Illinois' Peacekeepers Program Fiscal Year 2025 (FY'25) Report

July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025

February 2026

Corners | CENTER FOR NEIGHBORHOOD ENGAGED RESEARCH & SCIENCE

Northwestern | INSTITUTE FOR POLICY RESEARCH

Acknowledgements

CORNERS gratefully acknowledges the following for their contributions to this evaluation:

State Providers

- Acclivus, Inc.
- Metropolitan Peace Initiatives

Implementing Partners

- Acclivus, Inc.*
    - Acclivus, Inc., Black Men United, G.O.D., House of James, I&F, Le Penseur, Restorative Project, Second Chance, Seeds of Roseland, Target Area, and Unstacked
- Metropolitan Peace Initiatives
    - ALSO, Breakthrough, Chicago CRED, Claretian Associates, INVC, New Life Centers, Project H.O.O.D., Public Equity, Target Area, Think Outside Da Box, and UCAN

For more information about CORNERS' research and evaluation of the Peacekeepers Program evaluation, please contact:

Andrew Papachristos, PhD
CORNERS Faculty Director
avp@northwestern.edu

This report is made possible by the generous support of: Anonymous Foundation, Chicago CRED, the MacArthur Foundation, Metropolitan Family Services, Pritzker Pucker Family Foundation, Robert R. McCormick Foundation, and the Steans Family Foundation.

*Le Penseur and Seeds of Roseland were de-contracted at the end of 2024; Acclivus is now implementing partner in Riverdale/Altgeld Gardens and G.O.D. is taking on South Deering.

Introduction

The Peacekeepers Program (the Program) originally launched in Chicago as the Flatlining Violence Inspires Peace (FLIP) Strategy in 2018. By the summer of 2022, FLIP was operating in 16 Chicago Community Areas (CCAs). The Program expanded significantly In Fiscal Year 2024 (FY'24) with public support from the **State of Illinois** and integration into the **Reimagine Public Safety Act** (RPSA) portfolio, which allowed for year-round operations. The Peacekeepers Program model remains grounded in its original underlying assumption: reducing gun violence in small geographic areas with disproportionately high rates of shootings can lead to sustained periods of peace in surrounding areas and, over time, this localized impact will contribute to a broader, citywide decline in gun violence victimizations. Through Fiscal Year 2025 (FY'25), the Program had operated in a total of 39 CCAs and Cook County suburbs.

Via state providers, **Metropolitan Peace Initiatives (MPI)** and **Acclivus, Inc.**, the Program leverages the expertise of street outreach workers at community-based organizations experienced with implementing Community Violence Intervention (CVI). The implementing partners' street outreach teams, with input from law enforcement and the Center for Neighborhood Engaged Research and Science (CORNERS), locate small geographic areas with disproportionately high rates of shootings, or "hot spots," within their community area. Once hot spots are identified, outreach workers recruit individuals closest to gun violence or those most at risk of gun violence involvement to engage in programming. These recruited individuals, known as **Peacekeepers**, receive training to mediate potential conflicts in the designated hot spots.

The Peacekeepers Program is committed to achieving two core objectives: (1) reducing gun violence in identified hot spots and, ultimately, across entire communities; and (2) supporting the integration of Peacekeepers into the CVI workforce pipeline.

This report provides implementation updates for the 33 CCAs[1] and six Suburban Cook County communities which operated the Program in FY'25. The report also includes implementation information for the **FY'25 Peacekeepers Housing Support Initiative**, which provided for the first time housing support (i.e., rental assistance or emergency housing) for Peacekeepers who are returning citizens—individuals released from correctional facilities back into their communities—and meet other eligibility criteria. Finally, it contains descriptive analyses of gun violence trends in the 25 Peacekeepers Program community areas that were operating for the entirety of July 1, 2024 through June 30, 2025, focusing on hot spots.[2] It does not seek to establish causation or correlation between these trends and the implementation of the Program.

1 The 33 CCAs are inclusive of all the community areas that implemented the Peacekeepers Program during FY'25.

2 Note: the year-over-year comparison includes the 25 CCAs implementing the Peacekeepers Program who operated the Program for the entire FY'25 period.

Source: Breakthrough Urban Ministries

Violence Trends Highlights

Hot spots are small geographic areas with disproportionately high rates of shootings within their community area. In FY'25, between July 1, 2024 and June 30, 2025, **43%** (n=69) of hot spots located in the city of Chicago[3] witnessed a **decrease** in shooting victimizations, approximately **24%** (n=38) saw an **increase** in shooting victimizations, and **34%** (n=54) experienced **no change** in shooting victimizations relative to FY'24.[4]

Taken together:

- Peacekeepers Program hot spots in Chicago saw an overall **32% decrease in shooting victimizations** in FY'25 compared to FY'24.
- Peacekeepers Program community areas experienced an overall **23% decrease in victimizations** during FY'25 compared to FY'24.
- Citywide in Chicago, there was an overall **23% decrease in victimizations** during FY'25 compared to FY'24.
- FY'25 data show a **consistent decline in victimizations** since FY'21, with FY'25 experiencing the **lowest cumulative number of shooting victimizations.**

3 This data point reflects hot spots located in Chicago only, as CORNERS currently does not have Suburban Cook County shooting data.
4 There are 180 hot spots in Chicago, however Riverdale and South Deering sites have been excluded from this report's analyses, resulting in a total of 161 hot spots.

Program Implementation Updates

This section highlights key implementation updates of the Peacekeepers Program for FY'25, including the launch of the housing initiative, trends in participant retention, changes in implementing partners for specific CCAs, temporary stops and starts experienced in CCAs, along with supporting data of the mediations, NAAs, and trainings.

Peacekeepers Program Housing Support Initiative

To address housing insecurity among Peacekeepers, the Office of Firearm Violence Prevention (OFVP), through the Illinois Department of Human Services (IDHS), partnered with the Illinois Office to Prevent and End Homelessness (IOPEH) to pilot a housing support initiative for eligible Peacekeepers during FY'25. Across both state providers, a total of 122 active Peacekeepers received housing support. Of the 122 Peacekeepers, CORNERS, as the Program's implementation partner, verified over 80 Peacekeepers with returning citizen status, one of the criteria required to receive housing support.

Program Expansion and Retraction

The Program expanded into additional CCAs during FY'25. Privately funded implementation occurred in Uptown and Rogers Park from November 2024 through January 2025. Beginning in April 2025, the Program launched in Near West, Near North, and West Town, funded by OFVP.

In the fall of 2024, Acclivus, Inc. launched the Program in the suburbs of Harvey, Cicero, and Berwyn after implementation delays in all three municipalities. Program launch occurred in the suburbs of Riverdale, Lansing, and South Holland as well.

In Harvey, funding challenges and a shortage of experienced CVI implementing partners postponed the Program's start, which was originally planned for FY'24, to FY'25.

Cicero and Berwyn, which had also planned to launch in FY'24, experienced challenges with buy-in from local law enforcement and difficulties in identifying experienced CVI implementing partners, which pushed their launch to FY'25. Program operations ultimately ended in Cicero and Berwyn by the end of FY'25.[5]

Two hot spots in Chatham discontinued operations beginning in FY'25, reportedly due to a lack of approved funding from the State for this fiscal year.

5 Cicero has since re-launched in Fiscal Year 2026 via implementing partner Higher Ground.

Implementing Partner Updates

G.O.D. assumed implementation responsibilities in South Deering, while Acclivus, Inc. took over Program operations in Riverdale. These transitions followed the discontinuing of FY'25 state funding for Riverdale / Altgeld Gardens and South Deering due to reported financial challenges.

Training, Deployment, and Coverage

1,550 Peacekeepers recruited by implementing partners received training in conflict mediation and other street outreach-related activities, expanding violence prevention efforts across **213 hot spots** in Chicago and Suburban Cook County.

Participant Retention

73% of the Peacekeepers enrolled for FY'25 remained in the Program through the end (Q4) of FY'25; **27%** of Peacekeepers left the Program (voluntarily or involuntarily) throughout the course of FY'25.

Scaling the CVI Workforce

17 Peacekeepers transitioned into full-time CVI positions in FY'25. Since the Program's initial launch in 2018 through the end of FY'25, a total of at least **180 Peacekeepers** have transitioned into full-time positions in the CVI field.

Mediations, Conflicts Resolved, Non-aggression Agreements (NAAs), and Violence Prevented

1,259 conflicts between street crews associated with violence were mediated by Peacekeepers in FY'25, with **72% (n=907)** of these conflicts successfully resolved by Peacekeepers.

25% (n=318) of all conflicts were reported as being likely to have escalated into further violence if they were not addressed by Peacekeeper mediations.[6]

46 NAAs[7] received Peacekeeper coverage during FY'25.

6 This report includes mediation counts for both CCAs and Suburbs.

7 A non-aggression agreement (NAA), sometimes referred to as a no slide agreement, gets negotiated by street outreach workers, sometimes with the involvement of Peacekeepers, to prevent groups in conflict from aggressing on one another. Peacekeepers often help support the maintenance of NAAs.

Peacekeeper Participant Recruitment and Demographics

This section reports the demographics of the **1,550 Peacekeepers** across Peacekeepers Program community areas.

Participant Demographics

Below is a breakdown of Program participant demographics for FY'25.

Race & Ethnicity

	Ethnicity				
Race	Hispanic / Latino	Non-Hispanic / Latino	Undisclosed Ethnicity	Total	Percent of Total
Indigenous American / Alaskan Native	1	0	1	2	<1%
Asian	0	1	0	1	<1%
Black / African American	0	276	802	1,078	70%
Hawai'ian / Pacific Islander	0	0	0	0	0%
Multiple Races	8	0	12	20	1%
White	1	5	2	8	<1%
Undisclosed	80	19	342	441	28%
Total	90	301	1,159	1,550	100%
Percentage of Total	6%	19%	75%	100%	

Of 1,550 total Peacekeepers, **70%** identify as Black or African American. A small number of Peacekeepers identify as Multiracial (20), White (8), Indigenous American or Alaskan Native (2), and Asian (1).

Age

Age	Total	Percent of Total
Under 25	182	12%
25-30	205	13%
31-40	369	24%
41-50	291	19%
51-60	163	11%
60+	34	2%
Undisclosed	306	20%
Total	1550	100%

Most Peacekeepers are between 31-40 and 41-50 years old, making up 24% and 19% of the total, respectively. Representation decreases in both younger and older age groups, with 13% of Peacekeepers aged 25-30, 12% aged under 25, and 11% aged 51-60. Individuals over 61 make up a small percentage, with 2% of Peacekeepers falling into this group. Twenty percent of Peacekeepers did not disclose their age.

Gender

Gender	Total	Percent of Total
Female	242	16%
Male	1,053	68%
Non-binary	0	0%
Trans female	0	0%
Trans male	0	0%
Other	0	0%
Undisclosed	255	16%
Total	1550	100%

The majority of Peacekeepers (68%) identify as male, while 16% identify as female. No Peacekeepers reported identifying as non-binary, transgender, or any other category. Sixteen percent of individuals did not disclose their gender.

Participant Attrition

In FY'25, **15%** of participants left the Peacekeepers Program by the end of Q4. Participants' reasons for leaving the Program vary. By the end of Q4 of FY'25 State Providers reported 31 Peacekeepers were involuntarily removed from the Program and three Peacekeepers died. In total, 10 Peacekeepers were victims of shootings during the FY'25, with the majority of incidents occurring outside of program hours. The table below further explores the number of Peacekeepers who left the Program and their reasons why.

Reason for Separation	Number of Peacekeepers Separated from Programming	Percent of Total
Voluntary Separation	37	16%
Involuntary Separation	31	14%
New Job (CVI)	17	8%
New Job (Other)	15	7%
Moved Away	4	2%
Injured	3	1%
Deceased	3	1%
Undisclosed	116	51%
Total	226	100%

Participant Transitions

A key objective of the Peacekeepers Program is to train Peacekeepers to become street outreach apprentices and support their transition into full time careers as CVI professionals. A total of **17 Peacekeepers were promoted to a formal CVI role in FY'25**.[8]

While Peacekeepers primarily receive training focused on becoming street outreach apprentices, with the aim of growing into careers within street outreach, participants transition into diverse career pathways within the CVI field. In addition to becoming street outreach workers, participants have historically accessed CVI careers in life coaching, victim services, and case management, among others.

8 Since the Program's initial launch in 2018 through the end of Fiscal Year 2025 (June 30, 2025), a total of at least 180 Peacekeepers, including the 17 in FY'25, have transitioned into full-time positions in the CVI field.

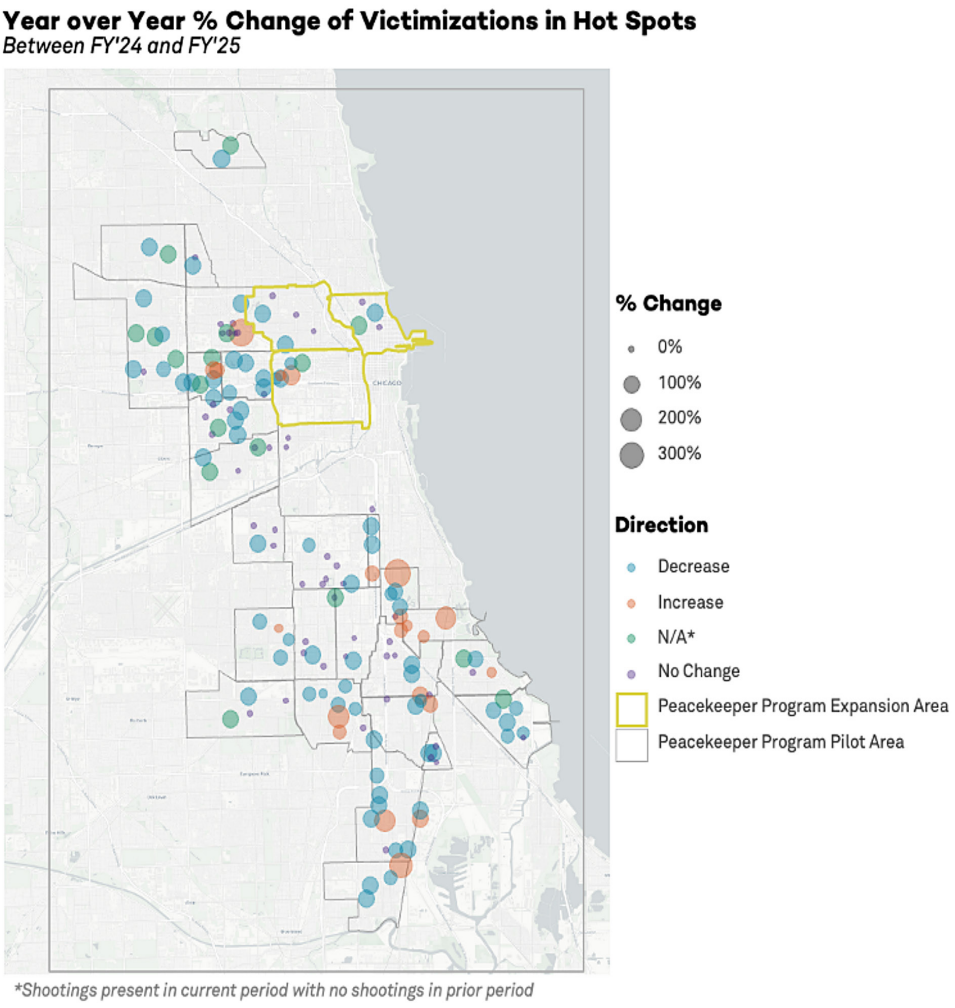
Source: Breakthrough Urban Ministries

Fiscal Year 2025 Year-over-Year Trends

The successful implementation of the Peacekeepers Program relies on monitoring violence at two key geographies: **hot spots**, small geographic areas with disproportionately high rates of shootings, and **community areas**. The figures below examine violence trends for 161 hot spots in 29 CCAs across fiscal years, with most comparing FY'25 (July 2024 through June 2025) to FY'24 (July 2023 through June 2024). Shooting victimization data comes from the Violence Reduction Dataset from Chicago Data Portal, with domestic incidents filtered out using crime data shared by the Chicago Police Department. Hot spot data is shared directly with CORNERS from implementing partner organizations or State Providers.

Peacekeepers Program Hot Spots

The magnitude and direction of percent changes of victimizations in hot spots between FY'24 and FY'25 is seen in Figure 1 below. Overall, 43% (n=69) of hot spots in Chicago showed a decrease in shooting victimizations, approximately 24% (n=38) saw an increase, and 34% (n=54) experienced no change relative to FY'24. Taken together, Peacekeepers Program hot spots in Chicago saw an overall 32% decrease in shooting victimizations in FY'25 compared to FY'24.



43%
of hot spots in Chicago showed a decrease in shooting victimizations

24%
of hot spots saw an increase in victimizations

34%
of hotspots experienced no change

32%
overall decrease in shooting victimizations in FY'25 compared to FY'24

Figure 1

Eleven percent (n=17) of hot spots that had no shootings in FY'24 experienced shootings during FY'25. Of the 17 hot spots with no shootings in FY'24, 11 hot spots experienced one shooting victimization, four hot spots experienced two shooting victimizations, one hot spot had four shooting victimizations, and one hot spot experienced five victimizations during FY'25. A year-over-year percent change cannot be calculated in these instances due to the previous year having zero incidents.

Rolling Averages

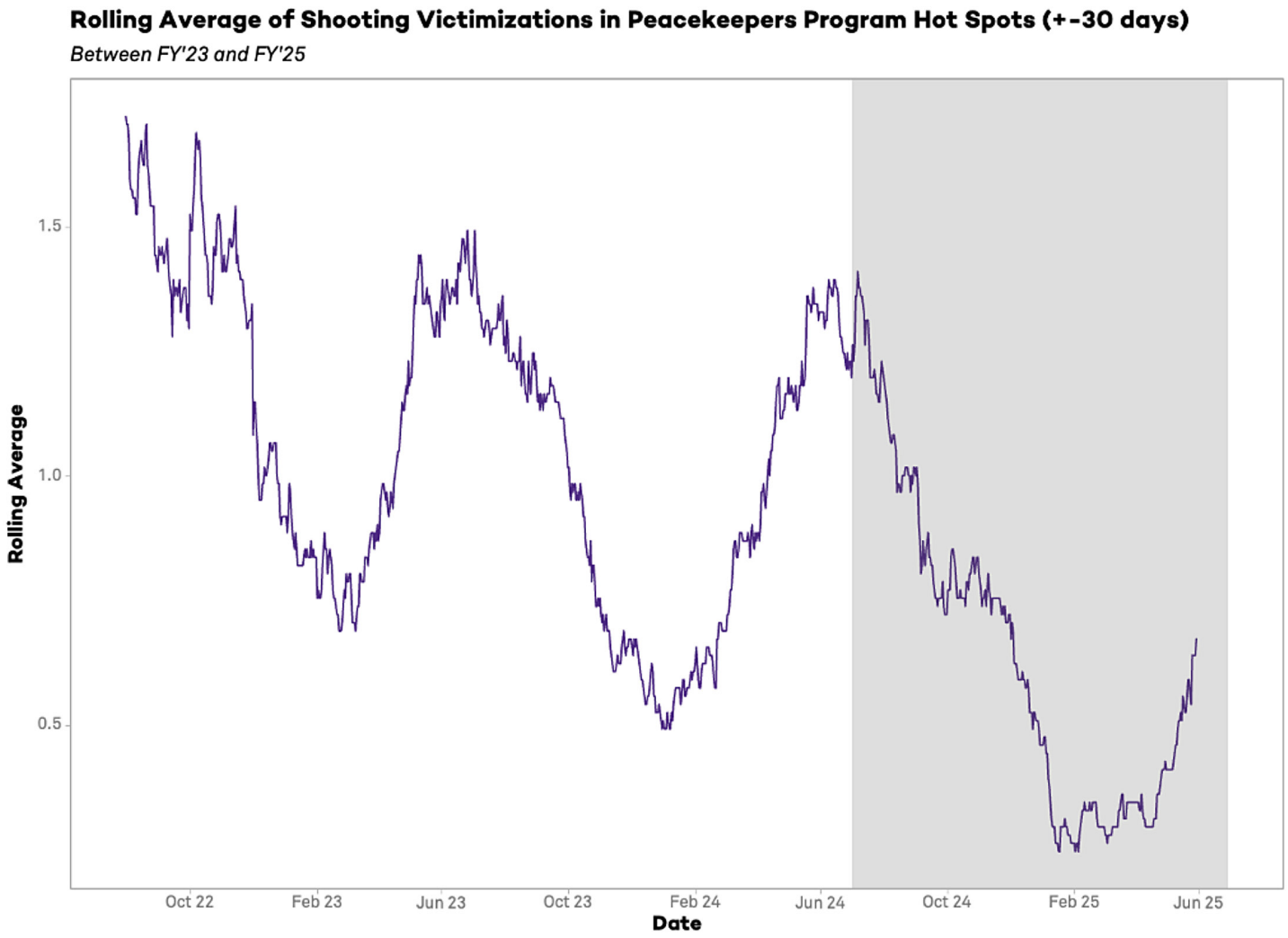


Figure 2

The rolling averages presented in Figure 2 provide context to the consistent seasonal pattern of gun violence in Peacekeepers Program hot spots, with victimizations rising in the spring, peaking in the summer, declining in the fall, and reaching their lowest point in the winter. The non-shaded portion of the graph in Figure 2 displays the rolling averages of shooting victimizations between FY'23 and FY'24, while the shaded area represents FY'25. **The rolling averages of shooting victimizations in Program hot spots show substantial decline in FY'25, as these values fell to a post-pandemic low in the first half of the year.** Furthermore, a comparison of the final days of FY'24 and FY'25 reveals a 32% drop in the rolling average, highlighting the notable lower level of violence in FY'25.

Peace Intervals

The Peacekeepers Program builds on the FLIP theory that "flatlining" violence within Program hot spots will inspire broader peace. As periods of non-shooting are prolonged in hot spots, the expectation is that these stretches of calm will have a ripple effect—reducing the frequency of shooting incidents at the community level over time. Through the implementation of mediations and management of NAAs, the Program aims to extend the duration between shooting events in hot spots, resulting in improvements in perceived safety and, in turn, a betterment of community wellbeing. Such improvements are meant to encourage community members, including potential shooters, to embrace these extensions of peace. Further, these violence-free periods are meant to provide residents with intervals of respite from community violence, creating space for recovery from the trauma of violence, and allowing community members to more safely enjoy public spaces.

To measure this, the following analysis captures and quantifies such periods of calm, referred to henceforth as "peace intervals," within established hot spots. **A peace interval is defined as a period of one or more days where no shooting incidents occur within a given area**. As seen in Figure 3 below, an increased peace interval (green bars) indicates longer periods of time without a shooting, while a decreased peace interval (orange bars) suggests less time without a shooting in a Peacekeepers Program hot spot within a community area relative to the previous year.

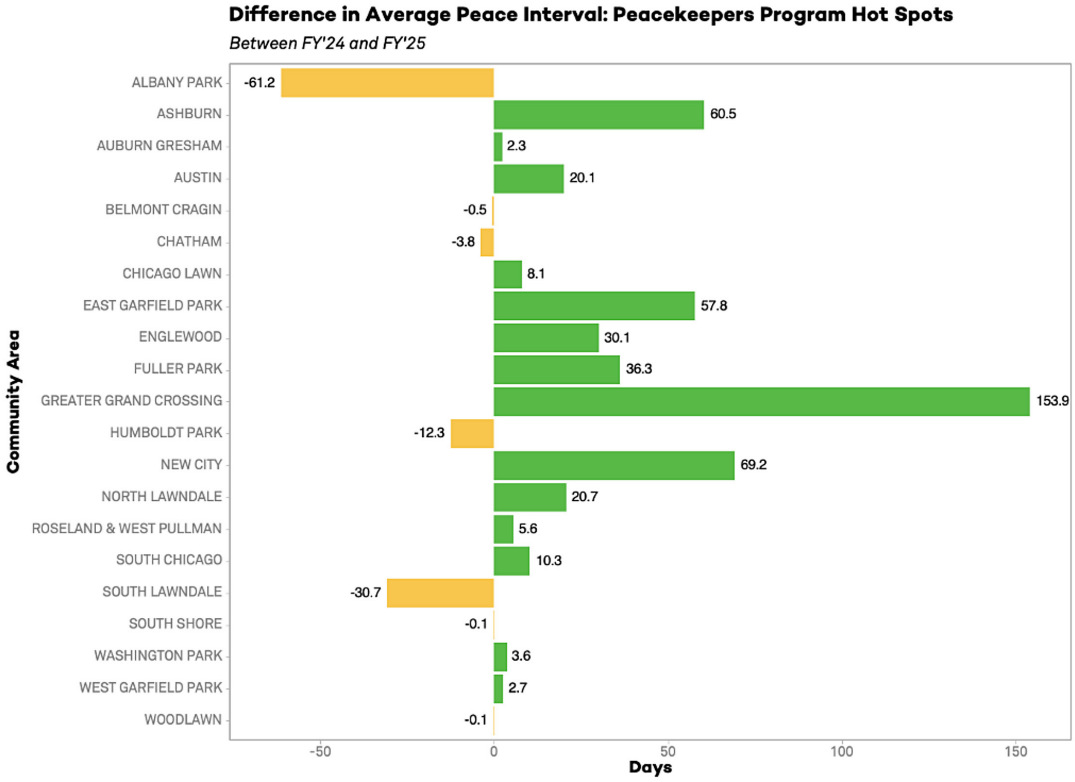


Figure 3

The changes in average hot spot peace intervals in FY'25 relative to FY'24 varied greatly amongst program community areas, ranging from a decrease in peaceful days of about two months, as seen in Albany Park, to an increase of a little over five months, as seen in Greater Grand Crossing (Figure 3). On average, during FY'25, Peacekeepers Program community areas experienced **18 more days without any shootings in hot spots** compared to FY'24. Five community areas experienced decreases in peace intervals in their hot spots. Overall, the average window of peaceful days in hot spots is widening, allowing additional time for communities to experience respite from gun violence.

Because the Program model posits that reducing shootings in hot spots will drive down overall community gun violence, it is important to assess whether shifts in violence as conveyed by the rolling average and peace intervals extend beyond hot spots and align with broader community-wide and city-level trends. The next section examines how these reductions compare to overall trends in Chicago citywide and Peacekeepers Program community areas.

Peacekeepers Program Community Area Trends

The following figures highlight patterns of victimizations in Peacekeepers Program community areas cumulatively and year-over-year.

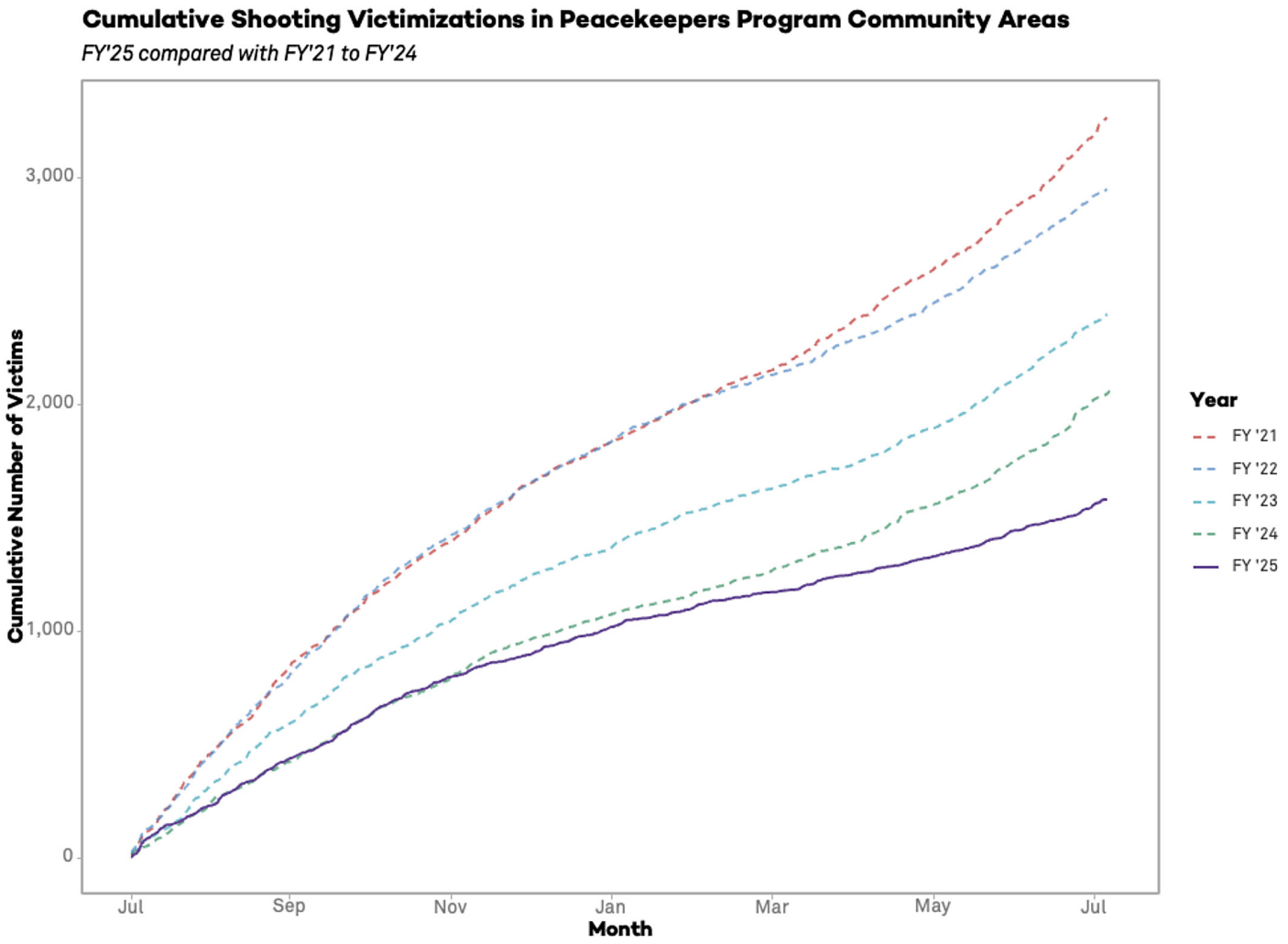


Figure 4

Figure 4 presents cumulative shooting victimizations in the Peacekeepers Program community areas across five fiscal years: FY'21 through FY'25. The data show **consistent decline in victimizations since FY'21, with FY'25 experiencing the lowest cumulative number of shooting victimizations.** The slower growth in victimization numbers in FY'25 may indicate that successful intervention efforts contributed to reduced violence in these areas.

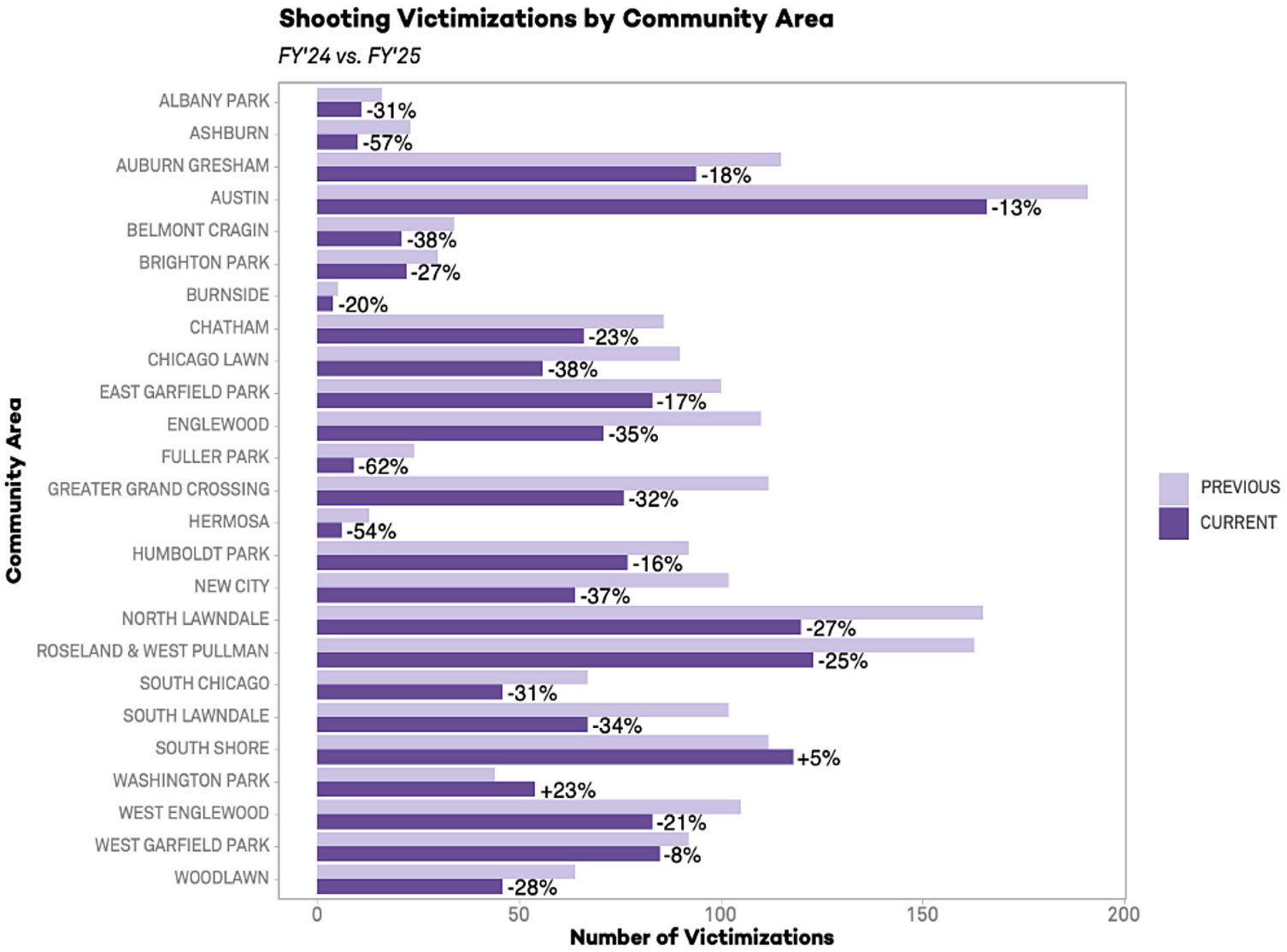


Figure 5

Figure 5 illustrates the change in the number of shooting victimizations in Peacekeepers Program community areas between FY'24 and FY'25. **Among the 25[9] Peacekeepers Program community areas depicted, 23 experienced a decrease and two experienced an increase.**

9 Uptown, Rogers Park, Near West, Near North, and West Town are not included in the above figure.

Peacekeepers Program Community Area and Hot Spots Hourly Trends

The following figures provide both temporal and geographic patterns of when and where violence occurs in Peacekeepers Program community areas.

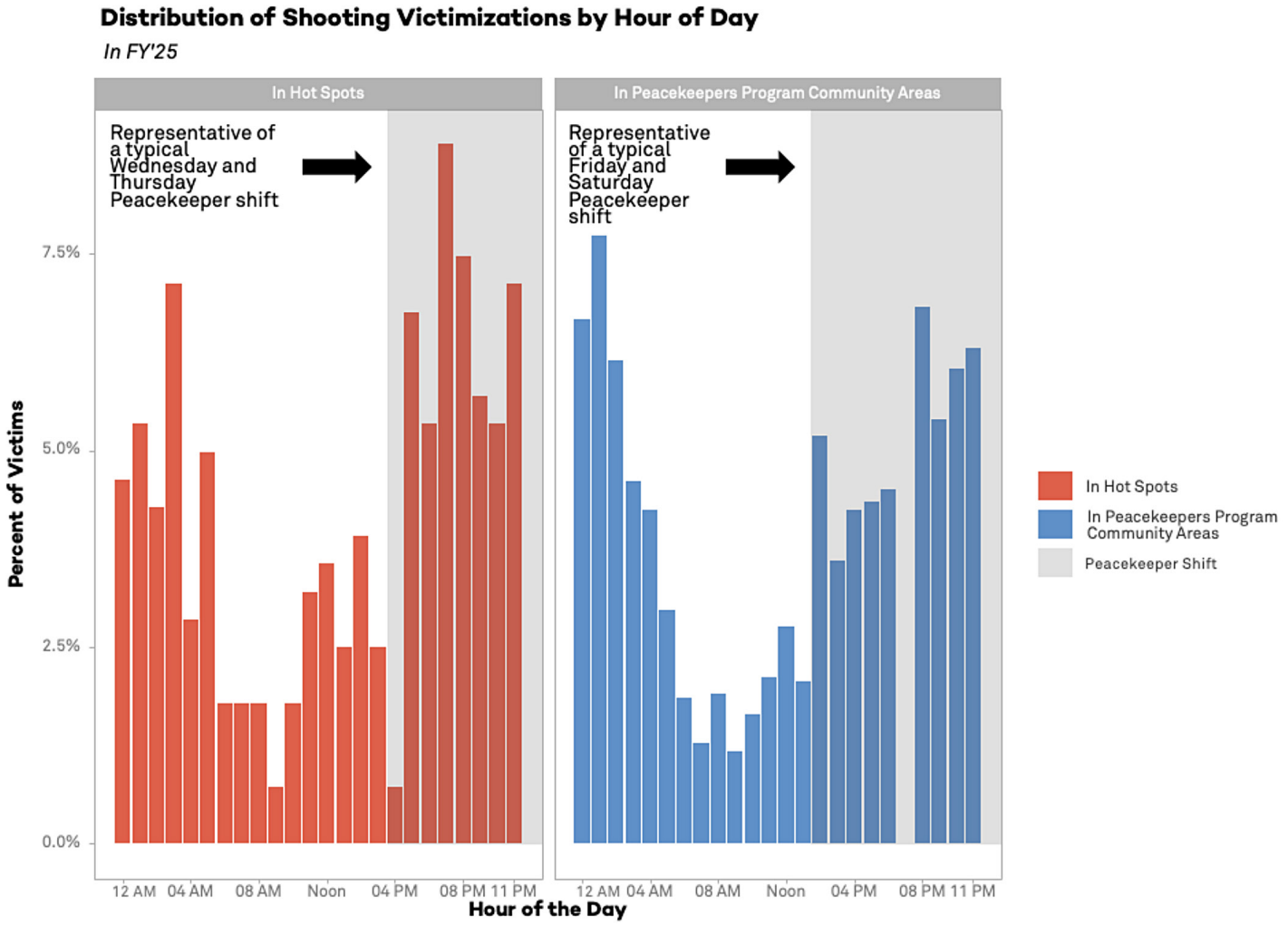


Figure 6

Figure 6 shows the time distribution of shooting victimizations inside hot spots and entire Peacekeepers Program community areas in a day. **Nearly half (47%) of victimizations in FY'25 occurred from 4 pm to midnight at the hot spot level while 44% of victimizations at the Peacekeepers Program community area level occurred within the same period.** While Figure 6 depicts shootings for the whole week, Peacekeepers canvass from Wednesday to Saturday. On Wednesdays and Thursdays, Peacekeepers canvass from 4 pm until no later than midnight. On Fridays and Saturdays, Peacekeepers start at 2 pm and end their shifts no later than midnight.

Citywide Trends

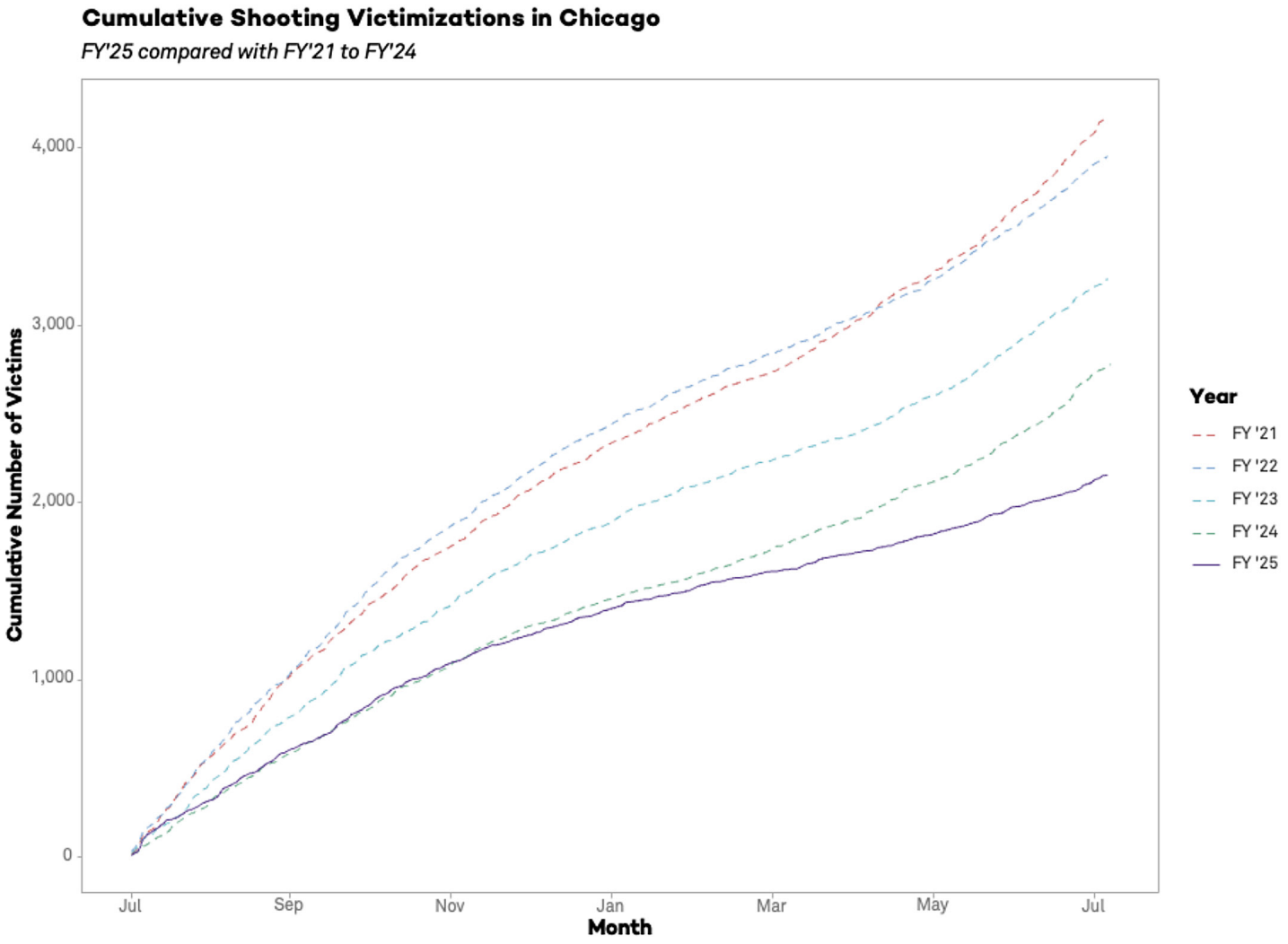


Figure 7

Chicago experienced the lowest number of shooting victimizations by the end of FY'25 compared to the previous four fiscal years, as seen in Figure 7. The data shows a **consistent decline in total victimizations between FY'21 and FY'25.**

Conclusion

Both Peacekeepers Program community areas, and the city of Chicago have seen lower incidents of violence in FY'25 relative to FY'24. Since FY'21, Chicago and Peacekeepers Program communities have experienced a year-over-year decline in shooting victimizations. While Peacekeepers Program community areas saw roughly the same decrease in victimizations as the city as a whole (23%), hot spots experienced a slightly larger decrease of 32%. Since hot spots have disproportionately high rates of shootings within the community areas, the most substantial reductions in violence are suggestive of the potential efficacy of the Peacekeepers Program strategy. A quantitative impact evaluation will be essential for assessing how changes in victimization patterns coincide with program activities at the hot spot, community, and citywide levels. During FY'25 the Program implemented housing support for Peacekeepers, retained 86% of its participants, mediated over 1,200 conflicts, and supported 46 non-aggression agreements, which further illustrates its operational strength and community engagement.

Key Findings

Shooting Victimizations Decreased in Program Hot Spots

Peacekeepers Program **hot spots** in Chicago saw an overall **32% decrease in shooting victimizations** in FY'25 compared to FY'24.

Rolling Averages Show Substantial Decline in Shooting Victimizations

The rolling averages of shooting victimizations in Program hot spots show **substantial decline** in FY'25, as these values fell to a post-pandemic low in the first half of the year.

Peacekeeper Communities Experienced Longer Periods Without Shootings

On average, during FY'25, Peacekeepers Program community areas experienced **18 more days without any shootings in hot spots** compared to FY'24.

Community Areas See Consistent Decline in Victimizations over Five Years

Data across five fiscal years in Peacekeepers Program community areas show **consistent decline in victimizations since FY'21, with FY'25 experiencing the lowest cumulative number of victimizations.**

Appendix

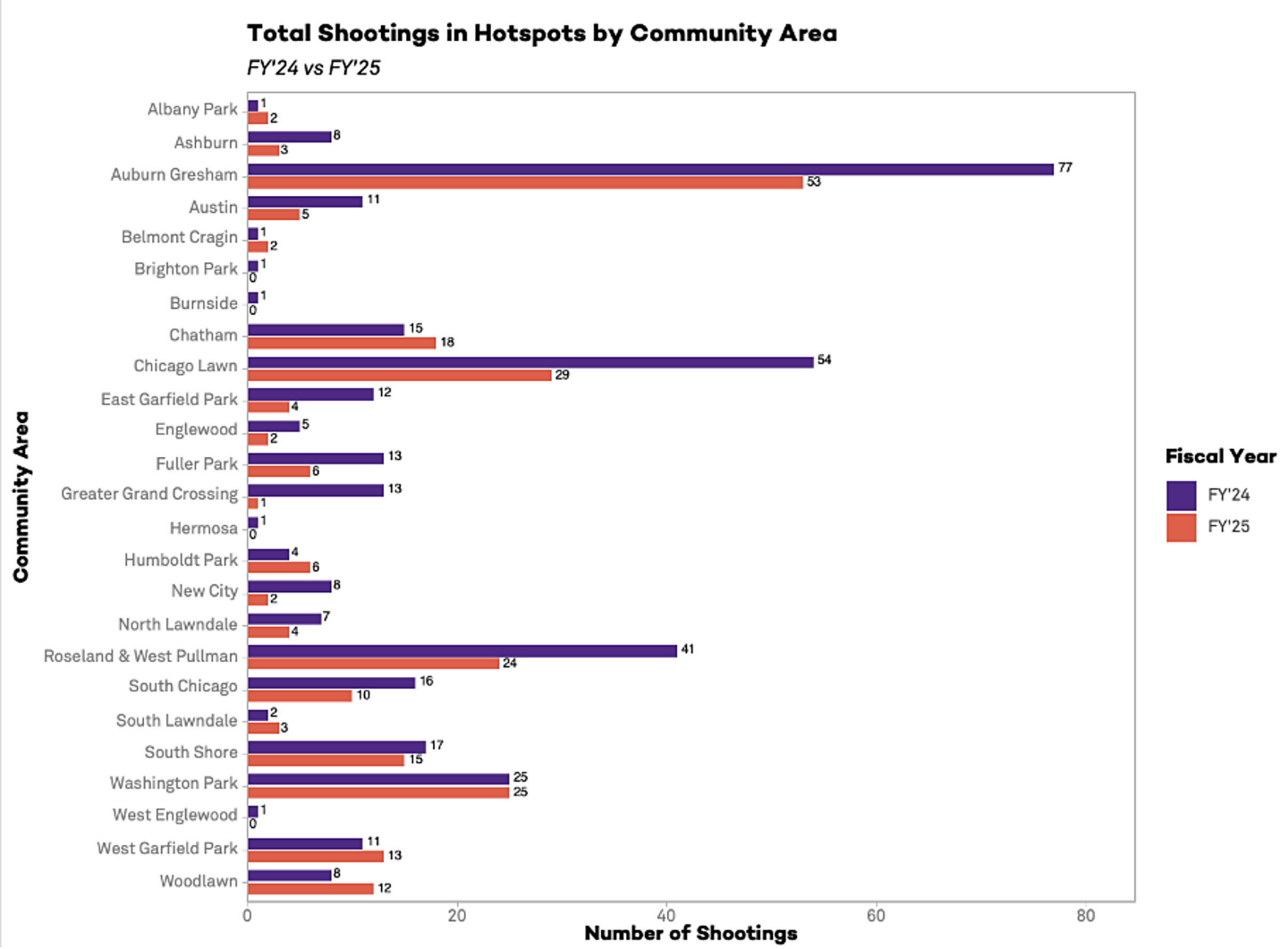


Figure A1

Program Hot Spots

Year-over-Year Change in Shooting Victimizations

Community Area	Total Victimizations FY'24	Total Victimizations FY'25	YOY % Change in Victimizations
Albany Park	1	2	+100%
Belmont Cragin	1	2	+100%
Hermosa	1	0	-100%
Ashburn	8	3	-62.50%
Auburn Gresham	77	53	-31.17%
Brighton Park	1	0	-100%
Burnside	1	0	-100%
Chatham	15	18	+20%
Chicago Lawn	54	29	-46.30%
Englewood	5	2	-60%
Fuller Park	13	6	-53.85%
Greater Grand Crossing	13	1	-92.31%
New City	8	2	-75%
Roseland & West Pullman	41	24	-41.46%
Washington Park	25	25	0%
West Englewood	1	0	-100%
Woodlawn	8	12	+50%
South Chicago	16	10	-37.50%
South Shore	17	15	-11.76%
Austin	11	5	-54.55%
East Garfield Park	12	4	-66.67%
Humboldt Park	4	6	+50%
North Lawndale	7	4	-42.86%
South Lawndale	2	3	+50%
West Garfield Park	11	13	+18.18%
All Peacekeepers Program Hot Spots in Chicago	353	239	-32.29%

Table A1

On average, Peacekeepers Program community areas saw 4.5 fewer hot spot victimizations in FY'25 than FY'24. Hot spots in Peacekeepers Program community areas collectively experienced a 32% year-over-year decline in shooting victimizations. Most communities experienced notable declines in hot spot victimizations, with only seven out of 25 Peacekeepers Program community areas experiencing increases in their overall hot spot shooting victimizations.

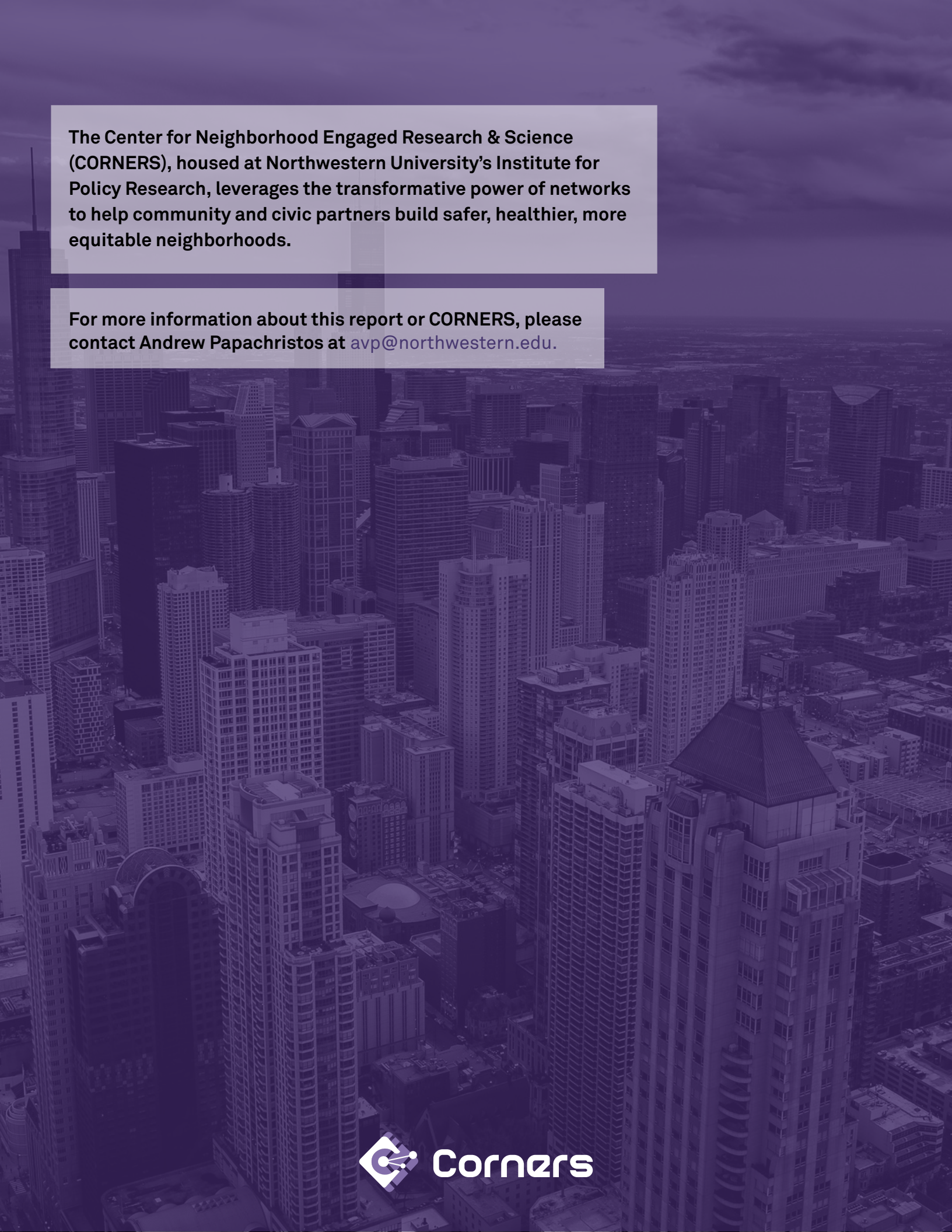
Peacekeepers Program Community Areas

Year-over-Year Change in Shooting Victimizations in Peacekeepers Program Community Areas

Community Area	Total Victimizations FY'24	Total Victimizations FY'25	YOY % Change in Victimizations
Albany Park	16	11	-31.25%
Belmont Cragin	34	21	-38.24%
Hermosa	13	6	-53.85%
Ashburn	23	10	-56.52%
Auburn Gresham	115	94	-18.26%
Brighton Park	30	22	-26.67%
Burnside	5	4	-20%
Chatham	86	66	-23.26%
Chicago Lawn	90	56	-37.78%
Englewood	110	71	-35.45%
Fuller Park	24	9	-62.50%
Greater Grand Crossing	112	76	-32.14%
New City	102	64	-37.25%
Roseland & West Pullman	163	123	-24.54%
Washington Park	44	54	+22.73%
West Englewood	105	83	-20.95%
Woodlawn	64	46	-28.12%
South Chicago	67	46	-31.34%
South Shore	112	118	+5.36%
Austin	191	166	-13.09%
East Garfield Park	100	83	-17%
Humboldt Park	92	77	-16.30%
North Lawndale	165	120	-27.27%
South Lawndale	102	67	-34.31%
West Garfield Park	92	85	-7.61%
All Peacekeepers Program Community Areas	2057	1578	-23.29%
Non-Peacekeepers Program Community Areas	738	574	-22.22%
Citywide	2795	2152	-23.01%

Table A2

Most Peacekeepers Program community areas saw reductions in their year-over-year victimizations, with only 2 out of the 25 witnessing increases. On average, Peacekeepers Program community areas saw 19.2 fewer victimizations in FY'25 relative to FY'24. In all other Chicago community areas, on average, there were 3.2 fewer victimizations, suggesting that targeted interventions, such as violence prevention programs and community engagement, might be associated with the observed lower levels of violence in Peacekeepers Program communities.



The Center for Neighborhood Engaged Research & Science (CORNERS), housed at Northwestern University's Institute for Policy Research, leverages the transformative power of networks to help community and civic partners build safer, healthier, more equitable neighborhoods.

For more information about this report or CORNERS, please contact Andrew Papachristos at avp@northwestern.edu.

Corners