

*Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant*  
**McElderry Park**

Community Plan for Crime Reduction

Presented by:

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At

**Baltimore Data Day Conference**

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<http://bniajfi.org/currentprojects/bcji/>



# Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant

**Funded by:** U.S. Department of Justice  
**Administered by:** Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (MOCJ)  
**Governed by:** McElderry Park Revitalization Coalition (MPRC)

## Quick Synopsis:

**The goal of the BCJI program is to improve community safety by designing and implementing effective, evidence-based approaches to addressing crime within a targeted neighborhood, as part of a broader strategy to advance neighborhood revitalization through cross-sector, community-based partnerships.** The McElderry Park Revitalization Coalition (MPRC) serves as the community-based steering committee for the process and is comprised of community members, law enforcement officials, faith-based institutions, businesses, and non-profit organizations within the community of McElderry Park and surrounding neighborhoods. The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance-Jacob France Institute (BNIA) supports the process by providing longitudinal analysis of crime incidents, data on the surrounding physical and socioeconomic context, and citizen calls for service using the 311 system.

**Amount of Grant:** MOCJ awarded \$938,773 over 3 years

# McElderry Park (Baltimore, MD) Target Area

*Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation Grant*



Basemap: ESRI  
Map created by The Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance - Jacob France Institute

# Acknowledgements

The implementation of the Byrne Grant in McElderry Park is a highly engaged and participatory process involving numerous residents, businesses, community groups, nonprofits, Universities, and City government agencies. A partial list of the groups working together in McElderry Park includes:

- Amazing Grace Lutheran Church
- Baltimore Development Corporation
- Banner Neighborhoods
- Charm City Clinic
- Chesapeake Habitat for Humanity
- Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning
- East Monument Main Street
- Environmental Justice Partnership
- Historic East Baltimore Community Action Coalition
- Johns Hopkins University
- Julie Community Center
- Mayor's Office of Criminal Justice (Baltimore City)
- McElderry Park Community Association
- Monument McElderry Fayette Revitalization Plan
- Monument Street Merchants Association
- Safe Streets East
- Southeast Police District (Baltimore City)
- MD National Guard
- Men and Families Center
- Various Federal Agencies

# The Planning Process

**Planning:** Year 1- May 2013 through April 2014

- **Community-Led:** The MPRC was created to engage and mobilize community members and local partners in the grant's initiatives
- **Data-Driven:** Based on administrative records on crime incidents, 911 calls, housing code violations and other data, our research partner – BNIA – developed a data-driven analysis of the drivers of crime within the McElderry Park neighborhood.
- **Collaborative Problem-Solving:** The community compiled a comprehensive list of specific crime reduction strategies and voted to prioritize five specific strategies for Year 2 funding, Eight programs were funded and implemented in Year 2 and our research partner – BNIA – will again be funded to assess and evaluate the funded programs.

**Program Implementation** – Years 2 and 3 – Begins in July 2014

- Programs funded for Year 2 - Total funding: \$332,650.00

**Assessment** - Years 2 and 3 – Begins in July 2014

- BNIA will comprehensively assess the effect of program implementation on the prevention and reduction of crime in McElderry Park and alternatives to criminal activity for residents of McElderry Park.

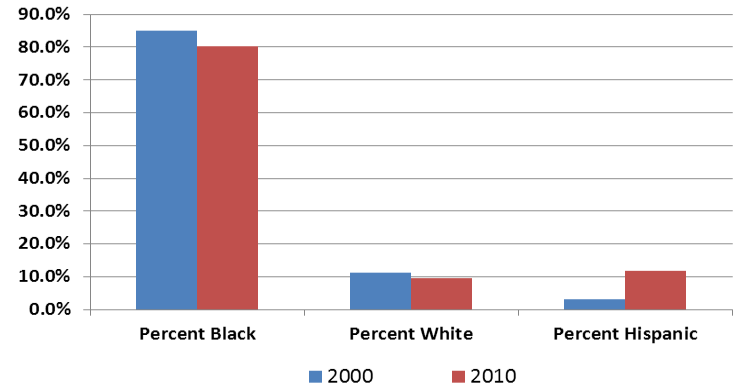
# Community Outreach

- Community Kick off meeting April 2013
- Monthly Meetings with the MPRC
- Center For Graceful Living work
- CPHA Listening Sessions
- Focus Groups Summer 2013
- Community Data Presentation Meeting Nov 2013
- Community meeting to finalize proposed strategies March 2014

# Community Statistics and Data Collection

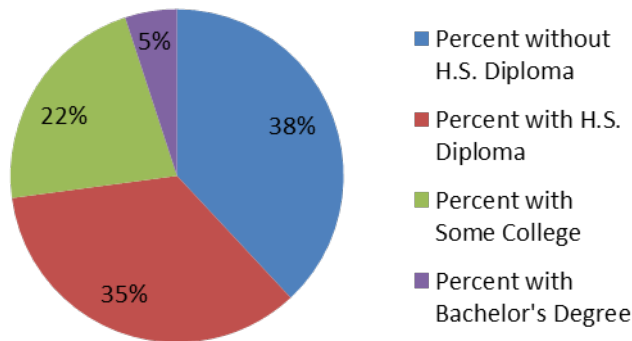
## McElderry Park Population Characteristics

Race Ethnicity in 2000 and 2010

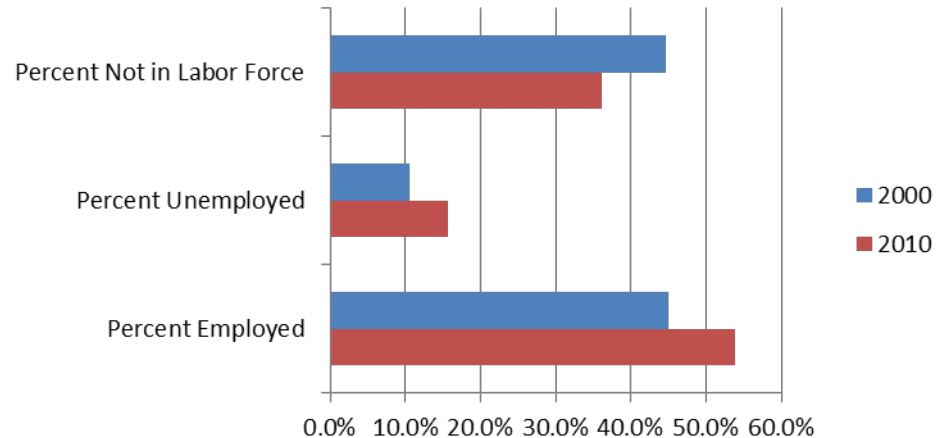


## McElderry Park Educational Attainment and Labor Force

Educational Attainment, 2010



Labor Force Participation, 2000-2010



# Community Statistics and Data Collection

- McElderry Park Housing Characteristics
- McElderry Park Cleanliness and Sustainability
- McElderry Park Violent Crime
- McElderry Park Property Crime



# Focus Groups

- **Eight focus groups were conducted between July 1<sup>st</sup> and October 1<sup>st</sup> 2013.** Focus group participants were informed about upcoming focus groups at community meetings and events, through door-to-door outreach, and outreach efforts by local community program staff.
- Three focus groups were held at the McElderry Park Resource Center, two were held at local community programs, one was held at a business on Monument Street, one was held at the local library, and one was held at a neighborhood church.
- **Participants were asked to fill out a short survey on their perceptions of the top three community problems, the cause of each problem, and a potential solution to reduce/eliminate the problem.**
- **During the focus group each participant had the opportunity to discuss their responses.** Collectively participants discussed a range of problems identified by the group.

## Questions

- What are the reasons/causes for the community problem?
- What is the community currently doing to address this specific problem?
- What does the community lack in terms of services/resources that may be contributing to this specific problem?
- What are potential solutions/strategies to this specific problem?
- What community strengths could be used to address this specific problem?
- How do residents work together to prevent certain problems?
- How do police assist the community in addressing these problems?

# Focus Group Findings

## 1. Physical Disorder (Incivilities)

- Sanitation/cleanliness – physical incivilities such as trash and litter. Makes a community look dirty, unkempt, and disorderly
- Accountability
- Message to others

### **Solutions:**

- Enhance landlord and residents accountability
- Consistent fines for dumping trash, overflowing garbage cans, and litter on property
- Incentive programs – cleanest block receives reward (e.g., block party)
- Resources: more trashcans (metal); more trash pickups
- Involve local youth in efforts to improve the physical conditions in the community
- Educate residents

## 2. Crime and Safety

- Crime attractors – anything that serves to attract criminal behavior. Residents referred to sanitation issues making the community look worse and invite criminal behavior.
- Many different types of criminal behavior mentioned – drug use and selling; gangs; prostitution; property crime; violent crime; shootings
- Fear of crime, especially violent crime
- Feeling unsafe, especially at nighttime. Residents described avoiding nighttime activity.
- Safety affecting business – safety issues serve as a barrier to new businesses coming in and for existing businesses who need customers
- Business owners and crime – business owners playing a role in crime (drugs, Monument St.)

### **Solutions:**

- Improve lighting
- Cameras (mixed response – some residents don't believe cameras deter, others do)
- Community policing; foot patrol; more patrol; night patrol increase

# Focus Group Findings

## **3. Law Enforcement Relations and Response**

- Ineffective policing
- Relationships w/ community

### ***Solutions:***

- Police training to improve resident/police relations
- Community policing; foot patrol

## **4. Lack of Employment**

- Overall lack of employment opportunities in community
- High rate of unemployment (often linked to high number of people with criminal records or low skills)
- Ineffective or limited career training
- Lack of entrepreneur opportunities
- Barrier of criminal records
- Employment rejection – creates a sense of hopelessness
- Low paying jobs – residents expresses concern that most jobs pay minimum wage and this requires them to work multiple jobs

### ***Solutions:***

- Developing a community wide strategy to assist individuals with criminal records to find legal work. Strategy should be coupled w/ a mentoring/counseling (mental health)
- Job training programs need to be tied to employment
- Blue-collar employment opportunities
- Entrepreneurial programs
- Education about opportunities, training, college, etc.

# Focus Group Findings

## **5. Lack of Youth Programs and Activities**

- High number of adjudicated youth – criminal records impacting future success
- Lack of positive role models
- Inconsistent mentors – existing mentors are not consistent in contact with their clients
- Disconnected role models – teachers/youth workers not from area; inability to connect
- Negative community influences – residents feel like the social and community influences on youth people are negative. Drug dealers, absent fathers, female headed households
- No safe place for kids – existing playgrounds and other places for kids are unsafe (physical conditions of playground – glass, litter, damaged equip.; presence of negative older youth)
- Not enough attention to youth – kids have major issues but root causes not addressed
- Lack of youth development opportunities; groups focusing on kids
- Large groups of unattended youth intimidates residents and workers
- Youth poverty – contributor to involvement in illegitimate activities; forced to care for self

### ***Solutions:***

- More youth program (age appropriate) in the community
- Safe place for children to play
- Improvement of local playground
- Positive role models in the community
- Mentorship program

# Crime Hotspot Analysis

The Byrne Criminal Justice Innovation (BCJI) program is an Obama Administration effort to address crime hotspots in persistently distressed areas. In order to identify crime hotspots in McElderry Park, the locations of Part 1 crime (violent and property) were mapped based on data obtained from the Baltimore City Police Department.

Violent crimes (homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery) were separated from property crimes (burglary, larceny, and auto theft) to ensure that similar types of Part 1 crimes were analyzed.

**The analysis revealed 18 hotspots where at least 4 incidents of crime had occurred at the same property address or at an adjacent property (neighboring or directly across the street) for each year over the 12-year period.** The overarching finding shows that hotspots in the neighborhood are “traveling” from the western side (Patterson Park Ave) to the eastern side (Kenwood & Streeper Streets).

McElderry Park Part 1 Crime Hotspot Overlap Areas, 2000-2012



Violent crimes include homicide, rape, aggravated assault, and robbery. Property crimes include burglary, larceny, and auto theft.

Source: Baltimore City Enterprise GIS, Baltimore City Police Department  
Map created by BNIA-IFI, 2013

# Crime Hotspot Profiles

**Profiles of the 18 hotspot locations were created**, which detailed the types of crimes that occurred at the location and contextual information on the physical built environment, housing conditions (vacant properties, owner-occupancy) and calls for service for trash and narcotics.

**From the hotspot analysis, four types of hotspots emerged:**

1. Commercial Business-Adjacent
2. Vacant Property-Adjacent
3. Areas of Opportunity
4. Milton Avenue Corridor

#12 McElderry Park Crime Hotspot Detailed Description

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**500 Block of Streeper Street at McElderry/Jefferson Alley**

Incident Information

Hotspots	Years	Type
Violent crimes	2003, 2007*, 2008, 2012	Aggravated Assaults, Robberies
Property crimes	2002, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011*, 2012	Burglaries, Larcenies

\*Peak years

Social Disorder

- One homicide (2006)
- 266 calls for service for narcotics since 2000, with peak years in 2002, 2006, and 2007;
- Total of four 911 calls for shootings since 2000;
- Concentrations of juvenile arrests for drug-related offenses in 2007 and 2008

Surrounding Context

- Residential properties;

Routine Opportunity Areas

- Parallel parked cars on the street with inadequate lighting;
- Narrow pedestrian alleyway could provide cover for illegal activities

Physical Disorder

- Scattering of properties on the 500 block of Streeper with short term (1-2 years) vacancies

Built Environment & Design

- Possibly inadequate lighting at night;
- Narrow, pedestrian-friendly alley that connects to N/S

Streets and Alleys

- Kenwood Avenue is a residential, low traffic, one-way street;
- McElderry/Jefferson Alley is narrow and provides a shortcut to N/S running alleys

Sense of Community

- Low rate of owner-occupancy on Streeper Street

#12 - Streeper Street and McElderry/Jefferson Alley  
Number of Crime incidents in Hotspot by Year, 2000-2012

Part 1 Crime Hotspots, 2000-2012

Streeper St., McElderry/Jefferson Alley to the west  
Streeper St., looking west

500 Block Streeper St.
McElderry Park Crime Hotspot Profiles
Prepared by BNA-JFI  
img: Google

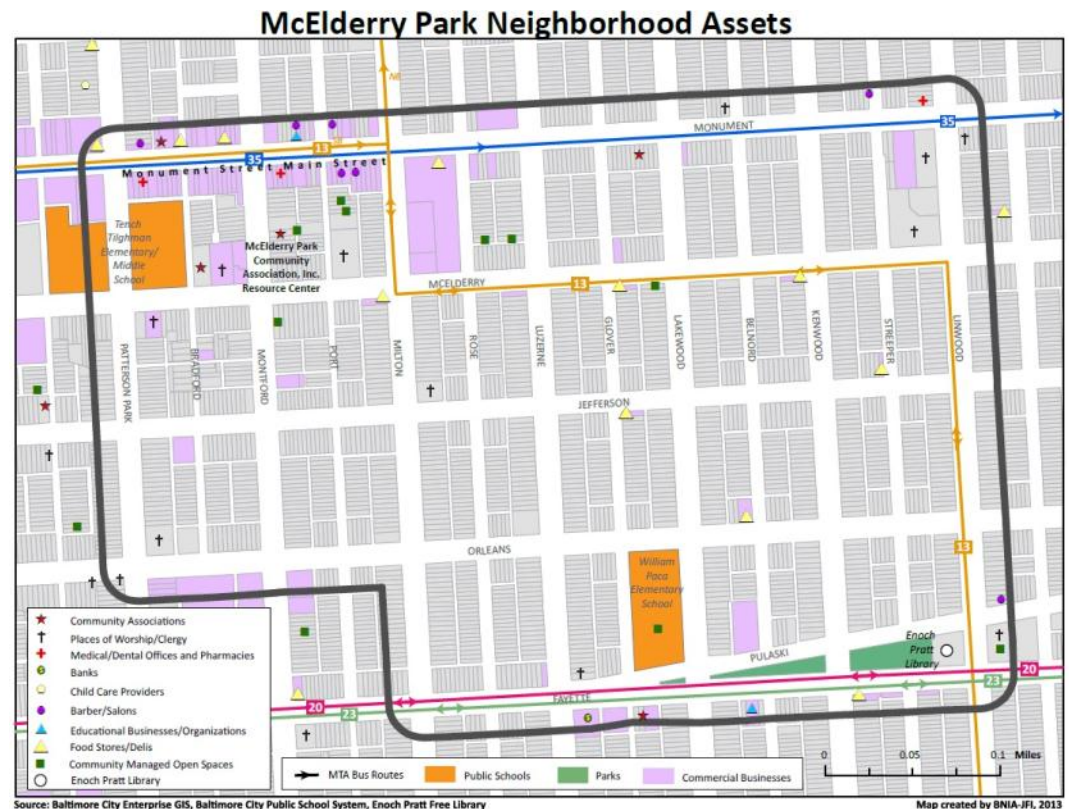
# Community Asset Mapping

Creating and maintaining a dynamic map of all of McElderry Park's community assets allows residents, organizations, and other stakeholders to stay engaged and informed about people, places, programs, and events in the community.

Community members were asked to provide physical locations of neighborhood Amenities such as community non-profits, places of worship, community managed open spaces, parks, schools, and businesses.

The asset mapping process, while ongoing, is a dynamic process that relies heavily on community reporting and feedback to ensure that all known people, programs, and places are made known to the people who work and live in McElderry Park.

**The final product of the asset mapping will be an interactive, online map. A static, downloadable map will also be available, along with information on how to submit new or modify old assets.**



# Community-Led Crime Reduction Strategies

Through the community engagement process, residents and other stakeholders provided potential solutions to help reduce crime in the neighborhood. **The comprehensive nature of the recommended solutions were organized according to social, economic, physical and policing strategies.** While not all of these strategies will be funded through the BCJI grant, the full list represents the desires from the community to truly address the drivers of crime and many organizations in the community are already working towards these solutions.

Social Strategies	Short-Term	Community-Building & Organizing	1. Gatherings/Potlucks to get to know neighbors
			2. Engage faith-based organizations
			3. Share good things in community and link neighbors to good programs and people
			4. Ensure meetings are accessible to Spanish-speaking residents and provide bilingual information (simultaneous translation)
	Leadership Development	1. Develop Block captains/Neighborhood Watch	
		2. Encourage daytime informal neighborhood monitoring (maybe older residents)	
	Property Owner/Resident Accountability	1. Enhance Landlord/resident accountability--Focus on Nuisance Abatement	
		2. Setting community standards- verbalize to neighbors; in welcome packets, using the newsletter, website, public art to communicate	
	Maintain Green/Shared Spaces	1. Train residents to maintain and enhance community gardens/managed open spaces after installation	
		2. Pocket parks	
		3. Alley greening	



# Crime Reduction Strategies

Social Strategies	Long-Term	Health & Human Development	1. Support mental health and grief counseling
			2. Provide access to primary health care to improve physical health
			3. Improve environmental health by reducing exposure to lead poisoning and asthma triggers
		Recreational Spaces & Programs	1. Build a new recreation center
			2. Establish Community access for the recreation centers and help maintain playgrounds in the neighborhood to give kids places to play safely
			3. Provide appropriate programs at resource centers- centers with different themes to help kids and their parents
		Mentoring	1. Parenting classes
			2. Target the youth and teach them to be better young men or women in their community (life coach)
			3. Programs to target early teens/preteens between grades 3-6
			4. Provide career counseling for teens age 15-18 and college preparatory counseling
			5. Support for kids already in the penal system or with parents in the penal system
		Education	1. Provide afterschool programs for youth
			2. School system needs to be accountable for truants
		Mixed-Income Housing	1. Create mixed income neighborhood with affordable housing opportunities for community using fair development and land trust

# Evidence-Based Crime Reduction Strategies

Any program or plan implemented using BCJI funding must have evidence to indicate that the intended outcomes for crime reduction can be met. A literature review was conducted to assess the effectiveness of the reduction strategies and over half of the strategies identified by McElderry Park residents were supported by research:

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## **Effective**

Street lighting  
Neighborhood cleanups/beautification  
Alley gating  
Youth mentoring  
Career academies for youth

## **Promising**

Neighborhood watch programs  
Community gardens  
Foot patrols  
Cameras  
Enforcing curfews  
Youth recreation programs  
Parent-child development  
Work training programs

## **Mixed**

Re-entry/employment programs

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# Community Voting

**The 62 crime reduction strategies that were submitted were taken to the streets for community voting. Each voter was given 3 options to make a difference in the community.** Over 149 votes were cast in deciding how to allocate funding. The strategies with the most votes would help determine how to allocate funding for programs.

## **Voting Results:**

- 50% of funds will be dedicated to Workforce Development Programs such as employment development for McElderry Park residents with program or program component addressing ex-offenders;
- 25% will address Youth (including teen) Recreation, Education, and Mentoring Programs;
- 25% will go to cleanliness & environmental improvement including but not limited to greening initiatives, job and service programs related to cleanliness, organizing residents around city services, and improvements to built environment (i.e. Alley gating);
- The remainder of funds will go toward Legal Assistance related to employment, i.e. expungement and general legal assistance, i.e. family matters, financials matters, homeownership issues.

# 2014-2015 Funded Programs

**Total Funding: \$332,650**

- **Workforce Development**
  - Our Daily Bread
  - Digit-All Systems
- **Cleanliness**
  - Project Serve of Living Classrooms
- **Public Safety**
  - Safe Streets
- **Youth Engagement**
  - Banner Neighborhoods
  - Baltimore Viewfinders
  - Patterson Community School

**Community Outreach:** Center for Grace-Full Living

**Research:** Baltimore Neighborhood Indicators Alliance-Jacob France Institute