Commercial District Safety & Sanitation

Foundation issues for districts

- Perception of safety is critical to attract pedestrians, firms and investment
- Cleanliness/physical conditions affect a district's image, sense of safety and may attract crime (broken windows theory)
- Value issues & conflicts are embedded in safety and sanitation interventions
 - What does safety mean, what are threats to safety
 - Appropriate standards for safety and sanitation
 - Respective roles of community members & police
- Community organization and deliberation helps define shared norms and broaden engagement to enforce them

Public Safety Approaches

- Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design
- Community Policing and Community-Police Partnerships
- Supplemental Security Services

Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design

- Focuses on design & management of the physical environment to reduce crime
- Seeks to eliminate opportunities for crime with community surveillance ("eyes on the streets") and "ownership" of spaces
- General approaches:
 - Promote visibility throughout district
 - Generate activity and mixed uses to reduce isolated spaces
 - Promote ownership and maintenance of spaces
 - Signage to define private/public spaces and behavior standards

Applying CPTED

- Use CPTED principles and checklist to evaluate the commercial district:
 - Define problems areas, issues, conditions
 - Offer design improvements/alternatives
 - Work with public agencies, private property owners and business to implement them
- Incorporate CDTEP into guidelines for façade improvement programs
- Conduct design review of proposed projects using CPTEP principles

Community Policing

- Urban police departments often seek to partner with communities to address crime
 - Use community input to set policing priorities
 - Expand reporting of criminal activities
 - Expand crime prevention efforts
 - Develop innovative approaches to fight crime
- Requires considerable time to build trust, define shared goals & implement actions

Payne-Arcade Crime and Safety Program

- Crime & Public Safety Committee promoted dialogue, fostered shared view of the problem and crafted solutions
- Community education on policing and how to handle hostile situations
- Instituted summer beat patrol
- Direct cell phone contact with beat police officers
- Joint business-city funding of new initiatives
- Applied CPTED to business improvement grants
- Documented improved safety outcomes

CSI Outcomes

- Information sharing on crime activities
- Expanded police sponsorship of youth services
- Design of new developments to improve security with police expertise & input
- Expanded physical improvement efforts (lighting, clean-ups)
- Improved property guardianship through "double voice" of police and CDC.

Supplemental Security Services

- Common approach used by BIDs
- Hire staff to "patrol streets", aid customers, notify police of problems, & discourage "disorderly" behavior
- Police can also be hired to supplement security
- Requires desire/capacity of business community to fund these services
- Study of Philadelphia found a reduced probability of crime in BID areas

District Sanitation Involves Public and Private Responsibilities

- Street cleaning and plowing
- Trash collection
- Tree maintenance
- Graffiti removal
- Sidewalk cleaning and snow removal
- Vacant lot maintenance
- Litter pick-up

Sanitation Issues and Approaches

- Advocacy work with city agencies to improve their services:
 - Baltimore BID: Maintain list of issues and follow-up to resolve them
- Education/peer pressure to improve business & property owner performance
- Supplemental services beyond city government to address district sanitation & maintenance
 - Primary activity for urban BIDs via hired staff and contracts
 - Some small commercial district organize joint purchasing of services, e.g., snow removal in Mattapan Square
- Beautify district to increase pride and reduce motivation & opportunities for graffiti and liter
 - Murals on large walls, flower planting, banners, etc.
- Awards, contests, acknowledgements as incentives for business participation

Low Cost Supplemental Services

- Cost is a obstacle to better sanitation in many small and/or low-income districts
- Options to add services at lower cost
 - Community service or part-time jobs for area youth
 - Corporate sponsorship
 - Prison work-release and community service programs
 - Pro bono services