

# INNOVATIONS IN COMMUNITY BASED CRIME REDUCTION



**T**he Innovations in Community Based Crime Reduction (CBCR) program has a new name, but its goals and mission remain the same: data-driven, comprehensive and community-oriented strategies to reduce crime and spur revitalization. Formerly known as the Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation program when it was launched in 2012, CBCR is administered by the Department of Justice Bureau of Justice Assistance (BJA), with technical assistance provided by the national nonprofit Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC).

BJA announced the name change in October to emphasize the administration's focus on providing new and effective responses to pressing crime challenges. The name, Innovations in Community Based Crime Reduction, also reflects the program's comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to reducing neighborhood-level crime. This edition of the Update highlights examples of success throughout the CBCR network of 74 urban, rural and tribal communities around the country. Local sites are convening diverse partners including local law enforcement, researchers and residents to analyze crime drivers and pursue strategies that address crime, redevelop neighborhoods and enhance community-police collaborations.

## A Growing Network

The CBCR program continues to expand its reach, as BJA announced 13 new awards in October 2017. Nine of these communities received Planning and Implementation grants, and four existing sites that have completed planning received an Implementation grant. Summaries of the full list of 2017 awards can be found [here](#). Following is a spotlight on a few of these sites:

## The CBCR Approach

These powerful themes run through all CBCR projects.

### DATA-DRIVEN

CBCR targets crime hot spots – often streets, properties or public spaces in communities that have struggled with crime for years. Researchers are engaged in the day-to-day work, helping partners examine problems, assess evidence-based solutions, and monitor progress.

### COMMUNITY-ORIENTED

CBCR champions active roles for residents in identifying problems, selecting strategies and creating safe and healthy environments.

### SPURS REVITALIZATION

CBCR tackles problem properties, unsafe streets and parks, unemployment, transit barriers and service gaps related to crime.

### BUILDS PARTNERSHIPS

CBCR taps the resources of public, nonprofit and community leaders to bring more resources and different approaches to bear on longstanding crime challenges for lasting change.



**Pictured** clockwise from top left:

A selfie at the annual Police District Promise Zone Community Fun Day in the Mantua neighborhood of Philadelphia, PA.

The resource trailer in Madison, WI is ready to set up for a community event in the CBCR target area in the Raymond Road Corridor.

A resident on the community engagement team speaks out at a University Avenue Corridor Coalition meeting in Flint, MI.

**Tucson, AZ:** The San Ignacio Yaqui urban Native American community in the CBCR target area will develop strategies to address crime and the fear of crime associated with youth-involved violence and vacant and abandoned homes. The extensive Tucson CBCR team includes law enforcement, tribal organizations, local schools, and social service and nonprofit groups like the local YMCA.

**Chicago, IL:** The Englewood neighborhood on Chicago's South Side recently formed an eclectic, energized public safety taskforce for its community Quality-of-Life planning process. For a neighborhood challenged by blight, poverty, poorly performing schools, gangs and violence, the CBCR planning grant will support the taskforce as it examines ideas that range from improving police technologies to community revitalization.

**Rochester, NY:** An open-air heroin market on North Clinton Avenue fuels drug use, violence and homicides in the poverty-stricken El Camino neighborhood. The Ibero-American Development Corporation is leading a coalition that will use the CBCR Planning and Implementation grant to develop a deployment plan for police to focus on hot spots, increase access to substance abuse rehab services, attract new development and engage the community to build the capacity of residents.

## Reductions in Crime

### Driving Down Crime in Austin, TX

Focused on the Rundberg community north of downtown, the Austin partnership helped drive down the overall crime rate 4.5 percent in the neighborhood, with violent crime in the three targeted CBCR hot spots falling precipitously—as much as 82 percent. In the past, police and community members had been unsuccessful in making such a dent. But new CBCR strategies reset the equation in a lasting way: The changes in Rundberg’s crime rates stayed below citywide averages in both 2016 and 2017, even after the CBCR programs were complete.

Reducing crime is more than just arrests. In Rundberg, the work included a new mobile walking beat model for police officers, transforming a vacant lot from a homeless encampment to a park, and a police led-mentoring class for middle-school students. When communities combine these types of activities, it prevents crime by boosting the effectiveness of police, encouraging residents to partner with law enforcement, helping at-risk youth avoid trouble and making it more difficult to commit a crime. Other examples of crime reduction:

- **Redevelopment strategies in Flint, MI** closed a convenience store renowned locally for hold-ups and drug deals, razed the building and built a new sandwich shop. The changes—along with new community associations and resident programs to target blight—led crime in the immediate area, including drug-related loitering, assaults and shootings, to drop 20 percent from 2015 to 2016.
- **A focus on crime hot spots in Philadelphia, PA** contributed to a fall of Part 1 crimes within the CBCR targeted areas of the Mantua community from an average of 61 incidents in 2012 at each hot spot to 46 in 2015. Near a recreation center for kids, crime decreased 75 percent in the year after implementing efforts that included better lighting, new community/police partnerships and organizing local block leaders.

## Community Revitalization

### Sheriff’s Office Leads Turnaround in Alameda County, CA

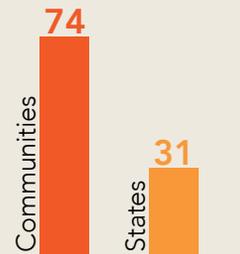
There’s new life and energy at Mission Boulevard and Hampton Road in unincorporated Alameda County, CA. The Alameda County Sheriff’s Office organized and ran Eden Night Live, a home-grown community festival held on weekend summer nights to change perceptions of a desolate stretch of empty storefronts that has been a hotspot for criminal activity for at least a decade.

Working from an idea proposed at CBCR meetings, Eden Night Live helps small businesses increase their local consumer base, supports opportunities for entrepreneurs and creates a safe place where residents can connect to one another.

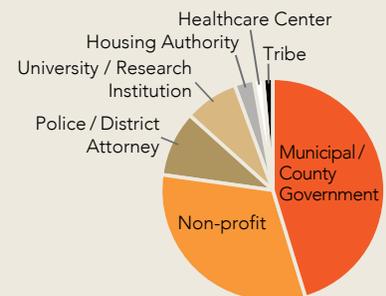
Many CBCR projects around the country take aim at neighborhood crime drivers such as trash-filled lots, vacant stores and dilapidated homes. Residents, property owners and community development organizations run clean-

## CBCR Fast Facts FY 2012-2017

### Geographic Breadth



### Coordinating Agencies



### GRANTS BY CATEGORY

40	Planning & Implementation
22	Planning Only
12	Planning & Enhancement
9	Implementation Only

up events, operate facade improvement programs for local businesses and rehabilitate buildings for affordable housing. Other examples of revitalization include:

- **Neighborhood Pulse in Erie, PA** pulls data about blighted properties and crime in the Little Italy community from a half dozen municipal sources. Police, neighborhood and nonprofit groups on the CBCR Problem Property Review Team use the cloud-based application to prioritize responses to problem buildings, such as addressing ongoing code violations.
- **Community clean-ups in Youngstown, OH** brought out more than 600 volunteers to secure 79 vacant buildings and clean up the properties, removing hundreds of bags of trash and abandoned tires. The City of Youngstown also demolished seven abandoned, severely blighted houses as part of their CBCR early-action project.

### *Social Cohesion & Community/Police Relations*

## Training Brings Together Police and Residents in Springfield, MA

A new training by the Healing Racism Institute for the South End residents of Springfield brings police officers and community residents known as “promotors” together to discuss and understand systematic and historic racism and its impacts on public safety in the neighborhood. City Hall officials say the training has had a profound impact on how they engage and partner with the community.

This kind of training is one of many efforts at CBCR sites to explicitly foster positive interactions between community members and police and create opportunities for close collaboration—from regular meetings to synergistically working side-by-side on programs. In neighborhoods where there is distrust between residents and the criminal justice system and little connection among neighbors, CBCR supports events that bring out participants, create new local leaders, and build relationships and confidence with police—all of which contribute to reducing crime and helping solve incidents when they do occur. Other examples include:

- **A resource trailer in Madison, WI** holds supplies like a grill and tables that allow neighborhood groups across the city to hold events that build relationships and in the long term lead to increased social cohesion and collective efficacy. Owned by the police department, the trailer has been used for a half dozen meetings since its debut in September 2017, including the Madison Neighborhood RoundTable workshop and a clothing and baby stroller distribution party.
- **The Community Benefits program in Syracuse, NY** is about the connection between health and safety, promoting conflict resolution, resident engagement and increased collaboration among service providers. Kitchen Table Talks, for example, bring together approximately a dozen neighbors for a meal and discussion of community issues, also serving as a way to recruit new members to the Near Westside neighborhood’s anti-crime campaign.



Left: Police and community activists meet in Austin, TX. Right: In towns like Harlan, KY, CBCR practitioners are building a rural model.

## CBCR Network News

### Symposium Connects Practitioners Across the Country

A symposium where 94 percent of attendees said they learned something new is a success, and that's what was achieved at the March 2017 CBCR Symposium, "Building Partnerships for Crime Reduction," convened by LISC in partnership with BJA. Community leaders, researchers, law enforcement officials, government employees, foundation officers and other partners from around the country came to Washington D.C. for the event, which highlighted CBCR strategies for marrying community development and public safety.

The symposium included panels and discussions from practitioners and other experts, including Principal Deputy Assistant Attorney General Alan R. Hanson. More than a third of the 142 attendees were affiliated with a past or current CBCR site, bringing the ideas they heard back to the communities where they work. To see some of the many materials created for the national symposium—and watch a video of the proceedings—use [this link](#).

- **Local leaders from three CBCR cities visited Cleveland, OH** to learn more about how law enforcement and partners on the CBCR team in the Mt. Pleasant community work. Funded by the LISC Small Grant Fund, the two-day event presented local teams from **Milwaukee, WI**, **St. Louis, MO** and **Alameda County, CA** with tours and presentations on efforts like the Police Assisted Referral program run by the Cuyahoga Metropolitan Housing Authority (CMHA) police department. The program trains officers to understand and react to trauma in victims and witnesses to crime, adding another capacity to law enforcement and building resident trust in the police.
- **The CBCR team from Shreveport, LA** made a similar visit in October 2017 to **Austin, TX**. Community members, officers and leadership from the Austin Police Department and the site's research team gave insights on everything from how to use data at a community meeting to incorporating culture change into a police department.

## Insights from Inside the Network

LISC regularly writes about the work of local CBCR partners across the country. Read more about what it takes to foster community based crime reduction in these articles:

**Berea, KY:** The CBCR program in Appalachian Kentucky is using three pillars of resident engagement to adapt urban strategies to a rural context—from bringing in new partners to closely listening to youth. [Learn more](#)

**Flint, MI:** The energy and commitment of neighbors, business people and key anchor institutions are transforming Flint's historic University Avenue corridor, tackling blight and crime and making the area more secure and livable. [Learn more](#)

**Denver, CO:** Police leadership has initiated a series of programs for officers on the Northwest Side that teach about the day-to-day life of the community in which they serve and strengthen relationships with its residents. [Learn more](#)

## Sustaining Impact

### Trauma Funds Grow in Nashville, TN

The Martha O'Bryan Center, a faith-based anti-poverty nonprofit that leads the Nashville CBCR team, has been chosen to partner on a \$225,000 grant by the Kresge Foundation to prevent and mitigate the impact of adverse childhood experiences (ACES). The Nashville partnership has prioritized a trauma-informed approach to addressing violence in Cayce Place, the city's largest and oldest public housing development, bringing in partners like the Tennessee Justice Center to strengthen their framework for connecting criminal justice and public health beyond the life of their CBCR grant.

CBCR programs offer a well-organized cross-sector partnership in the community, a comprehensive plan to address crime and its drivers, and established evidence-based programs. That is an attractive package for philanthropies and government agencies that are looking for effective investments. Many CBCR sites like Nashville continue their collaborative work even beyond the grant period with this kind of support. For instance:

- **A Promise Neighborhood grant in Corning, CA** will bring in more than \$3 million from the federal Department of Education and matching grants from the Paskenta Band of Nomlaki Indians and the City of Corning. Research data and a mentoring program for local youth from the CBCR planning and implementation grant were critical elements to attract the new funding.
- **ArtPlace America support for Alameda County, CA** will add \$400,000 over the next two years to the ongoing CBCR initiative, Eden Night Live, as it finds a new permanent home. "We have played a key role in attracting resources and attention to our neighborhoods and in reframing police-community relations," Alameda County Sheriff Captain Marty Neidefer told ArtPlace.



*Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) is the national technical assistance provider for CBCR, working in cooperation with the Bureau of Justice Assistance. This paper was supported by Grant No. 2012-AJ-BX-K046 awarded by the Bureau of Justice Assistance to LISC. The Bureau of Justice Assistance is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the National Institute of Justice, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Office for Victims of Crime, and the Office of Sex Offender Sentencing, Monitoring, Apprehending, Registering, and Tracking. Points of view or opinions in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.*

## Site Grant Resources



For more information about CBCR program priorities and the site network, please visit:

[www.lisc.org/CBCR](http://www.lisc.org/CBCR)