

Kamau As-Salaam

Spring 2020

Option Paper

Neighborhood Security and Resiliency: Reviving East Washington

Table of Content

Tables and Figures.....	3
Abstract.....	4
Research Questions.....	4
Introduction.....	5
Research Methods.	6
Literature Review.....	7
Defensible Spaces.....	8
Urban Village.	12
Urban Fortress.	13
Broken Windows Theory.	14
Technology in Environmental security.	17
Research.	19
Tools.	19
East Washington Neighborhood.....	21
Demographic Analysis.	24
Housing Analysis.	26
Crime Analysis.	27
Recommendations.	29
50 Worst Properties Program.....	29
Recommendation #1.	31
Recommendation #2.	32
Recommendation #3.	33
Conclusion.	34
Bibliography.	36
Appendix.	38
50 Worst Interview.	38
Neighborhood Survey Links.	38
East Point Crime Data.	39
Community Analyst Infographics.	40

Tables and Figures

Figure 1.....	9
Table 1.....	11
Figure 2.....	16
Figure 3.....	18
Figure 4.....	21
Figure 5.	21
Figure 6.	24
Figure 7.	26
Figure 8.	27

Abstract

Blight and crime are often a packaged deal when referring to urban communities. Given that blight and crime are common issues in the U.S.A there are a number of different methods used in the past to solve those problems. This paper will discuss those different methods in regard to neighborhood security. With help from some East Point officials, this paper was written with the intent to research neighborhood security measures and design initiatives to improve upon the quality of life in the East Washington neighborhood of East Point, by using design elements to hinder crime and blight.

Research Questions

1. What are the theories and concepts surrounding crime prevention, and blight control on the local level?
2. What are other neighborhoods and communities doing to battle blight and crime around their homes?
3. What makes the East Washington Neighborhood so susceptible to blight and crime, and how does it compare to the Jefferson Park Neighborhood?

Introduction

Since the advent of civilization there has always been a close relationship between a home and the feeling of security. People naturally want to feel and be safe where they lay their heads. The idea of neighborhood or community security is something that has been accomplished in many places but has also failed in others. There are numerous variables that can determine a neighborhood's level of safety, and many of these variables can be influenced through design elements. In this paper we will explore the different design elements that hurt or help to improve community security. The analysis proceeds through an examination of new or lesser known options when it comes to creating cohesive and safe communities. The design and safety concepts explored in this paper are as listed; Defensible Spaces, Urban villages, Urban fortress', the Broken windows concept, and Technology in neighborhood security. These concepts will provide a framework for possible solutions within the blighted community being researched (Gardiner, 1978).

The East Washington Neighborhood Association is the neighborhood chosen to apply in theory some of the ideas surrounding neighborhood security. East Washington is in the City of East Point, Georgia (Ward B) and is the most blighted neighborhood in the city (50 Worst Properties List, The City of East Point). It also happens to be the poorest neighborhood within the city and is responsible for the most crime related incidents. (Community Analyst. ArcGis Online). Due to the 2008 housing crises East Washington has a unique issue with its housing stock. The blight and inconsistency amongst the housing in East Washington is likely leading to many of the crime related issues. This paper will provide a guide to using design elements as a way improve neighborhood security.

Research Methods

The research methods to be used in this study includes interviews with a number of people that reside in the East Washington Neighborhood. Participants in this study included, selected members of the East Washington Neighborhood Association, planners from the East Point Planning and Community Development department, and the East Point GIS specialist. As a result of a close working relationship the author was granted the use of closed data on the housing stock of East Washington, as well as crime data from the East Point Police Department. Additional materials included a survey given to various community members and association presidents.

The first step of the process was to conduct extensive research on; defensible spaces (designing to deter crime), urban villages (creating spaces to encourage communal bonding and responsibility), urban fortress' (securing space and buildings as a way of crime prevention), the broken windows concept (the idea that something which is clearly unkempt or neglected can become a target for vandalization and crime), and technology in neighborhood security.

After this, an extensive analysis on the East Washington housing stock was conducted using city GIS data. A survey was self-compiled and administered through Facebook neighborhood association groups, and the application Nextdoor. This survey was used to gain on the ground perceptions of crime and blight in both neighborhoods, and the lack thereof. Finally, by working closely with planners within the city, the research conducted was used to come up with several scenarios and plans that could help curb blight and crime within the down-trodden East Washington Neighborhood.

Literature Review

Neighborhood (environmental) security is an important aspect of home life all over the world. “Environmental Security (E/S) is an urban planning and design process which integrates crime prevention with neighborhood design and urban development. Essentially, it is a comprehensive environmental design approach that combines traditional techniques of crime prevention with newly developed theories and techniques. Furthermore, E/S is concerned not only with reduction of crime but also the fear of crime, since it is recognized that the fear of crime is equally serious and is a major contributor to the urban decay process”. (Gardiner, 1978, 1). The goal of environmental/neighborhood (interchangeable) security is to design spaces to limit the opportunity for crime. This term also has an emphasis on accomplishing the goal of limiting crime opportunities without creating fortresses that limit the quality of life. Designing and redesigning spaces to deter crime and deny criminal activity is a goal that can be accomplished by every neighborhood depending on resources and participation.

Some places excel in harboring safe spaces and communities, while others consistently struggle with crime and dangerous environments. There is an abundance of research done on this front that addresses different hurdles to safety specific to different places (National Crime Prevention Council). Some of these techniques and concepts are broad and can be applied to many places, and some are more focused to deal with very unique cases.

This literature review will serve as a basis for research regarding improving neighborhood security through planning and design. The concepts covered in this literature review consist of: Defensible Spaces, Urban villages, Urban fortress’, the Broken windows

concept, and Technology in neighborhood security. These concepts will provide an understanding of environmental security and provide ideas for implementation in East Point's East Washington Neighborhood.

Defensible Spaces

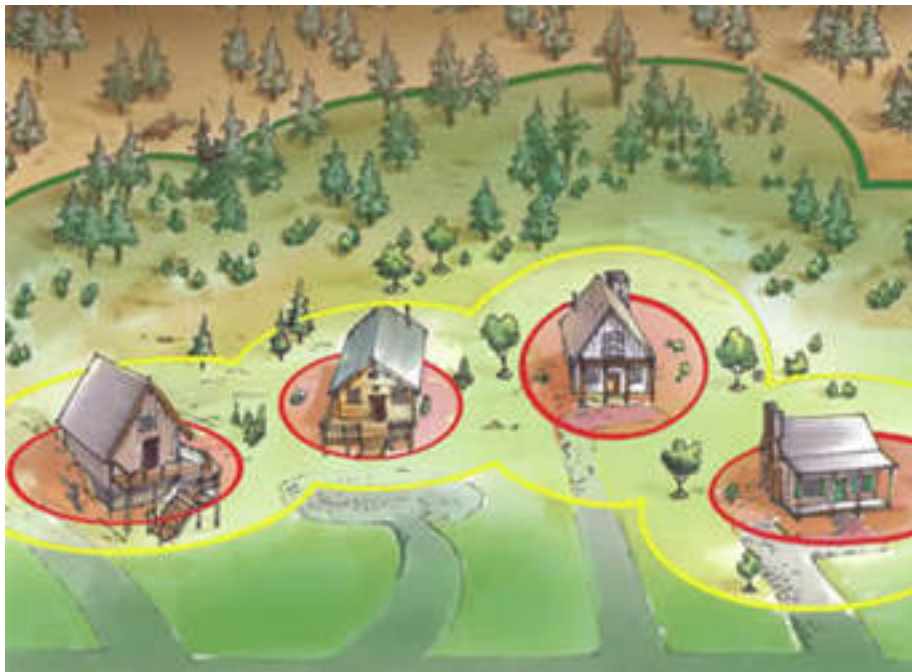
Defensible space is defined as “An environment designed to deter crime through markers, surveillance, and signs of ownership.” (Lidwell, Holden, Butler. 2015, 35). The Principles of Design source states that there are three main features of defensible space: territoriality, surveillance, and symbolic barriers.

Territoriality is explained as defining ownership within spaces. This includes gates, community signs and markers, hedges, and more. This aspect of defensible space stands on the notion that clearly owning and claiming property or space will deter crime. “Territoriality is defined as the capacity of the physical environment to create ,for each individual, perceived zones of territorial influence that result in a proprietary interest and felt responsibility.” (Gardiner, 1978, 14). The idea behind this theory is that the more territoriality applied to an area the least that area will be perceived as vulnerable, or easy to take advantage of.

Surveillance refers to an eye on the street open space level concept of safety. Proper lighting, well maintained community spaces, and reducing concealment are ways to implement surveillance. Some communities request that neighbors leave their porch lights on to deter crime. Having minimally concealed communities, coupled with a consistent presence of people and eyes on the street is a way to deter crime. The physical design of buildings and spaces play a significant part in natural surveillance. The height of a building,

and distance from the street and lights could hinder or increase security. Designing homes in clusters that are viewable by other neighbors increases surveillance and community engagement. Again, neighborhoods that perceive to be easily marked will in theory have more issues with security. “Natural surveillance is defined as the capacity of physical design to provide surveillance opportunities for residents. The idea here is to illuminate and locate public and semi-public pathways, entrances, and areas to facilitate surveillance by residents and to reduce ambiguity of use.” (Gardiner, 1978, 15).

Figure 1



B.O.R Defensible Space 2011

Symbolic barriers act hand in hand with territoriality and surveillance by providing opportunity for community engagement. Aesthetics such as swings, lawn furniture, porches, and plants are forms of symbolic barriers. These tools separate private ownership from public ownership while also building territoriality. Places that are perceived to be cared for are less likely to be seen as easy targets. “Symbolic barriers identified by residents as boundary lines

serve as defining areas of comparative safety. Many places warrant the use of symbolic barriers, including transition points between a public street and the semipublic grounds of a building; an area between a building's lobby and its corridors; or hallways on particular floors of a building." (AMF, 2020).

Porch-sitting culture

Coincidentally an American culture incorporated defensible space in the past but was cast aside for a lengthy period. Porch sitting culture was an important aspect in southern American living for centuries. Porch sitting offered a window into the public space, while also serving as a transition from the public realm to the private realm. This culture served as a tool of fraternization for people of all ages.

In the 19th and 20th century, a lack of indoor activities, air conditioning, and electronics forced people onto their porches. The increased use of the automobile, and a move from the front yard to the backyard also had an influence on the demise of porch-sitting in American culture. This naturally drove people to interact with their neighbors, community, and nature. There were literally always eyes on the street, and porch-sitting created a sense of community amongst neighbors. This sense of community created a sense of responsibility to self, neighbor, and community. It seems like architects and planners did away with the biggest piece of defensible space that Americans had at their disposal, during the subdivision movement.

"No front porches. My uncle says there used to be front porches. And people sat there sometimes at night, talking when they wanted to talk, rocking, and not talking when they didn't want to talk. Sometimes they just sat there and thought about things, turned things over. My uncle says the architects got rid of the front porches because they didn't look well.

But my uncle says that was merely rationalizing it; the real reason, hidden underneath, might be they didn't want people sitting like that, doing nothing, rocking, talking; that was the wrong KIND of social life. People talked too much. And they had time to think. So they ran off with the porches.” (Bradbury, 1968).

Trends on front porches have begun to take a turn. “Porch-building is on the rise across the country, up 23 percent on new homes from two decades ago.” (Freehill-Maye, 2017). The slow return to porch-sitting culture is likely attributed to the nostalgia of simpler times in American society. The rejection of the McMansion boom that contributed to the crippling recession of 2008, has seen a return to humble living. In 2014 the Census bureau reported that “63 percent of new single-family homes completed last year had this once-again-trendy feature, up from 42 percent in 1993.” (Toscano, 2014). From 2010-2017, the Census saw steady increases in patio, deck, and porch construction in every region of the United States of America (see table below). Perhaps this is because the market has been recovering since the recession, but the steady increase seems to be too significant. Trends point to a growing popularity in returning to porches, and outdoor spaces.

Table 1

Presence of Outdoor Features in New Single-Family Houses Completed¹
(Components may not add to totals because of rounding. Percents computed from unrounded figures.)

Year	Number of houses (in thousands)									Percent distribution									
	Total	With								Total	With								None
		Patio only	Porch only	Deck only	Patio and Porch	Porch and Deck	Patio and Deck	Patio, Porch, and Deck	None		Patio only	Porch only	Deck only	Patio and Porch	Porch and Deck	Patio and Deck	Patio, Porch, and Deck	None	
United States																			
2010	496	73	109	32	120	61	8	23	70	100	15	22	6	24	12	2	5	14	
2011	447	66	97	28	116	53	7	23	56	100	15	22	6	26	12	2	5	13	
2012	483	78	101	26	134	53	7	24	60	100	16	21	5	28	11	1	5	12	
2013	569	99	111	33	164	57	9	29	68	100	17	20	6	29	10	2	5	12	
2014	620	124	111	35	176	60	12	35	66	100	20	18	6	28	10	2	6	11	
2015	648	124	125	32	183	64	14	39	66	100	19	19	5	28	10	2	6	10	
2016	738	145	136	39	220	74	13	43	67	100	20	18	5	30	10	2	6	9	
2017	795	155	139	45	241	83	17	49	67	100	20	17	6	30	10	2	6	8	
RSE/SE	1	18	9	16	8	14	16	11	11	(NA)	3	2	1	3	1	(2)	1	1	

Northwest

HUD, U.S Census Bureau. 2017

Many neighborhoods could incorporate porch-sitting into their crime resilience efforts. This method or rather underrated driver of community building touches on all three points of defensible space: territoriality, natural surveillance, and symbolic barriers. Coupled with other environmental security techniques porches could be a useful, beautiful, and practical improvement on crime and socialization within a neighborhood.

Jane Jacobs is a prevalent source of knowledge when it comes to all of the mentioned aspects of urban design. In her popular book *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*, Jacobs expresses how having eyes on the street, and a healthy mix of private and public spaces can build a well-rounded community and city. (Jacobs, Jane. 1961).

Urban Village

The “Urban Village” theory leans on the assumption that a lack of social homogeneity can be a root source of chaos within a community. When the social aspect of the neighborhood is disorganized the place is viewed as a vulnerable and easy target. This idea of creating spaces to encourage communal bonding and responsibility to protect communities is a consistent piece of Jane Jacobs’ research. The Urban Village model solely relies on social boundaries as a way to protect the community and people.

As a free-standing theory, the Urban Village model has some flaws. “While social interaction and collective responsibility are seen as essential for effective neighborhood crime prevention, the urban village model relies on pre-existing cultural bonds, i.e. resident homogeneity, to achieve these essential behaviors. Therefore, it does not adequately address or recognize the socially heterogeneous neighborhood so common in our cities today.

Additionally, the urban village model does not recognize or consider the need for having a physical environment structured to allow and encourage social interaction in either a heterogeneous or homogeneous neighborhood.” (Gardiner, 1978, 13). Many American neighborhoods and cities are so diverse that hope for a more wholistic and open neighborhood may seem unattainable. The Urban Village theory fundamentally lacks a physical way of encouraging healthy socializing.

Urban Fortress

The Urban Fortress model is a much more straight-forward concept in environmental security. This concept is all about securing space and buildings as a way of crime prevention. It is a simplistic approach basically separating the public from the private by using gates, walls, and security. The goal is to isolate the resident from a seemingly harmful outside environment.

This concept is of course not without its flaws. “Studies indicate that the presence of security guards and extensive protection equipment, rather than enhancing the residents' feeling of security, actually generates more anxiety by presenting a fearful image of potential danger, and by encouraging the belief that the residents are powerless to prevent victimization. Eventually this perception can lead to a breakdown of the community's social structure by resident withdrawal from neighborhood life and indifference to problems and thus a relegation to the police of total responsibility for neighborhood control. Besides the social costs of the fortress model, the dollar costs of maintaining equipment and security personnel are such that few neighborhoods could afford them even if desired.” (Gardiner, 1978, 14).

Broken Windows Theory

The Broken Windows Theory is the idea that something which is clearly unkempt or neglected can become a target for vandalization and crime. Psychologist Philip Zimbardo created the basis of the theory in 1969 when he completed a field study revolving around 2 different cars. One car was left in a poor and crime ridden neighborhood in New York City, while the other was left in the affluent neighborhood of Palo Alto, California. The car in New York was quickly vandalized and stripped for parts, while the car in California was left untouched for up to a week. It wasn't until Zimbardo smashed the California car with a sledgehammer that things changed. The car in California taken back to Stanford's campus where Zimbardo and his graduate students got carried away vandalizing the car for experimental reasons. This spectacle led to random people joining in the fun. They realized that the destruction of the car was somehow stimulating. "Zimbardo's conclusions were the stuff of liberal criminology: Anyone — even Stanford researchers! — could be lured into vandalism, and this was particularly true in places like the Bronx with heightened social inequalities. For Zimbardo, what happened in the Bronx and at Stanford suggested that crowd mentality, social inequalities and community anonymity could prompt "good citizens" to act destructively (Ansfield. 2019)."

Since the events of Zimbardo's field study a plethora of experiments and papers (such as Bellafante, Ginia's, "Police Critics Draw Attention to Dark Side of 'Broken Windows' Strategy." The New York Times, and Welsh, Braga, and Bruinsma's "Reimagining Broken Windows: From Theory to Policy") have been published referencing this theory. Eventually it came to the much larger scope of communities and even cities. In 1982 two criminologist James Q. Wilson, and George L. Kelling drew inspiration from

Zimbardo's experiment to make the argument of the broken window concept. "If a window in a building is broken and is left unrepaired, all the rest of the windows will soon be broken." (Kelling & Wilson. 1982). Kelling and Wilson created the broken windows theory to address not just property but also human behavior. To New York City the "broken windows" became the people, and this led to some effective but highly controversial policing changes.

The controversial policing that followed the broken windows concept was not what Zimbardo intended with his original experiment. "Zimbardo wanted to document the social causes of vandalism to disprove the conservative argument that it stemmed from individual or cultural pathology". (Ansfield. 2019). Kelling and Wilson conveniently left out the fact that it was Zimbardo and his researchers that vandalized the car and got carried away with it. The omission of this fact misconstrued Zimbardo's experiment to fit the narrative of their "broken windows" concept. This made it easy for them to draw a line from one broken window to cause the vandalism of the car, when in actuality onlookers joined in the destruction of the California car because they saw others doing it and it looked enticing. Zimbardo called vandalism "Rebellion with a cause".

The misrepresentation of Zimbardo's experiment created the racialized tone of the broken windows concept. The original experiment that had everything to do with human nature, was turned into a weapon for the media and police against people of color. Zimbardo believed that his hypothesis had been confirmed: "The lack of community cohesion in the Bronx produced a sense of "anonymity. Conditions that create social inequality and put some people outside of the conventional reward structure of the society make them indifferent to its sanctions, laws, and implicit norms." (Zimbardo. 1962). Instead of using Zimbardo's

research to address a societal issue, Kellings, Wilson, New York City, and the media made the theory about race. The truth is society cannot just arrest people and create misinterpretations of an area and expect crime to just stop. People aren't windows and buildings. People are complex beings who when put into a failing societal system with no upward mobility will naturally rebel with a cause.

If the broken windows concept had been created with the caveat of racism it may have actually been a more worthy theory. It has been documented that places already vandalized will encourage more vandalism, but this is a physical attribute not a social one. Perhaps if cities and police forces focused on the physical and social environment rather than spending energy on low level petty offenses, the crime might subside naturally while increasing the quality of life in an area.

Figure 2



Morrison Patt. Broken Window's Policing isn't Broken. Arizona Daily Sun. 2015

Technology in environmental security

Technology seems to be progressing more rapidly with every passing year. Some of this technology has been designed and aimed at home security, which in turn can provide security for the whole of a community. Early forms of modern security systems first surfaced in the mid 1800's. The alarm was patented by the Reverend Augustus Russell Pope in 1853. Edwin Holmes purchased the patent from Pope and began producing and selling the alarm systems in 1858 (Donnelly. 1992). These early alarm systems came in the form of electromagnetic contacts that were connected to batteries and bells. When the bell was to ring due to a burglary attempt a guard was sent to the residence. This is essentially the same system we use to alarm systems today, but the technology is much more advanced. The first home cameras were introduced in the 1970's. These clunky devices came equipped with intercoms, alarm buttons, and lock switches.

The most popular and recent security tools being used are from companies Adobe, Nest, and Ring. Self-monitored security systems are easy to install for owners and are much cheaper than traditional security systems such as ADT. For a few hundred dollars, middle income, or even lower income households can self-secure their homes. Self-monitored security companies provide a number of different doorbells, cameras, flood lights, and security features that are easily assembled used. Each camera connects to an app where owners can receive notifications and real time video surveillance of what is going on in and around their homes. These devices are extremely precise and can project clear videos and pictures from much further than an owner's front yard.

Many neighborhood associations are encouraging as many neighbors as possible to purchase and use self-monitored security systems. If there is a neighborhood network of

devices this can help deter crime, and when crime occurs the network can help to identify the culprits. The different security and flood lights available from each company are also crime preventative measures as well-lit areas are believed to make spaces less vulnerable. These devices have been proven to solve and deter a number of crimes, and this is consistently showcased in the media.

Some cities such as Hapeville, GA (East Point's neighbor) have gone as far as setting up a system of cameras specifically for protecting their neighborhoods. Hapeville police use the Flock camera system that they speak highly of. "PSA: Criminals I'm going to try and help y'all one more time. The Hapeville Police Department does not back off of crime. We don't shelter in place. And we most assuredly do not quarantine. We are out in full force. We have the Flock camera system. We have made 4 arrest in 24 hours off this system alone. Hint: these cameras are everywhere!! Our officers are all over. For your own sake please, please stay out of Hapeville." (Hapeville Police Department. 2020). The good thing about the Flock system is that it has a built-in license plate reader. If a city were willing to invest in the security of its neighborhoods the Flock Camera system would be a relatively cheap and easy to use option.

Figure 3



Hapeville Police Department. Facebook Post 04/03/2020

Research

Tools

The main tools used to analyze the East Washington Neighborhood housing stock was the Clean City Initiative: 50 Worst Properties GIS database. Following the 2008 market crash East Point was faced with an overwhelming amount of abandoned homes. This issue prompted the creation of the 50 Worst Properties Program in 2010. Technically the 50 Worst Properties program is a part of the Clean City Initiative, as the scope of the efforts became much larger than just 50 properties. Due to the magnitude of the work a specific department of 3 employees was created to manage and facilitate all 50 worst duties.

“The Task Force actively identified properties that were deemed as unfit for human habitation. Over the course of three (3) years approximately 159-properties have been documented under the program. Via court actions, the City has been given permission to secure (board and clean) some of the properties and demolish others. This program is a collaborative effort between the City Manager’s Office, Municipal Court, City Attorney’s Office, Finance and each of the City’s service delivery departments: Planning & Community Development, Fire, Police, EP Power, Public Works-Buildings & Grounds, Water-Sewer and Solid Waste. (The City of East Point, FY 2018-FY 2019 Clean City Initiative (CC: 50 Worst Properties Program).”

Another program facilitated by the CCI is the East Point housing inventory count. The City Manager Fred Gardiner decided to create a system where the city would send out canvassers who would collect data on the quality of the city’s housing stock. While the process is long and tedious the CCI task force was able to rate most of the homes within East Washington. While collecting information from the CCI/50 worst database it became evident

that the East Washington neighborhood does indeed have the most vacant and the most blighted houses.

To analyze East Washington's demographic and financial data we used a new ArcGis online application named Community Analyst. Community Analyst compiles the American Community Survey and Census data to spatially organize data. Through Community Analyst we were able to draw the boundaries for East Washington and then immediately obtain accurate data for boundaries. Community Analyst also provides in depth infographics using the same information. (Many of these infographics will be provided in the appendix). This application made analyzing East Washington's neighborhood profile relatively easy. All of the GIS databases and information were provided by East Point GIS Specialist Dominic Maldonado. What he didn't directly provide, he instead taught the steps necessary to extract the data and manage it. The City Manager Frederick Gardiner gave permission for city resources to be used for this paper.

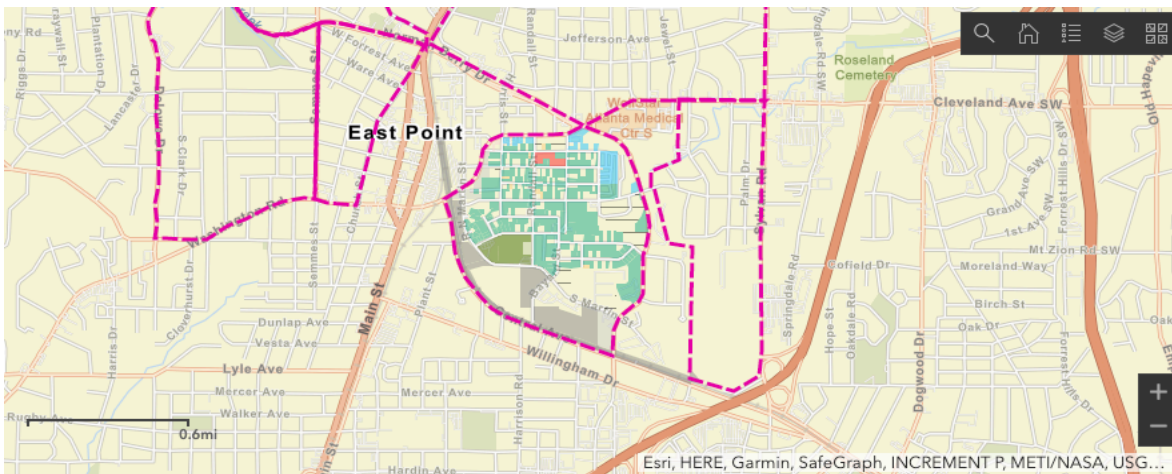
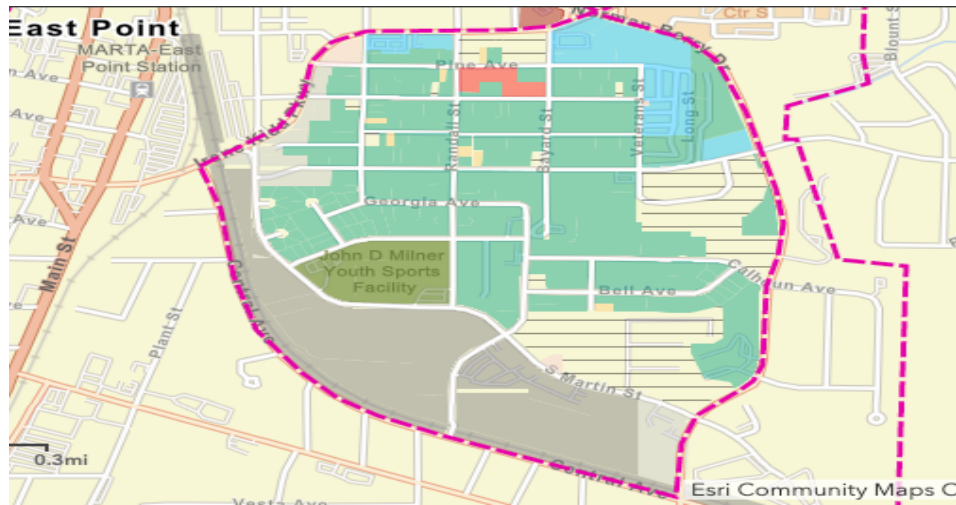
Another source of information was the crime data comparing two different streets in East Washington. The data was provided by the East Point Police Captain Kenneth Drake (Daytime Watch Commander).

Besides the tools listed above, a survey was conducted of some residents in East Washington to get a sense of their concerns and feelings about their neighborhood's security. In addition, we interviewed the assistant planning director who is in charge of the 50 worst properties program to gain insight about the planning department's program and how effective it is.

East Washington Neighborhood

As previously stated in the intro the neighborhood of East Washington happens to be the most blighted, poorest, and underserved neighborhood in the city of East Point. The neighborhood boundaries are Central Ave to the South and West, Irene Kidd Pkwy to the North, and Norman Berry Drive to the East. The neighborhood is also noticeably close to both Hapeville and College Park borders.

Figures 4&5



Esri, ArcGis, City of East Point: CCI Map

Within the boundaries of East Washington is a multi-field baseball park which used to be accompanied by a recreation center (which has been torn down in recent years). The neighborhood is home to the Kipp South Fulton Academy. They also have a tiny little-known grocery store connected to the trailer park. There is also a plaza with different businesses including a small gym, a barber shop, a café, and a food mart. It should be noted that the food mart doesn't sell any fresh food or produce. The neighborhood is also in very close proximity to East Point's fleet maintenance, land fill, a recycling plant, and many other industrial uses that would be considered detrimental to the health of the citizens. The citizens of East Washington, and East Point in general frequently complain about the smell produced by the land fill and recycling plant. There are also numerous churches in the neighborhood, and the Gus Thornhill funeral home.

Very early in the research we discovered that the East Washington Neighborhood Association doesn't have much of an online presence. The Jefferson Park neighborhood association who we surveyed as well in comparison to East Washington was extremely receptive, and they happen to have a consistent neighborhood Facebook page. The Jefferson Park Neighborhood association host a plethora of events and are vocal in city related issues. Only Cleveland Avenue separates these two neighborhoods. However, these two neighborhoods are on opposite ends of the spectrum when it comes to their profiles. Jefferson Park is much wealthier according to community analyst.

We were able to quickly get a hold of representatives from Jefferson Parks Neighborhood association board and spoke directly to the president. We struggled to even find East Washington's representatives, and when we finally did locate their names and contact information no one ever responded. This made the surveying and interviewing

process difficult. 38 members of Jefferson Park responded to the survey, while only 4 residents of East Washington responded. The 4 residents that responded were members of the local gym in the plaza.

To make matters even more interesting the Neighborhood of River Park (which sets directly East of East Washington) is more similar in profile. River Park however has a stronger online presence, and a stronger presence of community. The lack of a recognizable community, or difficulty to find community leaders could be a contributing cause of East Washington's problems. This realization directly related to the "Urban Village" concept discussed in the literature review section of this paper. While the lackluster response from East Washington residents and representatives was disappointing it provided insight into why the community has been struggling.

It should be noted that East Washington still has a lot to offer as a community. There are many more beautiful and well-maintained homes than dilapidated ones, however there is too much blight to simply ignore the issue. A consistent sense of community was recognized during site visits. The big plaza is a central place where many adults living in the neighborhood spend time. Some would frame this as loitering, but the business owners don't seem to mind, and the people who are hanging out are genuinely nice and welcoming. This aspect could be related to the eyes on the street concept of planning. The second instance of community is recognized in the ballpark. There is a turf soccer field in the park, and it is consistently utilized in the evenings by the Hispanic community. The assumption is that many of these Hispanics are taking up residence in a private trailer park section of the neighborhood. It should be noted that even many of the trailer parks look well-maintained.

The people of East Washington may be poor in comparison to other neighborhoods, but they aren't lesser people by any means. The community is there, it just may not be as easily accessible or recognizable as other neighborhoods surrounding East Washington.

Figure 6



City of East Point: East Washington. John D. Milner Recreational Facility.

Demographic Analysis

All data in this section was collected by ArcGis Online: Community Analyst. Currently the Neighborhood of East Washington has a population of 1,623 people, and an average household size of 2.8 people. Adolescence (ages 0-19) are 32% of the population in East Washington, 38% of the population in River Park, and 20% of the population in Jefferson Park. The population of adolescence for Fulton County is 25%, and Georgia is

27%. Children and teenagers don't add capital to a community, so a higher percentage of children will lower the economic statistics in an area.

East Washington has a black population of 71%, a Hispanic population of 26%, and a white population of 15%. River Park is even less diverse with a black population of 78%, a Hispanic population of 15%, and a white population of 14%. Jefferson Park has a black population of 55%, a white population of 36%, and a Hispanic population of 8%.

The median household income is \$29,228. In comparison the median household for the U.S.A is \$61,937, Georgia is \$56,183, Atlanta is \$61,381, East Point is \$39,131, the sister neighborhood of River Park is 27,580, and the sister Neighborhood of Jefferson Park is \$54,029. The per capita income from East Washington is \$13,888, compared to River Park's \$15,291, and Jefferson Park's \$31,104. The median age for East Washington is 33.6, while River Park is only 27.8, and Jefferson Park is 43.6. Only 5% of East Washington's population have a bachelor or graduate degree compared to River Park's 19% and Jefferson Park's 29%.

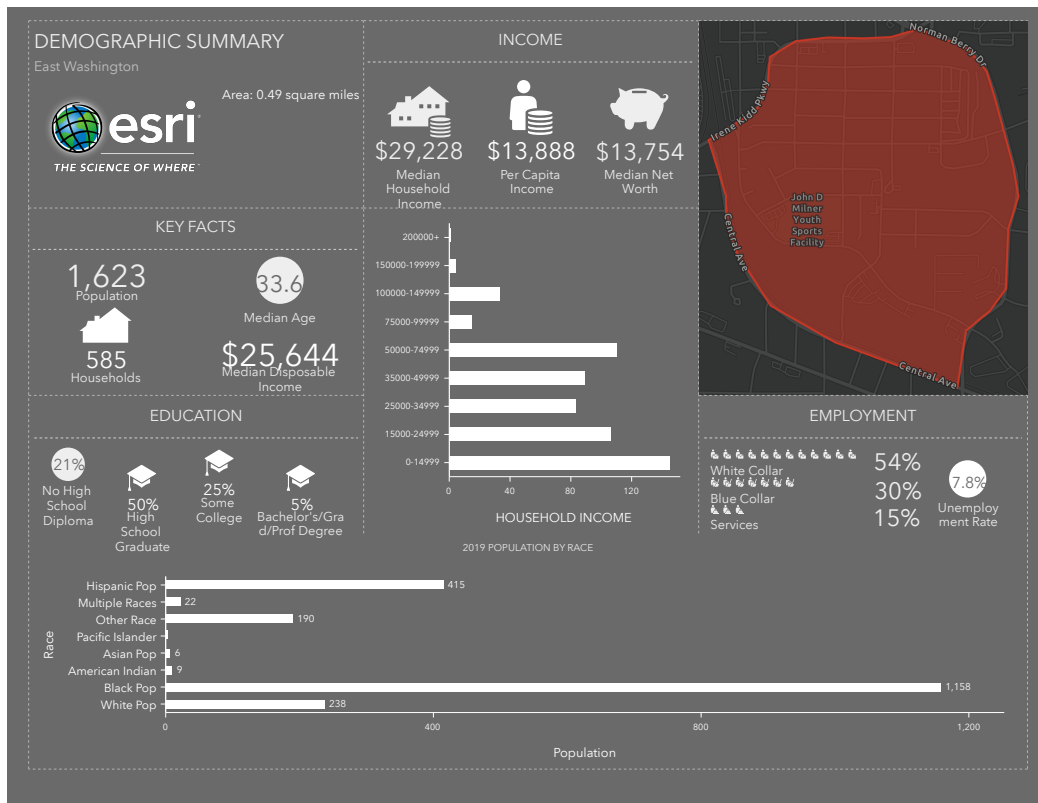
This analysis suggests the following observations about East Washington. East Washington is economically comparable to River Park, which makes sense because the neighborhoods are only separated by a small hospital complex (South Fulton Medical Center).

1. The median age, and percentage of individuals with bachelor's degrees or higher signifies that River Park has a younger demographics with easier upward mobility.

This likely means that this River Park will continue to grow and address their blighted properties (which is much less than East Washington).

2. East Washington and River Park have much younger demographics, and many more children than Jefferson Park.
3. Even though Jefferson Park is literally across the street from East Washington, the historical white wealthy population has created a more resilient community.

Figure 7



Esri: ArcGIS Online Community Analyst: East Washington Neighborhood Demographic Summary. More infographics provided in appendix

Housing Analysis

According to the CCI database 79 out of 299 homes in East Washington are vacant homes or lots. In comparison the neighborhood of River Park has 52 vacant structures with 342 total homes counted. It is no coincidence that all of these vacant properties are either on the 50 worst list or being recommended to be added to the list. Along with a larger number of

vacant homes is a private trailer park on the Eastern edge of the neighborhood. While the trailer park properties aren't currently counted in the CCI housing inventory, many of the structures are on the 50 worst list and have a history of code violations.

Figure 8



City of East Point: CCI Housing Analysis Dashboard: East Washington

Crime Analysis

For the crime analysis the approach was to take sample sizes from East Washington, Jefferson Park, and River Park, and compare the data. It is hypothesized that the area with more vacant and blighted homes would have more crime related events.

The addresses chosen are as listed:

1. 1344-1444 (30 Houses) Georgia Ave, East Point, GA 30344 (East Washington non-blighted)
2. 1310-1408 (29 Houses)Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr, East Point, GA 30344 (East Washington Blighted)
3. 2766-2846 (36 Houses) Palm Dr, East Point, GA 30344 (River Park)
4. 1275-1421 (51 houses) Jefferson Ave, East Point, GA 30344 (Jefferson Park)

Crime data was collected for 146 total houses in East Point.

The goal in East Washington was to compare one blighted street (Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr.), to a non-blighted street (Georgia Ave.). For Jefferson Park, and River Park two normally non-blighted streets were chosen to compare to East Washington. The crime data goes back one full year (04/07/2019-04/07/2020). It should be noted that the addresses are about the same in number, however the range chosen for Jefferson Park (Jefferson Ave.) and River Park (Palm Dr.) are along more major corridors, while the East Washington streets are a bit smaller in magnitude with less traffic. The results of the crime data collection are below. (A spreadsheet of specific crimes is provided in the appendix). (City of East Point Police Department, Crime Count Statistics)

1. 1344-1444 Georgia Ave. (East Washington non-blighted)
 - a. 10 total crimes counted.
2. 1310-1408 Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr. (East Washington Blighted)
 - a. 25 total crimes counted.
3. 2766-2846 Palm Dr. (River Park)
 - a. 19 total crimes counted.
4. 1275-1421 Jefferson Ave. (Jefferson Park)

- a. 15 total crimes counted.

Based on these results the hypothesis proved to be correct in that places inflicted with blight and unkempt properties do have higher instances of crime related events. One conclusion is that populating and redeveloping the Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr. street will likely reflect similar crime patterns as Georgia Avenue. This sentiment was also expressed by Vincent Washington (the Assistant Housing Director and 50 Worst Properties director), in his interview on the 50 Worst Properties project.

“Interviewer - Would you consider proper urban design as a tool to combat crime in a neighborhood?

Vincent Washington - No, more community involvement, policing and occupied homes will give you neighborhood stability which will remove blight and positively effect crime rates (Vincent Washington, 2020).”

(This full interview is in listed in the appendix).

Recommendations

50 Worst Properties Program

In the interview with Vincent Washington he spoke about possible improvements to the 50 Worst Property Program that would make redevelopment of blighted areas even more efficient.

“Interviewer - What would you change to make the 50 worst properties program more effective?

Vincent Washington - If we had a way to make the owners more responsible for their properties to reduce the burden placed on the city and its resources (Vincent Washington, 2020).”

As it currently stands the 50 Worst Program is extremely effective in its implementation, but it is a slow process for many of the properties. The process for the 50 Worst Program is described below in a four-step process.

Group A. Identification of Property

- Code Enforcement creates a list of frequent complaint about nuisance properties.
- This list is then forwarded to the 50 Worst team and other departments for review.
- The 50 Worst team takes the list and inspects the properties to see which need immediate attention.
- This list is then compared to the property Tax Assessor site.
- A letter is then sent to the owner to address the issue(s) with the property.

Group B. Board and Secure

- If the owner cannot be contacted the property file is then forwarded to the city Solicitor
- If the owner complies and solves the issue they are removed from the list.
- After 30 days owner is cited if they are still in state.
- If the owner is not in the state an affidavit is completed stating that the property is unsafe and needs abatement as soon as possible.
- The solicitor then schedules a court date to have the judge decide on an Order to secure the property.
- Buildings and Grounds board and abate on weekends only and begin the boarding process.

Group C. Demolition

- If the boards are removed or the property is further vandalized an affidavit is filled out to suggest demolition or salvage for the property.
- Once demolition is court ordered, the property is prepared for demolition by issuance of a letter regarding abatement of rodent control, test for asbestos, utility cuts
- Property is demolished
- Seed and straw property

Group D. Liens

- Reimbursement of funds spent on staff hours and material
- Rodent control; test for asbestos and utility cuts are submitted to City Solicitor
- Solicitor prepares and files a lien on property
- Any liens paid go back to the city for operation expenses.

As shown above, this process is tedious and has to go through many different departments before anything can be done about blighted homes. Due to the 2008 housing market crash many owners of the blighted properties never returned to the neighborhood. This makes tracking them down for court hearings difficult. Though the process has made many strides at redeveloping and cleaning up the city, it is a slow process, with little returns on investment. The

sad truth is, is that if people can't afford to upkeep and repair their homes, they probably can't afford the tax liens either.

Recommendation #1

Considering the amount of time, it takes for one property to move through the 50 worst process, perhaps a solution involving a better return on maintenance for the city should be explored. A brief conversation was held with the City Manager Frederick Gardiner about the possibility of a land banking program. More specifically, the City Manager mentioned a possible partnership with the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority.

“What is a Land Bank? - As common denominator, we describe the land bank as a public authority created to efficiently hold, manage and develop tax-foreclosed property. Land banks act as a legal and financial mechanism to transform vacant, abandoned and tax-foreclosed property back to productive use. In addition, a land bank is a powerful locational incentive, which encourages redevelopment in older communities that generally have little available land and neighborhoods that have been blighted by an out-migration of residents and businesses.” (Land Bank Atlanta, 2016).

Land banking would provide East Point with a legal avenue to seize properties that are tax foreclosed. Then these properties could be sold low to teachers, police officers, and other valuable members of society to then rehabilitate and live in. This would save the city money in maintenance fees and provide more tax revenue. It is unlikely that East Point has the resources to fund its own land-bank but creating a relationship with LBA could prove to be a fruitful partnership.

Recommendation #2

The big difference between East Washington Neighborhood, and River Park neighborhood is the community engagement. As stated earlier in this paper, River Park has a very strong and motivated neighborhood association despite it being one of the poorer and more blighted neighborhoods. This strong community connection is what facilitated a quicker recovery and growth period for River Park compared to East Washington. The best thing East Washington can do is formally and consistently organize the neighborhood association.

East Washington is relatively successful when it comes to their eyes on the street approach to neighborhood security, but as we saw earlier there is rarely eyes on the street in chronically blighted areas. The non-blighted street (Georgia Ave) had much less crime than the blighted street (Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr.). If East Washington were to do simple things like building a well-managed Facebook group, a website or even a Nextdoor account they could create a sense of community which creates security and reduces vulnerability.

Once the community is organized its residents can then advocate for better services and safety in their neighborhood. Council members and police seem to be more responsive to neighborhoods like Jefferson Park, but this is because the neighborhood has organizational power. If East Washington were to organize, they could force the food mart in their neighborhood to supply fresh foods. They could encourage the city to improve the baseball park, and even use it more frequently for city sanctioned events.

Recommendation #3

Considering that East Point has a big issue with car related crimes such as theft and vandalism it would behoove the city to invest in technology that can aide in curbing this kind of crime. For the East Washington neighborhood survey the 4 participants listed “burglary of home”, and crime as the most prevalent. Trends show that the neighborhood of Jefferson Park tends to have more automobile related crimes than East Washington. This is likely because the cars in Jefferson Park are nicer and carry a larger risk/reward value. If a cities more affluent neighborhoods are experiencing consistent crime, then the whole city really needs a re-evaluation.

The best solution for East Washington and East Point is to ramp up the use of cameras. When East Washington organizes a more effective neighborhood association, they can encourage members to invest in self-service home cameras. If those that can afford it purchase a Ring, Nest, or Adobe home camera system this can be a first level deterrent and assist police.

East Point should consider investing in license plate reading cameras on a massive scale following Hapeville’s (and even College Park’s) lead using the Flock camera system. Again, this can act as a deterrent and it will make the police departments jobs much easier in tracking crime. According to Captain Drake the city is currently exploring this kind of technology even though they are behind. He further suggested that the city incorporate a kind of camera that is sensitive to noises like gun shots, car screeching, and window shattering, that will turn in the direction of the sound when initiated.

Conclusion

The neighborhood of East Washington is by no means a poorly designed neighborhood. The neighborhood has multiple avenues of entry and exit, it has a school, a gym, grocery stores and convenient stores, a recreation park, plenty of churches, sidewalks, and nice-looking homes. The problem with East Washington isn't design it is organization. Before 2008 the neighborhood while not middle class was much better than it is now. Many homes were abandoned, and the neighborhood never recovered. Crime became more prevalent especially on streets that were extremely blighted. This paper is an attempt to identify solutions to help East Washington reach its true potential as a safe and beautiful place to live.

When communities are viewed as vulnerable, they are taken advantage of, but when neighbors look out for each other the community can be stronger. The best options for reviving East Washington involves creating an "urban village" and using technology to do it. Feasible solutions include:

1. Work with the Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank to facilitate a legal way of seizing property.
2. Form a truly cohesive, consistent, and functional Neighborhood Association for East Washington to create an urban village.
3. Invest in low level and high-level security technology as preventative measures to crime, and convenience for local law enforcement.

These solutions are realistic and provide East Washington with the fastest path to prosperity. The most important of these is the community organization. Providing the current

vacant housing to constructive members of community and society, while empowering the current residents of the neighborhood could be effective in completely revamping the neighborhood, without gentrifying it.

It is no secret that East Washington is a poor community by modern standards and metrics. However, this lack of income is not a good excuse for the overwhelming blight in the neighborhood. Even when compared to another poor neighborhood River Park, East Washington has many more blighted properties and crime. Being directly across the street from one of the cities more affluent neighborhoods doesn't make matters any better. East Washington has plenty of potential and amazing people living within the neighborhood, the city and residents just need to find a way to tap into that energy. The City of East Point has a responsibility to breathe life into East Washington, and it is hoped that this paper offer some insight and a feasible path to success.

Bibliography

Gardiner, Richard. 1978. *Design for safe neighborhoods*. The environmental security planning and design process. Washington D.C.: National Institute of Law Enforcement and Criminal Justice Law Enforcement Assistance Administration United States Department of Justice. <https://www.ncjrs.gov/pdffiles1/Digitization/50335NCJRS.pdf>

Lidwell, William. Holden, Kritina. Butler, Jill. 2015. *The Pocket: Universal Principles of Design*. Beverly, Massachusetts.: Rockport Publishers.

AFM. "Crime Prevention through environmental design." American Family Insurance. Accessed January 30, 2020. <https://www.amfam.com/resources/articles/loss-control-resources/crime-prevention-through-environmental-design>

Bradbury, Ray. 1963. *Fahrenheit 451*. New York, NY.: Ballantine Books.

Freehill-Maye, Lynn. 2017. "America rediscovers its love of the front porch." City Lab. <https://www.citylab.com/life/2017/11/front-porches-are-having-a-moment/546176/>

Toscano, Samantha. 2014. "Porches are officially making a comeback. And we're all about it." HuffPost. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/porches-making-a-comeback_n_5630321

HUD, U.S Census Bureau. 2017 Characteristics of New Housing. <https://www.census.gov/construction/chars/pdf/c25ann2017.pdf>

Jacobs, Jane. 1961. *The Death and Life of Great American Cities*. New York. Vintage Books

Ansfield, Bench. 2019. "How a 50-year-old study was misconstrued to create destructive broken-windows policing." Washington Post. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/2019/12/27/how-year-old-study-was-misconstrued-create-destructive-broken-windows-policing/>

Kelling, George L., Wilson, James, Q. 1982. "Broken Windows: The Police and Neighborhood Safety." The Atlantic. <https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/1982/03/broken-windows/304465/>

Welsh, Brandon. Braga, Anthony. Bruinsma, Gerben. 2015. "Reimagining Broken Windows: From Theory to Policy". Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency.

Bellafante, Ginia . 2015. "Police Critics Draw Attention to Dark Side of 'Broken Windows' Strategy." The New York Times

De La Cruz, Beth-uel. 2019. “Adobe Vs. Nest Secure Vs. Ring Alarm Home Security.” Home Alarm Report. <https://homealarmreport.com/home-security/abode-vs-nest-vs-ring/>

Donnelly, Karen. 1992. *Domestic Security: The Holmes Burglar Alarm Telegraph, 1853-1876*. University of Pennsylvania.
https://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1514&context=hp_theses

“Crime prevention and personal safety tips to help keep you and your community safe from crime”. National crime prevention council.
<https://www.ncpc.org/resources/home-neighborhood-safety/>

The City of East Point, “FY 2018-FY 2019 Clean City Initiative: 50 Worst Properties Program”. 2018.
<https://eastpointga.icitywork.com/>

Hapeville Police Department. Facebook post. 04/03/2020.
<https://www.facebook.com/HapevillePD/posts/2389565141144211>

City of East Point, 50 Worst Properties Department. “50 Worst Properties Process”. East Point, GA. 2018.
http://eastpointcityga.igm2.com/Citizens/Detail_LegiFile.aspx?Frame=&MeetingID=2079&MediaPosition=&ID=2104&CssClass=

Fulton County/City of Atlanta Land Bank Authority. “Organizational Overview”. 2016
<https://fccalandbank.org/overview/>

Morrison Patt. 2015. “Broken Window’s Policing isn’t Broken”. Arizona Daily Sun.
https://azdailysun.com/news/opinion/broken-windows-policing-isn-t-broken/article_4a3c91f3-a0ba-56bc-a0bf-5c3a72f2e1a2.html

Appendix

50 worst interview questions – Vincent Washington (April 7, 2020)

1. What exactly is East Point's 50 worst program?
The 50 Worst program is the City of East Point's way of effectively addressing blighted properties.
2. Please briefly explain your job responsibilities.
My responsibilities include:
 1. Identifying blighted properties with the task force (P&CD, Fire, Code Enforcement, Legal).
 2. Notifying the owners of record for compliance. If owners are non-responsive or they do not comply step 3. If owners of the properties agree to a Consent Order, I review rehabilitation plans and monitor their progress based on the Consent Order.
 3. Prepare properties for court hearing.
 4. Clean and board properties or Demolish properties pursuant to Court Order issued by Chief Judge.
 5. Maintain properties that have Court Orders.
3. Which neighborhood would you consider the most blighted or neglected?
East Washington and River Park. (Ward B)
4. Is there a correlation between crime rates and blight within East Point's neighborhoods?
Yes, to included Vagrancy and Illegal activities such as Drugs, Theft and Prostitution. The standing argument for debate is does Blight bring Crime or does Crime bring Blight.
5. Would you consider the 50 worst program an effective and valuable city operation?
It is effective and valuable in that we remove blight through rehabilitation, cleaning and boarding or demolition. Rehabilitation or new construction is the greatest benefit in that the property is habitable which makes the property occupiable the city receives taxes and utilities.
6. What would you change to make the 50 Worst Program more effective?
If we had a way to make the owners more responsible for their properties to reduce the burden placed on the city and its resources.
7. In what ways have you seen the 50 Worst Program best help the city?
Re-development of the effected neighborhoods.
8. Would you consider proper urban design as a tool to combat crime in a neighborhood?
No, more community involvement, policing and occupied homes will give you neighborhood stability which will remove blight and positively effect crime rates.

Neighborhood Surveys

East Washington Neighborhood Survey Responses

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-XFSSPKKX7/>

Jefferson Park Neighborhood Survey Responses

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/results/SM-Z9FDZKKX7/>

Neighborhood Crime Count 04/07/19-04/07/20

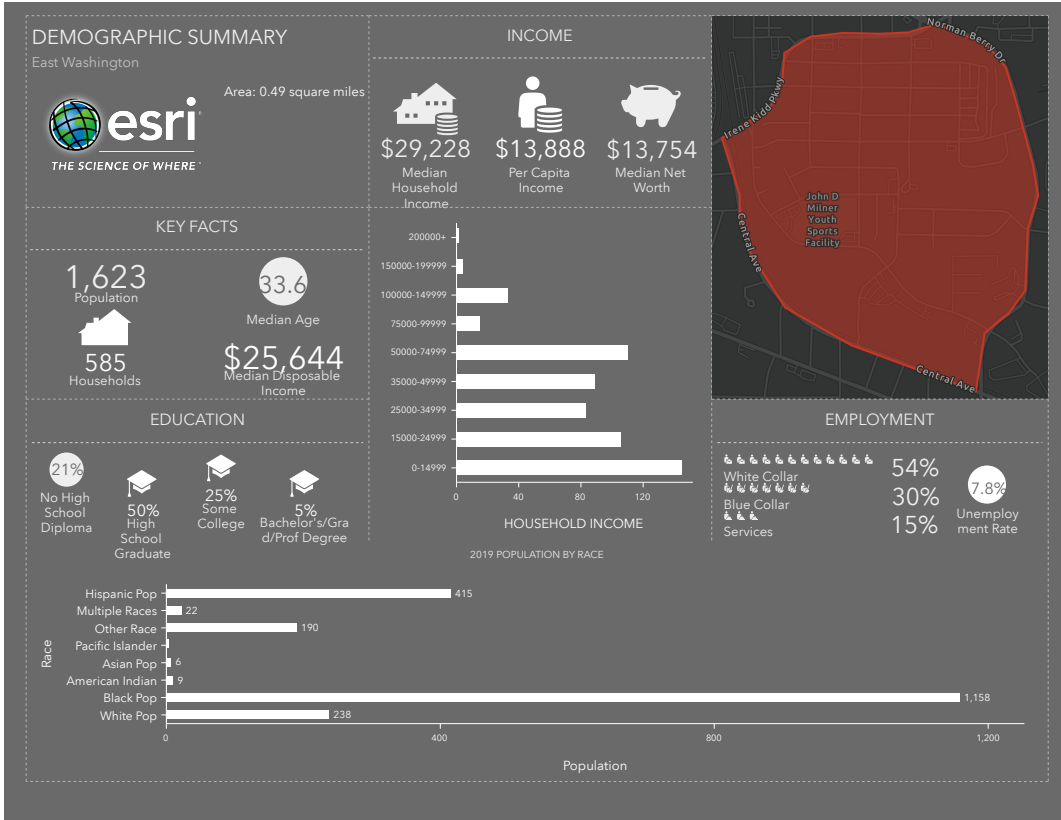
	Type	Count
1310-1408 Gus Thornhill Jr. Dr.	ALARM Count	5
	ALARM SYSTEM VIOLATION Count	1
	BURGLARY - FORCED ENTRY Count	2
	CIVIL DISPUTE Count	1
	CRIMINAL TRESPASS - PROPERTY DAMAGE Count	1
	FIREARMS, DISCHARGING WITHIN CITY Count	3
	PERSON SICK Count	1
	STOLEN VEHICLE RECOVERED Count	3
	THEFT FROM RESIDENCE Count	1
	THEFT FROM VEHICLE Count	3
	THEFT OF CITY PROPERTY Count	1
	THEFT OF TAG / DECAL Count	1
	TRAFFIC OFFENSE Count	1
	WANTED PERSON LOCATED Count	1
	Grand Count	25

	Type	Count
1275-1421 Jefferson Ave	ALARM Count	2
	BURGLARY Count	1
	CRIMINAL TRESPASS - PROPERTY DAMAGE Count	1
	INFORMATION Count	1
	MENTALLY ILL PERSON Count	1
	MISSING PERSON Count	1
	MISSING PERSON - RUNAWAY Count	3
	PERSON DEAD - UNDETERMINED Count	1
	PROPERTY - LOST/FOUND Count	1
	THEFT FROM PORCH Count	2
	TRAFFIC ACCIDENT (HIT & RUN) Count	1
	Grand Count	15

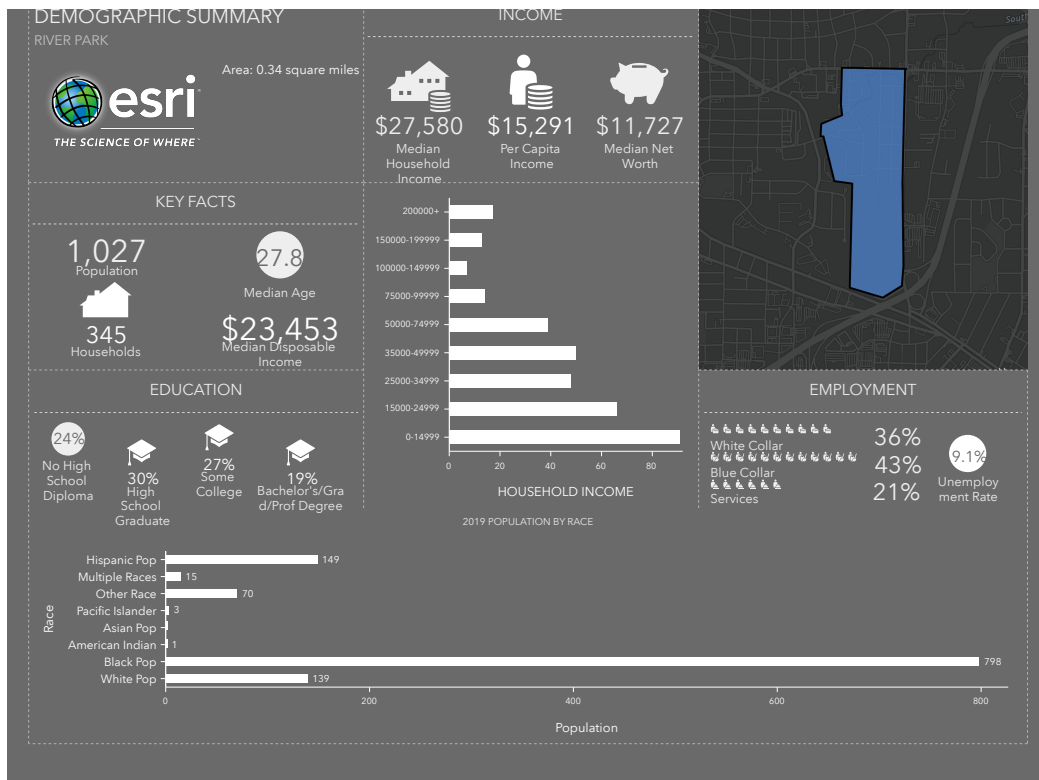
	Type	Count
2766-2846 Palm Dr.	BATTERY Count	1
	BATTERY - SIMPLE Count	2
	BURGLARY Count	1
	CANCEL CASE NUMBER Count	1
	DISORDERLY CONDUCT FIGHTING Count	1
	FIRE Count	1
	FIREARMS, DISCHARGING WITHIN CITY Count	2
	INFORMATION Count	1
	JUVENILE CASE Count	1
	LOUD NOISES YELLING SHOUTING ETC Count	1
	MENTALLY ILL PERSON Count	1
	PERSON DEAD - HOMICIDE Count	1
	POSSESSION OF A SCHEDULE II CONTROLLED SUBSTANCE - COCAINE Count	1
	STOLEN VEHICLE RECOVERED Count	2
	THEFT- ATTEMPT Count	1
	THEFT OF PERSONAL PROPERTY Count	1
	Grand Count	19

	Type	Count
1323-2444 Georgia Ave	BATTERY Count	1
	CRIMINAL TRESPASS WARNING Count	1
	FIREARMS, DISCHARGING WITHIN CITY Count	1
	HIT & RUN Count	1
	INFORMATION Count	1
	PERSON DEAD - NATURAL Count	1
	THEFT FROM VEHICLE Count	2
	THEFT OF TAG / DECAL Count	1
	TRAFFIC OFFENSE Count	1
Grand Count	10	

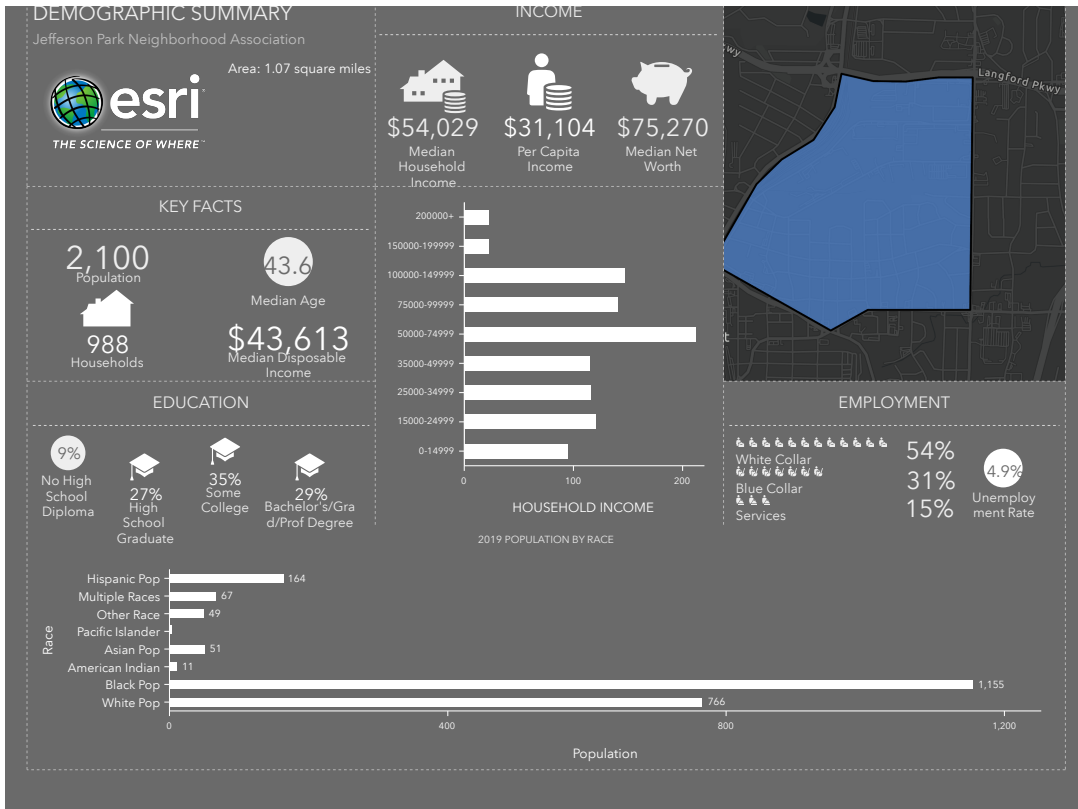
City of East Point: Crime Statistics for East Washington, Jefferson Park, and River Park Neighborhoods



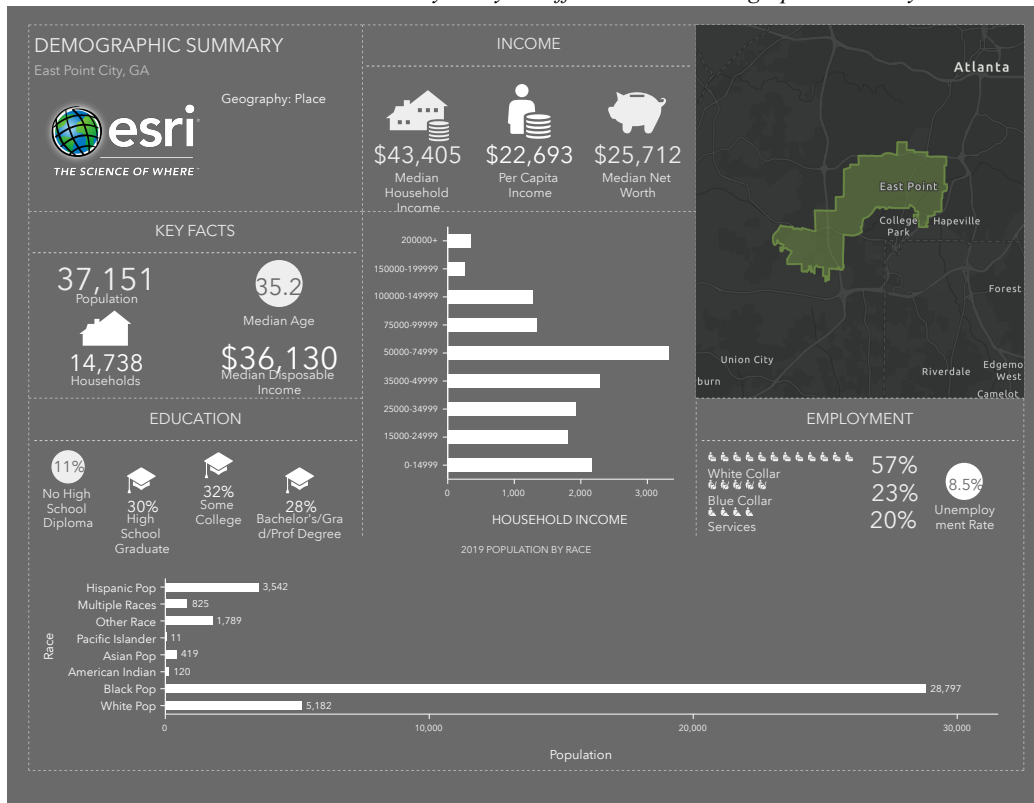
Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: East Washington: Demographic Summary



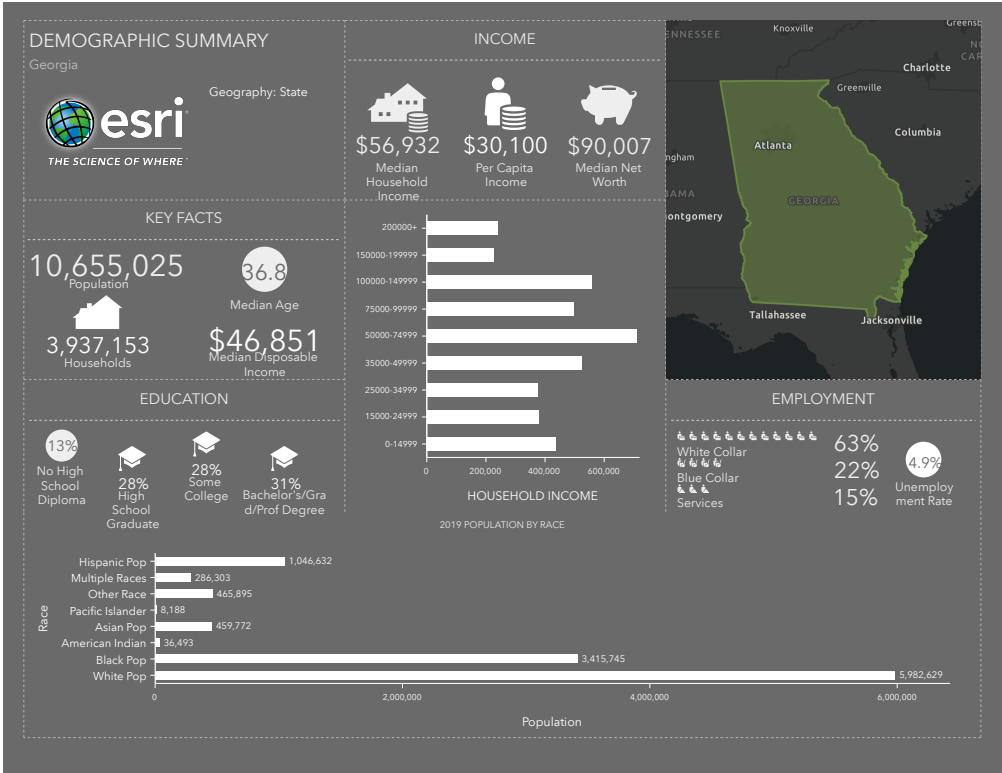
Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: River Park: Demographic Summary



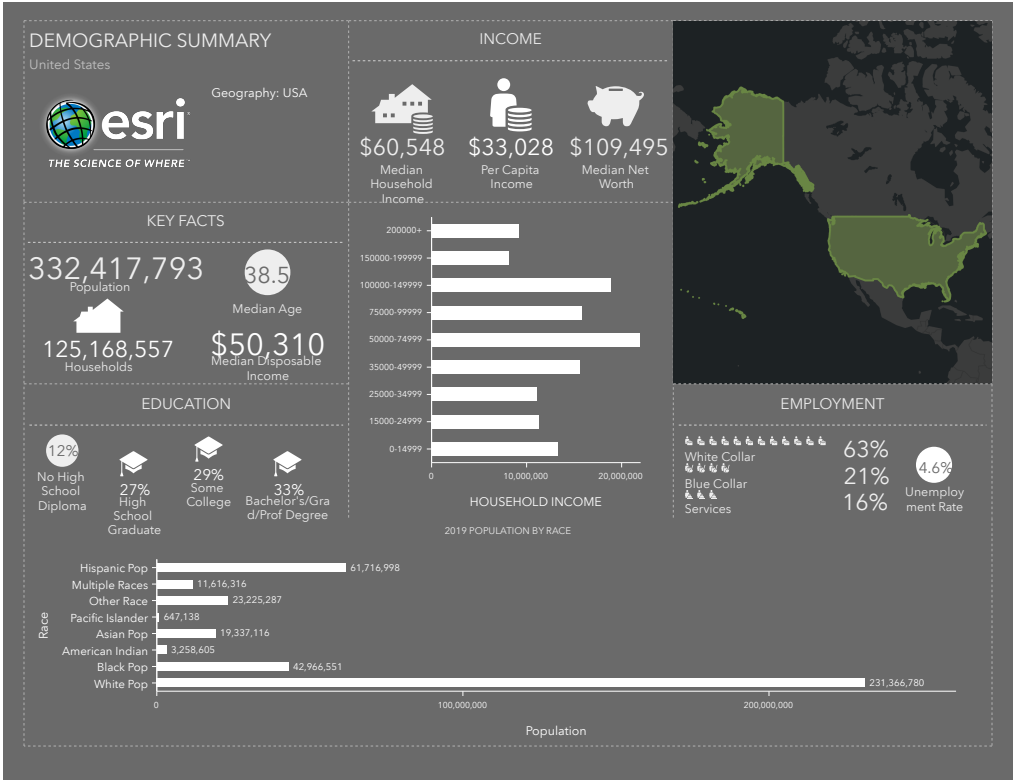
Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: Jefferson Park: Demographic Summary



Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: East Point: Demographic Summary.



Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: Georgia: Demographic Summary.



Esri: ArcGis Online Community Analyst: U.S.A: Demographic Summary.

