

Please answer questions in space provided. Applicants should feel free to use photocopies of the application forms if needed. If possible, answers to all questions should be typed or written directly on the forms. If the forms are not used and answers are typed on a separate page, each answer must be preceded by the question to which it responds, and the length of each answer should be limited to the area provided on the original form.

1. How has the project impacted the local community?

The Justice Center has re-engineered the response to low-level crime in the neighborhood. Residents in Red Hook have long complained about their quality of life being degraded by vandalism, prostitution, and drugs. Instead of ignoring these supposedly "victimless" crimes, the Justice Center seeks to combine punishment and help. Low-level offenders are sentenced to paint-over graffiti, clean parks and maintain public housing. They are also linked to on-site services like drug treatment, health care, and job training in an effort to prevent them from returning to court again and again. The community benefits from this new approach to quality of life offenses in several ways: 1) the conditions of disorder in the community are actually remediated by supervised offenders performing community service, 2) a number of offenders are provided with the help they need to avoid criminal behavior and thus become neighborhood assets instead of liabilities, 3) by making justice visible in Red Hook, the Justice Center helps to restore public confidence in government and creates an atmosphere where economic development efforts can flourish.

Addressing low-level crime is just one of the ways in which the Justice Center has had a tangible impact on Red Hook. It has brought a similar spirit of reinvention to landlord-tenant disputes and Family Court cases as well.

2. Describe the underlying values of the project. What, if any, significant trade-offs were required to implement the project?

At its core, the Justice Center has a two-pronged approach, focusing on problem-solving and prevention. The problem-solving aspects include the multi-jurisdictional courtroom where the Red Hook judge has unprecedented access to both information and sanctioning options. It also includes a building that is easy for litigants to navigate and includes space to house a range of services to address the needs of Red Hook families. From the beginning, the community wanted the Justice Center to go beyond just responding after the fact to court cases and move towards addressing the roots of these issues through prevention. The Justice Center's prevention work includes community mediation, mentoring and internship programs for local teens, and community volunteer projects. Beyond these services, the Center has sponsored a baseball league, hosted an annual day-long celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, and held an overwhelmingly popular Halloween celebration. These are not activities traditionally hosted by a local court, but have proven vital to the success and acceptance of the Justice Center, with each event building another link between the community and the Justice Center.

3. Describe the key elements of the development process, including community participation where appropriate.

The Red Hook Community Justice Center grew out of the seeds of tragedy. In 1992, Patrick Daly, a beloved principal of a local elementary school, was out looking for a truant student and was murdered in a cross fire between rival drug gangs. The Brooklyn DA, Charles Hynes, responded to this tragedy by calling for the creation of a community court. From that point on, the neighborhood was intimately involved. Planners set up focus groups, individual interviews, and town hall meetings with local residents. The local community board created a special committee dedicated to the Justice Center. Even before the building opened, the Justice Center's AmeriCorps program recruited local residents to gather community input through an annual community-wide survey, asking over 1,000 residents basic questions about safety, quality of life, and service needs. At the same time, Justice Center planners convened agencies scheduled to be on-site, including the NYPD, the District Attorney's Office, Legal Aid Society and others to ensure adequate and appropriate space. After each round of revisions and re-designs, the Justice Center planners presented their proposals to an array of residents, agencies, unions and providers for further refinements. The final product, while tight on space, has managed to accommodate a remarkable set of needs and activities. Most important, the project managed to pass New York City's Uniform Land Use Review Process (including formal review by the local community board, the Brooklyn Borough President, the City Planning Commission and the City Council) without objection.

4. Describe the financing of the project. Please include all funding sources and square foot costs where applicable.

The Justice Center has three floors with 26,000 sq. feet of space. It is sited on a 1/2 acre lot with a rear and side parking lot. The renovation of the Justice Center cost \$5.5 million and was funded by the City of New York (using revenues from a New York State Dormitory Authority bond issue) – at an average square foot cost of \$211. The building is rented by the City from the Catholic Church, which owns the property, for a nominal amount. The planning and development was funded by the U.S. Department of Justice. Ongoing Justice Center operations are supported by the New York State Office of Court Administration, the City of New York, and private foundations.

5. Is the project unique and/or does it address significant urban issues? Is the model adaptable to other urban settings?

The Red Hook Community Justice Center is the first of its kind – a multi-jurisdictional community court designed to address the disconnect between citizens of economically-depressed neighborhoods and government, high rates of crime and substance abuse, as well as the need for revitalizing a waterfront neighborhood that suffers from industrial disinvestment. Yet the Justice Center was built with an eye toward replication and adaptation by other jurisdictions. One common issue with model projects is that they are typically boutique models, designed to serve a tiny population. This is not the case in Red Hook. While it is true that the Justice Center serves only a small part of New York City, the Justice Center's catchment area is hardly tiny – it includes over 200,000 residents. This is a larger population than many American cities. The message this sends is clear: if it can be done in Red Hook, it can be done in Indianapolis, Hartford, or Minneapolis. And indeed, there are signs that the community court model is starting to develop a good deal of traction nationally. Based on Red Hook (and an earlier prototype, the Midtown Community Court), the community court model is being replicated in 30 jurisdictions across the country (see attached December 2002 article from Washington Post). Red Hook and its parent organization, the Center for Court Innovation, have played an active role in promoting this expansion through publications, websites (www.communityjustice.org), workshops, and site visits.