

# NEO CANDO

*In Practice*

## EVALUATING SOCIAL CHANGE, DEVELOPING COMMUNITY

Longwood Plaza, a dilapidated shopping center located at the corner of East 40<sup>th</sup> Street and Community College Boulevard was a thriving open-air market of drug dealing. It was not uncommon to see people wearing bulletproof vests and carrying weapons in the area. The presence of this drug dealing activity made the corner one of the most dangerous areas in the city of Cleveland.

Another problem facing residents of the neighborhood was the lack of nearby shopping centers. Residents were forced to travel more than two miles in order to buy groceries. Many residents in the neighborhood lack personal vehicles, making it even more difficult to buy and bring home affordable groceries, as they were forced to use public transportation.

A redevelopment project of the corner was undertaken by Burten Bell Carr Development and Neighborhood Progress Inc. as a means to eliminate blight, reduce crime, encourage investment in the neighborhood, and provide much needed assets to the neighborhood, including a grocery store, a bank, and various retail outlets. The project has successfully transformed the area which was once a source of danger and violence into an enormous asset which benefits residents of the neighborhood by providing nearby shopping, financial services, and a sense of community and safety.

Jeffrey Sugalski, a Real Estate Development Specialist at Burten Bell Carr Development, and his team from BBDC, submitted a grant proposal to the Dominion East Ohio's 12th Annual Community Impact Awards highlighting the impact that the new development has had on the neighborhood. The award program honors organizations which have made a significant impact on their community. The development of the Arbor Park Place retail was the first large-scale development in the neighborhood in over forty years.

In his proposal, Jeffrey used the social and economic indicators section of NEO CANDO to look at the amount of crime happening in the census block group around the new shopping center before and after the redevelopment project. He found that between 2002 and 2005, the illicit drug offenses resulting in arrest fell from 104 to 2. Similarly, he found that drug possession arrests fell from 91 to 2 during the same years.

In addition, Jeffrey cited crime data from NEO CANDO showing that both Part I crimes (homicide, rape, robbery, aggravated assault, burglary, larceny-theft, auto theft, and arson) decreased by 50 percent during the same period. Part II crimes (non-aggravated assault, forgery, fraud, embezzlement, receiving stolen property, vandalism, weapons violations, prostitution, drug violations, family offenses, disorderly conduct, kidnapping and other offenses not classified as Part I crimes) went from 193 in 2002 to 35 in 2005.

The use of NEO CANDO data in Jeffrey's proposal allowed him to pair reliable, factual data with what residents of the neighborhood had already witnessed. The neighborhood was a safer place to be following the development of Arbor Place Plaza.

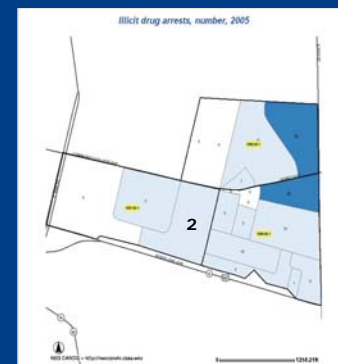
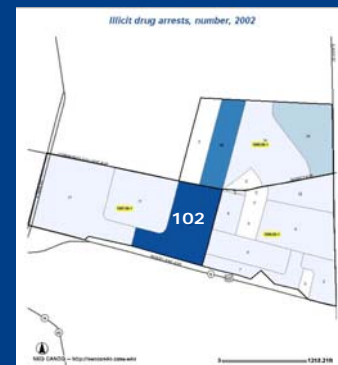
Jeffrey's proposal was awarded the top prize in the award contest, and Burten Bell Carr Development received \$20,000 (twice as much as any other recipient). In reviewing Jeffrey's proposal, the award funders stated that the inclusion of the data Jeffrey accessed through NEO CANDO was crucial to the organization's first place finish. The money will be used by the organization in another redevelopment project with the hopes of continuing its successful efforts to improve conditions in the Central neighborhood.

Jeffrey Sugalski



Burten Bell Carr Development

### Changes in crime in census block 1097.00-1



Source: NEO CANDO, Center on Urban Poverty and Community Development, Mandel School of Applied Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University