

Crime has been a buzz word throughout the Magic City for quite a while now. It has definitely become one of the dominant issues of this year's mayoral campaigns, with the major candidates running television and radio spots describing exactly how they would solve what is being considered a growing problem. In recent months merchants and residents, particularly on the city's east side, have become increasingly concerned about the issue, especially as they see the city turning a corner in terms of potential reinvestment. Two efforts in particular are getting noticed as they prepare to ramp up their efforts.

One effort to draw attention to the growing crime situation will take place **next week Tuesday, October 2**, during the weekly Birmingham city council meeting at City Hall. Merchants and neighbors in the Five Points South area are scheduled to speak before the council to ask for increased focus on and serious actions to be taken due to the increase in criminal activity in the area. Members of the group include acting Five Points South Merchants Association president James Little and local restaurateur Frank Stitt. The group has also announced it's planning a crime vigil for October.

Another effort in existence since May is the [Victims of Birmingham Crime](#) MySpace profile. The profile was created to provide information and raise awareness about crime in Birmingham, with many of its bulletins and posts focused on the city's east side. They have received coverage from most of the area's major media sources, allowing it to grow its friends list to 240. They are now looking into more ways to connect those friends and to have a bigger influence on how the issue of crime is being handled. You can [click here](#) to read their most recent blog post or [here](#) to view their profile and contact them.

Both efforts are demonstrating what appears to be a larger movement citywide to become organized and to demand better responses to the issue. We're interested in learning more about similar programs on the city's west side and about your thoughts on this recently renewed focus on crime, especially with the election coming up. Post anything you've got as a comment.