

Comprehensive Communities Partnership (CCP) Project Background

In 1994 the City of Hartford was invited by the Department of Justice to design a program to combat the crisis created by drug related violence and the attendant economic implosion of the city's neighborhoods. This new initiative, called the Comprehensive Communities Partnership (CCP), was a three pronged effort involving departments in the City of Hartford, the Police Department and the community. The effort included a community organizing component so that neighborhood residents could establish priorities and work with city departments and the Police Department around aggressive problem solving. As part of this program the City of Hartford proposed to design and implement both Community Oriented Policing and Community Oriented Government. CCP promised significant changes in the way local government and the police department related to the community it served and in the way that business was conducted.

During the design phase of the program neighborhood leaders met monthly to make suggestions for the program and to react to each draft as it was being developed. This monthly meeting of leaders from each of Hartford's neighborhoods continued after the program was funded and is today an integral part of the CCP program. The resulting program was recognized by the Justice Department as unique and received the highest marks in what was a very competitive grant process.

CCP proposed new partnerships between residents and local government, among the departments of local government, and among state and local agencies responsible for public safety in Hartford. The new Community Court in Hartford is a prime example of the new partnerships formed through the CCP program.

The partnership between the neighborhood residents and the city was built on a few very simple fundamentals

- Organized neighborhoods are safer and more stable
While this statement sounds simple, it actually signaled a significant change. Strategies for public safety prior to CCP were often dominated by public safety officials who concentrated on enforcement and prosecution. The role of the community was minimal. CCP signaled the beginning of community involvement in creating safer, more livable neighborhoods. It is now understood that neighborhoods with significant amounts of social capital and a clear sense of community are safer. Whenever residents are involved in community activities and developing their own sense of what is acceptable and not acceptable, crime goes down. It is also true that in neighborhoods with aggressive problem solving experience residents not only feel safer, but benefit economically from the resultant stability.
- Community Oriented Policing must be implemented system wide
Dealing with quality of life issues, creating partnerships with neighborhood residents and designing prevention strategies are not simply additions to a public

safety strategy after all police calls for service have been answered. Rather, these proactive policing models result in dramatically reduced criminal activity of all types. (Kelling, George L. and Wilson, James Q., *Broken Windows*, Atlantic Monthly, March, 1982.)

- Community Oriented Government is good government

This method of providing government services requires that all employees recognize that residents and businesses in the city are to be served. Like all customer-oriented enterprises, the city needs to understand the services that customers want and to provide those services in a way that produces customer satisfaction.

In order to implement the new partnership between residents and the city, CCP created Problem Solving Committees (PSC) in each of the neighborhoods of Hartford. Each PSC brings together representatives of all the participatory groups (block groups, business groups, religious institutions, clubs, tenant groups, etc.) in the neighborhood for the purpose of identifying priorities for the neighborhood and working with appropriate city departments to solve problems.

One of the most important features of the PSCs is that they allow the residents to set public safety and quality of life priorities for each neighborhood. City departments agree to respond to these priorities. While agencies and other providers of services are welcome to participate in the PSCs, they also respond to priorities of the residents rather than set the priorities themselves. It is important to note that PSCs are not restricted to dealing only with crime and public safety issues.

For further information on the CCP or the PSCs please call (860) 297-5175.