“If we take care of abandoned, empty lots in our cities, clean them up and create space for positive social interaction, we can help create safer streets.”

—Marc Zimmerman, MI-YVPC Director
Our Strategy

Our work builds upon previous research that indicates that caring for vacant properties can have beneficial effects on the health and safety of residents.

We are testing a novel approach that brings together three promising approaches to violence prevention:

- **Empowering** youth and adults to create change in their communities and improve their physical and social environments

- **Greening** activities, such as mowing and planting gardens, to revitalize neighborhoods and reduce crime and violence.

- **Creating Busy Streets** to provide safe spaces for residents to connect and communities to thrive

We will use the results of our study and lessons learned from a nationwide survey to develop a comprehensive guide for communities interested in developing greening programs to prevent violence and create safe and vibrant neighborhoods.

Our Communities

Our partner communities have established programs that engage youth and adult residents to care for and repurpose vacant lots.

**Flint, Michigan**

In Flint, the Genesee County Land Bank Clean and Green program supports innovative community groups and organizations in cleaning, maintaining and beautifying vacant properties. Clean and Green currently involves more than 50 community organizations and over 200 youth. The program maintains over 3,400 vacant properties.

**Youngstown, Ohio**

In Youngstown, the Youngstown Neighborhood Development Corporation (YNDC) has repurposed nearly 300 vacant lots for gardens, side lots, native plantings, and green space through both targeted land reuse programs and citywide competitions.

**Camden, New Jersey**

In Camden, the Cooper’s Ferry Partnership brings together public and private organizations to effect sustainable economic revitalization. The CFP supports a vacant-lot greening and maintenance initiative.

Contact Us

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