

REDUCING VIOLENCE ALONG MAIN STREET -DISTRICT ONE-

The Team

City Manager's Office, CPD District One, City Law, Economic Development, Transportation and Engineering, 3CDC, Urban Sites, 4EG, OTR Chamber of Commerce, Graydon Bricker Law Offices, other business owners and residents.

Introduction

In August of 2022, a mass shooting occurred in the Main Street entertainment area during a busy weekend night. Numerous police officers were present monitoring a large crowd, when several individuals engaged in a gunfight. Officers immediately intervened. Nine people sustained gunshot wounds during the gunfight. One person was shot by a police officer as he was actively shooting a handgun into a dense crowd.

Prior to this incident, violence and other problems were escalating at this location. CPD added overtime patrols, then reallocated officers from other parts of the city to further enhance staffing. Ultimately, CPD deployed the Civil Disturbance Response Team (CDRT) by late July of 2022, to help manage the continually growing disorderly crowds. Several shootings had also occurred prior to the mass shooting, some in very close proximity to police patrolling the space.

Problem Identification

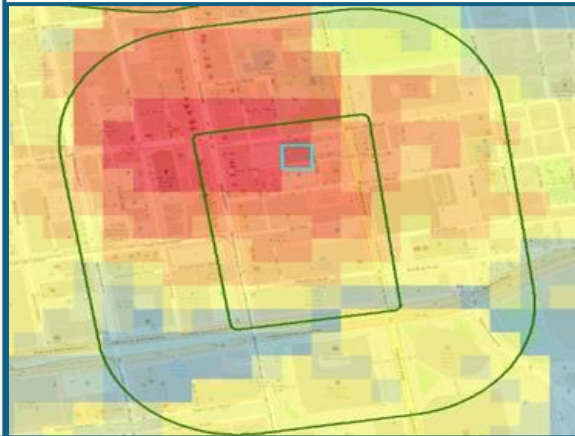
By August of 2022, the problem of escalating violent crime and shootings, as well as public crowd-based disorder was clear. CPD and city leaders sought to enhance the problem-solving framework, to achieve greater capacity to address a problem of this scale, and to broaden the tools available beyond law enforcement efforts alone.

Analysis

By September of 2022, analysis of this area showed increases in Part 2 crimes of 18%. More shockingly, total violent crime had increased by 191%, as compared to 2021. CPD used a locally created "violence score" metric, to precisely understand the severity and geography of the problem of violence across data sets (see visualized violence score map below).

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Main St/ Sycamore St YTD Totals					
	2019	2020	2021	2022	Change 21/22
Homicide	0	0	0	0	N/C
Rape	1	0	0	3	↑ 3
Robbery	15	5	4	17	325.0%
Agg Assault	1	8	7	12	71.4%
Total Violent Crime	17	13	11	32	190.9%
Burglary/BE	9	14	11	11	N/C
Theft from Auto	25	16	50	67	34.0%
Personal/Other Theft	55	26	35	42	20.0%
Auto Theft	10	5	12	19	58.3%
Total P1 Crime	116	74	119	171	43.7%
Total P2 Crime	89	65	110	130	18.2%



City leaders engaged in public discussions with concerned residents and business owners, and the administration supplemented these discussions with public surveys to capture sentiment, and to scan for new ideas. Information was captured across a range of topics, including perceptions of police, and feelings regarding past and potential future responses.

ENGAGING THE COMMUNITY

SCANNING



In-person surveying, virtual & in-person meetings, observation sessions and conversations



We've been asking:

- What do you like about Main St?
- What do you think could be changed or improved?
- What questions do you have for community leaders?
- What ideas do you have for Main St?



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Responses

Phase I

Prior to the mass shooting, CPD had responded to escalating problems here with additional directed patrols, redeployment of officers from other parts of the City, and with deployment of the Civil Disturbance Response Team (CDRT). Public engagement had begun, which included encouragement to business owners to return to past practices of hiring off duty police officers to assist with security needs, and to encourage open communication between businesses and police. Due to the presence of large crowds and reckless vehicle operation, Main Street was often closed by police to vehicle traffic during the hours of greatest activity.

Phase II

In the immediate wake of the mass shooting, in addition to continued closures of Main Street during peak times and deployment of CDRT, parking was eliminated from Central Parkway to Liberty, sidewalks were narrowed (via temporary fencing), and mobile light towers were added to the space.

Phase III

After several weeks, the sidewalks were returned to normal width. In the months that followed, parking restrictions were reduced, ultimately restoring parking to all locations except the 1300 block of Main Street and a small section of 13th Street, where problem behavior was most severe, and where the mass shooting had occurred.

City administration formalized the Main Street Working Group, which met regularly for the next two years. This group included representatives from various City departments, City leaders, business owners and operators, and interested stakeholders.

A neighborhood public safety camera was added to the area (several were already in place). The city worked with the local development corporation, ultimately expanding nearby Ziegler Park across Woodward Street, which had previously been a site of gathering and public disorder. This significant development action repurposed this space (which intersects with the 1300 block of Main Street), improving lighting and amenities, thereby encouraging positive use of the space. Lighting was also improved in the Main Street corridor, with 20 fixtures upgraded to LED. DOTE and police worked with rideshare operators in an attempt to alleviate traffic challenges in this high-density pedestrian and vehicle space, establishing pickup/drop-off zones at the edges of the Main Street corridor.

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During working group meetings, police and others highlighted vacant storefronts in the 1300 block as an attractive gathering point for those interested in negative activities. The city committed to develop a Pop-Up-Shop program to encourage positive occupancy of these commercial spaces, while also providing important business start-up opportunities for the community. Several new businesses occupied this space as a result of this program, although vacancy remains a challenge at the forefront of work group members' minds.

POP-UP SHOPS:

The Make-up Room
Selfie Cincy
Hello Beautiful
175 Summit Club
Shea Candle
BRKN MRLS

More information:

<https://www.downtowncincinnati.com/pop-up-program/>



As time passed, police stopped closing Main Street to vehicular traffic, but they continued to use the 1300 block to stage CDRT resources and to provide high visibility presence. Problems with gathering and negative behavior slowly declined, as did shots fired events, shootings, and violence.

Assessment

As time passed, violence in this area declined. By the end of 2023, violence scores were down by almost 50%, and problem behavior was dramatically reduced in the 1300 block of Main Street, which had been the most severe location in 2022.

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Reported violent crime mirrored violence scoring, with total violent crime down 46% from 2022. Decreases were noted in every violent crime category.

Main St/ Sycamore St YTD Totals					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	Change 22/23
Homicide	0	2	0	0	N/C
Rape	0	0	4	1	-75.0%
Robbery	9	7	24	12	-50.0%
Agg Assault	8	13	13	9	-30.8%
Total Violent Crime	17	22	41	22	-46.3%
Burglary/BE	17	14	13	22	69.2%
Theft from Auto	22	70	80	104	30.0%
Personal/Other Theft	36	48	57	43	-24.6%
Auto Theft	8	22	28	28	N/C
Total P1 Crime	100	176	219	219	N/C
Total P2 Crime	90	147	168	153	-8.9%

While this area of Main Street continues to have important needs, important reductions in violence and public disorder have occurred. Economic development and revitalization discussions continue to be prioritized, while police will continue to monitor public safety conditions.

Outcome: violent crime decreased.