

Celebrate Columbia

◆ City of Columbia to Receive the 2010 MetLife Foundation Award for Neighborhood Revitalization

The Local Initiatives Support Corporation (LISC) announced the 2010 MetLife Foundation Community-Police Partnership Award, where the Columbia Police Department (CPD), TN Development Corporation, and the Columbia Housing Development Corporation (CHDC) received the Neighborhood Revitalization Award for Project: Resurgence of the Historic Waverly Neighborhood. This national recognition recognizes community organizations and police departments working together to reduce crime and revitalize neighborhoods.

The historic Waverly neighborhood is the oldest African-American community in Columbia, South Carolina. By the 1990s, the once prosperous area had become full of abandoned housing, drug dealers, and prostitutes. Formerly-thriving businesses served as gathering places for crime. In an effort to address crime and simultaneously spur economic development, the CHDC, TN Development Corporation and the CPD came together to create a two-fold revitalization plan. One part involved reclaiming abandoned lots, houses and businesses, and transforming them into affordable homes and viable commercial entities. The other part involved establishing a Koban—a police service model coming from Japan—in which uniformed police officers moved into an abandoned home in the neighborhood to increase police presence, combat crime and improve community-police relations. Officers resided on the top floor of a home and converted the ground floor into community space where neighborhood associations held regular meetings.



This level of neighborhood engagement built community trust, which led to a significant increase in the reporting of illegal activity. Committed to developing the area, CHDC started purchasing residential properties and vacant lots in the community. In total, 14 properties were purchased and redeveloped; 13 of the 14 have been sold. Over the past 10 years, crime has decreased dramatically in Waverly, with violent crime down 88%, prostitution down 57%, and drug violations down 66%.

For more information, visit: www.lisc.org or contact the TN Development Corporation at 803.545.3767.