

Problem: Violent and Property Crimes in the City of Newark, NJ

Data-Informed Problem Solving: Newark Public Safety Collaborative (NPSC) meetings.

The NPSC makes data analytics and research evidence accessible to local community groups and change agents. As a neutral convener, the NPSC hosts regular meetings focused on the results of Risk Terrain Modeling (RTM) analyses about pressing crime problems. Multiple community stakeholders participate in the meetings to learn from the analytical results and add context to the data. Insights help to maximize existing resources and expertise to form new interventions or improve the impact of projects already underway in the city. NPSC organizes people around data to craft ways in which they can share the burden of crime prevention at places in the city that need them most.

Key environmental factors that drive the problem include: Abandoned Buildings, Vacant Lots, Restaurants, Liquor Stores, Grocery Stores/Bodegas, Pharmacies, and Gas Stations.

Community-Led Solutions: The crime risk reduction initiatives discussed below were ignited through RTM analyses offered by NPSC analysts and put into practice by local community leaders. While all of these initiatives may appear separate from one another, they combine to produce a deliberate and impactful response to crime problems throughout the city as a whole. RTM is the common denominator that informs each of their plans and actions. The result is a comprehensive, sustainable, transparent, measured, and effective crime prevention strategy for the City of Newark. Law enforcement is one part of a larger effort to reduce and prevent crime.

In response to RTM analyses produced by NPSC:

>> New Community Corporation (NCC) reoriented their existing resources, including security personnel and CCTV cameras, to be focused on and around their affordable housing units at the places that need them most. They trimmed trees and bushes to make certain places more inviting, and to ensure clear lines of sight for security reasons. NCC's vacant lot remediation program purchased abandoned buildings that were enabling crime in the highest-risk places and turned them into new affordable housing.

>> The Mayor's Office and the City of Newark reallocated limited services to places that needed them most.

>> PSE&G, the local public utility company, prioritized the installation of 1,500 new LED lights in the city to places identified as highest-risk for criminal behavior during nighttime hours. PSE&G also enhanced its merchant outreach campaign to offer street-pole mounted floodlights directed at storefronts in an effort to help protect employees, customers and properties in risky places.

>> LISC and the Urban League teamed up in the highest-risk places of Fairmount and Upper Clinton Hill sections of the city to implement resident-led business checks and to increase awareness of PSE&G's floodlight program. RTM results informed their priorities, which began with liquor stores.

>> The Newark Community Street Team (NCST) agreed to dynamically deploy its outreach workers and 'Safe Passage Program' to the highest-risk places around four schools in the South and West Wards, to help ensure students get to-and-from school safely.

>> Newark Community Solutions (NCS) and the South Ward Children's Alliance collaborated to clean and repurpose vacant lots in the highest-risk places of Newark's South Ward. In addition to greenery, they added little free library boxes, murals, and performance stages.

>> The Newark School of Arts (NSA) teamed up with Integrity House, Link School, Symphony Hall, and Equal Justice USA, to establish a poster contest for its elementary school-aged students. With support from Newark's police department and mercantile associations, the winning poster will be visibly affixed to the entrances of storefronts located in high-risk places, reminding patrons to "Turn off your cars, Take your keys". This effort to prevent motor vehicle thefts and car jackings was prioritized at gas stations, pharmacies, convenience stores.

>> Rutgers University – Newark agreed to enhance enrollments, scholarships and support services to local residents and first-generation college students coming from the most vulnerable places in the city.

>> The Newark Police Department deploys directed patrols to the highest-risk places along with instructions to focus on the environmental attractors of crime located there.

Why This Works: Organizations that participate with NPSC maintain their independence, but they operate in a coordinated fashion by being equally data-informed. Stakeholders that attend NPSC meetings benefit from hearing how other groups define their problems and use NPSC's data analytics to help them in addressing these issues. The combined collective actions then contribute to crime reductions and increased public safety in Newark. **Visit www.publicsafetycollaborative.org to learn more.**