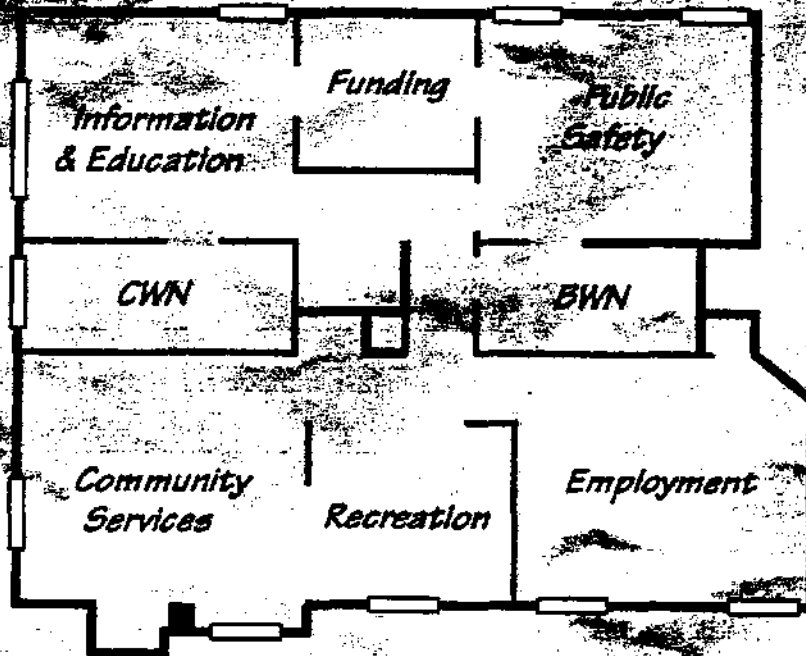


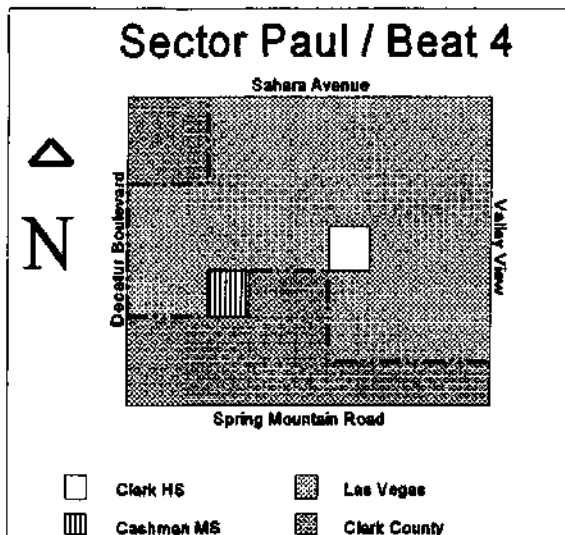
Project

One Neighborhood for Everyone



Southwest Area Command

THE AREA



The neighborhood is known as Paul/4, Sector Paul/Beat 4, of the Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department's Southwest Area Command. This densely populated square mile, developed in the sixties, is no longer considered prime real estate. At the center is Clark High School. Clark is surrounded by concentric layers of vintage apartments. This area has been characterized by an increasingly diverse population, plagued with declining property values and

rising crime, and depressed by declining income levels and increasing unemployment.

In 1991, the hallmark of Paul/4 was the visible daily struggle to survive. Beat officers regularly rotated out of this unpopular assignment and governmental responsibility for this area was divided by a meandering city/county line. "Who to call for what" was a complicated proposition. The manager of one set of apartments adjoining the high school began writing letters, making telephone calls, appearing in person and generally *demanding* that something be done to change these deteriorating conditions.

The early solution was to pass the problem to the police. The high school was refusing to acknowledge a problem, and city government could not do it alone. With the city's resources and valuable help from some apartment managers, the police launched *Operation Watch Dog*.

A small, but motivated, crew of police officers from the Line Solution Policing (L.S.P.) Team focused its attention on the problem. The resulting whirlwind of police activity included the apprehension of a ring of juvenile car thieves, enforcement of building code violations, the towing of junked vehicles, and the removal of graffiti. Apartment managers from surrounding complexes organized and worked in concert with the police, who began checking tenant lists for wanted suspects.

Having "scored" and significantly reduced the calls for service in the area, the L.S.P. Team reduced its presence and moved on to solve problems in other troubled areas. Unfortunately, the "victory" was short-lived, and by 1992, crime and decay were once again rampant in this neighborhood.

SCANNING

From 1992-93, crime was rising at alarming rates. Burglaries were up by 59%, robberies by 60%, and incidents of sexual assault had swelled by more than 120%. Local street gang turf wars contributed significantly to the increase in violent crime on the street and at the high school. The lack of community pride was evidenced by graffiti which covered virtually every paintable surface in the area. The downward spiral created its own dynamic of social and economic dislocation.

By 1993, the area was nearing 16,000 residents. Of the combined 11,000 single and multi-family residences, 8,647 were inhabited by renters. Most of the rental properties were aging apartments in disrepair, and 13% of the population had incomes below the poverty line. The deteriorating physical condition of the buildings forced lowered rents and reduced the amount of investment capital available to owners. In short, another "inner city" neighborhood was born.

ANALYSIS

Representatives from the school, city and county government, area businesses and apartment management, and the Police Department rejoined forces and reviewed past efforts. It was quite apparent that more input and greater participation from the community's residents would be necessary. These were the only true "stakeholders" in the area. The "One Neighborhood for Everyone" collaborative was formed

from this disparate group, determined to bring unity, pride and empowerment back to residents of the neighborhood.

The first course of business was to develop some area measurements with which to determine problems and serve as a benchmark. A national survey of existing collaboratives, as well as an area needs assessment, were used as pointers to direct the search for effective and enduring solutions to revitalize the area. This resulted in a "perceptions and needs" survey distributed to more than 2,000 area stakeholders, crime statistics and calls for service analysis, and development of an area demographic profile.

The 1990 census depicted Paul/4 as demographically similar to the rest of the county with the significant exception of a 2% increase in the Hispanic population. Of those, 9.7% reported they "did not speak English very well." Minority population of students rose to 47% compared to 32% in 1992. The economic figures confirmed a prevailing suspicion: Per capita income was \$2,905 less than the county's norm; the median family income was \$8,625 less; and 13.2% of the residents were living below the poverty level. The number of families on public assistance had increased significantly from 5% in 1992 to 10% by 1994.

The crime statistics mirrored the perceptions of area residents as measured by the collaborative survey. Crime, especially *violent* crime, was increasing almost exponentially.

Table 1 - Jan-June 1992 vs. Jan-June 1993 Part I Crimes

CRIME	1992	1993	CHANGE
Burglary	122	194	+ 59.0%
Robbery	28	45	+ 60.7%
Grand Larceny	173	125	- 27.7%
Homicide	1	2	+ 100%
Auto Theft	76	83	+ 9.2%
Aggravated Assault	17	18	+ 5.9%
Sexual Assault	5	11	+ 120%

Source: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department - Crime Analysis Section

RESPONSE

Success depended upon an effective infrastructure of support and services and a commitment to look for solutions, identify resources, monitor programs, and evaluate progress. The mission statement for the One Neighborhood for Everyone collaborative was established as, *"To empower residents and businesses in the area to take back their community by identifying, developing, and implementing services and programs that will improve the lives of residents and make the community a safer place to live, work, and go to school.* From that, goals of the ONE. Collaborative were stated as:

- *To increase opportunities for community involvement, educational achievement, and employment for area residents.*
- *To provide a safe, secure environment for families and youth and decrease involvement in gangs and criminal activity.*
- *To assure that the basic health needs of the community are being met.'*
- *To provide support services and child development programming.*
- *Empower families to help themselves and their children by building on family and community strengths and co-locating services and resources.*

To accomplish these, the collaborative formed into subcommittees charged with assessing specific needs, identifying resources, implementing services, and analyzing results. The committees were staffed with representatives that would most suit that group's task.

Public Safety realized that it must achieve more results using fewer police resources. To this end, the subcommittee determined a plan to attempt to reduce crime on the "front end" through prevention. The cooperative apartment manager/beat officer program initiated during Operation Watchdog was greatly enhanced; *Drug free zones* were created around area schools, bus stops and playgrounds; The number of area Neighborhood Watches increased; And they coordinated the effort to eradicate graffiti. Residents and

line officers were empowered to assume more responsibility for area problems through delegation of broader decision-making powers. This partnership was enhanced with the implementation of area police bicycle patrols facilitated by public contributions. Public Safety established a neighborhood office on one of the most crime-ridden streets in the area. Officers could now write reports and conduct business without having to leave the O.N.E. neighborhood. Police, school, and apartment community hotlines were also initiated to provide area residents with direct links to a variety of services.

A Youth Council, the Law Club, and a Police Explorer Post were formed to facilitate feedback from students and to get them involved in identifying, planning, and implementing programs they deemed important. Their projects are facilitated by police officers, school personnel, apartment managers, and parents.

Youth and Recreation set out to bring the neighborhood wholesome activities for children and teens that would occupy them with constructive activities. A Community School was established on the high school's campus and offered a variety of programs to community residents. Summertime youth and teen programs were sponsored by the city. The county set-up a comprehensive series of "drop-in" summer programs.

To help consolidate gains and enhance the sense of community, the Recreation Committee produced a neighborhood festival providing games, live entertainment, food, and information on available services. The City and County Recreation Departments work in tandem and have set the standard for other communities to emulate.

Information and Education compiled documentation of physical assets, services, demographic data, and perceptual measures in such a way as to create a three-dimensional "map" of the O.N.E. area. The results of the initial survey serves as the baseline for future assessments. This committee was also charged with developing methods of disseminating information to the community as well as collecting, analyzing,

and reporting data. The data from the initial needs assessment, conducted in both English and Spanish, were analyzed in cooperation with an analyst from Program Evaluation Associates. Each subcommittee used the relevant data to determine future objectives. A second, scientifically-based, resident survey was conducted in April of 1995. Those results are being analysed at the time of this writing.

Funding is a concern for any entity. The City Councilman and the County Commissioner co-chaired this vital committee, opening doors and facilitating the needs of committee members. Community Development Block Grant funds were pursued to satisfy the information received from the analysis of the needs assessment. Funds were also obtained to upgrade and accommodate the new Community School. Just as important, students and members of the community stepped forward with donations ranging from ten to a thousand dollars.

Community Services has the task of bringing needed social services to the O.N.E. neighborhood's residents. The City of Las Vegas purchased a block of dilapidated apartments located in the center of the operational area at the recommendation of the collaborative. Not only are these apartments being renovated to provide affordable housing, but space was allocated as extension offices for needed social services such as WIC, Head Start, and Service Link.

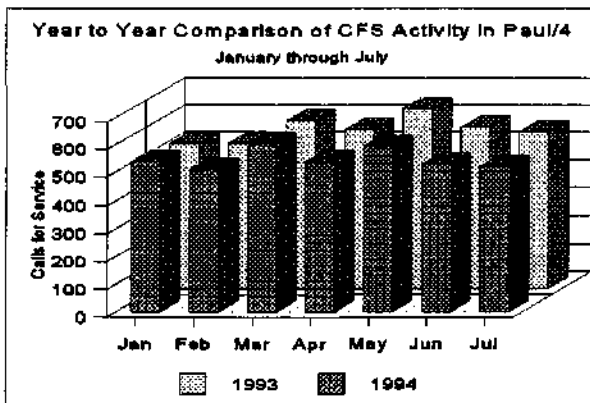
Employment has accepted the task of providing job-readiness training and facilitating employment opportunities. Through Nevada Partners, Nevada Business Services and the School District's SMART GRAD program, teens are provided job-readiness training. The Clark Community School provides classes for area adults of any age. Employment preparation training and a successful job fair were held in 1994 and repeated in April of 1995.

In addition to the above subcommittees, two service groups were created. The **Community Watch Network** coordinated the mutual needs of rental properties and homeowners. A **Business Watch Network** formed into a state chartered nonprofit organization to improve the economic climate of the area through

service, education, and crime prevention.

The Steering Committee is co-chaired by the City Councilman and the County Commissioner. Its meetings are attended by the chairs of each subcommittee, presidents of the network groups, and representatives from the area's schools. Their task is to coordinate work of the different subcommittees and measure progress toward goal attainment.

ASSESSMENT



Objective measures must be taken to properly assess the O.N.E. collaborative's progress. The first measurement was a "snapshot" comparison of the area's police calls-for-service (C.F.S.) for the first half of the benchmark years, 1993 and 1994. The result indicated a surprising 8% decrease.

The testing method used to validate the C.F.S. reduction was a determination of the area's crime rate using the UCR Part I crimes. A comparison of the same period demonstrated a 29.48% reduction in Paul/4's crime rate between 1993 and 1994. By year's end the crime rate declined by more than ten points in Paul/4 for a net change of *minus* 33.54%. This compared quite favorably to the 19.89% increase for the entire area of metropolitan Las Vegas.

Table 2. Crime rate per 1,000 inhabitants (based on reported Part I Crimes - January through December)

Area of Comparison	1993	1994	% Change
Metropolitan Area	67.60	81.05	+ 19.89%
Paul/4	30.62	20.35	- 33.54%

Source: Las Vegas Metropolitan Police Department - Crime Analysis Section

It is important to note that police officer staffing at the Southwest Area Command was reduced by four officers during that year. Performance indicators show a higher level of success in terms of lowering the crime rate while simultaneously reducing the number of personnel needed to accomplish the task.

HOW do you accomplish more with less? The officers of the Southwest Area Command met this challenge by becoming partners with the community. They stopped for lunch with the students at Clark (Friendly Badge); they volunteered for extra-duty at school athletic events; they attended neighborhood events such as the O.N.E. Festival on their days off; officers "adopted" selected apartment complexes; and individual officers identified needs on their beats and went about addressing them.

CONCLUSION

This was never a police program "for" the community. It was, is, and always will be a truly cooperative effort in which the police simply play an important part. The best proof of program viability is the evidence that can be found "outside" the cop shop: Are other resources, independent of the police operation, voluntarily cooperating with this agenda for change? The answer is a resounding YES for the O.N.E. collaborative.

Empowerment comes from within the individuals who live and work in this area - from their own accomplishments and sacrifices - not from government handouts. To this end, no programs or funding requests are initiated which are not driven by grass roots - *community* - activism. The Community Watch Network rallied the apartment managers and property owners, and the Business Watch Network brought business to center stage. The resulting organizational reengineering pioneered changes and inspired innovation in other parts of the metropolitan area.

Clark High School's participation was of paramount importance. They have led the way in providing facilities and leadership to help make a difference in the area. Permanent programs for area residents such

as the Clark Community School and the computer lab have extended their commitment to an educational mandate that extends far beyond their student body. Most important to the collaborative's effort was that this school provided an apolitical location to focus area activities.

Local government has also established long-term area commitments due to the facilitating efforts of the elected city and county officials. The City of Las Vegas has spent more than one and one-half million dollars to acquire, improve, and maintain space for affordable area housing and needed social programming. Clark County has also met the challenge by allocating Community Development Block Grant funds for the construction of a community center that will provide a location for other valuable civic, social, and recreational services. Local government's most productive investment has been to direct recreational programming into an area with so many disadvantaged youngsters. This has well-exceeded the standard commitment of simply sending code enforcement officials on a short-term blitz of citation writing.

The success of the ONE. collaborative has had an important and lasting effect on the way community-based programs are staffed and administered at the Southwest Area Command. The priority is to resist the urge to create special units by opting to make "area ownership" the function and responsibility of the regularly assigned beat officers. In that manner, these units could never be stripped from the residents. Ownership was obtained in two ways. First, a great emphasis was placed on including the beat officer in the many area events and meetings. The effect was to create working relationships and friendships with the residents and businesses. Next, line units bore the responsibility for brainstorming solutions to area problems. More than forcing decision-making to the lowest possible level, the beat officers are setting the area's agenda in collaboration with the residents and businesses. The Southwest Area Command Hotline (229-SWAC), Friendly Badge, Community Office, and Youth Councils are just a few examples of productive activities from the initiative of the area "beat cops." This makes great sense from the patrol administration standpoint. The short term positive results that were generally only realized by specially

assigned units are given longevity because the commitment is continuous and no "extra" resources need to be allocated. Other programs have routinely lost their viability once "special" funding was no longer available or when administrative interests waned. At the Southwest Area Command, interest is where it needs to be - *At the line level!*