

# FAYETTEVILLE POLICE DEPARTMENT

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## **Reclaiming Neighborhoods Strategy (The B Street Model)**

Submission: 2010 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in  
Problem-Oriented Policing

Submitted by: Assistant Chief Katherine Bryant

## **Reclaiming Neighborhoods Strategy (The B Street Model)**

### *Summary*

In September of 2008 an initiative was implemented to improve working relationships between business owners, residents and various City Departments in a downtown area known as “the B St. area.” The model incorporated a holistic approach for implementation to rehabilitate an area in serious decline and reduce crime. As this project evolved, the following objectives and measures for success were formally identified:

- Objectives:
  - Low crime rate and reputation as a safe community
  - Well organized neighborhoods with residents taking pride and responsibility for their neighborhoods
  - Safe streets with vehicles traveling at the posted limits
- Measure of success:
  - Increased community governance and establishment of a formal active community watch group
  - Reduction in overall crime and crime committed by youth offenders in the area
  - Observable beautification efforts of community through community assistance programs and stakeholder participation
  - Support for rental inspection program
  - Increased collaboration of City departments in a holistic approach to neighborhood reclamation

The area is plagued with quality of life issues that correlate with crime that has occurred for over thirty years presenting a classic case of “broken windows.” Police have responded using reactive and proactive strategies as a band aid approach providing temporary relief through arrests. This strategy was developed to respond to causal factors, establish partnerships for community involvement and participation, and increase the likelihood of permanent improvement for the area.

Team members met monthly and involved all city department stakeholders who discussed their respective department’s challenges and identified a planned response to these challenges. Meetings were an opportunity to regroup and seek best practices for accomplishing the objectives, altering the approach when efforts were unsuccessful, and identifying new approaches that could be implemented for gaining community involvement and participation.

The project was concluded in January of 2010 with a final work group meeting where the group discussed the following accomplishments:

- Establishment of an active community watch group

- Demolition of substandard housing
- Beautification of houses, landscaping, and school property
- Education and enforcement of solid waste procedures
- Reduction in overall crime in the area
- Reduction of the fear of crime

The strategy concluded with a transition to a new area in the city with team members committed to a maintenance plan for the B Street area to keep the momentum moving in a positive direction.

## *Description*

### **Scanning**

The “Reclaiming Neighborhoods Strategy” was the result of a creative response to citizen complaints of increased drug and prostitution activity in the B St. area during the third quarter of 2008. The displacement of crime from a problem solving project in a nearby area (S. King St.) had contributed to an increase in crime in the B St. area. Effects of displacing crime from neighborhoods in the downtown area have occurred frequently over the years and historically provide very short-term relief for people who live and work in the area. It was imperative that a more well-rounded approach be taken to achieve sustainable improvements.

Police Chief Tom Bergamine, City Manager Dale Iman, and Assistant City Manager Doug Hewett met to discuss how this problem could be addressed not only as a police department issue but as a problem solving project involving multiple city departments. The basic premise was that community policing should be embraced as a citywide objective, not just a policing objective. In order to better understand the problem, situational information such as types of crime, underlying causes, rental property versus owner occupied and location of crime and illegal activity, would assist in providing a response tailored for the area. Quality of life issues are subjective and oftentimes not quantifiable so in scanning the area for problems and identifying underlying causes of crime and disorder it was important to see the area through different lenses by having multiple city departments and resources involved at the onset of this project.

This area is a mixed development area consisting of residential, commercial, church and school properties located within close proximity of each other as well as in the downtown area. There are several low income housing complexes located within walking distance of B St. As a result of this meeting some initial tasks were identified and included:

- Crime Analysis mapping the area to include arrests, crime, calls for service, drug arrests, search warrants, etc.
- A city department “walk-down” to be conducted to evaluate the problems in the area
- Crime Prevention personnel to conduct a CPTED during night time hours
- Trespass agreements where applicable
- Warrant sweep in the area, to include Eastern Blvd, and areas close to the target area
- Partnering with mounted patrol, downtown units, narcotics, special projects unit, patrol officers assigned to the area, etc.
- Mr. Hewitt would coordinate for his personnel to conduct a review rental versus owner occupied properties and obtain names of property owners
- This effort was identified to be a collaborative effort between police personnel and other City Resources

It became apparent from the type of information that was identified to be gathered that the driving force for this project would consist of two main groups of stakeholders. City departments would need to work together to align available resources and most

importantly, that team would need to work toward strengthening partnerships with the citizens who live and work in the target area.

### **Analysis**

Historically, the B St. area has been known as a high crime area. The prevalent offenses have been illegal narcotic and prostitution activity. This area is directly linked to Hwy 301 S (Eastern Blvd.) which is a major artery into and out of the city. A significant number of rental properties with absentee landlords have contributed over the years to the lack of ownership in the area. In the past, response to the problem has been handled as a police problem. For example, a citizen complains causing the police to identify the drug dealer or prostitute, develop probable cause to make the arrest and move on to the next problem. This cycle had gone on for many years, which contributed to apathy by those who lived and frequented the area.

Recognizing that the police cannot arrest their way out of crime and just merely continue the cycle of putting people in jail, the challenge was to get the community stakeholders involved and help them understand that everyone would have to work together to make this project a success. Initiating and sustaining community involvement would be critical to the success of the project.

City departments (Community Development, Inspections, Human Relations, Environmental Services, Public Works Commission, City Manager's Office, Fire Department, and the Police Department) worked together and identified issues associated with their area of expertise based on the assessment of the target area (Appendix A). In addition to crime, a multitude of issues were identified that were contributing to the blight in the area to include: overgrown lots, curbing, sidewalks and

paving cluttered with weeds, dirt and debris, vacant and dilapidated houses, trash in yards and on the street, bulky items left on the curbside, poor street lighting, etc.

A Fayetteville Police Department Crime Prevention Specialist conducted an in-depth CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) problem solving survey (Appendix B). The results of the survey provided qualitative data that stated:

Overall impressions are that the community is uninviting and plagued with criminal activity. The area is polluted with trash and abandoned houses. Drug dealers own the streets and vagrancy is out in the open. There is little ownership in the area. The area looks uninviting and most homes are poorly maintained. The area has low curbside appeal.

The survey identified strategies for consideration and included those items that could be immediately implemented by using existing city resources as well as long-term strategies that would require participation at other levels, either requiring ordinance changes, outside agency participation, and participation by business stakeholders in the area:

Immediate strategies are recommended to alleviate the symptoms of the problem but do not properly address the core issues of the social disorganization. Long term strategies are aimed at attacking some of the core environmental factors that are attractive to social disorder. It seems that much of the prostitution traffic is coming from Eastern Boulevard. In addition, through citizen interviews and special project information, the prostitutes and drug dealers are using the Eastern Boulevard motels for business.

The Police Department's Crime Analysis Unit conducted an analysis of criminal activity that had occurred in the area for the previous six months (Appendix C). Crime analysis data provided information for the area on the types of crimes that were occurring and data was used to identify what departmental resources would be

needed to impact the criminal activity. The data provided a snapshot of activity that could be used for comparison purposes and was updated for the monthly meetings.

## **Response**

The concept for this model was a team approach, utilizing existing resources through active involvement and support of key city departments as well as outside public and private agencies. These included Police, Fire, Inspections, Environmental Services, Community Development, Human Relations, Parks and Recreation and PWC. Additionally, Community Development funding initiatives were identified and used to assist with support for this area. Other agencies, such as the Cumberland Community Action Program and Sustainable Sandhills partnered with the City in the effort.

The process for identifying an action plan was developed through information exchanged and suggestions made by team members during monthly meetings. Each Department identified strategies they could employ to increase success in this area. Each month accomplishments were discussed and next steps were identified. After several B Street workgroup meetings, additional meetings were scheduled with the business community, churches and residents. During these meetings the group described the initiative and what the team was hoping to accomplish. The B St. model was intended to be a flexible model that could be adjusted based upon community response. It was anticipated that this model could be used for other areas of the city by adopting specific actions that address conditions inherent to a target area.

The team also worked toward establishing monthly community meetings involving local businesses, the faith based community, and residents. Officers, Crime Prevention Specialists and Community Development Team members knocked on doors



and visited businesses to deliver meeting flyers. Press releases were used to disseminate information announcing community meetings and other activities for the area. The first few meetings scheduled were advertised as a community crime meeting and were held at a fire station located in the area. Only a few residents attended.

A clean up day for the area was scheduled and a church in the area was willing to host the activity. The team's goal was to conduct a neighborhood clean up and get the folks in the neighborhood involved in an effort to show the work that the city was committed to doing in the area. The clean up was scheduled for the same day as the citywide "Fayetteville Beautiful" clean up project to piggy back on that activity. Only volunteers from outside this area participated with no participation by residents.

The team decided that a different approach may help using a different theme to gain citizen commitment and advertised the meeting as a "Citizen Information Meeting" at Praise Fellowship Church of God with specific information being provided on home repair programs, fire safety, crime prevention, as well as addressing concerns that citizens may have. Following this meeting, a local resident stepped up and agreed to be the Community Watch Coordinator to establish an active group. A different church, Fayetteville Emanuel Holiness Church agreed to provide their parish hall for the meetings and along with the Community Watch Coordinator provided dinner to those who attended. Approximately seventeen citizens attended representing local business owners and residents who live in the immediate area. Following this meeting the group has continued to meet monthly and attendance has been consistent.

The Inspections Department worked to identify and followed up on reported substandard housing with notification to property owners. After determining that heavy

equipment would be needed to clear a vacant lot of very dense bamboo on the corner of B St. they coordinated with the parks and recreation maintenance crew to get the job accomplished. The bamboo presented concealment and escape routes for criminal offenders and presented officer safety issues as well as visibility issues for residential property that backed up the lot. The Inspections Department was also responsible for having several houses demolished and notifying property owners of lots that needed to be cleaned up consistent with local ordinances.

The Environmental Services Department conducted frequent pick ups in the area in addition to regularly scheduled days for trash collection to empty trash carts, and picked up bulky items left at the curb. They worked this activity into their daily routine as they drove through the area to their department's headquarters. Employees of this department made personal contact with residents to provide environmental services information, ordinance requirements for complying with trash collection, bulky item pick up, etc. Employees provided trash bags to encourage residents to clean up their yards and residents became more proactive in keeping the area cleaner. The Parks and Recreation Department evaluated areas that could be cleaned up using city staff for brush removal and maintenance.

The Public Works Commission conducted field visits, evaluated street lighting and identified lighting that was substandard as well as areas where additional lighting was needed. The Human Relations Department and the Community Development Department coordinated with residents/property owners to identify needs as well as identify resources for repair of owner occupied housing, beautification, etc. These

departments were instrumental in developing relationships with the residents and property owners and encouraging them to participate with the project.

Crime Prevention Specialists (CPS) coordinated to get school personnel engaged in the project via the exchange of information and meeting participation. CPS were responsible for coordinating monthly meetings to include identifying dates, meeting times and locations, coordinating for the distribution of flyers and information with other city departments, and developing meeting agendas. CPS knocked on doors of residences and made personal visits to business owners and managers.

Narcotics/Vice, Campbellton Special Projects Unit, Mounted Patrol and patrol officers saturated the area developing leads and making arrests. As a result of this project one of the Emergency Response Team supervisors came up with an idea for “full service search warrant” that was implemented and has been used on other locations in the city. When a search was planned, attempts were made to involve all anticipated resources for the execution. If children in the house had been identified as neglected, or the house had uninhabitable conditions, or canines were being used to attack officers then those agencies; Department of Social Services, Inspections, Health Department, Animal Control, etc. could be asked to be present and take immediate action instead of receiving the information at a later date for follow up action.

### **Assessment**

As all departments came together each month to meet and discuss what “was working” and what “wasn’t working,” it was clear that a collaborative approach created a much stronger and well rounded response. Information regarding challenges and successes was obtained from each department to identify their perspective and was

included in the final project report. This information was identified so if this project was replicated in a different area in the city, team members would have a tool for understanding the challenges, opportunities and successes that were faced during the implementation of the project strategies for B St. It was the belief of this work group that this model could be used as a template for other areas of the city. Conversely, it was identified that it is not a one size fits all approach and that one of the things that made this project successful was the degree of flexibility by group participants to come up with creative ideas to get around roadblocks that were encountered.

**Challenges:**

- The **Human Relations Department** coordinated with a local church to sponsor a neighborhood clean up in conjunction with Fayetteville Beautiful activities. Unfortunately there was no B St. community participation with the event other than city employees assisting with the clean up.
- The **Community Development Department** identified that the ongoing involvement required to engage B Street residents and business owners was sometimes overwhelming to a department with a small staff.
- The **Community Development Department** had programs that could help stabilize the neighborhood. Challenges included getting property owners to participate in the programs and the Department's ability to provide assistance to occupied properties that were beyond repair.
- Several consistent and ongoing challenges for the **Environmental Services Department** included: multiple families in one home not working but contributing to constant generation of garbage at a single family residence, residents leaving roll out

carts at the curb on a regular basis rather than stowing them as required by ordinance, residents placing bulky items at the curb but failing to call in for a bulky item pick up, and residents failing to properly containerize their discarded items for pick up. The Department collected furniture and household garbage on Link St, Nimocks Ave, School St, Dick St, and Campbell Ave on a weekly basis, sometimes twice a week.

- The main challenge that the **Inspections Department** encountered was the lengthy timeframe it takes to process violations. The typical procedures utilized during these processes included certain steps for Chapter 16 (Abandoned & Derelict Vehicles) & Chapter 22 (Environmental Services) to include; posting of the property, notification letter to the owner, follow up inspection of property, issuance of a citation to owner if still in violation or awarding the bid to a contractor if the property was still in violation, concluding with a follow up inspection after contractor has abated property.
- **Police Department** Crime Prevention Specialist attempted to schedule meetings at the area fire station. Residents were not inclined to come to meetings at that location and participation was very low. Getting a community watch started presented a challenge until various community stakeholders were willing to step up and participate to include a church in the neighborhood that volunteered to host the meetings and provide dinner for those who attended.
- **Police Department** Crime Prevention Specialists attempted to include more of the community in the Community Watch process. They attempted to reach out to employees of Pauline Jones Elementary School and hoped to include the parents of students who attend the school as well. After making contact with Mr. Rusty Tatum, the principal of Pauline Jones Elementary School and discussing the B St. project a

request was made to use the school as the meeting location. Mr. Tatum was very obliging and offered the use of the facility and provided the contact information of the person who could assist with the approval process. However, meeting dates conflicted with other activities occurring at this location. The PD was also informed that Pauline Jones was not a community school. Students from surrounding communities are bussed into the B St area meaning that the PD would not reach the neighborhood target audience through the school. The intent was to distribute information to the parents using the kids, however since the kids were bussed into the area this wasn't a feasible activity.

**Successes:**

- The **Human Relations Department** contacted area businesses to provide information about the project and invite them to participate in the community watch meetings. A local business owner, John Poulous, committed to providing a meal for the meeting at half price and HRD paid the other half of the bill. Approximately 21 people from the area attended the meeting.
- The **Community Development Department** coordinated with residents/property owners to identify needs as well as resources for repair of owner occupied housing, beautification, etc. They provided information to property owners regarding community development programs such as the Owner-Occupant Housing Rehabilitation Program, Investor-Owner Housing Rehabilitation Program, and the Acquisition and Demolition Program. Community Development is currently working with two homeowners (B Street and Link Street) to repair their homes through the Housing Rehabilitation Program.

- The **Community Development Department** conducted follow up activities after the meetings and found that citizens were generally less skeptical about the project when spoken with individually.
- The **Environmental Services Department's** greatest accomplishment was the publishing of a recycling booklet, which covers city ordinances concerning the collection of yard waste, household garbage, and bulky collection. These booklets provide information on recycling and were hand delivered in the B St area. Their goal was to educate residents on services that they provide, decrease the amount of garbage left at the curb, get residents involved in the cleanup efforts, and promote ownership of residential areas.
- The **Environmental Services Department** has unofficially adopted B St in an effort to promote "Keeping Fayetteville Beautiful." They have also provided trash bags to residents to assist with their efforts to beautify the neighborhood. They have used summer employees to police up trash along the right-of-way of B St and other areas throughout the city.
- The **Public Works Commission** conducted field visits and lighting studies for the target area. Additional lights were installed as a result of these studies in the following areas: South C St, North C St, Minor St, B St, Eastern Blvd, and Person St.
- **Inspections Department** personnel inspected the B Street area on a weekly basis checking for code violations. Violations noted included; Chapter 14 (Substandard Housing), Chapter 16 (Abandoned/Derelict Vehicles), and Chapter 22 (Environmental Services). When violations were identified, the property was posted and notification letters were mailed to the owners informing them of the violation and

to bring the property back into compliance. Identified violations included seventy-four trash violations, twenty vehicle violations and sixteen housing violations. Over time, the number of violations dropped indicating that weekly inspections, along with the team work from other city departments, was creating an impact on the neighborhood.

- The **Inspections Department** coordinated work on several properties in the B Street area where bamboo was growing in the yards. An initial concern was the safety issues that the out of control bamboo contributed by providing concealment for criminal offenders. Property owners were contacted regarding the situation and their permission was obtained to allow Parks & Recreation to clear the properties of bamboo.
- The **Police Department** was contacted by Pauline Jones Principal, Mr. Tatum who requested to be included in the efforts of the B St area. He photographed and reported graffiti on school property and also made the PD aware of trespassers on the property. Mr. Tatum was added to the email contacts and receives all crime trend alerts and hot spot information that is emailed weekly.
- The **Police Department** coordinated with the Community Development Department to host a “community meeting” on the PD’s behalf. Praise Fellowship Church provided use of their facility for the meeting. This was a very successful meeting where citizens, property owners and business owners attended. The PD was able to speak on the importance of a viable Community Watch group in the area. Ms Eugenia Johnson of Minor St volunteered to become the coordinator for the group. Following this meeting a Community Watch startup information packet was sent to



Ms. Johnson which resulted in a successful group being established and the first official meeting held in August 2009.

- Various **Police Department** units, patrol, traffic, mounted, special projects unit, narcotic/vice, etc. conducted criminal investigative and observation activities. Search warrants were conducted on drug houses, prostitution specials were conducted in the area, offenders with outstanding warrants were arrested, routine patrol and observation activities placed an emphasis on identifying open air drug activities that were investigated. (Appendix D)

Community participation is paramount to the successful continuation of a project such as this. Municipalities have finite resources that cannot be committed to one area indefinitely. In order for this project to work the stakeholders in the area had to get involved and they must stay involved. The workgroup committed to identifying a maintenance plan for the continued success of achievements accomplished. The workgroup identified the following maintenance activity commitments:

- The **Community Development Department** will continue to market its programs to the property owners in the area. Once the area has been improved, they will work with organizations such as Habitat for Humanity and Kingdom Community Development Corporation to build affordable single family housing on the vacant lots in the area. They would like to be able to financially sponsor and implement a beautification project.
- The **Environmental Services Department** will continue to police trash from the right-of-way weekly and will issue citations to those who continue to violate city

ordinances. They will also continue to speak with residents and encourage them to help with the beautification efforts.

- The **Inspections Department** will continue working with other City departments to ensure goals are met by continuing periodic inspections, continue with recommendations for the development of a Rental Inspection Program and coordinating with local community programs for assistance.
- The **Police Department** will continue to monitor the area for illegal activity and take enforcement action when violations are identified, conduct investigations for criminal activity, and coordinate for monthly community watch meetings.

The strategy has worked (Appendix E). Challenges in this area still exist and will not be easily overcome. These problems did not develop overnight and they will not be resolved overnight but crime has been reduced, the area has become more attractive, and most importantly citizens have become involved. Continued success will still involve the two main stakeholders, and as the lines of communication have been opened, everyone is committed to continued success for this area.

The approach to this project was service-oriented and integrated community policing to a city-wide level stressing collaboration among city departments and other local agencies. Using systematic problem solving efforts and creating a more transparent government structure by introducing community stakeholders to the many layers that make up city government, participants have embraced the philosophy of community governance and expanded the opportunity to develop stronger community collaborations in the B St. area. (Appendix F)

### *Agency Information*

- Key Project Team Members:
  - Community Development - Victor Sharpe  
Robert McFall
  - Inspections - Robert Anderson  
Bobby McLemore  
James Alexander
  - Human Relations - Ron McElrath  
Luis Collazo
  - Environmental Services - Jerry Dietzen  
James Rhode
  - Public Works Commission - Eric Hargraves  
William Westbrook
  - City Managers Office - Dale Iman, City Manager  
Doug Hewett, Assistant City Manager  
Rebecca Rogers-Carter, Financial Analyst
  - Fire Department - Benjamin Nichols
  - Police Department - Sgt. Steve McIntosh (Crime Analysis)  
Morgan Carlisle (Crime Analyst)  
Lt. Chris Davis (Narc/Vice)  
Sgt. Tom Bahler (Narc/Vice)  
Michele Lindo (Crime Prevention)  
Chanieca Hudson (Crime Prevention)  
Capt. Robert Spatorico (Campbellton Patrol)  
Capt. Mike Todd (Retired Campbellton Patrol)  
Asst. Chief Katherine Bryant (Campbellton Bureau)  
Chief Tom Bergamine

- Project Contact Person:

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## **Appendix A:**

Observations on 10/01/08 submitted by Environmental Services Department Head, Jerry Dietzen.

**The following items in the B Street should be addressed:**

### **Parks Division**

- Grass needs to be cut on the R/W at these locations:
  - On Lamon St. between B Street and Maloney St. – Vacant land
  - Vacant lot on corner of Lamon St. and B St.
  - Vacant lots at previous addresses of 518 and 520 Lamon St.
  - Vacant lot adjacent to 416 B Street
  - Unpaved R/W on west end of Adam St.
- Trim vegetation from fence line on B Street across from transit transfer station.

### **Street Division**

- Sweep the following streets:
  - Maloney St
  - Lamon St. East segment
  - B Street
  - Minor St.
  - Link St.
  - School St.
  - Adam St.
- Clean west end of pavement on School St. and check for positive drainage off end of the street. Mud, dirt and weeds in the pavement area.
- Clean curb at 433 School St. – full of dirt and weeds

### **Solid Waste**

- Collect and dispose of shopping cart full of debris near 517 Link St.
- Collect extra recycle cart from house on corner of B St. and Link St.
- Contact owner of 326 Maloney and request that owner pull limb pile to the street for collection
- Collect yard waste at:
  - 515 Minor St
  - 507 Link St.
  - 610 Link St.
- Collect overflow trash cart on Link St. – midway in the block- south side.
- Collect chair at 606 Link St.

### **Inspections**

- Overgrown/Trashy Lots need addressing/citations at:

- 307 Maloney St.
- 312 Maloney St.
- 314 Maloney St.
- 518/520 Lamon St.
- Lot adjacent to 416 B Street
- Lot across from 515 Minor St.
- 610 Link St.
- 533 Adam Street – Business is being operated from this house. Possible ordinance violation
- Have business owner remove unused sign post from business on corner of Eastern Blvd. and School St.
- Overgrown bamboo on private property on either side of Adams St. west side.

## **Police**

- 325 Maloney St. – Possible criminal activity – Observed two individuals standing in the street, one of them exchanging what appeared to be money tucked tightly in his palm with someone in a car that pulled to a stop in the middle of the street. Several people, 6 or 7ea on the property a few were drinking beer.

## **PWC**

- Remove half-poles, recently replaced without utilities, from in front of 512 and 514 Link St.

## **B Street Area CPTED and Problem Solving Project**

The B Street area has a history of prostitution, homeless vagrancy, open air narcotic sales, vacant abandoned houses, and several quality of life issues. Through examination many of the issues seem to stem from Eastern Boulevard traffic, the Greyhound Bus Station, and the local businesses enabling illegal activity, such as the prostitutes using the hotels on Eastern Boulevard. This appears to be the problem that the King Street area is experiencing, as well.

Both areas, King Street and B Street were once thriving communities that seem to have fell victim of urban sprawl. Most of the original homeowners in the area have moved or passed away. The homeowners left are surrounded by abandoned houses, closed businesses, and renters. There is evidence that local residents fear activity in the area. (See photo below)

Several of the residents in the area were interviewed to obtain information on the problems and to get a broader perspective of the neighborhood. The rent in the area can average from \$100 to \$ 425. The area residents were concerned with the shortage of recreational and productive activities for youth.

A CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) survey was conducted in the area in October. CPTED includes assessing natural access control, natural surveillance and territorial reinforcement.

### **Immediate Strategies**

Immediate strategies are recommended to alleviate the symptoms of the problem but do not properly address the core issues of the social disorganization.

#### **Immediate target goals:**

- Correct problems with vacant homes
- Clean and trim lots
- Implement trespass agreements
- Partner with local residents and businesses
- Provide green space with high visibility
- Investigate citizen narcotics complaint about 604 and 602 School St
- Investigate homeless activity at 620 Russell Street and the old Lobster House on Person Street and Old Wilmington Road.
- Reduce cut-thru traffic and clear lot on the corner of B Street and Person Street. Trim trees to promote safety and visibility, as well as make use of the natural beauty of the creek. Create a legitimate use for

this area. If a park is considered, it must be created in such a way that promotes visibility and legitimate use. Design should use CPTED to prevent it from becoming a loitering location.

Overall impressions are that the community is uninviting and plagued with criminal activity. The area is polluted with trash and abandoned houses. Drug dealers own the streets and vagrancy is out in the open. There is little ownership in the area. The area looks uninviting and most homes are poorly maintained. The area has low curbside appeal.

Low curbside appeal



Evidence of community fears



### Natural Surveillance:

Natural surveillance is a design concept that is aimed at keeping intruders under observation. Basically, the primary goal of natural surveillance is to facilitate observation. Natural surveillance generally includes police patrol, lighting, and windows, for example. (Crowe, 2000)

- Lighting should be improved throughout the area.
- The bushes should be trimmed by the corner lot at Person Street and B Street. This lot across from Praise Fellowship is an area of public disorder, as well as the Lobster House. Residents report that several individuals are living under the Person Street bridge, and under the Lobster House.
- There is a major concern of the vacant homes in the area. I recommend the buildings be demolished, repaired, or sold. The buildings are a breeding ground for homelessness, prostitution, drug activity, and a safety hazard. By removing these buildings, parking and visibility would increase, as well as reducing some of the crime in the area. Demolishing the buildings would increase visibility and provide the opportunity to develop the community.
- A strategy to increase access control is to implement trespass agreements at the following locations to significantly reduce prostitution opportunities.

Some photos of vacant homes in the area:



Link Street



Link Street, Trash accumulation



School Street

- Uninviting
- Attracts illegal activity and disorder
- Unattractive



Rear of property on School Street



The increase in vacant homes is associated with the level of prostitution, homeless loitering, drug use, violence and fear.

The homes that need repair, demolition, or to be sold are:  
Trespass agreements are also needed for these properties to keep intruders out until they can be maintained or demolished.

1. 207 B Street
2. 237 B Street
3. 309 B Street



4. 214 B Street
5. 210 B Street
6. 610 Link Street
7. 601 Link Street
8. 603 Link Street (?, photo above)
9. 607 Link Street (?, photo above)
10. The Lobster House on Person Street
11. 223 Eastern Boulevard, vacant business

In addition, all of the surrounding businesses should implement trespass agreements to reducing loitering activity:

**Immediate area of B Street:**

1. Praise Fellowship Church of God, 514 Adams Street
2. Praise Fellowship Church of God, 202 B Street
3. Fayetteville Emmanuel Holiness Church, 505 Minor Street
4. T & T Electrical Repair, 517 Minor Street
5. Carolina Conductor Inc, 517 Minor Street
6. Southern Gin & Grain, 121 C Street
7. Omni Moving & Storage Inc, 135 C Street
8. State Farm, Person Street

**Eastern Boulevard Businesses:**

1. Nationwide Insurance
2. All businesses in Cape Fear Plaza
3. Fuller's
4. Line X
5. Autozone
6. International Moving and Storage
7. Modern Moving and Storage
8. Shoe Show
9. Burger King
10. Movie Gallery
11. Subway
12. KFC\*\*\*\*\* (This is a popular location for loitering according to residents)
13. Hardee's
14. Fidelity Moving and Storage
15. Baldinos Giant Jersey Subs
16. Rock Shop Live
17. Car Wash
18. Bistro 315
19. GMC
20. Fastenal Co
21. Vitro America Inc
22. Labor Finders
23. New York Restaurant

24. Crown Moving & Storage Inc
25. Advanced Auto

**Grove Street Businesses:**

1. MiCasita's
2. Domino's Pizza
3. McDonald's
4. Medicine Shoppe
5. Wilco Hess
6. Hurst Annaho Supply Co
7. Cape Fear BBQ
8. Fireplace Place
9. Grove Street Food Court
10. Sandpiper Seafood

**Natural Access Control:**

The goal of natural access control is to decrease the opportunity to commit a crime. Some strategies typically used in natural access control include guards, locks, and spatial definition. Basically, the goal is to deny access to a crime target and create a perception of risk for offenders. (Crowe, 2000)

- To reduce access to isolated prostitution locations: Close off one of the streets at Pepsi Lane or Beale Street to prevent easy access or exits. Also consider manipulating the street pattern to prevent so much anonymous accessibility into the neighborhood from Eastern Boulevard.

**Territorial Reinforcement:**

The concept of territorial reinforcement implies that physical design can contribute to a sense of territoriality. Physical design can suggest ownership or lack of ownership of an area. (Crowe, 2000)

Obviously, criminals prefer areas with little ownership. Lack of ownership goes hand in hand with the Broken Windows theory, by suggesting that an offender can get away with more crime because there is little interest in an area to even resist the criminal activity.

Very little ownership was observed throughout the B Street area.

- Any beautification that could be done to the area would benefit the environment and reduce crime. Beautification is the first step to decreasing fear and developing pride in the community.

**Long Term Strategies:**

Long term strategies are aimed at attacking some of the core environmental factors that are attractive to social disorder. It seems that much of the prostitution traffic is coming from Eastern Boulevard. In addition, through citizen interviews and special project information, the prostitutes and drug dealers are using the Eastern Boulevard motels for business.

### Long Term Strategies:

1. Designating Eastern Boulevard as a special “tourist or business” district to promote legal and desired activities, and increase appearance.
2. Make contact with Eastern Boulevard business locations that are contributing to crime in the area. Try to talk with the local management about the crime concerns. Work with management to implement strategies and have CPTEDs done. Develop a course aimed at motel managers to facilitate the problem solving and crime prevention process. If that does not work then send information to corporate and investors. Last consider nuisance abatement and putting these locations on the “off-limits” list with Fort Bragg.
  - Travel Inn
  - Ramada Inn
  - Howard Johnson
  - Red Carpet Inn
3. Upscales is also an area that houses illegal activity such as prostitution, narcotics, and violence. (Same strategy as motel businesses)
4. Consider creating and implementing new ordinances for slum lords, vacant properties, and blight.
5. Research business license revocation for failure to attempt to reduce crime
6. Consider regulations for homeless shelters. The problems associated with homelessness are complex and stem from many issues. The homeless population continues to grow and if we don’t get a handle on the situation it may become much worse with the increase in foreclosures and increase in vacant homes.
  - First, it has become common for homeless individuals to congregate in vacant properties posing a safety risk and demanding a disproportionate amount of City services increasing City costs. In addition, by continuing to allow this activity is to decrease development opportunities in these areas therefore decreasing the City’s tax base. (See attached document from the National Vacant Properties Campaign).
  - Second, there are no regulations for places that house homeless, whether it is a homeless shelter or a neglectful property owner. **A strategy to prevent property owners from allowing this activity to continue would be to require a permit for any location that houses homeless individuals.** This would increase the safety of the homeless community; assist us with obtaining proper data about the

homeless situation, and to increase the safety of the residents surrounding the vacant homes.

- One example that comes to mind is the old Holt Mill at 640 Russell Street. There are many homeless individuals using that area to sleep and eat. Often they set fires to stay warm creating a hazard for those residents surrounding the vacant building. By requiring service providers to obtain a permit it would alleviate some of the abuse that the homeless community encounters by those willing to take advantage of the vulnerable community.
- The services provided to the homeless are often inconsistent due to funding problems or lack of unity among some of the service providers. In addition, many groups try to offer the same services that other organizations are offering creating a doubling of unneeded services. **To make effective use of the available resources, it would benefit the City via grant or City funds to have a Homeless Resource Liaison, or Nonprofit Liaison.** This position would coordinate the service providers to prevent duplicating the same services, coordinate providers with the National Alliance 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness strategies and goals, and coordinate educational training on grants and funding. This person would hold various trainings and work with the providers to partner effective strategies to end homelessness. There are resources available; it is just a matter of linking those services effectively.

7. Make Eastern Boulevard more attractive and increase the feeling of visibility by adding open spaces. Develop the area to promote tourism and the development of downtown.

### Contributing Factors Associated with Crime



Rear of Travel Inn



Travel Inn





(Evidence of long term stays)  
Local residents that use hotels  
Are considered high risk for crime  
According to COPS Disorder at  
Budget Motels



Travel Inn parking lot



Typical debris in the area



vacant, fear provoking property



Overgrown lot, low visibility

Often areas such as this are ideal for  
illegal activity such as:

- Prostitution
- Narcotics Sales
- Homeless Loitering
- Substance Abuse



Another example of neglect from property owners to keep their areas maintained.

Again, this is ideal for the illegal activities discussed above, and contributes to social deterioration.

### The Community at a Glance



A citizen takes pride in her yard, but is plagued by prostitution in the lot behind her house (Right Photo)



KFC Warehouse, Eastern and School St -evidence of homeless and prostitution



Well maintained and attractive home



A positive community resource

### Evidence of Community Fear



Fences and No Trespassing Signs show community fear and often become prisoners in their own homes, especially the elderly



Again, the photograph. chain link windows, posted by homeowners to what often feel



fear of crime is evident in this. The property is surrounded by fences, bars are on the windows and a No Trespassing sign is posted. The air conditioner is visible. Often in these communities hold on to what little control they have and feel helpless.

## References

Crowe, Timothy [Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design \(2<sup>nd</sup> ed\)](#) 2000

## Public Safety

Vacant properties have been neglected by their owners, leaving it up to city governments to keep them from becoming crime magnets, fire hazards, or dumping grounds. In some communities, attending to vacant and abandoned properties can overwhelm city resources. The police and fire departments bear the brunt of the responsibility, along with building inspection and code enforcement units.

### Crime

Vacant properties often become a breeding ground for crime, tying up an inordinate amount of police resources. The City of Richmond, VA conducted an analysis of citywide crime data from the mid-90s; of all the economic and demographic variables tested, vacant/abandoned properties had the highest correlation to the incidence of crime. Another study focusing on crime in abandoned buildings in Austin, Texas found that crime rates on blocks with open abandoned buildings were twice as high as rates on matched blocks without open buildings. The survey also found that “41 percent of abandoned buildings could be entered without use of force; of these open buildings, 83 percent showed evidence of illegal use by prostitutes, drug dealers, property criminals, and others.

Even if 90 percent of the crimes prevented are merely displaced to the surrounding area, securing abandoned buildings appears to be a highly cost-effective crime control tactic for distressed neighborhoods.”

A crime-prevention tactic that has gotten much attention in recent years is directly related to vacant, neglected, and abandoned property. According to George Kelling and James Q. Wilson, “The Broken Window Theory” holds that “If the first broken window in a building is not repaired, then people who like breaking windows will assume that no one cares about the building and more windows will be broken... The disorder escalates, possibly to serious crime.” Wilson and Kelling suggest that it is the nature of the physical environment that leads to an increase in criminal activity.

While the monetary costs of addressing the crime associated with abandoned buildings has not been calculated, it is clear that vacant properties burden police departments.

### Arson and Accidental Fires

In 1999, firefighters in Worcester, Massachusetts entered a vacant cold storage building that was aflame to search for a homeless couple reported to have been in the building. Two firefighters became disoriented, and

others went to their aid. Six became trapped and died in the fire. The homeless couple had left the premises after the fire began. The firefighters' deaths became national news as one of the major costs of vacant properties became all too clear.

The US Fire Administration reports that over 12,000 fires in vacant structures are reported each year in the US, resulting in \$73 million in property damage annually. Fires are likely in vacant properties because of poor maintenance, faulty wiring, and debris. In the winter, homeless people burn candles for light and heat and may even bring in outdoor grills. But more importantly, vacant buildings are a primary target of arsonists. More than 70 percent of fires in vacant or abandoned buildings are arson or suspected arson. Such fires strain the resources of fire departments. Because vacant buildings often contain more open shafts, pits, and holes that can be an invisible threat to firefighters, the cost of fighting those fires is more than financial. The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) estimates that 6,000 firefighters are injured every year in vacant or abandoned building fires.

### **Public Nuisances and Health**

Vacant and abandoned properties require a disproportionate amount of public maintenance. In addition to securing buildings against criminal activity, local governments must clean and care for them to prevent a buildup of trash, illegal dumping, and rodent infestations. In some cases, abandoned properties contain toxic waste, particularly in the case of abandoned industrial buildings.

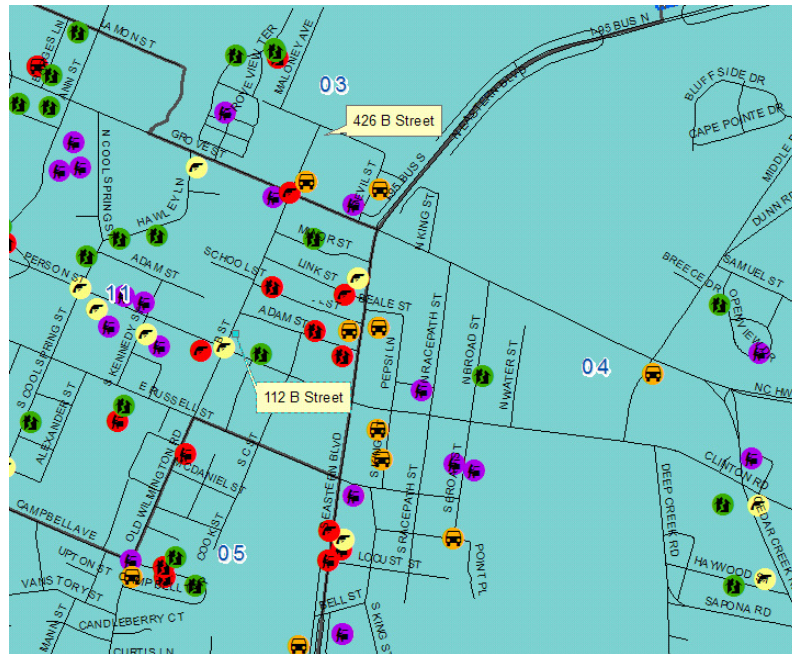
Most municipalities have adopted ordinances that allow them to clean, board, and secure abandoned buildings. For example, in Roanoke, Virginia, the city has taken a tougher stance on properties deemed health and safety hazards. If a property is deemed a hazard by the city the owner is given thirty days to ameliorate the problem. If no action is taken, the city will solicit input from the neighborhood, do asbestos and lead abatement, solicit demolition bids, raze the house, and place a lien on the property to try to recoup the demolition costs.



## Fayetteville, NC B Street

from April 1, 2008  
to Sept. 15, 2008

Featured Crimes (UCR codes: 0300,0510,0520,0640,07\_\_)

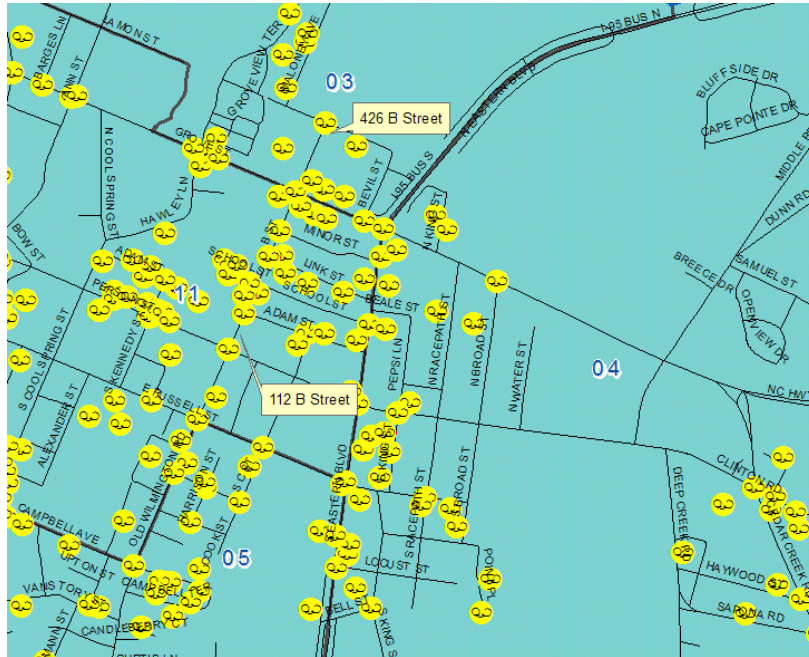


slide:2

FPD Featured Crimes are defined as:

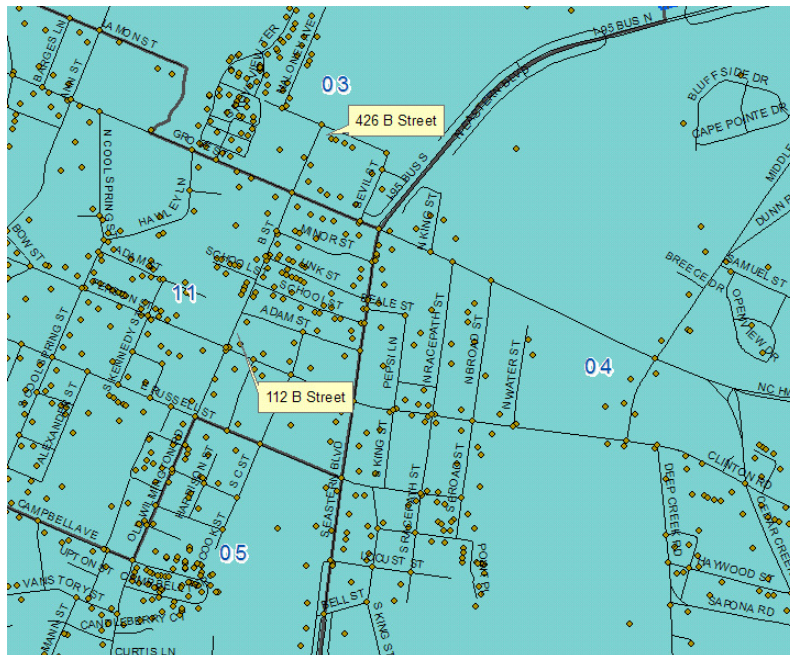
- Residential and Business Break-ins
- Larceny of Motor Vehicles
- Robberies
- Breaking and Entering of Motor Vehicles

### Arrests



slide:5

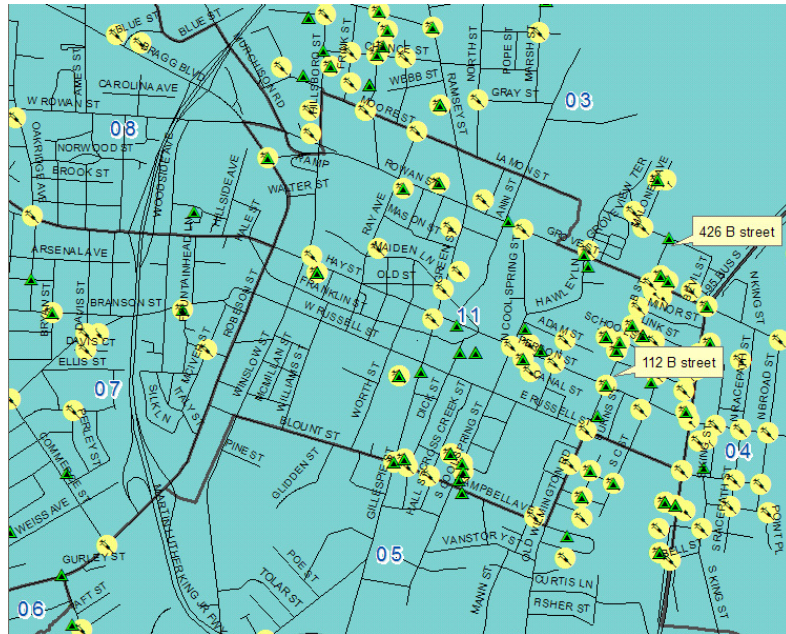
### CFS, Calls For Service (for which police responded)



slide:11

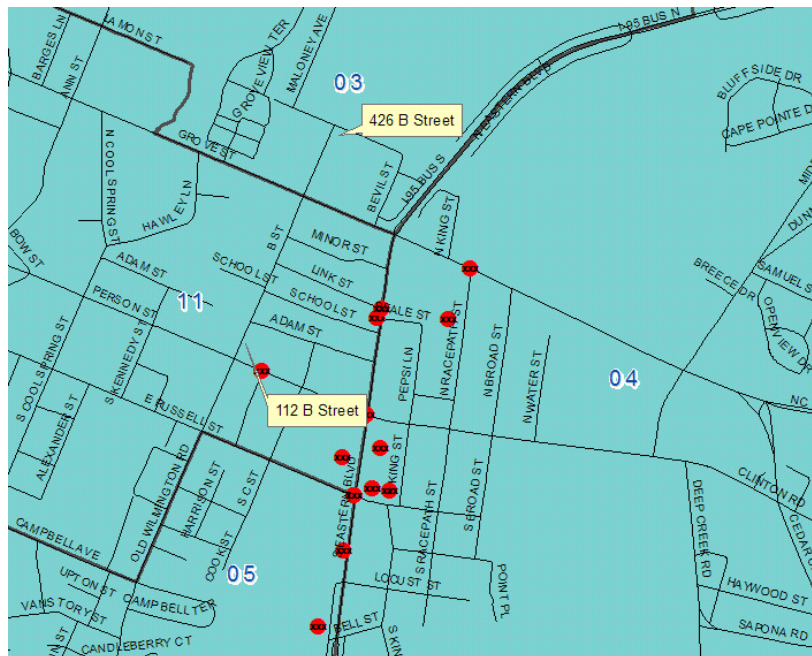


**Arrests, for drug violations  
(as an overlay to the Drug-offense locations)**



slide:13

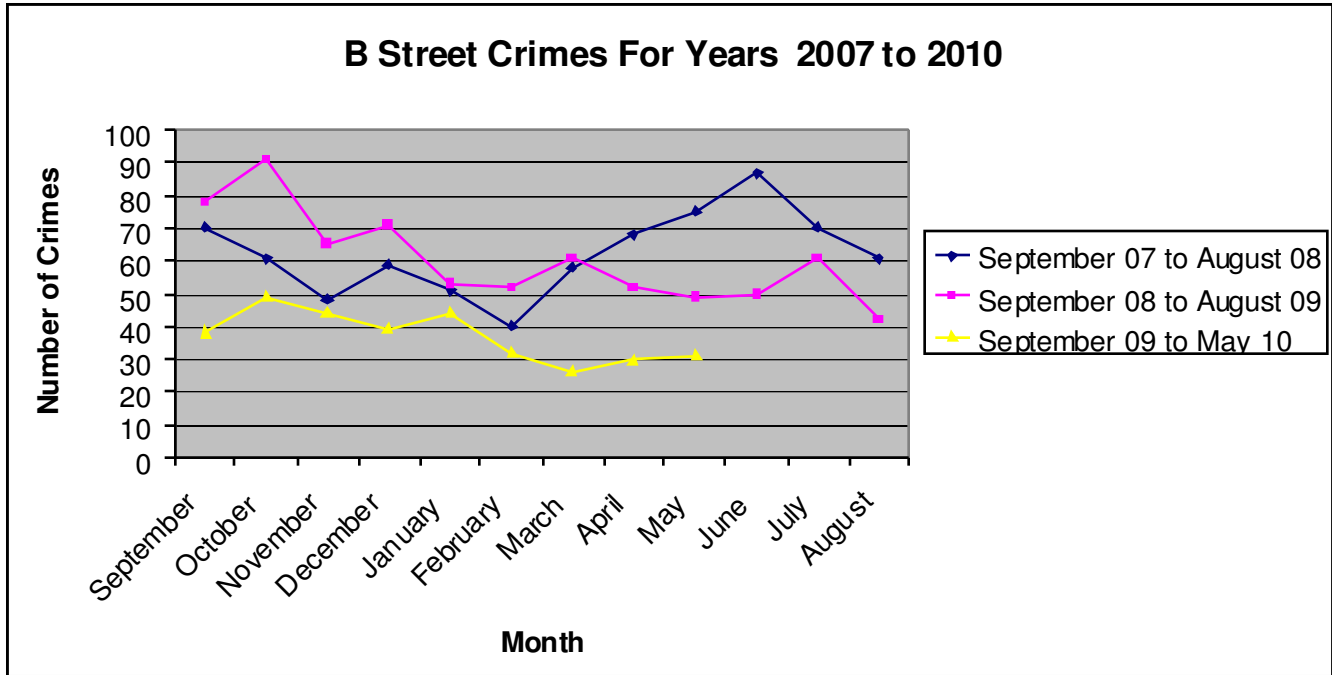
**Prostitution (UCR codes: 16\_)**



slide:20

Community wellness in this area is impacted by quality of life issues such as illegal narcotics and prostitution activity.

Appendix D



The chart depicts crime in the B St. area peaking in June/July 2008 with reductions beginning in November 2008 and continuing through May 2010.

## Appendix E

### 215 B St. Before/After



### 513 School St. Before/After



### 604 Link St. Before/After



Pauline Jones Elementary Community Garden established on corner of B St. and School St. The garden is maintained by the school children.





For those about to we salute you  
 These are the days for autumn, SUNDAY LIFE MAGAZINE

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 OCTOBER 22 - NOVEMBER 1  
 FORT BRAGG FAIRGROUNDS  
 CUSTOMER APPRECIATION DAYS  
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# The Fayetteville Observer

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 18, 2009

fayobserver.com

REGIONAL EDITION \$1.50

## DOWNTOWN FAYETTEVILLE

Crime and disrepair leave residents having to once again reclaim their neighborhood

# the B Street struggle

By Andrew Barisdale and Nancy McCleary  
 Staff writers

**P**ortia Thornhill stood on her front porch, took a long pull off a cigarette and watched the street people pass by. It's not the dream Thornhill envisioned 11 years ago when she paid \$46,000 for her home at 209 B St.

Back then, her house and five others on the street looked almost new after businessman Geoff Cramer saved them from demolition.

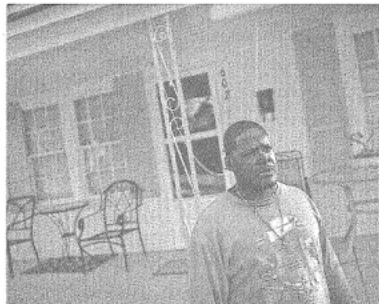
Buoyed by a new park and fire station on nearby Person Street, Cramer refurbished the houses with the hope that they would help resurrect one of Fayetteville's poorest and most crime-infested neighborhoods.

But the promise of community renovation proved no match for the cycle of poverty that has crippled B Street for decades.

See B STREET, Page 4A

## 'It was the worst house on this block, but I saw potential.'

— **Kenny Snead**, pictured below, about a home he is renovating in the B Street neighborhood on School Street. Snead hopes to buy the house.



Staff photo by Andrew Crist

## DON'T ASK, DON'T TELL

# Ending gay ban has little support

By Gregory Phillips  
 Staff writer

If President Obama curtails the Don't Ask, Don't Tell policy toward gays in the military, area soldiers say they will follow that order like any other.

But that doesn't mean they're happy about it.

Fort Bragg soldiers interviewed this week offered scant support for ending the policy, but the reluctance of troops to provide their identities reflected their reluctance to discuss what remains a sensitive issue.

The policy was adopted as a compromise in 1993 after President Clinton came under fire for attempting to end the ban on homosexuals serving openly in the military. It prohibits inquiries into a service member's sexual orientation but allows the military to discharge personnel for homosexual conduct or admitting homosexuality.

In his speech to the Human Rights Campaign last week, Obama said he "will end" the policy, but didn't offer a timetable for doing so.

"We should not be punishing patriotic Americans who have stepped forward to serve this country," he said. "We should be celebrating their willingness to show such courage and selflessness on behalf of their fellow citizens, especially when we're fighting two wars."

Sgt. 1st Class Brandon Johnson, who said he works with U.S. Army Special Operations Command, said he does not want the policy to end and does not want to know if he has gay comrades.

"I would not want to

See DONT ASK, Page 5A

## B Street: City hopes to help battered neighborhoods

From Page 1A

Over time, most of the houses fell back into disrepair, and B Street retained its reputation as an area to avoid.

Despite the setbacks, Thornhill and the city have not lost hope.

"I don't want to give up this house for anything," said Thornhill, who is 51.

The city, as well as churches, businesses and residents in this pocket at the edge of downtown, feels the same way. Since last year, they have begun a concerted effort to reclaim the B Street neighborhood.

The Police Department has beefed up patrols and made numerous arrests, while other city departments have intensified efforts to clean up trash, mow weeds and demolish eight crumbling houses.

City officials say the new approach could become a model for improving other neighborhoods overrun by crime.

They say two new programs designed to make landlords more responsible for their properties and tenants could help reverse the decline on B Street and elsewhere in the city.

Some of the efforts appear to be working already.

Geoff Cramer bought six condemned houses on B Street for next to nothing about a dozen years ago.

Instead of tearing them down, he thought, why not remodel and resell them as a way to raise the neighborhood out of despair?

Cramer gutted the houses and refurbished them inside. He painted the exteriors peach and other bright colors.

Today, Cramer runs a successful Raleigh business called Futures for Kids, which guides disadvantaged teens toward careers.

Cramer could not be reached for an interview, but his houses speak volumes about the challenges of trying to turn around a downtrodden neighborhood.

County tax records show that Cramer sold one of his remodeled houses, at 207 B St., for \$82,500 in 1998.

The house sold again two years later, for \$95,000. But within four years, that same house had fallen into foreclosure and was sold in April 2004 for \$29,000.

Four months later, it sold again, for \$10,000. Today, the two-story house sits empty, plywood plastered over its windows and doors.

Another house that Cramer remodeled — at 215 B St. — was torn down last year.

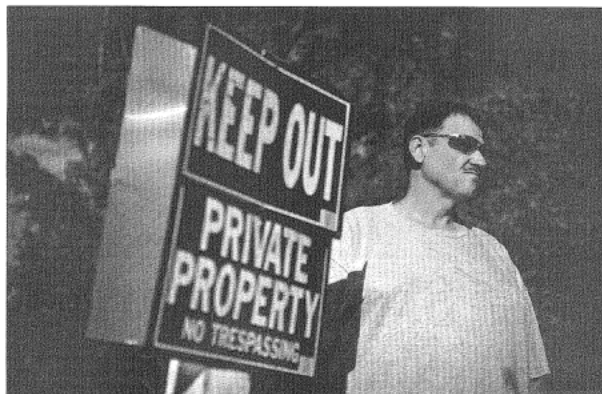
Sharon Austy, who lives next door to Thornhill, paid Cramer \$44,500 for one of his houses in 1988. The county says the house is worth \$33,700 today.

Austy, who is 61 and receives Social Security disability payments, said her pastel green home needs more paint, inside and out. Sections of the floors in the kitchen and bathroom have rotted.

"It's been OK," Austy said. "If I can get the repairs done, it will be a great experience."

Thornhill's house stands out as one of the few success stories. The county tax office assessed her house at \$53,200 during property revaluation this year. Part of the reason, she said, is that one of her sons, who worked for Cramer, did extensive repairs before she bought it.

The B Street neighborhood consists chiefly of four short roads that shoot off its main artery — not far from a downtown building with new development, residents and traffic. Most of the houses, with covered



Buddy Edge posted a sign at his School Street home in an attempt to keep people from walking through his yard to get to Link Street.

porches and shady trees, were built before World War II.

Before the city's recent crackdown on crime and blight, B Street had seen its share of shabby houses and abandoned vehicles parked in overgrown yards.

During the day, groups of young men hung out in front of shuttered houses. Sometimes, the drug addicts kicked in doors looking for a place to smoke their crack cocaine.

The B Street Crips gang formed in the neighborhood, which became more of a wasteland to be avoided than a place to live without fear.

Police stepped up their enforcement efforts to no avail.

In 2007, officers answered 537 calls in the neighborhood.

The calls increased to 809 in 2008, resulting in 57 active investigations, including 12 robberies.

By then, police realized that arrests and reactive strategies would not solve the problem, said Katherine Bryant, an assistant police chief.

Those methods proved to be temporary fixes to long-term problems, she said.

"One of the things we learned was that we couldn't just attack the crime problems because those have been consistent in that area over time," Bryant said.

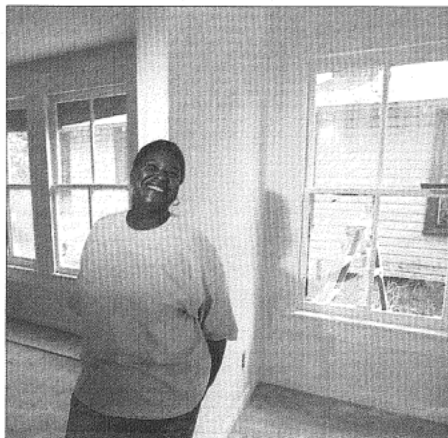
That's when the model for what is known as the B Street Project was created. It came about as Police Chief Tom Bergamine started his Community Wellness Plan this year in an effort to reduce Fayetteville's crime rate.

Police applied what is known as the "broken window theory." It presumes that if one window is broken in an abandoned building, eventually more will follow.

Bergamine put it more bluntly.

"If it looks like a dump, it probably is. If an area looks run-down, it will attract criminals because nobody cares," he said.

The challenge was to



I don't want to give up this house for anything,' says Portia Thornhill. This 1997 photo was taken when she was renovating her home on B Street.

give the homeowners and businesses a community they could be proud of, not just by making it safer, but by improving the appearance and drawing residents together in a common cause, Bergamine said.

The effort, he and others decided, would need involvement from nearly every city department.

"When we began this project, we realized the magnitude of challenges that this area has encountered for many years," Bryant said.

The different city departments — police, fire, inspections, community development and the Public Works Commission — teamed up to begin the process of returning the area to its residents.

Representatives of each department brainstormed a strategy to provide a blueprint for attacking crime in other problem areas, Bryant said.

Since September 2008, Davis said, six search warrants have been executed in the B Street area. Officers have returned to only one of the houses more than once.

That was at 207 B St., the house that is now boarded shut.

Davis said eight people have been arrested on 15 felony charges and six misdemeanors. Drugs valued at \$640 and one gun have been seized, he said.

While police chip away at the crime problems, churches and schools are doing their part to help improve B Street.

The neighborhood's largest church, Praise Fellowship Church of God, doesn't just nourish weary souls. It gives away food and clothing three times a week from a converted house on Adam Street.

Church leaders have donated uniforms to poor children at Pauline Jones school, and they have allowed police narcotics officers to set up stakeouts on church property.

The components of the strategy include:

- Monthly community meetings with business owners, residents and church members.
- Identifying and cleaning up substandard houses.
- Increasing trash pickups.
- Adding streetlights to make areas less prone to crime.
- Working with residents and property owners to locate resources for repairing houses and beautifying properties.
- Seeking involvement from faculty and staff at Pauline Jones Elementary School for the Arts on B Street.

The efforts appear to be working, said police Lt. Chris Davis, supervisor of the Narcotics and Vice Suppression Unit.

Some residents are doing their part, too. Kenny Sneed, who is 42, said he moved into a house on School Street that faced condemnation two years ago.

Plywood covered its windows and doors. Sneed, who operates a home-improvement business out of his car, went to work with the landlord's permission, hanging drywall and repairing floors and ceilings.

"It was the worst house on this block, but I saw potential," he said.

Sneed may be a homeowner one day. He said he is working on an arrangement to buy the house.

Willie Moore, who rents a house on School Street that could use a fresh coat of paint, said the neighborhood is cleaner today than it was before the city crackdown began a year ago.

"We are doing a great job," said Moore, who is 68. "We are trying to get it to look right."

Neighbor Buddy Edge, agreed. Edge is 50 and has lived in the same house for much of his life. He said he started to notice B Street's decline in the 1970s and '80s. Before then, he said, yards were neat and the houses well-maintained.

"It was nothing like this," he said.

Behind Edge's property, on the next street, sit two drab houses with boarded windows and doors. Signs are posted on each house asking for \$400 to \$450 in monthly rent.

Edge has a "No trespassing" sign staked in his side yard, but that doesn't prevent people from cutting through.

"I'll say something," he said. "They can't hear, or they can't read."

Despite the slow but steady progress, one problem continues to plague B Street and other poor neighborhoods in Fayetteville: rental properties owned by absentee landlords who seemingly don't care who lives in their houses as long as the money keeps coming.

Police have been called repeatedly to such houses to deal with drugs, prostitution, break-ins and alcohol violations, said Davis, the police supervisor.

Bergamine said 76 percent of the search warrants executed by police since July 2008 were at rental properties.

"If that doesn't speak volumes, I don't know what does," he said.

In February, Davis tried to get the landlords on board by holding a property management seminar targeting B Street landlords. Davis offered tips to make properties safer and more attractive and stressed the importance of doing background checks on renters.

Two people attended the seminar, Davis said.

"To say I was disappointed was an understatement," he said.

About 80 percent of houses in the B Street neighborhood are rented, judging by billing addresses kept by the tax office. The records show that the houses have an average tax value of \$39,533.

If the landlords won't take the steps to draw law-abiding tenants, then a rental-inspection program may be the answer, Bergamine and Davis said.

It's a way, Davis said, to make landlords accountable for their tenants by levying a fine against them.

Police have gotten their wish. Last month, the City Council approved two programs targeting rental properties.

One would require landlords to register their properties. The other would crack down on rental properties with repeat code violations or crime reports.

Thornhill, the woman who lives on B Street, said she feels safe with a chain-link fence around her property. She said she has no regrets about where she lives but the city's rental programs can only help make the neighborhood better.

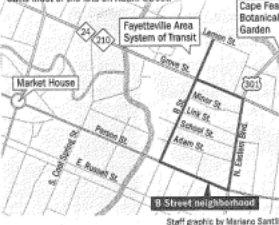
"I know it can be a nice place," she said. "It has so much potential."

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Staff writer Nancy McHenry can be reached at [nmchenry@observer.com](mailto:nmchenry@observer.com) or 486-3568.

### B STREET NEIGHBORHOOD

- Total number of residential properties: 89
- Homes occupied by owner: 17
- Average tax value of homes: \$39,533
- Most of the homes were built in the late 1930s and '40s.
- The neighborhood started its decline in the 1970s.
- Number of calls for police service in 2008: 809; 57 reports generated.
- Number of calls for police service through June 1, 2009: 277; 24 reports generated.
- Praise Fellowship Church of God, with about 400 members, owns most of the lots on Adam Street.



Staff graphic by Mariano Santillan