our statistical model is described in more detail in the Appendix, but in brief, it consisted of a negative binomial regression, which is used to model count variables when they are "over-dispersed." Put another way, they are typically used when there are a large number of 0 observations, as in this case, where many street segments experience no crimes at all in a given quarter.

To test for the effects of the intervention, we created dummy variables corresponding to whether a particular street segment was inside or outside the focus area and whether the crimes observed took place in the interim- or post-intervention period.

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10 Our analysis follows Ingrid Gould Ellen, Johanna Lacoe and Claudia Ayanna Sharygin, "Do Foreclosures Cause Crime?" *Journal of Urban Economics*, 2013, vol. 74, issue C, pages 59-70

We also created similar variables corresponding to which of the four quarters in a year the crimes occurred in (it is well known that crime levels are seasonal) and the year (because overall crime levels change from year to year). Finally, we introduced a spatial lag (within 660 feet) to capture any effects that crimes nearby, but outside the focus area, might have had on crime levels within the area.

Characteristics of Interventions

The three neighborhoods where we have provided extensive assistance with implementation are quite different from one another, as are details of the intervention itself, geography, timing, and expected effects on community safety. This variation posed special challenges to our analysis, including the delineation of impact areas, selection of comparisons, type of multivariate analysis, and the types of crimes expected to decline as a result of an intervention. In brief, interventions and their effect on crime levels, comparing pre-, interim- and post-intervention periods, include:

- Community safety efforts in the Olneyville neighborhood of Providence were led by the Olneyville Housing Corporation (now called One Neighborhood Builders), Providence Police Department, community organizations, and city agencies. Interventions included community policing and housing and open space renovations around four hot spots in between 2004 -2007. Evidence shows significant and sustained drops in Part II crime.
- Community safety efforts in the Washington Park neighborhood of Milwaukee were led by United Methodist Community Services, the Milwaukee Police Department, the Milwaukee District Attorney's Office and Washington Park Partners (a collaboration among community agencies and the convening body for LISC-supported comprehensive community development activities). Between 2011 and 2013, they built upon earlier successes in major park renovation and re-programming with more active police enforcement of weapons violations and drug activity, community policing and neighborhood crime patrols, and concentrations of newly constructed or renovated single- and multi-family housing. These led to reductions in both Part I and Part II crime neighborhood-wide.
- Urban park reclamation in Eastern North Philadelphia was led by the Asociacion de Puertorriquenos en Marcha (APM). The project upgraded a park that had fallen into disrepair and become an escape route from nearby drug corridors. Crime data show a sustained drop in Part I crime near the park after renovation, which began in mid-2010 and finished in mid-2011. (We did not have Part II crime data at the time of our analysis.) An improved working relationship between residents and police, though interrupted for a time, may have set the groundwork for improvements elsewhere in the APM focus area.

Case Results

Affordable housing in the Olneyville neighborhood of Providence, RI

Providence: Olneyville Case Results

The Olneyville case highlights how collaborative efforts between police and community developers achieved overall reductions in Part II crimes through increased enforcement, redeveloped problem properties, new park development, and an overall attention to better environmental design.[11]

In 2000, the Olneyville neighborhood of Providence, RI, about one-half-mile square, contained some 5,100 people, 36 percent of whom were under the poverty line. It is, and remains, a largely working class and Hispanic community with an old housing stock and many older mill buildings, some of which continued to house manufacturing activities. For a number of years, the community witnessed continuing disinvestment in its housing stock, which produced affordable but poor-quality units for the people who lived there. As in other low-income communities, crime posed a chronic problem. In 2002, Olneyville had the third highest rates of violent crime among all Providence neighborhoods, and was known for its drug and prostitution markets.

In the early 2000s, the city of Providence, state organizations, and neighborhood stakeholders formed the Olneyville Collaborative and together began to lay the groundwork for public safety improvement as well as blight removal. Fortunately, the neighborhood's Olneyville Housing Corporation (OHC), a community development

11 A detailed discussion of the Olneyville anti-crime efforts can be found in Bill Geller and Lisa Belsky, "Building Our Way Out of Crime: The Providence Rhode Island Case Study" in *Building Our Way Out of Crime: The Transformative Power of Police-Developer Partnerships* US Department of Justice Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, 2009.. We are indebted to Sean Varano, Associate Professor in the School of Justice Studies at Roger Williams University, for his help in obtaining Providence crime data and his comments on an early version of our analysis.

corporation supported by LISC, occupied a position of leadership in the community, having established its reputation through renovation of older units into higher-quality, but affordable, housing. As the corporation grew in strength, it began to take on a wider portfolio of development projects, and broadened its reach into other areas, often through partnerships with other community organizations and city agencies. LISC has been a strong supporter of this effort, investing some $3 million in community programs and projects between 2000 and 2015.

That part of the neighborhood adjacent to the Woonasquatucket River suffered from environmental contamination, illegal dumping, and open-air drug-use. As part of its mission to improve the community's overall quality of life, OHC actively pursued a program to recover the community's access to the river, in part through development of a new riverside park, and in part by construction of new affordable housing nearby. But it was generally recognized that development of a new park along the Woonasquatucket River would not have transformative effects on the community–including successful development of new affordable and market-rate housing–unless efforts were made to deal with chronic crime problems in the area.

To initiate a virtuous cycle of crime reduction–new development–further crime reduction, the city added police patrols and aggressive suppression of primarily Part II crimes, including drug-dealing, assaults, robberies, public intoxication and urination, and gang activity. For its part, the community development corporation set out to secure control of problem properties in the neighborhood, from whence much of this activity emanated. Beginning in 2003, the corporation bought properties from private owners, secured several city-owned properties, and gained city cooperation to foreclose on tax titles and demolition liens.[12]

This process was aided by the community's Nuisance Abatement Task Force, which helped convince the owner of one problem property to sell to the corporation, leading to removal of tenants engaged in criminal activity, renovation of the building, and rent-up to law-abiding tenants. This cycle was repeated for other problem properties nearby the park and the site of new multifamily housing development.

In 2005, LISC training on the principles and practices of CPTED surfaced a series of concerns and proposed responses surrounding the new developments. The community wanted to ensure the elimination of drug sales, prostitution, and loitering; the police wanted to ensure that the new housing did not eventually re-introduce new crime problems to the community. The participating group agreed on a series of infrastructure, urban and public design, land use, transportation, and other solutions to reduce opportunities to commit crime.

By the end of 2008, all of the problem properties had been renovated and most of the units occupied by new residents. Other problem sites where illegal activities could take place unobserved had been reconfigured. Many of the complementary public investments the community wanted were made, importantly including park renovations and programming. At the same time, OHC and the police cooperated on crime prevention and reduction efforts throughout the rest of Olneyville, drawing in part on the lessons learned through their initial cooperation in the focus area.

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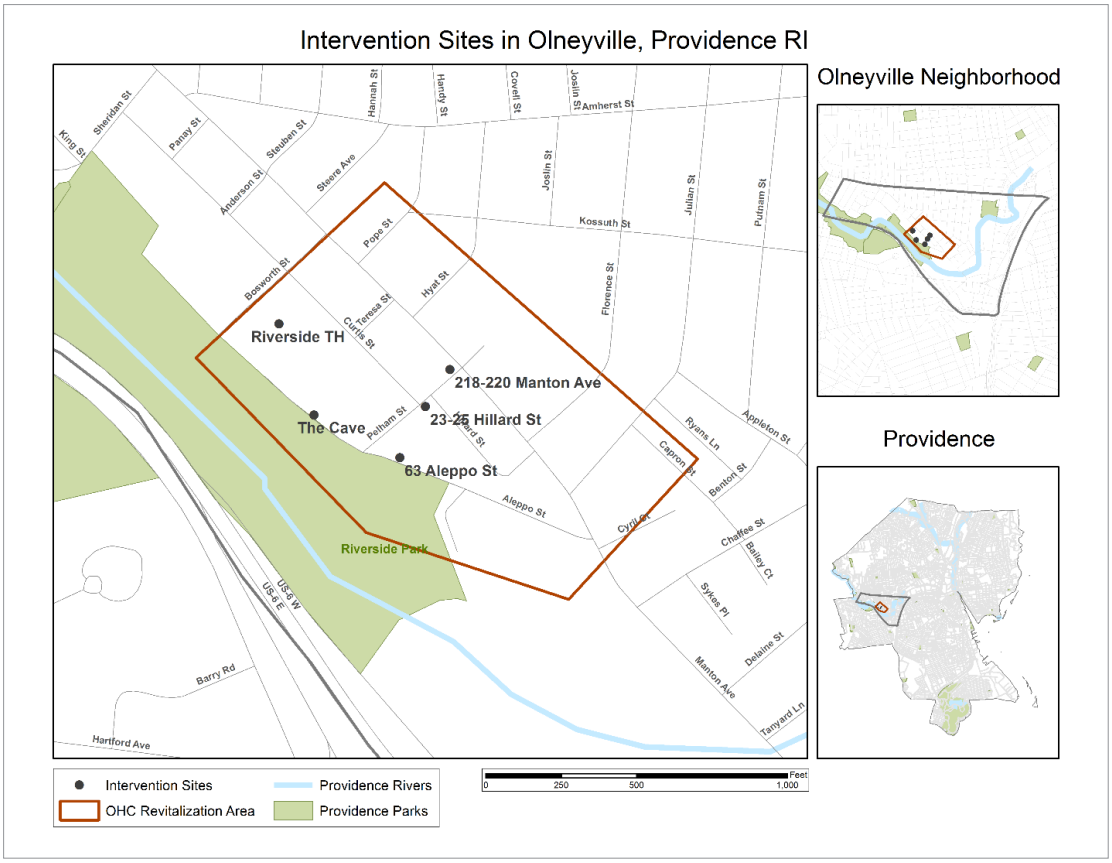
12 Ibid. page 21.

Figure 1: Map of Olneyvile Crime Prevention Intervention Sites



Olneyville Analysis Results

To find out whether these efforts produced crime reductions in the initial focus area, we defined an intervention area consisting of the areas around each node of housing renovation or construction, as well as the concentrated police enforcement area nearby the riverside park. The size of this area is just over 11 acres, containing a population of 686 persons in 2010. Crime on street segments within this area was compared to the remainder of the Olneyville neighborhood, which is quite similar in terms of social, economic, and housing conditions.

We find that the intervention indeed produced a decline in the Part II crime it was intended to reduce, even after taking into account the changes in overall crime in each year and quarter throughout Olneyville, and even after taking into account any contagion effects that might have been produced by changes in crime on blocks nearby (within 660 feet).

We calculate that after the period of more aggressive police enforcement, removal of blighted properties, and construction of new affordable homes, the number of Part II crimes in the focus area street segments was, on average, 41 percent lower than would have been the case had crime trends mirrored those of the comparison areas.

Figure 2: Index of Part II Crime in Intervention and Comparison Areas in Providence

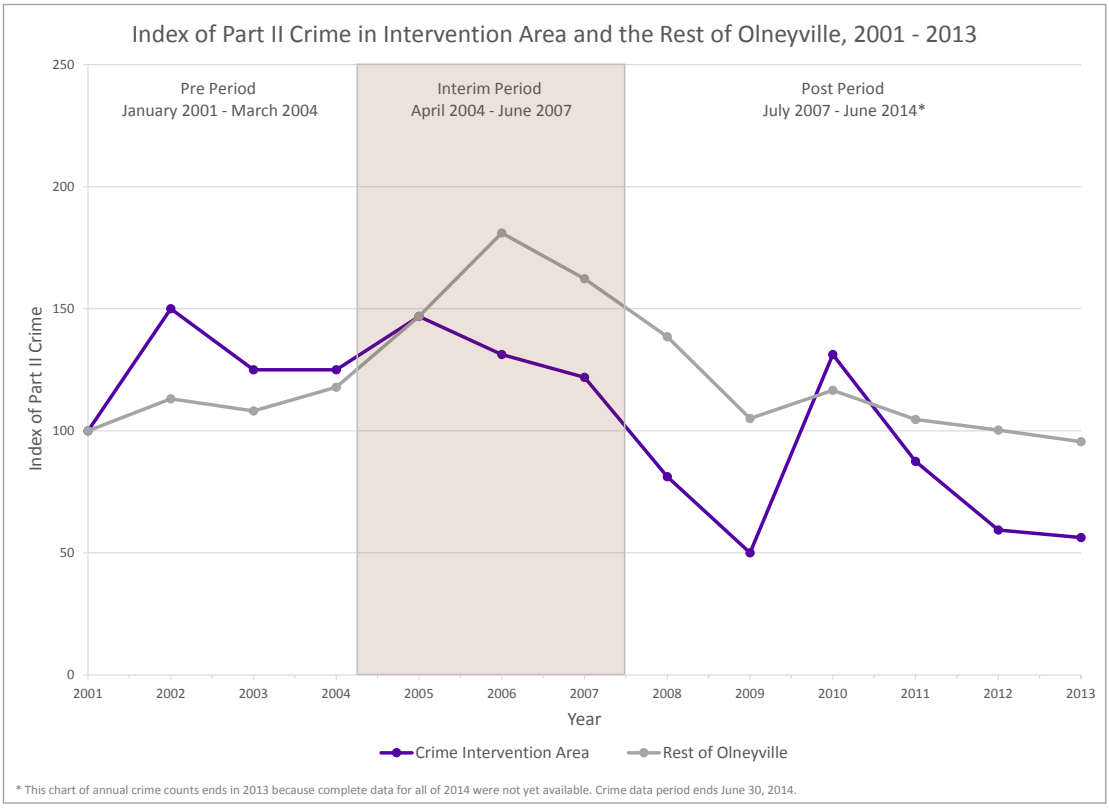


Figure 2 displays an index of Part II crime between 2001 (indexed at 100) and 2013, comparing the intervention area to the rest of Olneyville across the pre-, interim- and post-intervention periods. In terms of actual number of crimes, average Part II crime incidents in the intervention area dropped from 40 in the pre-intervention period to around 20 incidents in the post-intervention period. Without the intervention, and as shown by our negative binomial regression, crimes in the post-intervention period would have settled to around 30-35 crimes compared to the 20 actually recorded.

If we adopt a slightly relaxed criterion of statistical significance, we also find a reduction in more serious, Part I, crime during the intervention period after controlling for time period and the effects of nearby crime. These crimes were, on average, 37 percent lower than would have been expected, and they were 26 percent less in the post-intervention period (though under an even more relaxed statistical standard).[13]

These comparative crime reductions are substantial, reflecting the effect of the intervention amidst the statistical noise of seasonal and annual swings. And they are shown to persist despite overall declining crime levels throughout Olneyville during this time. We believe this is in part attributable to the efforts of OHC and their police and community partners.

13 By convention, researchers accept a likelihood of "false relationships" of .05 or less – that is, the probability that a given result would be obtained even if there were no relationship – though some studies accept .10. The decline of Part I crimes in the interim- period was significant at the .06 level; in the post-intervention period at .14.

Milwaukee: Washington Park Case Results

Washington Park is one of the poorer neighborhoods in Milwaukee. This largely African-American community lives with poverty rates in excess of 50 percent, declining population and very high rates of foreclosures and vacant properties. The neighborhood's 6,800 residents occupy an area just over one-half-mile square.

In 2003, a group of 10 community organizations joined by local churches and other groups formed Washington Park Partners to help plan and organize a comprehensive effort to improve the quality of the neighborhood. Between 2000 and 2015, LISC supported the Partners, investing about $3.8 million in affordable housing and other projects and programs.

Among the neighborhood challenges identified by the Partners: "in addition to the physical deterioration of housing and commercial structures in the neighborhood, there are problems of crime, drug sales, prostitution and anti-social behavior by youth and adults."[14] In response, the new quality-of-life plan created by the Partners included community social capital formation efforts, including establishing and linking "block clubs to address problem properties, increase safety, and develop new community leaders." These are explicitly referenced as building blocks of an overall community safety strategy, which would include efforts to improve police-community relations through community programs and problem solving. The plan called for a nuisance property task force to take on challenges of blight and crime, prominently including prostitution and drug dealing.

Over time, Washington Park community organizations, police, and city agencies, in some cases supported by philanthropic donations and in later years the Federal government, undertook a series of increasingly coordinated efforts to improve overall conditions in the neighborhood. Several clusters of activities emerged at varying times–most intensively 2011-2013–including two nodes of housing construction and renovation and a somewhat larger area of concentrated police activity adjacent to Washington Park itself (an historic Olmstead park) and involving a mix of enforcement, housing, and community activities.[15] This area is about 80 acres–just over a tenth of a mile square–containing about 1,800 people.

The concentrated police activity area witnessed three distinct waves of enforcement focused on shots-fired and weapons violations, drugs, public intoxication and loitering, gambling, and prostitution–symptoms of disorder most troublesome to residents. These enforcement efforts were carried out with the active cooperation with the community to identify and monitor nuisance properties.

The Milwaukee Police Department deployed street patrols with special units to focus on problematic people and places, including a focus on drug dealing, collaboration

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14 Washington Park Partners, "Planning for Hope: Partners for Change in Washington Park" Summer 2004, p.8.

15 This analysis draws upon a timeline and description of housing and public safety activities as well as a file of Milwaukee Police Department (MPD) crime data prepared by Mallory O'Brien, Director of the Milwaukee Homicide Review Commission as well as a file of MPD crime data prepared by Dan Polans, Crime Analyst, MPD.

with other city agencies to enforce codes on nuisance properties, and monitor parole compliance. District Community Liaison Officers and Community Prosecution Unit officers partnered with community stakeholders to develop Block Watches as well as neighborhood walks to identify problematic environmental and social conditions, and clean-ups. Police engaged in numerous meetings and conversations with neighborhood residents to elicit information about community issues with crime or conditions that lead to crime.

Active police and community engagement around problem properties and nodes of criminal activity continued throughout Washington Park, and even accelerated, during the period after concentrated activity in the clusters was completed. Beginning in 2014, a Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Program grant (BCJI), administered by the U.S. Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance and supported by LISC, spurred implementation of a range of activities in Washington Park, including enhanced enforcement and surveillance, deployment of community services, and community engagement.

Figure 3: Map of Washington Park Crime Prevention Intervention Area

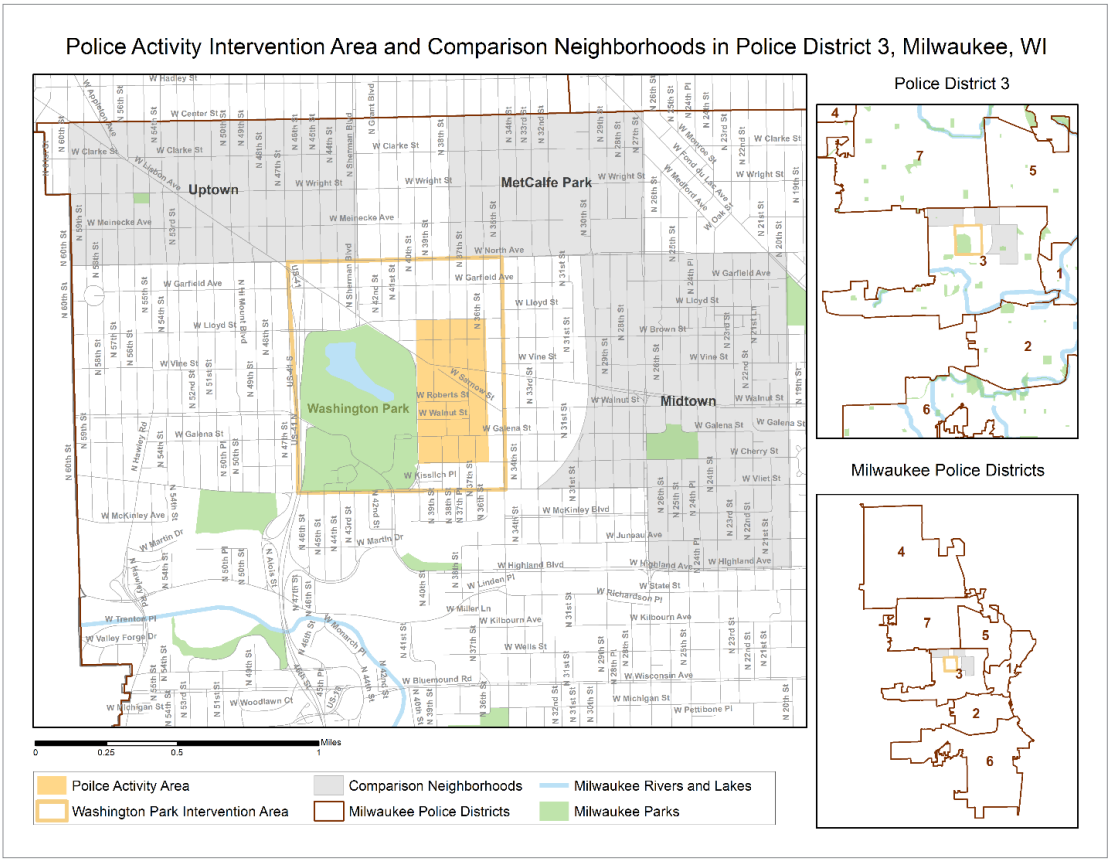
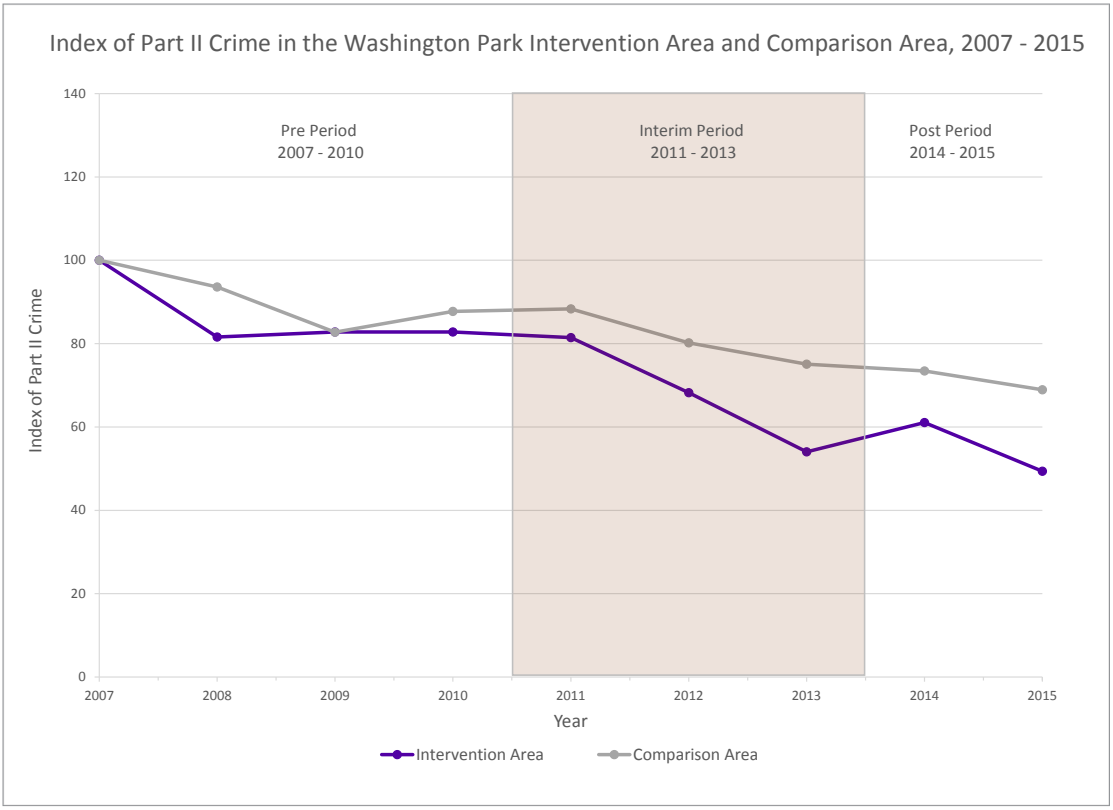


Figure 4: Index of Part II Crime in Intervention and Comparison Areas in Milwaukee



Washington Park Analysis Results

Our analysis shows that these efforts produced reductions in Part II crime–the primary focus of community and police activity–throughout the Washington Park neighborhood compared to what would have been expected had crime trends matched those in our comparison neighborhoods in Police District 3. These comparison neighborhoods–Uptown, Metcalf Park, and Midtown–resemble Washington Park across several social and economic indicators. Because they are in the same Police District, district-wide enforcement policies in addition to those specific to Washington Park affected all of these neighborhoods.

After taking account of the quarter, year, and possible effects of nearby crime on crime levels in Washington Park, we found that throughout the period of active intervention (2011-13), the number of Part II crimes was 11 percent less than would otherwise have been the case. After the end of this activity (and throughout the period in which the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation grant was in start-up mode), expected per quarter crime counts continued to be depressed relative to what would have been the case, amounting to 16 percent fewer crimes.[16]

As we did for Olneyville, we estimated what the number of Part II crimes would have been had the intervention not taken place, taking advantage of our binomial regres-

16 Reductions in the interim period were significant at the .06 level; in the post-period at the .02 level.

Milwaukee police engage with the communities they serve.

sion analysis. In terms of raw Part II crime incident counts in the intervention area, the annual numbers dropped from 720 per year, pre-intervention, to roughly 380 per year, post-intervention. Without the intervention, we estimate that post-intervention crime counts would have dropped only to about 475 incidents per year.

We further examined whether interventions in sub-areas within Washington Park could be identified as potential drivers of this decline in Part II crime. It would appear that efforts in our so-called Police Activity Area were indeed primary contributors to this result. Post-intervention Part II crime levels were 19 percent below what would have been true otherwise.[17] It's worth pointing out that Part I crime also declined–by about 35 percent–but this reduction was matched by declines in comparison areas.

From a purely analytic point of view, this outcome is worth remark: our analysis was complicated by the continuation of crime-fighting efforts after conclusion of focus area activities, which muddies an otherwise clear distinction between pre-, interim-, and post-intervention periods. To find significant intervention effects in the midst of this statistical noise is noteworthy.

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17 Significant at the .09 level. We did not obtain significant results for the two clusters involving only housing development. In one cluster–in the southern part of the neighborhood–declines in crime preceded development, perhaps as a result of neighborhood transition from poor- to moderate-income. The other cluster–in the northern part of the neighborhood–saw no overall change in crime, perhaps due to its adjacency to a crime hotspot that has persisted over time.

Philadelphia: Eastern North Philadelphia Case Results

Eastern North Philadelphia is one of the most distressed neighborhoods in Philadelphia with poverty rates hovering in the high 50-percent range throughout the past two decades. In 2010, about 12,000 persons lived in the neighborhood, which is about three-quarters of a mile square. This population figure represents an increase of about 10 percent over the preceding decade, continuing a longer-term trend of increasing neighborhood diversity–an historically Hispanic and African-American community in which white residents now account for 20 percent of the population.

Over the years, LISC had invested considerable sums in community projects and programs–amounting to $4.7 million between 2000 and 2015. In 2009, a comprehensive community planning process sponsored by LISC in Eastern North Philadelphia, identified crime and safety as critical community concerns, primarily as they pertained to open-air drug markets and associated gun violence.[18] In 2010, LISC supported a community engagement training effort that involved an inclusive community-based approach layered onto the design-focused method of traditional CPTED.

The group participating in the LISC-sponsored training chose to focus on a small dilapidated park–later named Rainbow de Colores Park–in the midst of a blighted residential neighborhood containing many poorly maintained, boarded up and derelict structures, empty lots, and alcohol-serving establishments. The park itself suffered from vandalism, graffiti, inoperable playground equipment, and broken glass, as well as open alcohol consumption and drug sales and use. It also offered an oft-used escape route from nearby drug corridors. In other words, this area displayed almost every crime driver theorized by opportunity-linked criminological theories.

The course team, led by staff from the Asociacion de Puertorriquenos in Marcha (a strong, multi-service local community development corporation) and officers from the city's 26th Police District launched a plan to refurbish the park using design principles that promote safety, adopt community policing, and enlist residents in both park design and, importantly, governance. After plan development and following the solidification of a solid working relationship between residents and police, the local city councilwoman allocated $200,000 to park renovations. For its part, the city agreed to sustain basic services, such as trash pickup and lighting repair.

In the summer of 2011, the community celebrated the opening of a newly refurbished park, complete with terraced surfaces, restoration of the popular handball court, a children's playground with play apparatus, a recreation area with park tables suitable for chess, and a small splash area activated during the summer months, as well as public art and lighting. Families now actively use the park, which is well-tended by community volunteers and has even hosted summer family-movie nights.

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18 This case description relies in part on the case study prepared for this research by Robert Stokes, Associate Professor, DePaul University School of Public Service.

An important outcome of the effort was the creation of a resident-led governance group–Friends of Rainbow De Colores Park–that became the park's advocate and steward. In other words, efforts to combat crime through environmental design, blight removal and community policing was supported by efforts to increase the collective efficacy needed to sustain initial public safety gains.

The combination of community-engaged design, community policing, physical revitalization, and community-led governance solved many of the issues the park posed as an incubator of crime. Furthermore, the project fundamentally changed, at least for a time, how the nearby community worked with the police. For example, a drug dealer's return to the community after release from prison unleashed a string of shootings among rivals. Before the park effort, a demoralized community suspicious of interactions with police would have remained silent. But instead, residents' willing cooperation led to quick arrest of the perpetrators and the return of neighborhood calm.

Figure 5: Map of Eastern North Philadelphia Crime Prevention Intervention Area

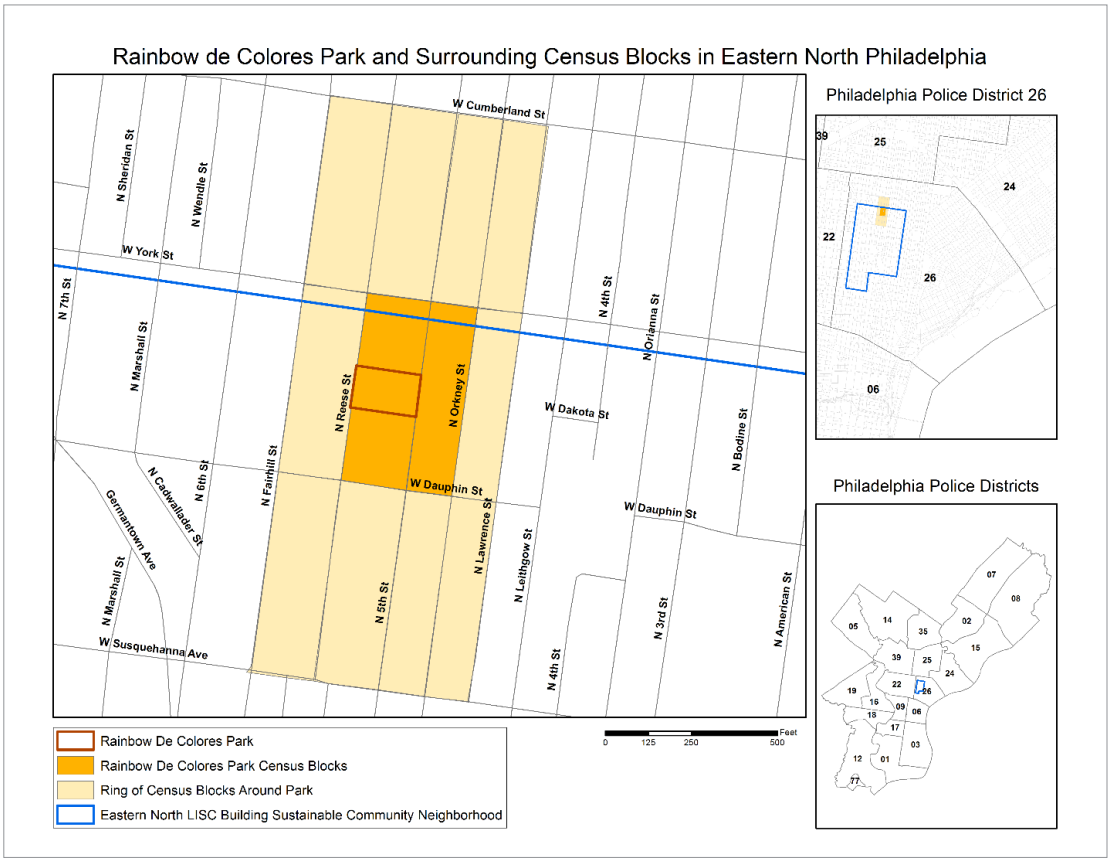
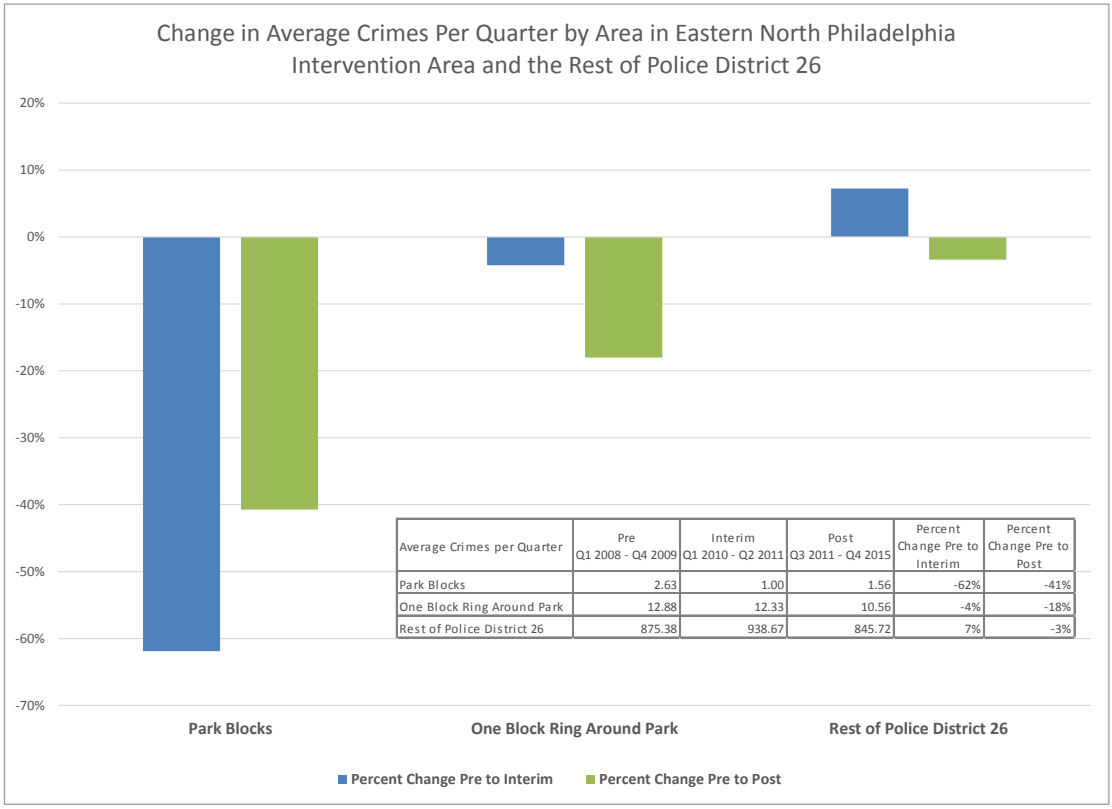


Figure 6: Change in Part I Crime in Intervention and Comparison Areas in Philadelphia



Average Crimes per Quarter	Pre Q1 2008 - Q4 2009	Interim Q1 2010 - Q2 2011	Post Q3 2011 - Q4 2015	Percent Change Pre to Interim	Percent Change Pre to Post
Park Blocks	2.63	1.00	1.56	-62%	-41%
One Block Ring Around Park	12.88	12.33	10.56	-4%	-18%
Rest of Police District 26	875.38	938.67	845.72	7%	-3%

Eastern North Philadelphia Analysis Results

Rainbow de Colores Park and the immediately surrounding blocks occupy about four acres, on which live around 100 persons. We also examined crime trends in a larger ten-block surrounding area covering 28 acres and housing some 1,100 people. The small scale of the intervention means that we could not carry out the same kind of statistical analysis that we did for other the other case study neighborhoods, which require the higher crime counts typical of larger areas to drive our regression models. Instead, we inspected crime counts over time for the several blocks immediately nearby the park and compared them to several surrounding areas and the police district as a whole.

Compared to the Part I crime levels that existed over the eight quarters prior to the beginning of planning work in early 2010, crime levels plummeted more than 40 percent overall for the 12 quarters (three years) thereafter.[19] Interestingly, during the period of community organizing and park cleanup and construction, crime nearly disappeared in nearby blocks. And with the exception of the latter half of 2011, when police intervened to halt renewed drug-related violence, Part I crime levels were down by more than 60 percent.

19 Unlike our analysis for Olneyville and Washington Park, we did not have Part II crime data available to our analysis.

In Philadelphia's Eastern North neighborhood, a refurbished Rainbow de Colores Park

Inspection of more recent crime data for the area for the several years after the end of our analysis period shows that crime reductions persist, even as crime in surrounding areas remains high. (In fact, they remain high even as violent crime levels in the rest of Philadelphia have declined.) Although this is not the best result one could hope for as the community was unable to extend its gains to a broader area around the park, it's worth pointing out that the community can claim a considerable accomplishment in keeping the park area relatively safe despite its location within a highly distressed area.

Conclusions and Implications

These cases are only three of the possible examples we could have analyzed to detect crime reductions through advanced statistical techniques. We believe that the analysis shows the value of a community-engaged and place-centered approach to public safety. That said, we also believe that this approach to community-based crime prevention and suppression must evolve. Beyond the two core strategies of introducing more safety-friendly environments and direct investments in community collective efficacy, there must be a third: police and communities must together extend the mutual trust and shared expectations for fair dealing typical of our examples to a more extensive array of interactions between police and the public. Just police procedures and community acceptance that police can legitimately expect willing cooperation are fundamental to future public safety gains in low-income communities.

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