QUANTITATIVE DATA

Safety in the Noble neighborhood, as well as Cleveland Heights overall, has increasingly become an area of both interest and concern to the residents. Over the years, residents have worried that crime statistics reported throughout Cleveland Heights have not been accurate. This concern prompted Cleveland Heights Chief of Police, Jeffery Robertson, who took over at the beginning of 2011, to update the technology and processes used to collect and understand crime data. The new system began accepting data in March, 2011. This system ensures that crime reports are not subjective. The system adheres to the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) guidelines, which are a regimented, clearly defined set of rules for classifying and reporting crime. Police reports are now publicly available online through the Cleveland Heights Police Department website.

According to the Federal Bureau of Investigation Uniform Crime Report (2015), "violent crimes are defined in the UCR Program as those offenses which involve force or threat of force" and include homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In contrast, non-violent/property crime "includes the offenses of burglary, larceny-theft, motor vehicle theft, and arson. The object of the theft-type offenses is the taking of money or property, but there is no force or threat of force against the victims" (FBI, 2015). Finally, non-aggravated assaults may include domestic violence (spousal abuse, parental abuse, and sibling abuse), menacing, aggravated menacing, and intimidation (FBI, 2015).

These crime types are further categorized as Part I crimes and Part II crimes. "Part I crimes include the violent crimes (homicide, rape, robbery and aggravated assaults) and property crimes (burglary, larceny-theft, auto theft and arson)" (FBI, 2015). In contrast, "Part II crimes include everything else such as non-aggravated assaults, forgery, fraud, embezzlement, receiving stolen property, vandalism, weapons violations, prostitution, drug violations, family offenses, disorderly conduct, kidnapping and all others" (FBI, 2015).

Using information gathered from Cleveland Heights Police Department Public Records, researchers explored crime rates in the Census Tracts of the Noble neighborhood, matching crime reports from Noble neighborhood to those corresponding to the Cleveland Heights area as a whole for the years of 2012 and 2013. The records only include incident reports completed by officers and not total calls for service. For purposes of uniformity, data is displayed at a rate per 100,000 residents, despite the city of Cleveland Heights having a population of around 45,000, according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015).
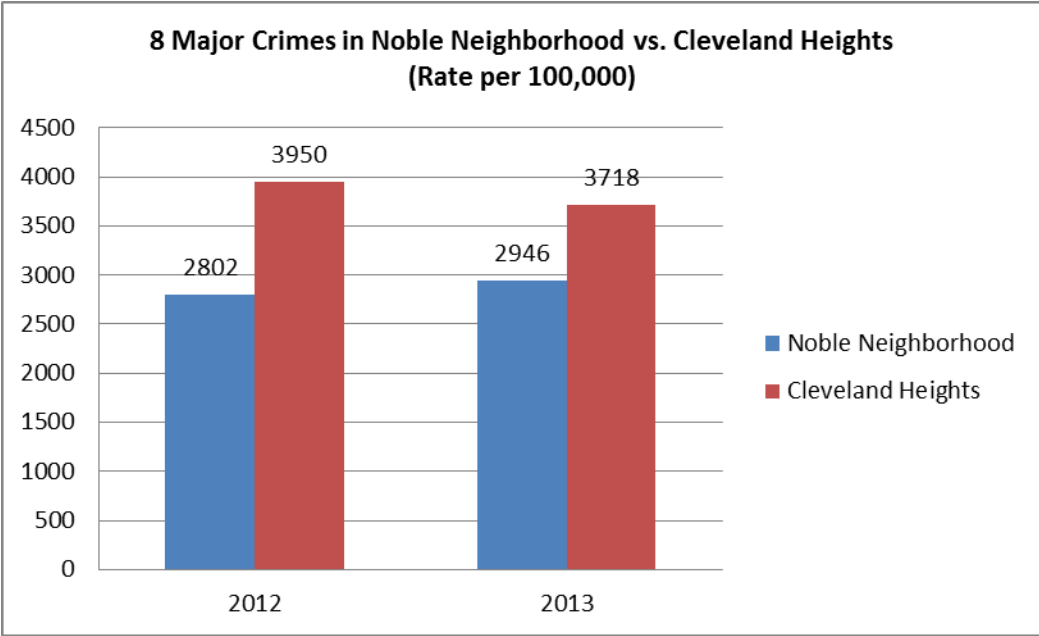
CRIME REPORTS

Over the course of 24 months (or 2 years from January 1st, 2012 to December 31st, 2013), 5,961 police incident reports were filed for occurrences within the Noble neighborhood Census Tracts. Of these reports, **2,012** could be classified as Part I or Part II crimes, including **1,277** non-violent/property crimes, **127** violent crimes, and **254** non-aggravated assaults.

A listing of crime reports is available in Appendix C.

8 Major Crimes in Noble Neighborhood vs. Cleveland Heights (Rate per 100,000)
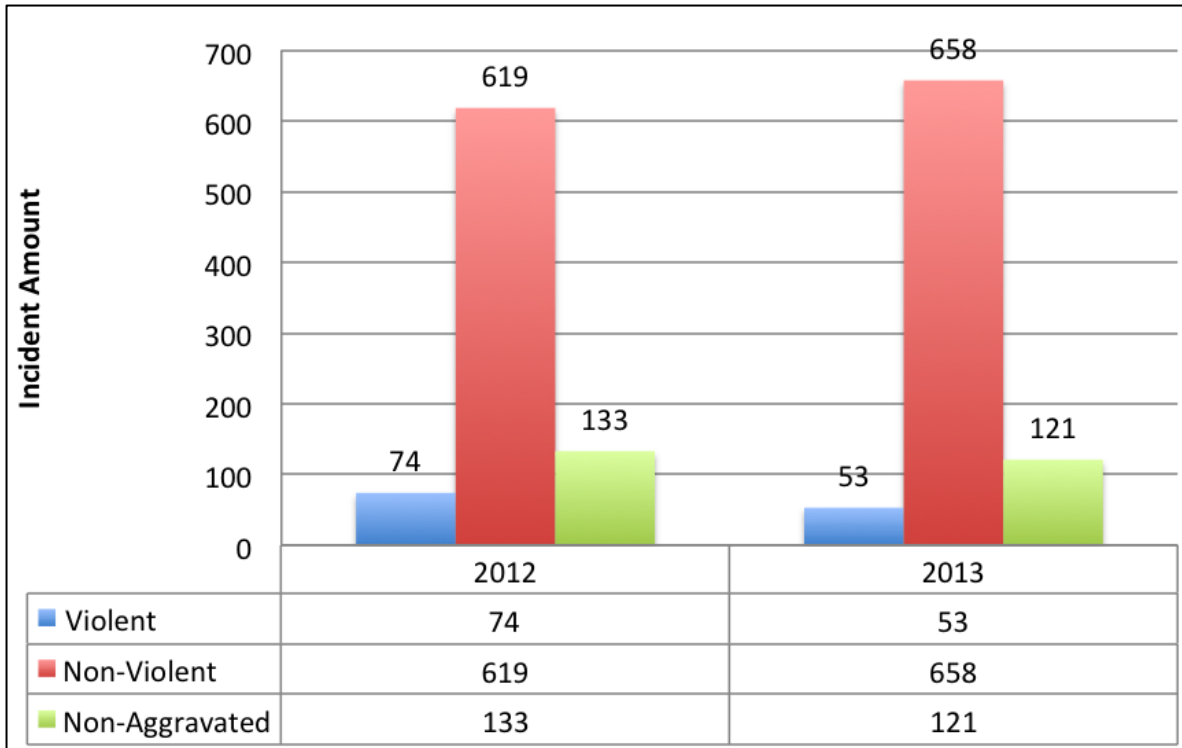
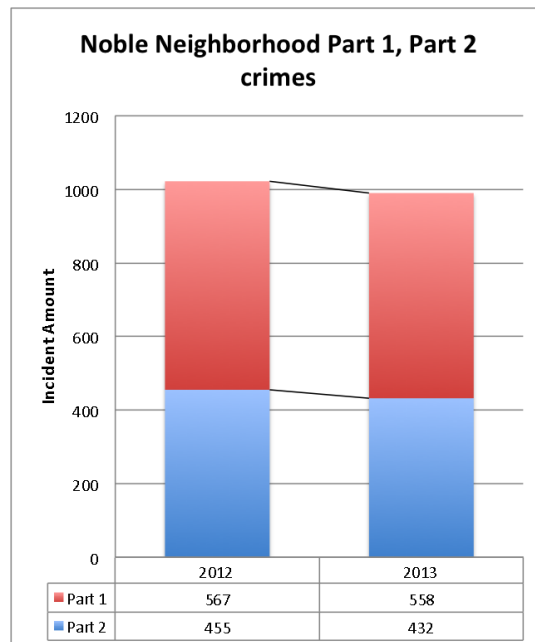*Note: Data provided by Cleveland Heights Police Department*

In order to compare Noble neighborhood crime data with Cleveland Heights' crime report as a whole, crimes were labeled as 8 major crimes (murder, rape, robbery, assault, burglary, larceny, motor vehicle theft, and arson) according to the F.B.I UCI definitions. To provide an accurate representation of the neighborhood, the above numbers represent a crime rate per 100,000 residents. While the crime rate for Noble neighborhood is lower than the rate for Cleveland Heights as a whole, it should be noted that the rate for Cleveland Heights dropped between 2012 and 2013, and increased slightly for Noble neighborhood during this period.

The following graph represents Noble neighborhood's total number of Violent, Non-Violent, Non-Aggravated crimes during 2012 to 2013. Violent crimes and Non-Aggravated crimes decreased, while Non-Violent crimes increased from 619 to 658.

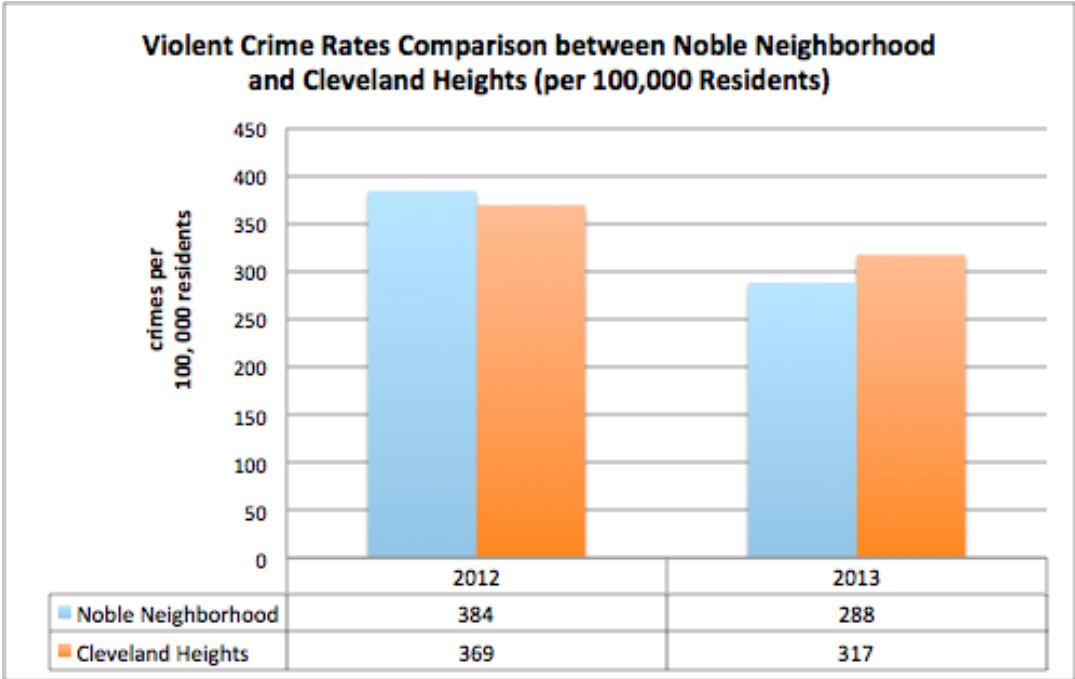**Noble Neighborhood Violent, Non-Violent, and Non-Aggravated Assault Crime Rates**

	2012	2013
■ Violent	74	53
■ Non-Violent	619	658
■ Non-Aggravated	133	121

Note: Data provided by Cleveland Heights Police Department

Noble Neighborhood Part 1, Part 2 crimes

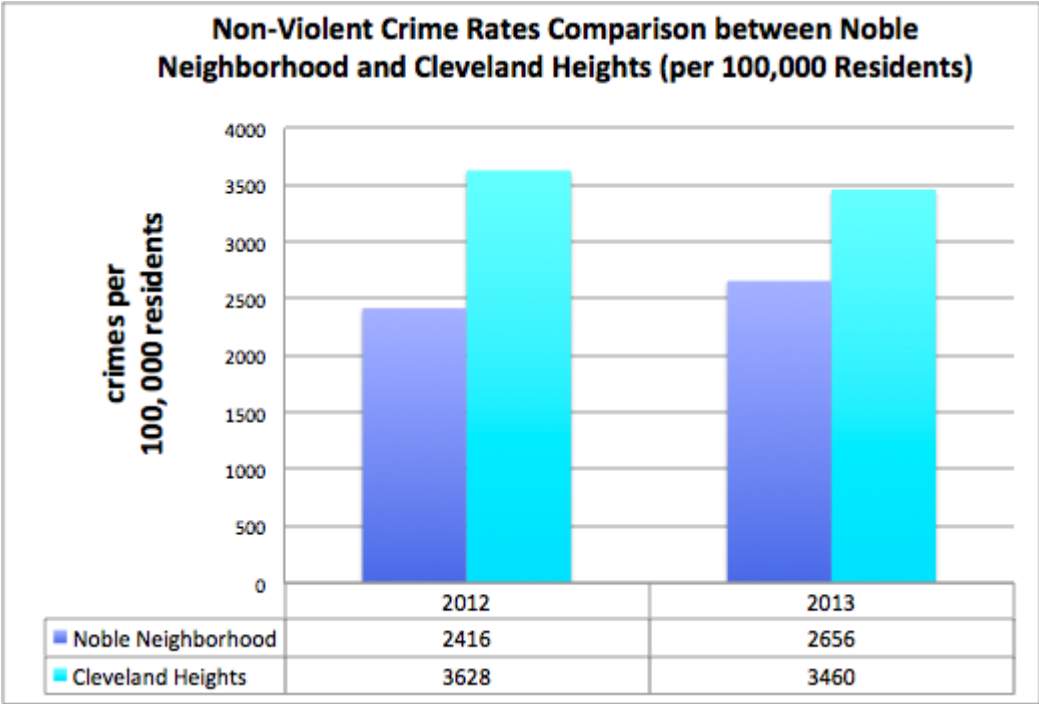|	2012	2013
■ Part 1	567	558
■ Part 2	455	432

Note: Data from Cleveland Heights Police Department Online Data

However, the total number of crimes decreased during these two years. The above graph represents the total number of crimes in Noble neighborhood during 2012 to 2013. Both Part I crimes and Part II crimes decreased. In both years, Part I crimes made-up more than Part II crimes.

The following graph shows the comparison of violent crime rates (per 100, 000 residents) between Noble neighborhood and Cleveland Heights. Violent crime rates decreased in both of these areas. Noble neighborhood had a little higher violent crime rate in 2012 than Cleveland Heights as a whole, but became lower in 2013. However, 2010 Noble neighborhood population data was used in the calculation of crime rates, due to lack of access to population data of Noble neighborhood after 2010. This can lead to inaccurate crime rates of Noble neighborhood. Results shown in graph 4 and 5 are references only.

Violent Crime Rates Comparison between Noble Neighborhood and Cleveland Heights (per 100,000 Residents)

	2012	2013
Noble Neighborhood	384	288
Cleveland Heights	369	317

Note: Data from Cleveland Heights Police Department Online Data

Non-Violent Crime Rates Comparison between Noble Neighborhood and Cleveland Heights (per 100,000 Residents)

	2012	2013
Noble Neighborhood	2416	2656
Cleveland Heights	3628	3460

Note: Data from Cleveland Heights Police Department Online Data

Compared to violent crime, non-violent crime is much higher in both numbers and rates, which parallels national trends. Non-violent crime rates in Noble neighborhood are about 33 percent fewer than Cleveland Heights in 2012 and 25 percent fewer in 2013.. **Comparisons presented in the above charts indicate that Noble neighborhood have a similar violent crime rate and a much lower non-violent crime rate than Cleveland Heights. It should also be noted that both violent and nonviolent crimes in Noble Neighborhood and Cleveland Heights are significant lower than the rates for Cleveland and neighborhoods like Ohio City that have positive public identities.**

To gain a deeper understanding of the issue of safety and crime in the neighborhood, students interviewed residents and neighborhood leaders, attended a "Meet Your Police" event, and conducted online research of the Noble neighborhood's media representation.

Noble Neighborhood in the Media

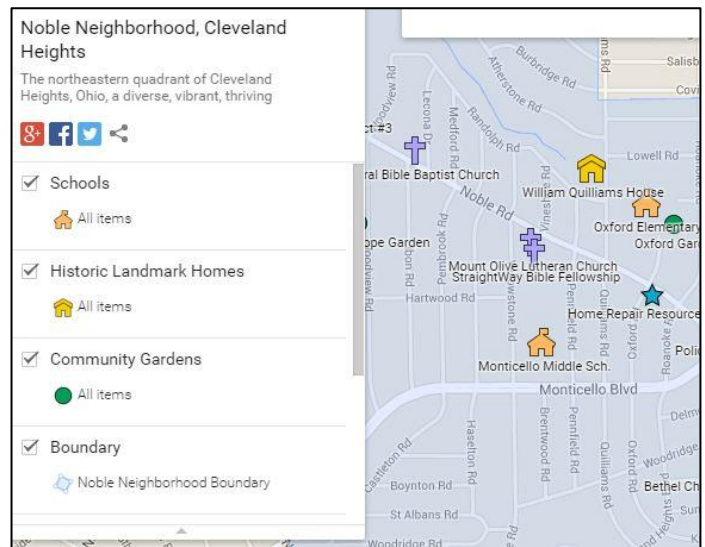This image is from the Noble Neighbors website, which gives members an update about various events and information about the neighborhood. This article is located at the bottom of the website's homepage. It explains to residents how they might report crime by using their smartphone or the Internet.

The Noble Neighbors website also includes a map with various resources indicated throughout the community. It currently highlights schools, churches, historic landmark homes, and community gardens. This can serve as a tool for people to know what safe places exist within the community. Consistent with the case theory presented later in this report, bringing more assets and resources into a community will improve the safety. This map is a good visual representation of those resources. Noble Neighbors has recently created a Facebook page for their community.

The page highlights neighborhood meetings, events, and photos. With only 31 likes, there is much potential for growth. This is not currently being used as a method of sending safety news and updates, but could be used as such.

Several interviewees expressed concern over the way the neighborhood has been represented in the press. The two images above depict the search results from The Cleveland *Plain Dealer* and the *Heights* Observer websites. The top results for searches from both news sources showed community events, political updates, and updates about the Noble Neighbors. Articles written about crime or other safety concerns in the neighborhood were not readily available.

Themes from Qualitative Data Collected During Interviews and "Meet Your Police" Event

Reasons for Interest in Neighborhood Safety. The reasons for interest in the safety of the neighborhood are as diverse as the residents interviewed. Each person has personal motivations related to safety concerns in the community, which are generally the most significant reasons why people chose to get involved with Noble Neighbors' safety task group. Some people, such as police and realtors, were interested due to professional obligation. Other residents were interested because of personal experiences where their safety or the safety of a close friend had been threatened in the neighborhood. Researchers were unable to get in touch with renters and retail owners in the area to understand what their concerns might be.

Changes in the Community's Safety. In order to address the current safety concerns in Noble neighborhood, it is critical to understand the historical context of the community. The quantitative data provides statistical trends regarding safety issues; qualitative research contributes to the discussion by presenting the perceptions of the issues from the perspective of residents, business owners, and the police force. Interviewees presented a variety of thoughts and opinions about whether or not the safety concerns in the community have changed over time. Many of our interviewees discussed the impact the housing market has had on crime in the community. Due to the national real estate crash of 2008, many homeowners were forced to vacate their homes. This has led to numerous vacant homes within the Noble neighborhood. Vacant homes often attract copper thieves who sell the valuable copper to scrap yards. Several interviewees suggested that these thieves often go undetected because they generally appear to be contractors. Both residents and police feel there has been a significant increase in copper thefts.

Some people believed that a disintegration of the "community feel" and cohesion of their neighborhoods has led to an apathetic approach to looking out for neighbors and homes. A few interviewees mentioned that the transient nature of many new renters in the neighborhood has also broken down that community feel. It seemed that interviewees were suggesting that the renters were of a lower socioeconomic status than homeowners, which they felt might be increasing the crime in the area.

It seemed that most people agreed that theft and burglary has been somewhat of a problem over time. It was unclear from the interviews whether these types of crimes have increased in recent years. Many interviewees sighted their own experiences of their homes being broken into and phones/other valuables being stolen since they moved to the neighborhood two decades ago.

Types of Crime. It seemed that nearly all interviewees had some significant experience with crime, whether on a personal level or second-hand. It is important to note that this data may be skewed; the sampled interviewees were largely part of a neighborhood group they joined due to an interest in community safety. It could be that many Noble Neighbors' personal experience was knowing the same one or two highly visible victims. It is possible that there are other members of the community who have not had experiences with crime and feel very safe in the neighborhood.

Nearly all interviewees addressed the issue of copper thefts. Several interviewees had first-hand knowledge of houses on their street that had been stripped, and others had heard of the thefts; police officers and the realtor also addressed copper thefts as an important issue. A common theme that emerged within the conversation about copper theft was that neighbors rarely recognize this type of criminal behavior because the thieves appear to be contract workers at the homes.

Many interviewees also expressed concern about other types of theft. Some of the concern around theft was associated with non-violent theft, such as home burglaries or stealing from cars in the

neighborhood. Others discussed violent theft, citing examples of children being attacked for their electronics or women being assaulted at night.

Another concern that many interviewees presented were crimes committed by juveniles. According to many interviewees, crime increases when school is not in session, particularly during summer and winter vacations. Many people felt that unattended minors were more prone to get involved in criminal behavior; several interviewees associated socioeconomic status with unsupervised youth, stating that families of a lower socioeconomic status were more likely to leave children unattended. The crime concerns of juveniles ranged from theft and assault to vandalism and intimidation. Some said they do not feel safe going out at night anymore because of the increased risk of becoming a victim of assault or theft.

The personal experiences interviewees have had with crime provide a general framework for their perceptions of crime. Those who had been victims of violent crimes or had known someone in the neighborhood who had experienced this type of crime seemed more likely to overestimate the increase in violent crimes in the neighborhood. People who had little experience with crime seemed less concerned about safety within the neighborhood.

Police-Resident Relations. One of the themes that emerged from our qualitative research was the importance of a positive relationship between residents, business owners, and police. A major concern for many of the residents within Noble neighborhood was that they felt somewhat neglected by the police force of Cleveland Heights. It was mentioned that police were more focused on areas such as Coventry or Fairmount because of the businesses there. As a result, some residents felt that police were less concerned with their residential neighborhood. One realtor also expressed concern that the police were not proactive in the neighborhood, leaving her to follow up on copper theft incidents. While not all interviewees expressed concern over the relationship between residents and police, researchers felt that it was an important issue to be explored.

There seemed to be a fair number of misunderstandings and miscommunications between police and residents. Some people were frustrated by the lack of access to police records from years past, not understanding that the crime data collected in previous years was measured differently and is not comparable to the current system of crime data. Others expressed that many people do not report crimes because they do not feel they have actionable information and do not want to endanger themselves by trying to get that information. Officers say that they do not want people to put themselves in harm's way to get information; they should report the information they do have, even if it is only a report of the time, location, and description of the incident. Police can use this information to improve the way they monitor the neighborhood. Most of the tension in police-resident relations appears to be impacted by these types of misunderstandings.