

OPEN AIR DRUG TRAFFICKING AT AN OTR INTERSECTION -PIVOT UNIT-

The Team:

Cincinnati Police PIVOT Unit, District One NLU and VCS, Over the Rhine Recreation Center, Cornerstone, Mary Magdalene House, St Francis Catholic Church, 3CDC, St Francis Center, Cincinnati Traffic and Engineering Department, Cincinnati Recreation Commission

Scan:

During the OTR PIVOT project, open air drug market activity and related violence and shootings in the immediate vicinity of the Republic/Green Street intersection became a topic of conversation between police and the community. Residents and police were very concerned about large crowds, noise and disorder, drugs and gunfire here. Three homicides have occurred within steps of this intersection since 2020.

Most of the buildings on this stretch of Green Street were abandoned and deteriorated. Republic Street is on the back side of the OTR Recreation Center. It was difficult for recreation staff to manage.

Analysis:

Analysis via the larger PIVOT strategy was ongoing, and it supported community and police concern about this intersection.



Response:

After reviewing possible additional responses, and proposing these initiatives to stakeholders and interested community members, the City initiated a temporary street barricade project at the intersection of Republic and Green Streets.

The barricades were placed in May of 2024 and removed in November of 2024. Barricades were added on Republic Street on both the North and South Side of Green Street. Signage was changed to allow traffic to enter Republic Street from Liberty and Elder Streets respectively. The barricades effectively turned Republic Street into a cul-de-sac and prevented drive-through drug traffic on Republic Street.

Additionally, Temporary fencing was used to deny misuse of the space under the Recreation Center overhang on Republic Street at Green. The fencing was eventually replaced with a wooden wall. Lighting was added to the Republic Street side of the OTR Recreation Center.

Why was this intervention implemented?

- Data[†] between 2022 and 2023 tell us that there has been a concentration of shooting incidents, weapons-related calls for service, drug activity, and violence within 150 ft. of the intersection of **Green/Republic**.
- Members of the community and residents have expressed considerable concerns about the violence, noise, and large gatherings on Green and Republic.

[†] Available upon request.



What factors make up this intervention?

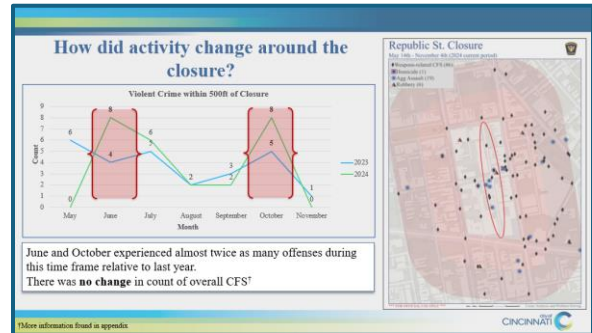
- Water barricades
 - Block entry on Republic St. on Green St.
- Signage
 - Posted on W. Liberty and W. Elder St.
- Fencing
 - Awning on Recreation Center fenced in
- Lighting
 - Increased lighting on Republic St. directly behind Recreation Center



OPEN AIR DRUG TRAFFICKING AT AN OTR INTERSECTION -PIVOT UNIT-



Results were mixed in this assessment. There was no change in overall calls for service. Violent crime spikes in June and October resulted in 5 more reported violent crimes in this area of interest. Weapon-related calls-for-service, however, declined by 5.



Assessment:

A detailed assessment of the impact of this specific intervention was conducted by CPD's Crime Analysis and Problem-Solving team.

Which time frame(s) will be measured?

Time frames	Intervention periods	Comparison period
Pre-Period (~4.5 months)	January 1 st , 2024 – May 13, 2024	January 1 st , 2023 – May 13 th , 2023
Current phase (~6 months)	May 14 th , 2024 – November 4 th , 2024	May 14 th , 2023 – November 4 th , 2023
Post-period	December 1 st , 2024 – May 13 th , 2025	December 1 st , 2023 – May 13 th , 2024*

*Post-period comparison overlaps with pre-period intervention.

Perhaps the most promising assessment information was difficult to measure. Community members, particularly on nearby streets where concern about displacement was very high, reported perceivable reductions in drug market behavior. Some officers' observations supported the assertion that dealers engaged in drug trafficking worked harder to conceal their actions, seeking darker alcoves and alleyways, rather than transacting on the open street.

What about displacement?

- Given identical counts within 500 ft of the closure, **no significant displacement** was experienced for either weapons-related calls for service or Part I Violent Crime.

Outcome: Mixed results regarding violence and weapon activity. Possible reduction in drug market behavior.