



EVALUATION OF THE AKRON WEED AND SEED PROGRAM 2000-2004

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July 2005

Acknowledgments

The Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services would like to recognize a number of individuals for their assistance in the evaluation of the city of Akron's Weed and Seed project, including: Peggy Holmes, Weed and Seed coordinator; the staff of Akron's Weed and Seed program; Officer Lloyd Ford, Weeding coordinator and community oriented policing officer, Akron Police Department; Thomas Tatum and Mike Meyer, Akron's Department of Planning and Urban Development; Detective Eric Paull and Malinda McVay, Planning and Research Unit, Akron Police Department; Scott Reifschneider, former intern, Akron Police Department; Chief Researcher Robert Swisher, Ohio Office of Criminal Justice Services; Jason Trask and Jim Zepp, Justice Research and Statistics Association; and Brian McDonald, Kent State University Survey Research Laboratory.

This project was supported by the Executive Office of Weed and Seed (Community Capacity Development Office) Grant #2002-WS-QX-0079, CFDA #16-595; and by the FY 04 State Justice Statistics Program for Statistical Analysis Centers #2002-BJ-CX-K008.

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Objective

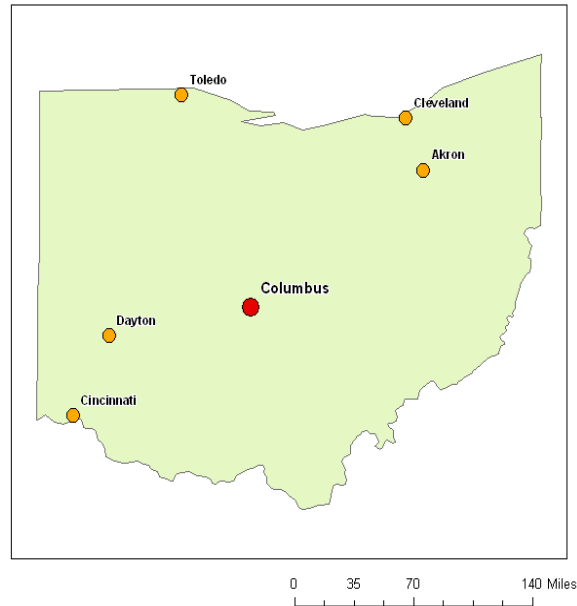
Operation Weed and Seed is a strategy designed to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug crime, and gang activity in targeted high-crime neighborhoods. The strategy consists of two primary components: a weeding strategy designed to “weed out” individuals contributing to crime in the neighborhood (and to prevent their return), and a seeding strategy that brings services to the neighborhood dedicated to prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood revitalization. Community policing is heavily involved in the Weed and Seed strategy, and its role is to serve as a bridge between the weeding and seeding components.

The purpose of this study is to assess the city of Akron’s Weed and Seed program over the last five years of its existence, from 2000 through 2004, with special emphasis on the weeding component of the program. Data sources include the following: offense and arrest data from the Akron Police Department for the years 2000 through 2004; a 2004 citizen attitude survey of the Weed and Seed area (comparable to a 1999 citizen attitude survey); interviews with key individuals involved in the Akron Weed and Seed program; various forms of support documentation, including grantee activity data reports, the “National Institute of Justice National Evaluation of Weed and Seed: Akron, Ohio Research Report,” Weed and Seed Steering Committee minutes, and land use data from the Akron City Planning Department.

History and Characteristics of Akron and the Weed and Seed Area

History and characteristics of Akron

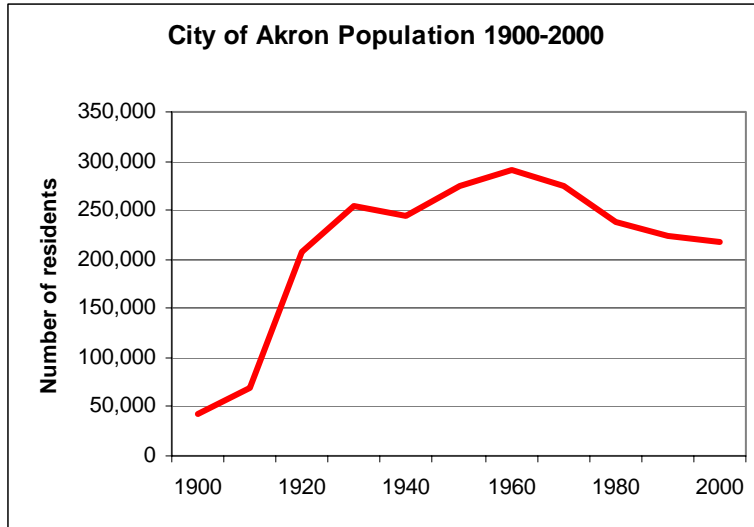
The city of Akron is located in Summit County in northeastern Ohio, 30 miles southeast of Cleveland. Akron is one of six cities in Ohio that has a population of more than 100,000. In 2000, the Census Bureau reported Akron's population as 217,075¹.



Akron was once considered the heart of the nation's rubber industry, and this was reflected in Akron's population boom from 1910 to 1930. After 1930, Akron continued to increase in population, reaching a high of 290,351 in 1960. Since 1960, and coinciding with the closing of nearly all rubber factories, Akron has experienced a slow and steady decrease in population that continued through 2000.² In 2004, Akron's population was estimated to be 212,179.

¹ All demographic data in this report originates from the U.S. Bureau of the Census 2000, unless otherwise indicated.

² From the Ohio Department of Natural Resource's web site:
<http://www.dnr.state.oh.us/recycling/awareness/facts/tires/ohiorubber.htm>



Currently, the city’s workforce is employed in a variety of industrial-commercial, retail-distribution, and service operations, including aerospace, nuclear power, metals, plastics, and chemicals.³

According to the 2000 Census, the median household income in Akron is \$32,132. Fourteen percent of Akron families have an income below the poverty level. More than 55 percent of occupied housing units are owned, while approximately 38 percent are rented and slightly more than seven percent are vacant.

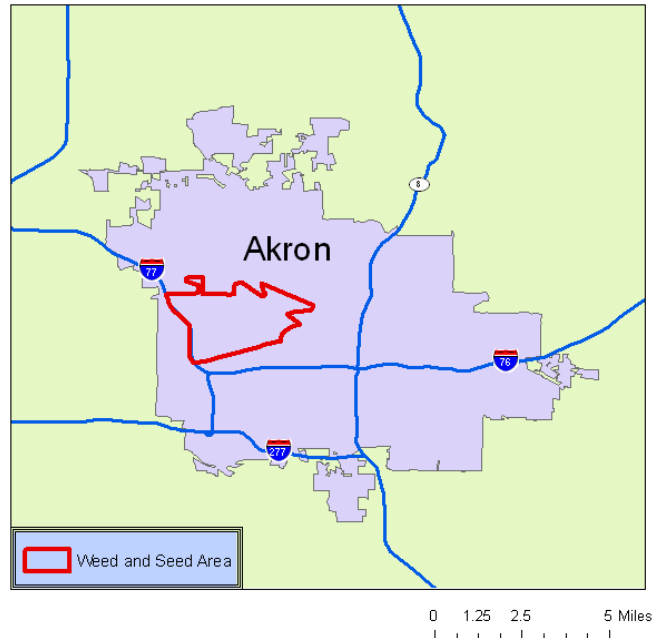
Eighteen percent of the population age 25 and older does not have a high school diploma.

Akron’s residents consist of two predominant races. White residents make up 67 percent of the city’s population, and Black residents make up 28 percent of the population. Nearly all (99 percent) of Akron’s residents are of non-Hispanic ethnicity.

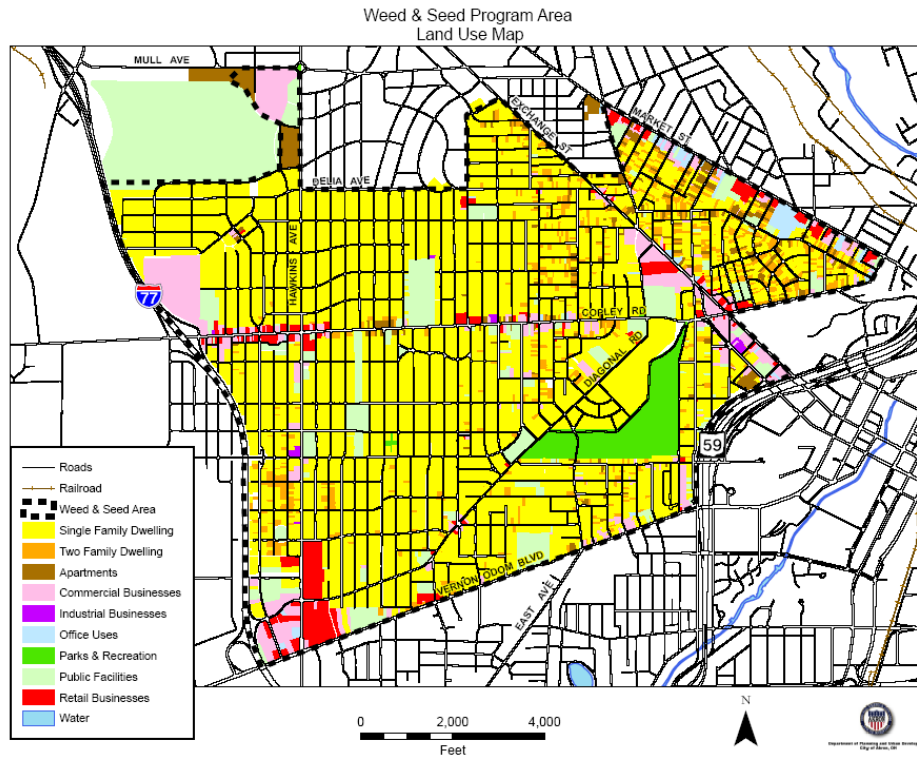
³ From the Downtown Akron Partnership’s web site: <http://www.downtownakron.com/info.html>

Characteristics of the Akron Weed and Seed area

An approximately four-square-mile area on Akron's west side (population in 2000 = 26,738) was federally designated a Weed and Seed area. The following map shows the location of the Weed and Seed site within Akron's boundaries.



The majority of the Weed and Seed area consists of single-family dwellings, as shown in the following land use map⁴. In addition, there are a few commercial and retail business clusters mainly on the border of the Weed and Seed area and along main roads running through the Weed and Seed area.



The median household income in the Weed and Seed area is \$27,772 — more than \$4,000 less than that of Akron as a whole. Similar to Akron’s rates, more than 52 percent of occupied housing units are owned, while 39 percent are rented and eight percent are vacant.

The Weed and Seed area includes eight public schools: one high school, one middle school, and six elementary schools, with a total population of approximately 3,500 students. Slightly more than five percent of youth are enrolled in private schools. The graduation rate for the 2003-2004 school year for the high school in the Weed and Seed area was 78.2 percent, slightly higher than the Akron Public School System’s overall graduation rate of 74.8 percent.⁵ The Ohio Department of Education’s grading system for school districts and individual schools placed the Akron Public School System in “Academic Watch” status, meaning that the district as a whole met five of the 18

⁴ Land use map provided by the City of Akron Planning Department.

⁵ The school data reported here come from the Ohio Department of Education 2003-2004 report, and are slightly different than that reported in the 2000 Census.

standards set forth by the Ohio Department of Education. However, the Weed and Seed area high school was given “Academic Emergency” status, the lowest ranking possible, as only one out of 12 individual school standards were met for the academic year.

The racial composition of the Weed and Seed area differs considerably from that of Akron as a whole. Blacks make up 78.5 percent of the Weed and Seed area, while Whites make up 18 percent of this population. When the Weed and Seed area is excluded from the Akron population count, the percent of Black residents in Akron drops from 28 percent to 21 percent of the population.

The following table displays demographic information for the Weed and Seed area and for the city of Akron.

	Weed and Seed area	City of Akron
Total population:	26,738	217,075
Median age:	34.2	34.3
Percent under age 18:	29.0%	25.3%
Total housing units:	11,650	97,268
Owner occupied	52.6%	55.1%
Renter occupied	39.3%	37.6%
Vacant	8.1%	7.4%
Race and ethnicity:		
Black	78.5%	28.4%
White	18.0%	67.3%
Other	3.5%	4.3%
Hispanic ethnicity	1.0%	1.2%
Non-Hispanic ethnicity	99.0%	98.8%
Family household:		
Age 15+ population	20,269	170,427
Married couple family	31.9%	41.1%
Educational attainment:		
Total population age 25+	16,060	136,134
No high school diploma	22.2%	18.1%
High school graduate	77.9%	81.8%
Percent HS graduate with College degree	16.8%	23.1%
Median household income:	\$27,772	\$32,132

Source: Data comes from Census 2000, Summary File 1 and 3. Much of the data for the Weed and Seed area and for the city of Akron was compiled by Allocate.

History of crime in the Weed and Seed area⁶

Crime was the deciding factor in designating the Weed and Seed area. A prior evaluation conducted by the National Institute of Justice noted that the west side of Akron was chosen because of its level of violent crimes, including some high-publicity homicides. As the following figure shows, while the property crime rate for the Weed and Seed area was lower than Akron's property crime rate (but higher than the U.S. property crime rate), the violent crime rate in the Weed and Seed area prior to the start of the program was higher than that of both Akron and the U.S.



Source: National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice. "1999 National Evaluation of Weed and Seed: Akron, Ohio Research Report."

Note: "Target Area" in this figure refers to the entire Weed and Seed area.

As the 1999 report also noted, youth seemed to be at particular risk. While only eight percent of the 12- to 18-year-old population lived in the Weed and Seed area, 14 percent of juvenile drug-related offenses involved juveniles from the Weed and Seed area. During the 1993-1994 school year, 51 students were expelled from schools in the target area due to weapon or drug violations.

⁶ The data in this section (including the figure) was originally published by the National Institute of Justice, U.S. Department of Justice, in the "1999 National Evaluation of Weed and Seed: Akron, Ohio Research Report."

The Akron Weed and Seed Program

History of the Weed and Seed program

In 1996, Akron's Planning and Urban Development Department applied for and received official recognition of Akron's Weed and Seed site. Akron received funding totaling approximately \$175,000 for each of five consecutive years — \$125,000 of the annual funding came from the Weed and Seed grant, while \$50,000 came from asset forfeiture money. A steering committee consisting of local government agency representatives, social services programs, and citizens was created to oversee the program. As of September 2004, the committee had 38 members.

As with other Weed and Seed sites, the Akron Weed and Seed strategy consisted of the two primary elements that make up its name — a weeding strategy and a seeding strategy. Law enforcement and prosecutors worked to “weed” the neighborhood of crime, drugs, and gangs, and social service agencies, citizens, and other government agencies “seed” the neighborhood with programs and resources needed for prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration. A third element, community oriented policing, served to bridge the weeding and seeding elements.

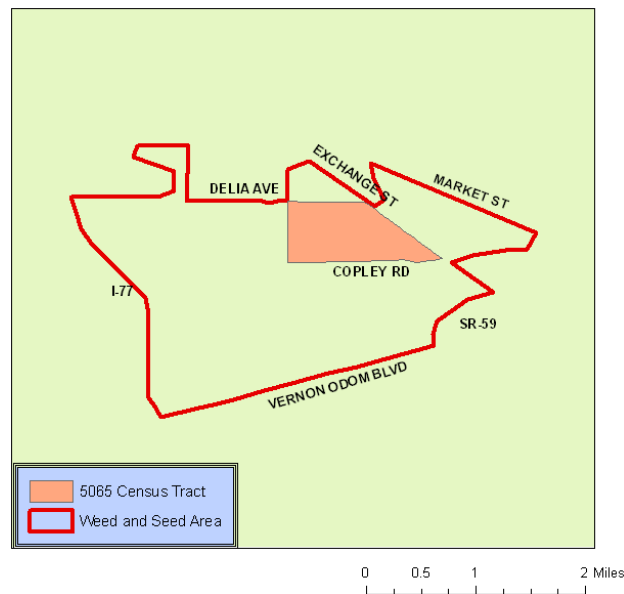
After funding began, the City of Akron transferred responsibility for the Weed and Seed grant to the Community Oriented Policing (COP) unit of the Akron Police Department. The administering agency for the program became the City of Akron Police Department. An Akron Police COPs officer was assigned to coordinate the weeding and community oriented policing activities in the area. Shortly thereafter, a project coordinator was hired to manage the seeding component of the program. To better allow her to focus on the seeding strategy, the coordinator transferred fiscal responsibility for the seeding activities to the Akron YMCA. Both Weed and Seed coordinators, as well as the Akron Police Department and the Akron YMCA remained with the program until its end in September 2004.

Given the large size of the officially recognized Weed and Seed area, the steering committee decided to focus attention on an area that was particularly hard hit with crime and drugs. In 1997, the first target area, which included an area of public housing, was chosen for its high crime rate. One of the major weeding tasks involved collaboration between law enforcement, the steering committee, and the Akron Metropolitan Housing Association (AMHA) to demolish several drug houses in the area and to create open spaces for parks in their place.

Interestingly, the first target area was already home to the successful Crouse Caring Communities project, established in 1993, which brought together a variety of social service functions for local residents. The Crouse Caring Communities project established a Safe Haven in a local elementary school, and much of the 1997 Weed and Seed funding was put toward the renovation of space within the elementary school to expand the Safe Haven. Renovation was completed in 1999. A second Safe Haven was created shortly after the first, to service residents in the western part of the Weed and Seed area. Other

than renovation of the Safe Haven and opening of a second Safe Haven, the majority of the Weed and Seed activities during this time were “weeding” in nature.

Multiple factors influenced the decision by the steering committee to move the target area to a new location. Several neighborhood drug houses had been destroyed, the Crouse Caring Communities project and other neighborhood social service agencies were effectively providing needed services to neighborhood residents, and the steering committee had begun to experience increasing difficulty in coordination with the existing social service programs. There was no official “transition” date, but historical documents and interviews with key personnel suggest that the transition to a new Weed and Seed location took place some time in 2000. The Crouse Caring Communities Safe Haven remains in existence in some capacity within the original neighborhood, although it is unclear to what extent the Safe Haven remained involved in the Weed and Seed program (more specifically, seeding activities) once the target area was moved.



While the officially recognized Weed and Seed area encompassed several census tracts in the west side of Akron, the new targeted Weed and Seed area, the Madison Ave./Wildwood Rd. neighborhood, became the focus of the Weed and Seed efforts in 2000, and remained the target area until the program’s end in 2004. This targeted area closely corresponded to census tract 5065 (and is hereafter referred to as CT5065). Another Safe Haven, the Madison Resource Center, was developed in 2001 in the heart of this neighborhood. Although weeding, community oriented policing, and seeding activities took place in the larger Weed and Seed site, efforts were focused on the target area, CT5065. While the other Safe Havens still exist, it appears that the bulk of the Weed and Seed programs and activities centered around the Madison Resource Center Safe Haven from 2001 through 2004.

Akron Weed and Seed Timeline

<u>Year</u>	<u>Activity</u>
FY 1995	Akron Weed and Seed program receives \$35,000
FY 1996	Akron Weed and Seed program receives Official Recognition (OR); Program receives no funding
FY 1997	Akron Weed and Seed program is given a five-year grant award from the Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS); Edgewood target area within Weed and Seed boundary is the focus of efforts; Renovation work begins on Crouse Caring Community Safe Haven
1998	Continued work in Edgewood target area
1999	Renovation work on Crouse Caring Safe Haven is completed; second Safe Haven opens in western part of Weed and Seed area
2000	Discussion begins regarding a transition of the target area to the Madison Ave./Wildwood Rd. area (which closely approximates CT5065)
2001	Begin transition to target area CT5065; Madison Avenue Safe Haven opens in target area CT5065
2002	Grant award ends, but extension is given
2004	Grant ends Sept. 30, 2004

Local mission and vision

The local mission of the Madison Resource Center Safe Haven is to “provide a Safe Haven environment for residents, and (families) to be able to access information on available services and programs.” The vision of the strategy is twofold: (1) law enforcement agencies and criminal justice officials cooperate to “weed out” criminals who are violent or abuse drugs to prevent them from victimizing residents in the designated area; (2) social services and economic revitalization are brought in to “seed” the area to ensure long-term change and a higher quality of life for residents.

Funding for the Weed and Seed program

Funding used by the Akron Weed and Seed program came from a variety of federal and non-federal sources. The Akron Weed and Seed program received \$35,000 from the Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS) in FY 1995. In FY 1996, the program received no funding. However, beginning in FY 1997, the program was awarded a five-year grant from EOWS. In each year of this five-year period, the program received approximately \$175,000, which included \$50,000 from asset forfeitures. A series of grant extensions allowed the program to remain funded until September 30, 2004. From 1996 to 2002, the Akron Weed and Seed program received \$852,918.

Of the approximately \$175,000 that the Weed and Seed program received annually, \$50,000 came from asset forfeitures. For the Akron Weed and Seed program, the asset forfeiture money was used to fund police equipment and police overtime. The remaining money was used to fund police overtime, police travel, youth diversion, the Weed and Seed coordinator position, and various seeding programs, including the establishment of three Safe Havens.

Appendix A provides a listing of other federal and non-federal sources of funding.

Elements of the Weed and Seed program

The Weed and Seed strategy consists of two elements — (1) weeding; and (3) seeding, which involves prevention/intervention/treatment and neighborhood restoration. Community policing is the bridge between these two elements. The following serves to highlight some of the programs and projects that took place in the Weed and Seed program from 2000 through 2004.

The law enforcement strategy: weeding and community policing

Partners in collaboration. The law enforcement strategy included involvement from the following agencies and departments:

- Akron Police Department, including the Vice Unit and the Narcotics Unit
- Federal Bureau of Investigation
- Drug Enforcement Administration
- Akron City Prosecutor's Office
- Akron Health Department
- Akron City Planning Department
- Akron Adult Parole Department
- Fugitive Task Force
- Akron Juvenile Probation Department
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Association

Approach to Weeding. The Akron Police Department identified violent crime, drug crime, juvenile crime, and gang activity as the major problems in the Weed and Seed area. In response to these issues, the weeding strategy involved numerous law enforcement activities. The majority of EOWS funding devoted to weeding activities went to police overtime, youth diversion, and police equipment.

Weeding activities:

- Neighborhood meetings
- Daily police presence in area high schools and middle schools using random drug and weapon searches
- Active involvement in the juvenile diversion program (through the Akron Police Department and the Summit County Juvenile Court) for referral of non-violent youth offenders to community service to avoid first-offense court adjudication and misdemeanor criminal record status
- Community oriented policing officers assigned to a gang and youth street crime tactical unit, with the Weed and Seed site designated a priority area
- A task force established within the police department (various units), the Akron prosecutor's office, and the Akron Health Department to coordinate activities and share information
- Enforcement sweeps for:
 - Curfew
 - Drugs
 - Tobacco, cigarette, and alcohol sales to minors
 - Inspections of convenience stores for illegal activities

- Gang unit activities, including:
 - Developing a database of members and gangs
 - Participating in planned sweeps for drugs and gangs
 - Providing training to concerned groups, including residents, school principals, teachers in the Weed and Seed area
- Street Narcotic Undercover Division (SNUD) activities in the Weed and Seed area, including:
 - Execution of search warrants
 - Undercover buys
 - Take down drug sweeps

Approach to Community Oriented Policing (COP). Community oriented policing served as the “bridge” between the weeding and seeding elements, and utilized officers from Akron’s COP unit. The coordinator for the weeding component was also an officer within the Akron Police Department’s COP unit. The following programs and projects were conducted by the Akron Police Department’s COP unit within the Weed and Seed area.

Community Oriented Policing activities:

- Officers were assigned to assist beat patrol officers covering each of the shifts.
- A door-to-door survey of neighborhood residents was conducted to identify needs and community based assets
- Meetings with community leaders were held to promote the Weed and Seed activities
- Involvement in the Weed and Seed steering committee
- Sponsorship of a bike rodeo for community residents
- Development of the publication “The Law and You” to educate students about the Akron Police Department and the law in their community
- Transportation of students to a prison for a “scared straight” type program
- Special projects involving partnering with other area programs, including:
 - Partnership with Akron’s Child Guidance for their Parent Program
 - Partnership with the 4-H program of The Ohio State University
 - Collaboration with city officials to clean up the Wildwood section of the Weed and Seed area
 - Collaboration with Buchtel High School teachers and staff to develop an out-of-school suspension program
 - Formation of an alliance with other service providers, including Akron Urban Minority, Alcohol Drug Outreach Program, Akron Volunteer Center, Wal-Marts of Summit County, and the Greater Westside Block Club to create programs designed for residents to celebrate positive influences in their community
 - Partnership with the Landlord Taskforce Partnership to close five drug houses

The seeding strategy

Partners in collaboration. The following is a partial list of agencies and organizations that collaborated with the Weed and Seed program to provide services to the area's residents:

- Akron Child Guidance Centers
- Family Services
- YMCA
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Association
- Black Law Enforcement Officer Association
- Caring Communities of Summit County (formerly Crouse Caring Communities)
- Urban Ounce of Prevention Services

Approach to Seeding. Over the course of the program's existence, several seeding programs, projects, and activities had been developed and implemented that were aimed at prevention, intervention, and treatment as well as neighborhood revitalization. While the following list is not exhaustive, it serves to highlight some of the more notable activities.

Seeding activities:

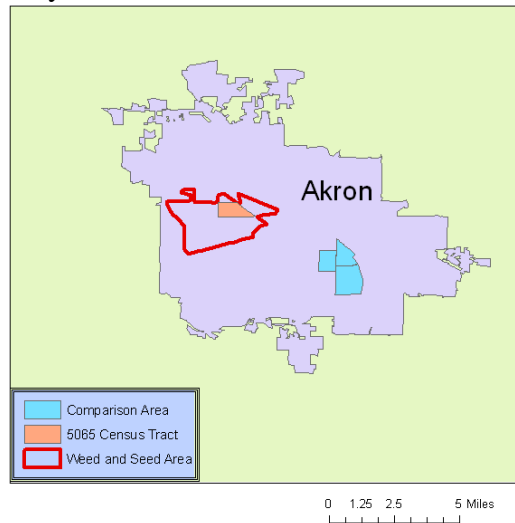
- Establishment of three Safe Havens over the course of the program's existence that have provided the following services at one or more of the locations:
 - Academic courses/tutoring/after school homework assistance program
 - Computer labs
 - Mentoring
 - Prevention violence education, including good touch/bad touch, 911
 - Job training
 - Anti-drug and anti-gang education
 - Summer day camp
 - Youth leadership training
 - Boys/girls club programs and scouting programs
 - Victim assistance programs
 - General health screening services
 - Free summer lunch program
- Athletic programs, including participation in the Annual Soap Box Derby, youth summer basketball tournaments, martial arts
- Sponsoring of high school Step Show
- Lawn and garden beautification day
- Collaboration with the Westside Neighborhood Development Corporation (WENDCO) to revitalize Akron's west side neighborhood (including the Weed and Seed area). WENDCO provides the following services:
 - Project New Beginnings, a first time home ownership program for low income families
 - Predatory lending education and prevention
 - Home buyer education and credit counseling program
 - Emergency home security repair program

Crime and Justice in the Weed and Seed Area

The strategy behind the weeding component of the Weed and Seed program is to weed out criminals who participate in violent crime and drug abuse and attempt to prevent their return to the targeted neighborhood. Two measures were used to assess the effectiveness of the weeding component of the program: longitudinal crime data and residents' perceptions of crime and justice. The following section describes crime over a five year period in the Weed and Seed area, the targeted area (CT5065), a comparison neighborhood, and the city of Akron.

Data sources. Incident-based data obtained from the Akron Police Department was used in the analyses, and included offense data, arrest data, juvenile arrest data, and weapon use data. For the purposes of this study, five years worth of data, from 2000 through 2004, were used in the analyses⁷. In addition, census data were used for gathering demographics needed to provide an overview of the Weed and Seed area and to determine the appropriate comparison neighborhood.

Methodology. The Akron Weed and Seed area can be geographically defined in two ways. The officially recognized Weed and Seed area encompasses approximately 4.09 square miles and has a population of 26,602 residents. Due to the large size of the Weed and Seed area, the steering committee decided that its efforts should be focused on a smaller neighborhood which corresponded closely with Census Tract 5065 (CT5065). CT5065 encompasses approximately 0.44 square miles and has a population of 3,983 residents⁸. Wherever possible, both neighborhoods were used in the analyses. Additionally, comparisons were also made to a demographically similar Akron neighborhood and to the city of Akron itself.



⁷ Federal funding of the Akron Weed and Seed program ended September 30, 2004, but for ease of analysis, data were collected and analyzed through December 31, 2004.

⁸ It should be noted that the target area CT5065 is much more densely populated than the Weed and Seed area as a whole (8,903.5 people per square mile vs. 6,505.0 people per square mile). Population density has long been considered to be a predictor of crime.

To determine the appropriate comparison neighborhood for inclusion in the study, several demographic factors were considered—population, race, median household income, and the percentage of owner-occupied housing units. Census data for the entire Weed and Seed area were compared to several non-contiguous Akron neighborhoods. The neighborhood that was chosen, while smaller in population than the Weed and Seed area, contained the demographics that most closely aligned with the Weed and Seed area.

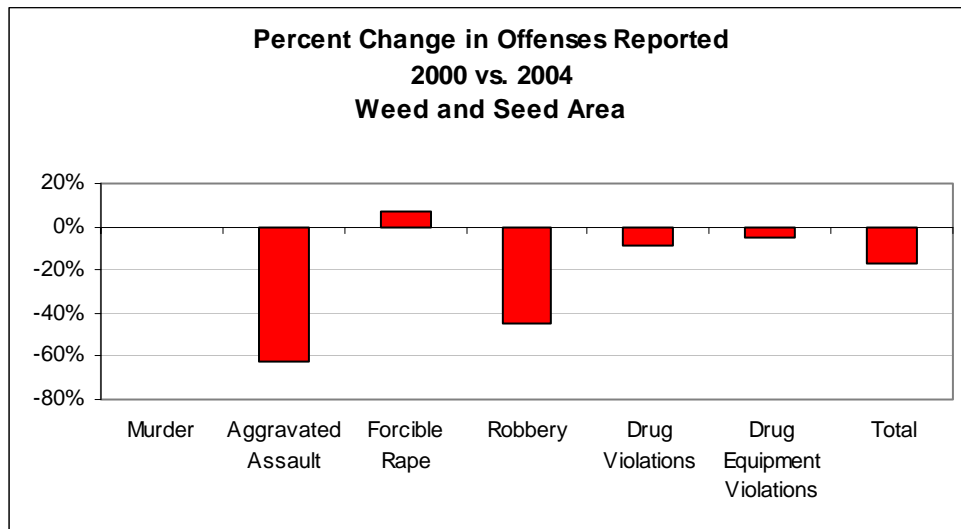
	Weed and Seed area	Targeted Weed and Seed area (CT5065)	City of Akron	Comparison neighborhood
Total population	26,738	3,983	217,075	8,156
Median age	34.2	28.6	34.3	N/A
Percent under age 18	29.0%	37.2%	25.3%	32.0%
Total housing units:	11,650	1,493	97,268	3,450
Owner occupied	52.6%	49.0%	55.1%	52.0%
Renter occupied	39.3%	40.6%	37.6%	36.4%
Vacant	8.1%	10.4%	7.4%	11.6%
Race and ethnicity:				
Black	78.5%	87.6%	28.4%	60.4%
White	18.0%	9.2%	67.3%	34.4%
Other	3.5%	3.2%	4.3%	5.2%
Hispanic ethnicity	1.0%	0.9%	1.2%	1.3%
Non-Hispanic ethnicity	99.0%	99.1%	98.8%	98.7%
Family household:				
Percent under age 18	29.0%	37.2%	25.3%	32.0%
Married couple family	31.9%	27.0%	41.1%	30.2%
Female householder, no husband present	N/A	37.2%	17.7%	30.7%
Educational attainment of population age 25+:				
Total population age 25+	16,060	2,099	136,134	4,853
No high school diploma	22.2%	27.1%	18.1%	30.0%
High school graduate	77.9%	73.0%	81.8%	70.0%
College degree	16.8%	10.7%	23.1%	5.2%
Median household income	\$27,772	\$23,968	\$32,132	\$24,568

Source: Data come from Census 2000, Summary File 1 and 3. Much of the data for the Weed and Seed site, for CT5065, and for the city of Akron was compiled by Allocate.

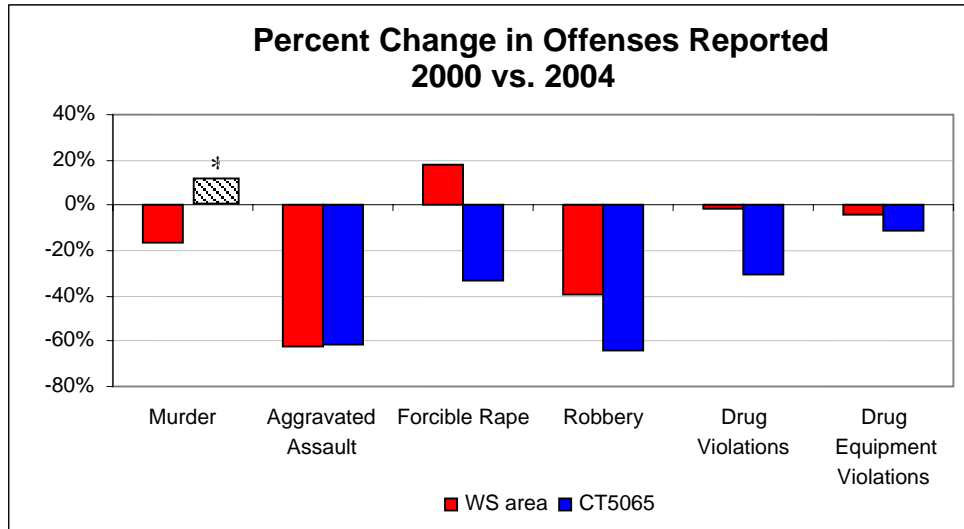
Offenses reported

Weed and Seed began in Akron to address the increasing number of violent crimes and drug crimes plaguing the area. Therefore, analyses were conducted for the following crimes covering the years 2000 through 2004: murder, aggravated assault, forcible rape, robbery, drug violations, and drug equipment violations. The analyses focus on the Weed and Seed area as well as the targeted area (CT5065) within the Weed and Seed boundaries. In addition, crime data was analyzed for the city of Akron and a comparison neighborhood within Akron for the same years.

Weed and Seed area. The Weed and Seed area as a whole showed decreases in four of the six offenses under study from 2000 to 2004. Murder showed no change and forcible rape showed a 7.1 percent increase. The most dramatic changes were noted in aggravated assaults and robberies, where the number of offenses reported decreased 62 percent and 44.5 percent, respectively. Drug violations and drug equipment violations decreased 8.8 percent and 5.5 percent, respectively.

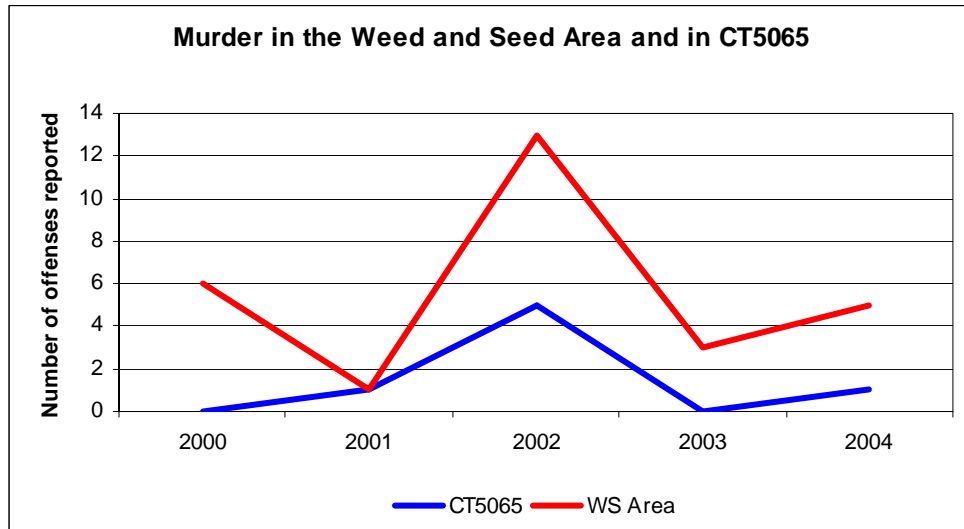


Weed and Seed area (minus CT5065) vs. CT5065. While weeding activities were conducted throughout the entire Weed and Seed area, the targeted area, CT5065, received special attention because of its particularly high crime rates. Therefore, all crime data specific to this targeted area were compared to the Weed and Seed area *minus* the targeted area CT5065. In general, the results in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065 are similar. Both areas showed decreases in all crimes under study from 2000 to 2004, with the exception of murder and rape. CT5065 showed greater decreases in rape, robbery, drug violations, and drug equipment violations. The Weed and Seed area showed a decrease in murder and aggravated assault. Murder increased in CT5065 from zero to one, while it decreased by one in the Weed and Seed area. Rape increased in the Weed and Seed area, while it decreased in CT5065. Overall, CT5065 experienced a slightly greater percent decrease in violent crimes and drug crimes than the remaining Weed and Seed area, 13.5 percent vs. 12.9 percent, respectively.

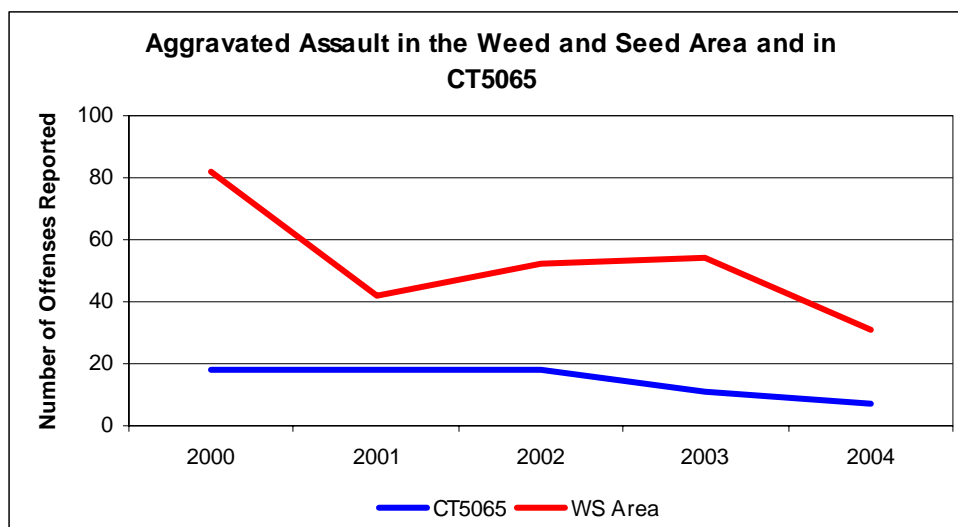


Looking at the individual crimes, the shapes of the five-year trendlines for each of the crimes are similar for both the Weed and Seed area and targeted area CT5065.

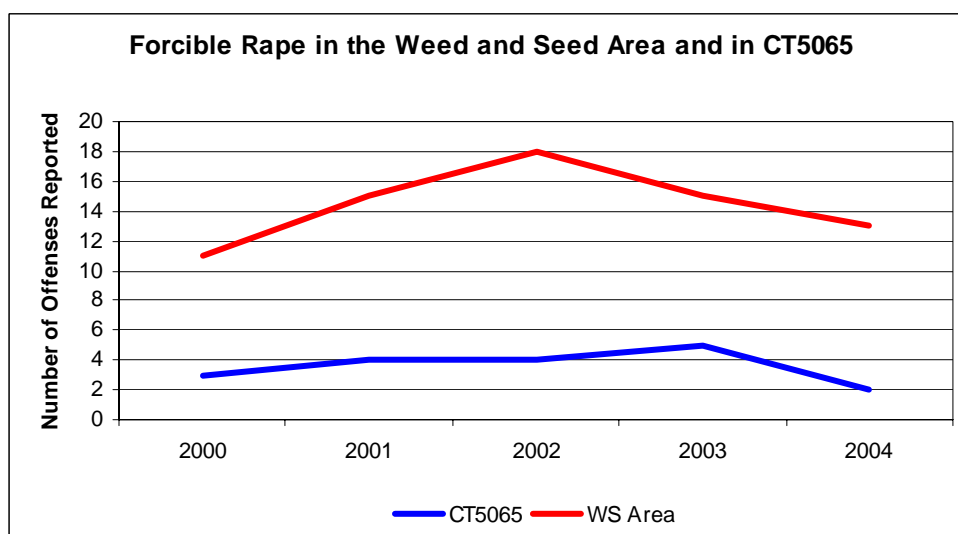
Murder. Murder fluctuated throughout the five-year period for the Weed and Seed area and for the targeted area CT5065. With the exception of the 2000-2001 period, both areas show the same pattern—an increase in the murder rate which peaked in 2002, followed by a sharp decrease in 2003 and an increase in 2004. However, given the low number of murders under study here, even slight fluctuations in the absolute number of crimes may appear exaggerated.



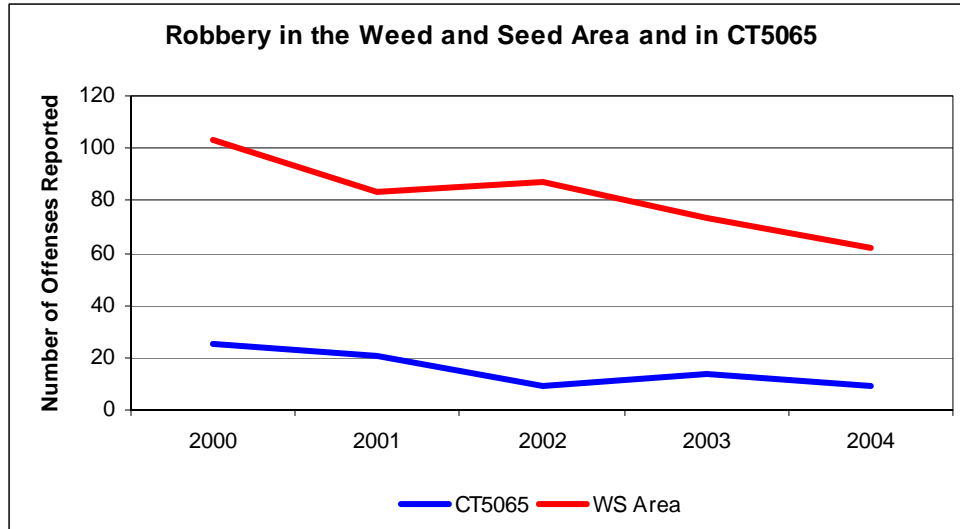
Aggravated assaults. Aggravated assaults were at a five-year high in 2000 and a five-year low in 2004 for both the Weed and Seed area and for CT5065.



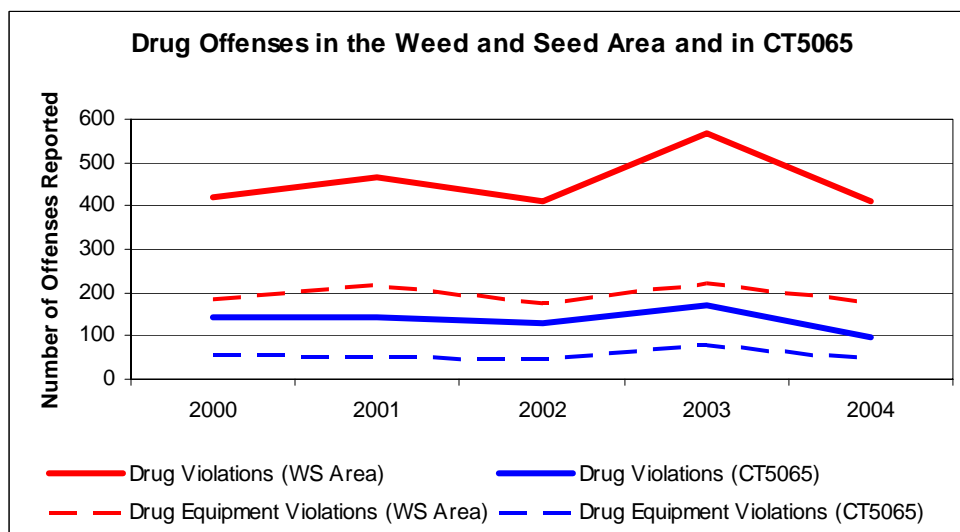
Forcible Rape. Forcible rapes increased or remained steady for the Weed and Seed area and for CT5065 from 2000 through 2002. The number of rapes began to decrease at different times, however. The number of rape offenses reported decreased in 2003 and again in 2004, whereas the decrease did not begin until 2004 for CT5065. While the number of rapes declined in both 2003 and 2004, the total number reported in 2004 is still higher than in 2000. Again, however, it is important to note the relatively low number of offenses that are being compared over the years.



Robbery. With a few exceptions, the number of robberies reported in both the Weed and Seed area and in targeted area CT5065 declined throughout the five-year period, from a high in 2000 to a low in 2004.



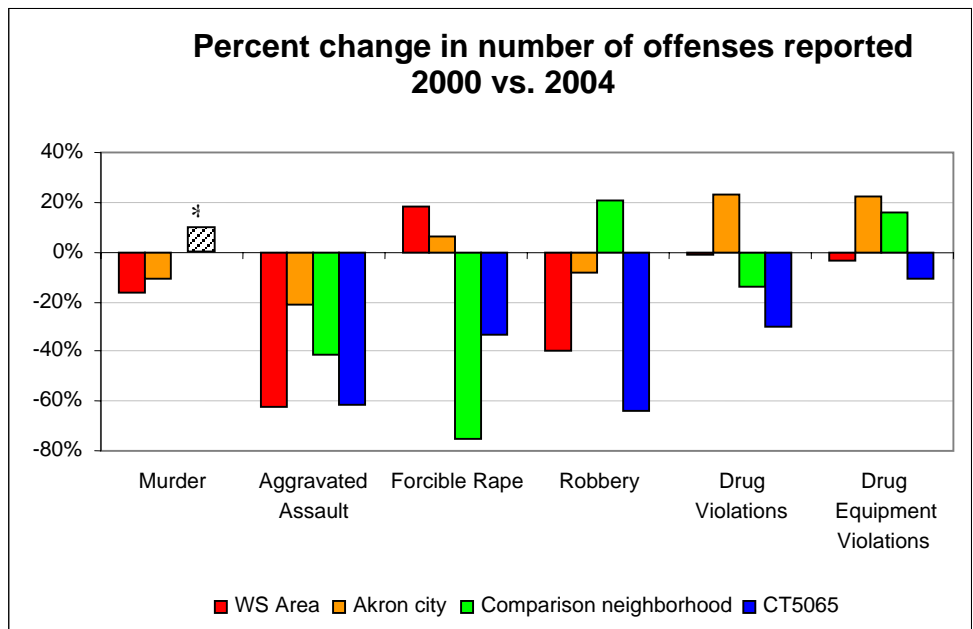
Drug-related crimes. The number of drug-related crimes fluctuated throughout the five year period for both the Weed and Seed area and CT5065. Interestingly, drug violations and drug equipment violations reached a low in 2002, followed by a high in 2003. Almost as sharp as the increase in drug crimes from 2002 to 2003 was the decrease in drug crimes from 2003 to 2004. Over the five year period under study, however, the total number of drug crimes decreased from 2000 to 2004 for both neighborhoods.



In addition to looking at the number of offenses reported within the Weed and Seed area and CT5065, crime data was analyzed for the city of Akron and for a comparison neighborhood within Akron's boundaries. While decreasing crime rates over time can be an indication of the success of the Weed and Seed program, it could also be the case that crime decreased in non-Weed and Seed areas. Looking at crime trends in the city as well as a comparable neighborhood would be another indication of the successfulness of the program.

The following graphic compares the percent change in offenses from 2000 to 2004 for the Weed and Seed area (minus CT5065), the city of Akron (minus the Weed and Seed area), the targeted area CT5065, and a comparison neighborhood. Overall, the total number of violent and drug crimes decreased in all sites except the city of Akron, which showed an increase from 2000 to 2004 of 13.8 percent.

Aggravated assaults showed a large decrease across all areas. Murder showed either no change or a slight change across all areas. Robbery decreased in all areas except for the comparison neighborhood. Forcible rape showed a large decrease in the comparison neighborhood and a smaller decrease in CT5065. Drug violations decreased in all areas except for the city itself. Drug equipment violations decreased slightly in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065.



* Note: Murder in CT5065 increased from zero to one.

Of all the areas under study, the city of Akron was the only area that showed an overall increase in the total number of violent and drug crimes studied here. This increase is due in large part to the number of drug-related crimes. In 2000, drug-related crimes (drug violations + drug equipment violations) totaled 3,201 offenses, which made up 72.5 percent of all the crimes studied in this report. In 2004, 3,936 drug-related crimes made up 78.3 percent of all the crimes under study. While murder, aggravated assault, and robbery showed decreases over the period, these decreases are swamped by the bulk of drug-related crimes.

Weed and Seed area vs. Akron (minus Weed and Seed area). Compared to Akron, the Weed and Seed area as a whole showed larger decreases in offenses reported for aggravated assault and robbery. In addition, while Akron showed increases in drug violations and drug equipment violations, the Weed and Seed area showed decreases. In

only two areas, murder and forcible rape, did the city of Akron show a more “positive” change. Given the relatively low number of murders and rapes that took place in the Weed and Seed area, these statistics should be interpreted with caution.

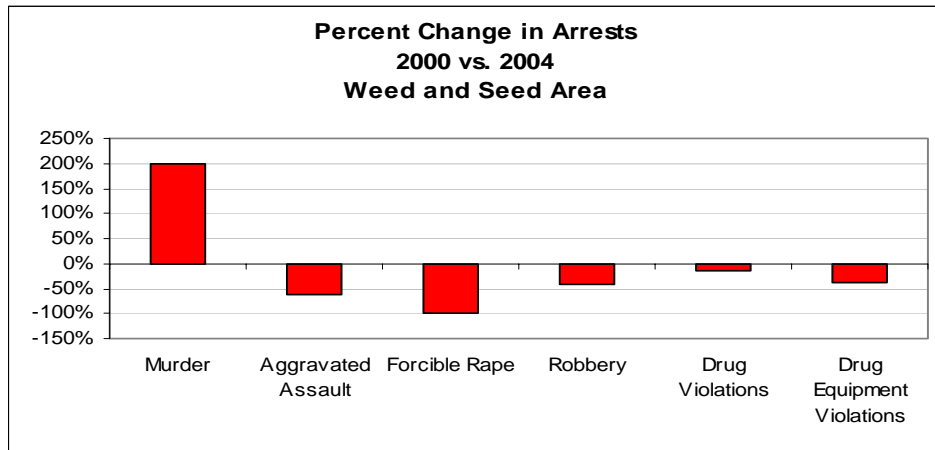
Weed and Seed area vs. comparison neighborhood. The Weed and Seed area as a whole was also compared to a non-contiguous but demographically similar Akron neighborhood. Compared to this neighborhood, the Weed and Seed area showed larger decreases in aggravated assault, robbery, and drug equipment violations. While the number of murders did not change from 2000 to 2004, the number of murders in the comparison neighborhood increased from zero to three. Both the Weed and Seed area and the comparison neighborhood showed decreases in drug violations, although the comparison neighborhood had a larger decrease (14.0 percent vs. 8.8 percent). The biggest difference between the Weed and Seed area and the comparison neighborhood was noted in forcible rape. The Weed and Seed area experienced a 7.1 percent increase, while the comparison neighborhood experienced a 75 percent decrease. These data should be interpreted with caution, however. The comparison neighborhood experienced an unusually high number of rapes in 2000. More than 72 percent of all forcible rapes reported in Akron occurred in this vicinity.

Summary of offenses reported. The area that was targeted by law enforcement, CT5065, appears to have benefited by the increased attention it was given, even more so than the larger Weed and Seed area. CT5065 showed decreases in all crimes except murder, where it increased from zero to one. The larger Weed and Seed area showed decreases in all crimes but forcible rape, but the decreases were not as large as those found in CT5065. Akron city’s crime rates, in comparison, decreased in murder, aggravated assault, and robbery, but increased in forcible rape and both drug violations and drug equipment violations. Data from the comparison neighborhood are mixed. The comparison neighborhood shows substantial decreases in aggravated assault and forcible rape, but increases in robbery and drug equipment violations. CT5065 showed greater decreases than the comparison neighborhood in all crimes but forcible rape, again suggesting that this targeted enforcement had an effect.

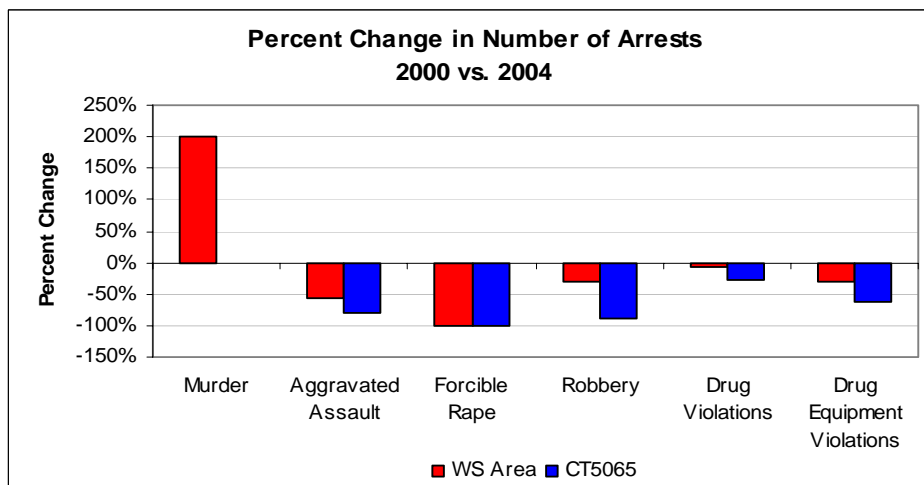
Arrests

Arrest data correspond with offense data — in general, the greater the number of offenses reported, the greater the number of arrests made. It is important to note that the crimes of murder and rape have such low numbers that even a slight fluctuation in number of arrests will result in a large percent change. For this reason, these data should be interpreted with caution.

Weed and Seed area. The number of arrests in the Weed and Seed area as a whole decreased for five out of the six crimes studied. Only murder showed an increase. While the percentage appears dramatic, it represents an increase from two arrests to six arrests.



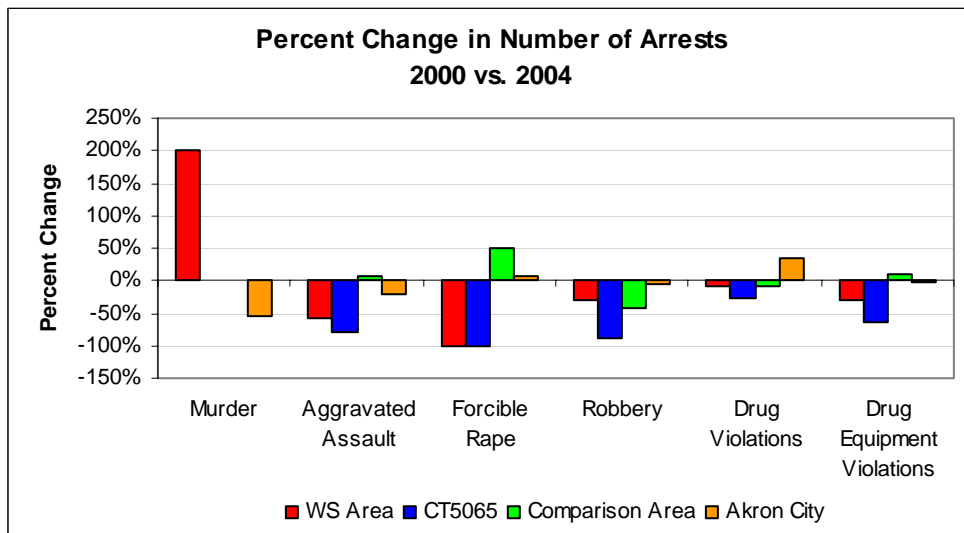
Weed and Seed area (minus CT5065) vs. CT5065. Arrests decreased in the same direction but with different magnitudes for the Weed and Seed area (minus CT5065) and CT5065. Just as aggravated assault offenses were at a high in 2000 and a low in 2004, so were arrests for this crime. Rape arrests bounce around over the five-year period, as did the rape offense data. Like the robbery offense data, robbery arrests decrease dramatically from 2000 to 2004 for both the Weed and Seed area and CT5065 — 41.9 percent and 87.5 percent, respectively. Drug violation arrests and drug equipment violation arrests show decreases across the five-year period as well.



Weed and Seed area vs. Akron city (minus the Weed and Seed area). With the exception of murder, arrests decreased a greater amount in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065 than in Akron city (minus the Weed and Seed area). Arrests for drug violations decreased in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065, but increased in Akron 34.6 percent. Arrests for drug equipment violations decreased in the Weed and Seed area 36.5 percent and in CT5065 63.2 percent, and decreased 2.6 percent in Akron city. Aggravated assault arrests, which were down 61.2 percent in the Weed and Seed area and 80 percent in CT5065, were down 19.4 percent in Akron city. Robbery, which was down 41.9 percent in the Weed and Seed area and 87.5 percent in CT5065, was down 6.0 percent in Akron city.

Weed and Seed area vs. comparison neighborhood. The comparison neighborhood showed a decreased number of arrests comparable to the Weed and Seed area for robbery. Additionally, arrests for drug violations in the comparison area decreased similar to that seen in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065. However, where the Weed and Seed area, CT5065, and Akron city showed decreases in aggravated assault arrests, arrests in the comparison area showed a slight increase.

Summary of arrests. In general, the arrest data correspond with the offense data—where there were decreases in the number of offenses reported, there were also decreases in the number of arrests made. The Weed and Seed area showed decreases in five out of six crimes. Targeted area CT5065 showed decreases across the same five crimes, although the decreases were larger in magnitude. The city of Akron also showed decreases in arrests in all crimes except drug violations and forcible rape. Compared to the Weed and Seed area and CT5065, the decreases were smaller in magnitude. The comparison neighborhood showed increases in arrests for three of the six crimes, but decreases in robbery and drug violations.

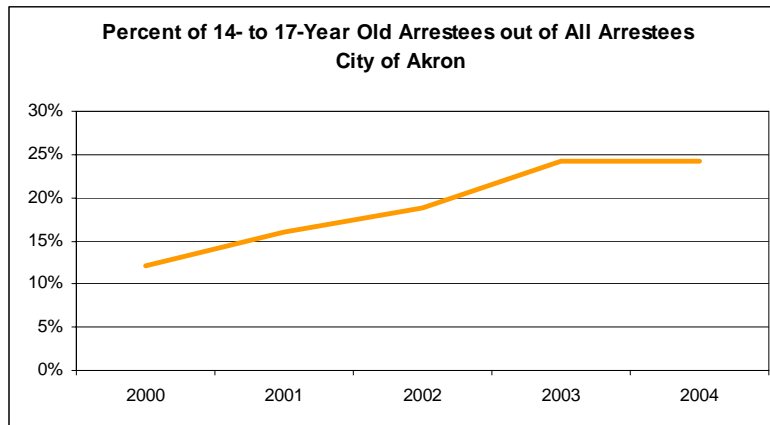


Juvenile arrests

The strategy for the Akron Weed and Seed program placed emphasis on juveniles and juvenile crime. Disciplinary data from the 2003-2004 school year from the Ohio Department of Education showed that a higher rate of high-school aged youth in the high school of the Weed and Seed area were expelled than students in the Akron Public Schools (0.7 per 100 vs. 0.5 per 100). The disciplinary rate for the Weed and Seed area was also higher for out of school suspensions (127.8 suspensions per 100 students vs. 64.0 suspensions per 100 students) and for other disciplines (225.4 disciplinary actions per 100 students vs. 70.8 actions per 100 students). Finally, withdrawals due to expulsions were higher in the Weed and Seed-area high school than in the Akron Public Schools (0.6 expulsions per 100 students vs. 0.3 per 100). Across all types of discipline — expulsions, withdrawals, out of school suspensions — the discipline rates in the Weed and Seed-area high school were *higher* in 2004 compared to 2001.

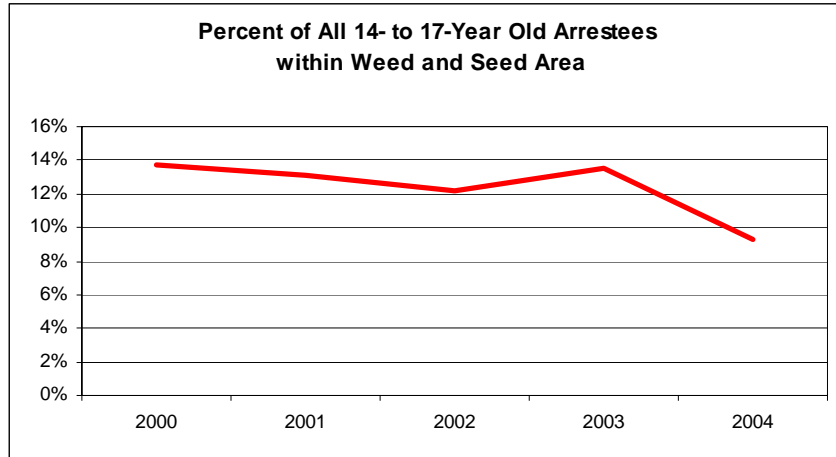
Juvenile arrest data from 2000 through 2004 was collected in the Weed and Seed area as a whole only. Analysis of juvenile arrestee ages indicated that approximately 86 percent fell between the ages of 14 and 17. Therefore, the juvenile arrest data that follows focuses on this age group.

Juvenile arrests in Akron. Juveniles age 14 to 17 made up 5.5 percent of the Akron population, according to the 2000 Census. In 2004, this age group made up 24.2 percent of all arrests, however. From 2000 to 2004, the number of arrests of juveniles ages 14 to 17 in Akron increased 78.6 percent. This age group made up an increasing percentage of all arrestees in Akron, as well, as the following graph shows.



Across the five years under study, the majority of juvenile arrests in Akron were for non-violent offenses. Analysis of juvenile arrests identified the following categories as the most frequent reasons for arrest: shoplifting (8.6 percent), simple assault (7.7 percent), disorderly conduct (7.5 percent), destruction/damage/vandalism (6.1 percent), curfew/loitering (5.0 percent), drugs/narcotic violations (4.7 percent), breaking and entering (4.5 percent), and stolen property offenses (4.1 percent).

Juvenile arrests in Weed and Seed area. Juveniles ages 14 to 17 in the Weed and Seed area made up 6.5 percent of the Weed and Seed population and 15.7 percent of all 14- to 17-year old juveniles in Akron. While the number of arrests of juveniles ages 14 to 17 increased 21.8 percent in the Weed and Seed area from 2000 to 2004, this increase is not nearly as great as that seen in Akron as a whole, where juvenile arrests increased 78.6 percent. Even though the *number* of juvenile arrests in the Weed and Seed area increased from 2000 to 2004, as a *percentage* of all juvenile arrests in Akron there was a decrease over this time period. In 2004, 9.3 percent of all juvenile arrests occurred in the Weed and Seed area.

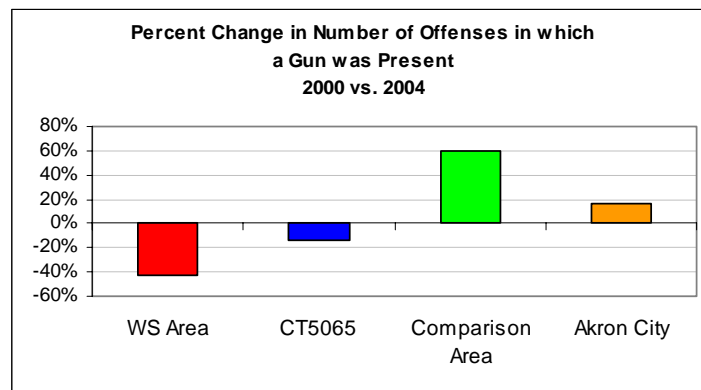
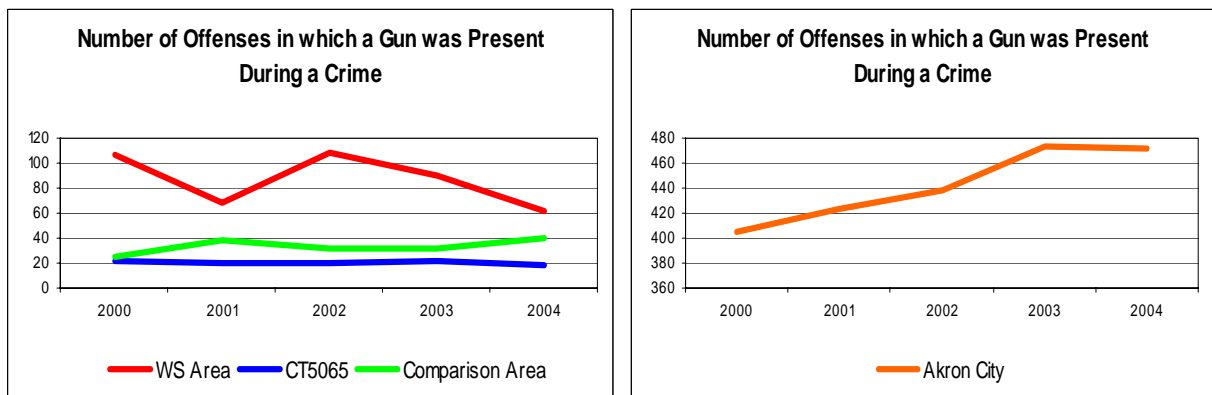


One of the biggest concerns regarding juveniles had to do with juvenile-related drug crime. In Akron city, the number of arrests of juveniles ages 14 to 17 increased 244.1 percent from 2000 to 2004. In the Weed and Seed area, the number of arrests for this age group increased a similarly high percentage, 262.5 percent. The increased attention on drug crimes, as evidenced by occasional drug sweeps in the Weed and Seed area may explain the large increase in drug-related arrests. In the Weed and Seed area, arrests for drug violations for juveniles ages 14 to 17 increased from 3.7 percent of all juvenile arrests to 11 percent of all juvenile arrests.

Gun use

Over the Weed and Seed program's five-year period, 2,749 offenses were reported in which a gun was involved. Nearly 36 percent of the offenses were robberies. Another 15.8 percent of the offenses were for menacing, and 12.7 percent were for assault.

The number of offenses in which a gun was present fluctuated over the years studied. The Weed and Seed area (minus CT5065) and target area CT5065 both had their highest number of gun-related offenses in 2000 and their lowest number in 2004, resulting in a decrease in the percent change of such offenses from 2000 to 2004. In contrast, the comparison neighborhood reported a low in gun-related offenses in 2000 and a high in such offenses in 2004. The city of Akron (minus the Weed and Seed area) showed a decrease from 2000 to 2001, followed by a sharp increase in 2002 which continued through 2003. The number of gun-related offenses decreased in 2004, but still remained at a higher level than in 2000 or 2001.



2004 Citizen Attitude Survey

In 1997, the National Institute of Justice conducted a national evaluation of the Weed and Seed program. Akron was one of several sites chosen for the evaluation. Part of the evaluation included a citizen attitude survey of residents of the Weed and Seed site⁹.

To complement the 1997 survey, another citizen attitude survey was conducted in the summer of 2004 by the Survey Research Laboratory at Kent State University. To allow for comparisons to be made regarding resident satisfaction, the 2004 survey consisted of several questions identical to those of the previous 1997 survey. See Appendix B for a list of all survey questions.

The survey was completed by 415 residents over a period of 42 days in the field. Of the 415 respondents, 71 lived within target area CT5065 and 344 lived outside CT5065 but within the larger Weed and Seed area. To assess whether police presence and social service delivery were perceived differently based on this geographic distinction, their responses were at times analyzed separately.

⁹ The NIJ report notes that Akron's Weed and Seed efforts were not fully operationalized at the point in which the 1997 survey was conducted. This must be taken into consideration before drawing any conclusions regarding the results of the survey.

Demographics of survey participants

The average age of the survey participant was 50.4 years¹⁰. The majority, 71 percent, of respondents were female. Seventy percent of those surveyed were Black, 20 percent were White.

Ninety-one percent of surveyed residents obtained their high school diploma or GED. Twenty-eight percent held a post-high school degree.

Thirty-nine percent of surveyed residents were employed full-time, and another 12 percent were employed part-time. One-quarter of those surveyed were retired or otherwise not looking for work.

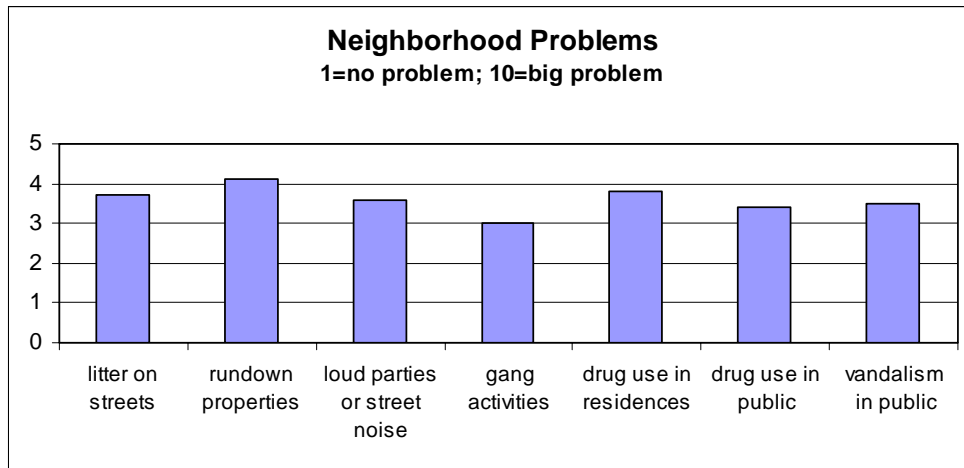
Nearly one-third of those surveyed rented their residence, while the remaining 67 percent owned the home in which they resided. Slightly over one-third of surveyed residents had a total family income under \$30,000.

¹⁰ That the mean age was so high was initially unexpected, but it corresponds closely with the mean age of survey respondents in the 1997 survey of 48.4 years.

Perception of neighborhood livability, safety, and crime

Respondents held a generally favorable attitude towards their neighborhood as a place to live. Eighty-three percent were very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the neighborhood, similar to that found in the 1997 survey (85 percent). However, compared to 1997, the percentage of very satisfied residents dropped from 52 percent to 39 percent, however. The percentages who were very dissatisfied remained the same from 1997 to 2004, at six percent.

The physical appearance of the neighborhood was of concern to residents. Three of the top four problems indicated by residents in 2004¹¹ — rundown properties, litter on the streets, and loud parties/street noise — were not criminal activities. Gang activities, with a mean score of 3.0, was considered a relatively small problem in comparison. A question appearing later in the survey confirms this finding. Worded slightly differently, 51 percent of residents felt that gang activity was not a problem in their neighborhood.



Residents' perception of neighborhood safety varied depending on time of day. Ninety-two percent felt very safe or somewhat safe during the day. During the night, 59 percent of those who responded reported feeling very safe or somewhat safe. Ten percent reported feeling very unsafe. These results are comparable with those found in 1997.

Fourteen percent of respondents reported that their neighborhood has become a better place to live in the past two years, down seven percent from the 1997 survey. Seventeen percent felt it had become a worse place to live, up five percent from the previous survey. The majority, 68 percent, of respondents felt the neighborhood remained the same.

The following table contrasts residents' perceptions of crime in their neighborhood in 1997 and 2004. Responses to the survey consistently showed that a greater percentage of residents feel that violent crimes, property crimes, and drug crimes are a bigger problem in their neighborhood now than they were in 1997. Across all surveyed crimes but one (drug use), there has been at least a 100 percent increase in the number who reported that

¹¹ This series of questions was not asked in the 1997 survey

the crime is a “big problem.” Correspondingly, across all surveyed crimes, there has been a decrease in the percentage reporting that the crimes are “no problem.”

Percentage of 1997 and 2004 respondents who feel crime issues are a “big”, “small”, or “no problem.”

	Year	Big problem	Small problem	No problem
Drug dealers in streets or in public	1997	16%	28%	50%
	2004	46%	28%	19%
Drug sales out of homes	1997	16%	25%	43%
	2004	37%	30%	23%
Burglary & other property crime	1997	13%	45%	39%
	2004	28%	46%	23%
Robbery & other street crime	1997	10%	38%	43%
	2004	28%	42%	27%
Violent crimes	1997	15%	33%	50%
	2004	31%	32%	34%
Gang activity	1997	6%	29%	57%
	2004	12%	30%	51%
Drug use	1997	22%	28%	33%
	2004	38%	32%	24%

Note: The addition of “Big problem,” “Small problem,” and “No problem” percentages do not add up to 100 due to a number of “refused” or “don’t know” responses.

When the categories “big problem” and “small problem” were collapsed into a single “problem” category, as shown in the following table, the differences across years are still striking.

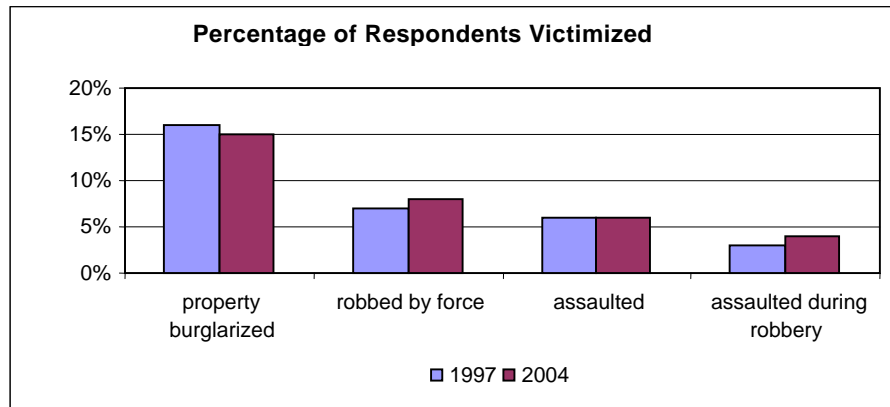
Percentage of 1997 and 2004 respondents who feel these crime issues are a problem.

	Year	A problem	No problem
Drug dealers in streets or in public	1997	44%	50%
	2004	74%	19%
Drug sales out of homes	1997	41%	43%
	2004	67%	23%
Burglary & other property crime	1997	58%	39%
	2004	74%	23%
Robbery & other street crime	1997	48%	43%
	2004	70%	27%
Violent crimes	1997	48%	50%
	2004	63%	34%
Gang activity	1997	35%	57%
	2004	42%	51%
Drug use	1997	50%	33%
	2004	70%	24%

Note: The addition of “A problem” and “No problem” percentages do not add up to 100 due to a number of “refused” or “don’t know” responses.

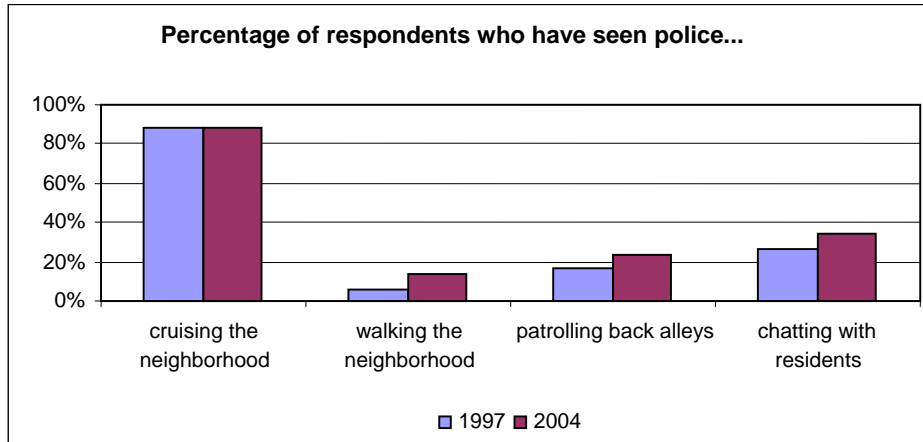
Victimization

The following figure compares victimization rates across years. Despite the perception that robbery and other street crime, burglary and other property crime, and violent crimes are on the rise, the percentage of those who have been personally victimized has remained relatively consistent across the two surveyed years.



Police presence and response

There appears to be an improved police presence in the neighborhood, as shown in the following figure. The percentage of police seen cruising through the streets of the neighborhood, walking or patrolling on foot through the neighborhood, patrolling the back alleys and behind buildings and chatting with residents remained the same or increased since the 1997 survey. Additionally, the 2004 survey indicated that nearly half (47 percent) of those surveyed had seen a police officer pull someone over in the neighborhood¹².



Residents appeared to be satisfied with police response in their neighborhood. Eighty percent of residents in the community felt that police are very or somewhat responsive to community concerns. Nearly identical results were obtained in the 1997 survey. Seventy-nine percent of residents reported that police are doing a very good or good job keeping order on the streets and sidewalks. Despite the fact that 74 percent of residents felt drug sales in public are a problem, 64 percent of residents reported that police are doing a good or very good job of controlling the street sale and use of illegal drugs in the neighborhood. Twenty-five percent of residents reported that police are doing a poor or very poor job at controlling illegal drugs.¹³

According to the 2004 survey, 79 percent of respondents felt that police are very or somewhat polite when dealing with neighborhood residents, while nine percent felt they were not polite. Likewise, 79 percent of those surveyed felt that police are very helpful or somewhat helpful to residents, while 10 percent felt they were not helpful.

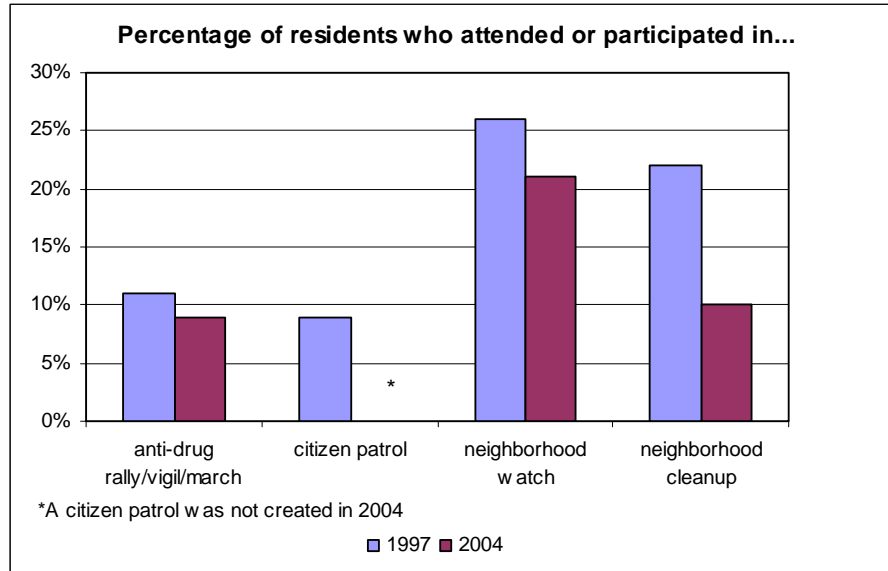
The 2004 survey found that 32 percent of respondents felt the police are very fair when dealing with residents, 44 percent felt they are somewhat fair, and nine percent felt they are not fair.

¹² This question was not asked in the 1997 survey.

¹³ Due to slight differences in the response categories for these two questions, responses to the 2004 survey cannot be compared to those of the 1997 survey.

Community involvement

Community involvement in some of the prevention, intervention, and revitalization efforts has decreased since the last survey, as shown in the following figure. When asked whether they had attended or participated in various activities involving the entire community over the previous two years, the majority of residents had not done so. The activity that generated the most involvement was the neighborhood watch program. Citizen patrol, which involved nine percent of residents in 1997, was not available in 2004.



While the participation statistics are not particularly impressive, it is important to consider how resident awareness of the program impacted the participation rates. Forty-nine percent of those surveyed reported awareness of the neighborhood watch program, 19 percent of surveyed residents were aware of the neighborhood cleanup project, and 18 percent were aware of the anti-drug rallies/marches/vigils. When residents were aware of a community activity such as those discussed above, participation rates increased dramatically, suggesting that adequate advertisement can greatly impact participation.

Awareness and participation rates for various community activities.

Activity	Percent awareness	Percent participation	Of those aware of the activity, the percent who participated
Neighborhood watch	49 percent	21 percent	43 percent
Neighborhood cleanup	19 percent	10 percent	53 percent
Anti-drug activities	18 percent	9 percent	50 percent

Perception of social services and other programs

Overall, respondents were dissatisfied with the availability of specific social services and other programs. Satisfaction levels were generally low when residents were surveyed in 1997 as well; however, levels decreased further in the 2004 survey.

The availability of sports and recreation programs for youth saw moderate satisfaction—61 percent were very or somewhat satisfied with such programming, as compared to 64 percent in 1997. The availability of drug treatment services was seen as satisfactory by only 38 percent of surveyed residents (32 percent of residents responded “don’t know,” however). This is down from 45 percent in 1997. Thirty percent of residents were satisfied with the availability of job opportunities in the neighborhood, down 13 percent from 1997.

Percentage of 1997 and 2004 respondents who are satisfied with availability of specific social services/programs.

	Year	Satisfied (very + somewhat)	Not Satisfied (very + somewhat)
Sports, recreation, other youth programs	1997	64%	23%
	2004	61%	30%
Drug treatment services for people in neighborhood	1997	45%	16%
	2004	38%	27%
Job opportunities for people in neighborhood	1997	43%	34%
	2004	30%	60%

Note: percent “satisfied” and “not satisfied” do not add to 100 percent due to a number of “don’t know” and “refused” responses.

Awareness of specific social services was relatively low. Thirty percent of residents were aware that a Safe Haven was available in the area, 31 percent of residents were aware of mentoring/tutoring availability, 42 percent were aware of the free lunch program, and 30 percent were aware of computer training classes. It must be noted, however, that given the average age of survey respondent, it is possible that older respondents do not know about programs that would not necessarily be applicable to them, such as mentoring/tutoring and the free lunch program.

The Weed and Seed program itself has become familiar to more people than in 1997. The program’s name was recognized by 50 percent of residents in 2004, up from 10 percent in 1997.

Comparison of Target Area CT5065 with Weed and Seed Area

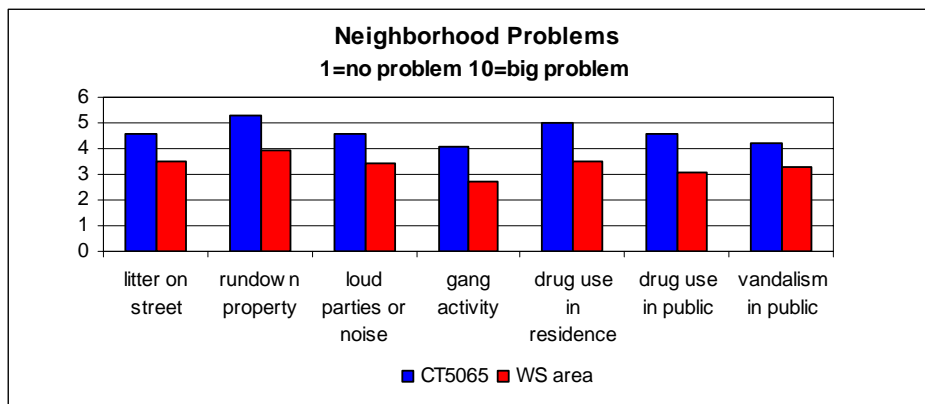
Given the attention that law enforcement placed on target area CT5065, and given that the Safe Haven (from which many programs and activities originated) was located in CT5065, it seemed important to compare these residents' perception of crime and justice to those outside the targeted area but still within the weed and seed site¹⁴. Oversampling was done to increase the number of residents surveyed in CT5065; however, it was not enough to ensure that their responses are representative of the entire census tract. The data from 71 residents is to be viewed as informational only; no statistical inferences can be made. In the discussion that follows, their data will be compared to data from the remaining 344 residents who live outside the target area but within the designated Weed and Seed area.

¹⁴ Not unsurprisingly, a higher percentage of those surveyed in CT5065 had heard of the Weed and Seed program than those in the remaining Weed and Seed area (70 percent vs. 45 percent).

Perception of neighborhood livability, safety, and crime

Overall, fewer surveyed residents were satisfied with the neighborhood as a place to live in CT5065 (70 percent) than in the remaining Weed and Seed area (85 percent). Twenty-four percent of those surveyed in CT5065 felt the neighborhood had become a worse place to live, compared to 16 percent of those surveyed in the remaining Weed and Seed area. The majority of both groups (56 percent for CT5065 and 70 percent for the remaining Weed and Seed area) felt the neighborhood had remained the same. Residents' perception of neighborhood safety did not seem to be a major contributor to the differences in satisfaction levels between CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area, as 89 percent of those in CT5065 area felt very safe or somewhat safe being out alone during the day, compared to 93 percent in the remaining Weed and Seed area. Likewise, 55 percent of those in CT5065 felt safe out alone at night, compared to 60 percent of those in the remaining Weed and Seed area.

Respondents expressed concerns about the condition of their physical environment. Overall, as shown in the following figure, those in CT5065 expressed more concern about neighborhood livability factors than those in the remaining Weed and Seed area. In fact, CT5065 is higher on every neighborhood problem dimension. And, as the composite data discussed earlier shows, other than drug activity, non-criminal activity generally was seen by both groups as a bigger problem than criminal activity. Gang activity was seen by residents in both CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area as the least problematic. Run down properties were seen by both groups as the biggest of all the problems surveyed.



Despite the increased efforts on the part of the police, criminal activity was still perceived to be a bigger problem in CT5065 than in the remaining Weed and Seed area. This was not surprising, given that a higher percentage of those surveyed in CT5065 were victims of crime than those in the remaining Weed and Seed area. It may also be the case that an increased presence of police in CT5065 was perceived by residents as suggestive of greater criminal activity.

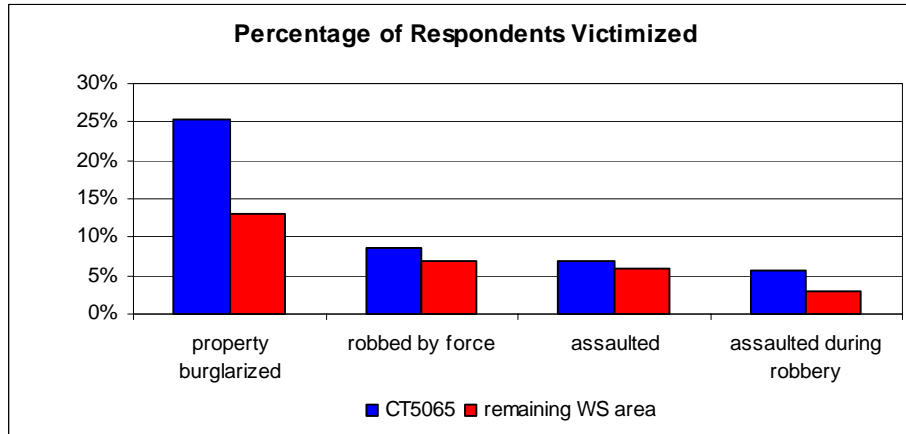
Perceived crime problems in CT5065 and in the remaining Weed and Seed area.

	Neighborhood	A problem	No problem
Drug dealers in streets/public	CT5065	89%	7%
	Remaining WS area	71%	22%
Drug sales out of homes	CT5065	80%	14%
	Remaining WS area	64%	25%
Burglary & other property crime	CT5065	83%	16%
	Remaining WS area	72%	24%
Robbery & other street crime	CT5065	79%	20%
	Remaining WS area	68%	28%
Violent crimes	CT5065	82%	16%
	Remaining WS area	59%	37%
Gang activity	CT5065	59%	34%
	Remaining WS area	39%	54%
Drug use	CT5065	84%	14%
	Remaining WS area	67%	26%

Note: percent “A problem” and “No problem” do not add to 100 percent due to a number of “don’t know” and “refused” responses.

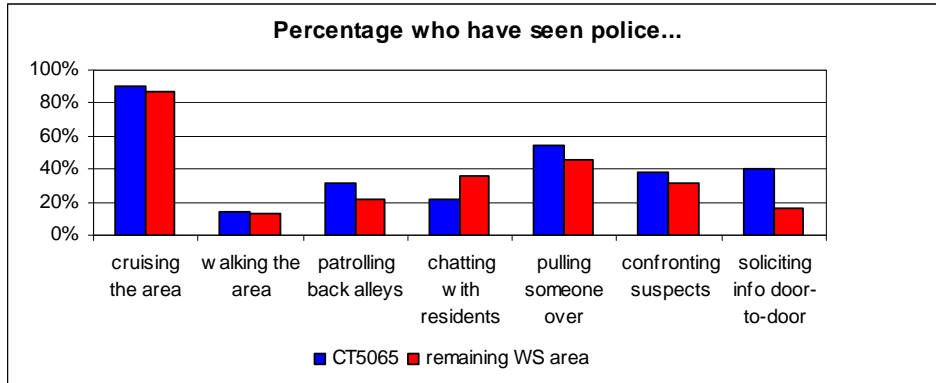
Victimization

A slightly higher percentage of those surveyed from target area CT5065 were victims of crime over the past two years, as shown in the figure below. Interestingly, the differences between CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area in perceived crime problems were much larger than the differences between the two areas in victimization (i.e., personally experiencing crime). The largest difference was in the percentage who were burglarized. Nearly twice the percentage of those in CT5065 reported experiencing a burglary (25 percent vs. 13 percent in the remaining Weed and Seed area).



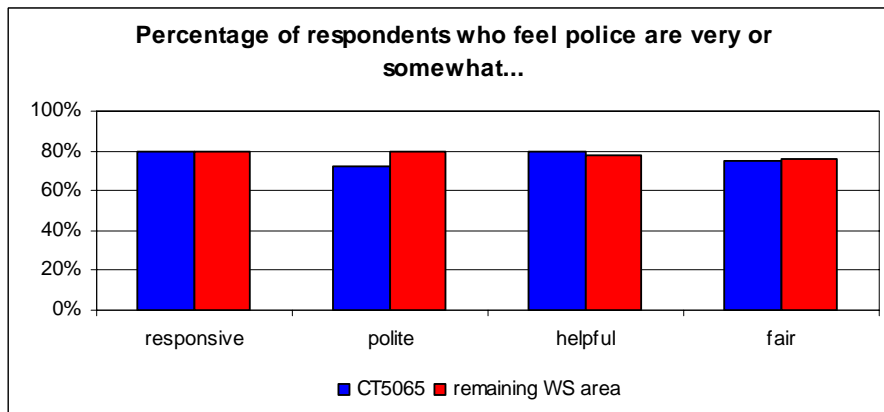
Police presence and response

Police presence was noticed in both CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area. In general, a higher percentage of those from CT5065 reported seeing and interacting with police (in a non-legal way) than those in the remaining Weed and Seed area, as shown in the figure below. The only exception to this is in the percentage of those who reported seeing police chatting or having friendly conversation with residents.



Despite the targeted approach of Weed and Seed law enforcement, a higher percentage of residents in the non-target area than in CT5065 reported that police are doing a good or very good job at keeping order on the streets and sidewalks in the neighborhood (81 percent vs. 69 percent). Likewise, a higher percentage of those in the non-target area than in CT5065 reported satisfaction in how the police are doing in controlling the street sale and use of illegal drugs (65 percent vs. 56 percent).

Overall, there was no difference between CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area in residents' police response satisfaction level. Sixty-nine percent of those in CT5065 and 70 percent of those in the remaining Weed and Seed area reported being very or somewhat satisfied in police response. As shown in the figure below, residents' perception of the responsiveness, fairness, and helpfulness of police was also essentially the same in both CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area. Only perceived politeness showed a difference between the two groups.



Community involvement

Across CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area, similar awareness and participation rates in community activities were found.

Awareness of and involvement in community activities.

Activity	Neighborhood	Percent awareness	Percent participation	Of those aware of the activity, the percent who participated
Neighborhood watch	CT5065	52%	17%	33%
	Remaining WS area	48%	22%	46%
Neighborhood cleanup	CT5065	13%	8%	62%
	Remaining WS area	21%	10%	48%
Anti-drug activities	CT5065	22%	11%	50%
	Remaining WS area	18%	9%	50%

Perception of social services and other programs

Residents' perception of the availability of certain social services and other programs was generally not positive. Less than half of residents in CT5065 (46 percent) surveyed felt very satisfied or somewhat satisfied with the availability of sports, recreation, and other programs for youths in the neighborhood. The satisfaction level was higher for those in the remaining Weed and Seed area (64 percent). Thirty-one percent of those in CT5065 expressed that they were "very unsatisfied" with the availability of these programs. Regarding the availability of drug treatment services in the neighborhood, only 44 percent were very or somewhat satisfied in CT5065 and only 36 percent were very or somewhat satisfied in the remaining Weed and Seed area. More than one-quarter of those in CT5065 expressed they were "very dissatisfied" with the availability of drug treatment services. Even fewer yet expressed satisfaction with the availability of job opportunities in the neighborhood. Only 31 percent in CT5065 and 30 percent in the remaining Weed and Seed area reported being very or somewhat satisfied with the availability of job opportunities.

Percentage of 1997 and 2004 respondents who are satisfied with availability of specific social services/programs.

	Year	Satisfied (very + somewhat)	Not Satisfied (very + somewhat)
Sports, recreation, other youth programs	CT5065	46%	48%
	Remaining WS Area	64%	26%
Drug treatment services for people in neighborhood	CT5065	44%	37%
	Remaining WS Area	36%	26%
Job opportunities for people in neighborhood	CT5065	31%	62%
	Remaining WS Area	30%	59%

Note: percent "satisfied" and "not satisfied" do not add to 100 percent due to a large number of "don't know" and "refused" responses.

Despite the relatively high percentages of individuals aware of the Weed and Seed program (70 percent in CT5065, 45 percent in the remaining Weed and Seed area), awareness of various Weed and Seed activities was limited. About one-third of those in CT5065 and one-quarter of those in the remaining Weed and Seed area were aware of the presence of a Safe Haven for youth; only eight percent of those in CT5065 and 11 percent of those in the remaining Weed and Seed area were aware of mentoring and tutoring programs for youth; 14 percent of those in CT5065 and 16 percent in the remaining Weed and Seed area were aware of the free lunch program for youth; and six percent of those in CT5065 and the remaining Weed and Seed area were aware of computer training classes offered in the neighborhood.

Summary and Conclusion

The Akron Weed and Seed program was in place nearly 10 years, from 1995 until its end in September 2004. Although the federally designated Weed and Seed area was quite large, it does not appear that the area as a whole was ever the focus of the program's efforts. Rather, smaller target areas were designated as the priority for the efforts of law enforcement and social service programs. Over the course of its existence, significant changes took place both in terms of staffing and in location of the target area. Sensing a need to provide weeding and seeding activities to more than one high-crime west side neighborhood within the large Weed and Seed area, the steering committee opted to shift the focus of their efforts to a new target area, Census Tract 5065, in 2000. This target area remained for the last five years of the program's existence. Along with the transition to a new target area came a shift from the multitude of services offered by the Crouse Caring Safe Haven to the newly built Madison Resource Center Safe Haven. A Weed and Seed coordinator was hired to organize and manage all programs and services out of the new Safe Haven. Despite the transition to the new target area, the mission and vision of the program remained relatively unchanged. Violent crime, drug crimes, juvenile crimes, and to some extent gang crimes were the priority for the Weed and Seed area.

Crime data for 2000 through 2004 suggest that areas receiving increased law enforcement attention, such as targeted area CT5065, and to a lesser extent the Weed and Seed area as a whole, benefited by seeing a reduction in reported crime and in arrests, compared to Akron city and a comparison neighborhood. Additional benefits were noticed in the Weed and Seed area and in CT5065 as a reduced number of arrests were reported in which guns were used. Juvenile crime, which rose from 2000 to 2004 in both the Weed and Seed area and in Akron city, rose less dramatically in the Weed and Seed area. Juvenile arrests in the Weed and Seed area actually decreased from 2000 to 2004. Juvenile arrests for drug crimes increased substantially in Akron and even more so in the Weed and Seed area, and may be attributed in part to an increase in drug enforcement activities by law enforcement, although this has not been confirmed.

Data from the 2004 citizen attitude survey shed light on residents' perception of crime and justice in the Weed and Seed area. Compared to a similar survey conducted in 1997, it appears that residents feel crime in their neighborhood is worse than it was. However, despite their perception of crime in the neighborhood, citizens hold a generally favorable view of the efforts of local law enforcement. This finding holds when the data is broken into respondents from CT5065 and respondents outside CT5065 but within the larger Weed and Seed area. Citizens hold a less favorable view of some of the social services provided in the Weed and Seed area, however. Less than one-third of residents were aware of the existence of a Safe Haven, and approximately the same number of residents were aware of programs offered by the Safe Haven, such as mentoring/tutoring and computer training classes. When residents were aware of community activities, participation increased, suggesting that more advertising needed to be done in the community to promote the seeding strategy.

Appendix A
Additional Sources of Funding

Documents from prior Grantee Site Characteristics and Activity Data Reports indicate that the Akron Weed and Seed program received funding from federal and non-federal sources in addition to the Executive Office of Weed and Seed (EOWS) funding. The following listing is not meant to be taken as an exhaustive listing of federal and non-federal sources of funding, as more recent data reports were not obtainable. Note that the funding sources noted here may have served the Weed and Seed area in addition to the larger community, such as the city of Akron itself. For this reason, it is too difficult to quantify how much of the funding went directly to the Weed and Seed area.

Federal funding

- Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) office grants (numerous awards received)
- Local Law Enforcement Block Grants
- Urban Ounce of Prevention grant
- Enterprise Community grant

Local Government funding

- City of Akron

Local non-profit and for-profit funding, which provided cash or in-kind contributions to the Weed and Seed program or directly to Crouse Caring Communities

- United Way of Summit County
- National City Bank
- Akron Metropolitan Housing Authority
- Knight Foundation
- Akron Public Schools
- Akron Summit Community Action, Inc.
- Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc.
- Child Guidance Centers
- Children's Hospital Medical Center of Akron
- Crouse School P.T.A.
- Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc.
- East Akron Community House
- Erie Island P.T.A.
- Family Services
- Fifth-Third Bank
- Freedom Road Community Center, Inc.
- Planned Parenthood of Summit, Portage, and Medina Counties
- St. Philip's Episcopal Church
- Summit County Children Services Board
- Summit County Juvenile Court
- Summit Education Initiative
- Summa Health System
- The University of Akron
- Wal-Marts of Summit County

Appendix B
Citizen Attitude Survey Questions
2004

Survey questions
2004

How they view their neighborhood

1. How MANY YEARS have you lived at your current address?
2. In general, how SATISFIED ARE YOU about your neighborhood as a place to live? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
3. In general, in the past two years, would you say your neighborhood has become a better place to live, a worse place to live, or stayed about the same?
4. Now I want to know more about what you think are problems in your neighborhood. For the following questions, give a rating of 1-10, with 1 being no problem and 10 being a big problem.
 - a. Garbage or litter on the streets?
 - b. People or landlords allowing their property to become rundown?
 - c. Loud parties or street noise?
 - d. Gang activities?
 - e. Drug use in homes or apartments?
 - f. Drug use in public areas?
 - g. Vandalism in public areas?

Neighborhood crime prevention

5. During the past two years, were you **aware of** any of the following taking place in your neighborhood:
 - a. A neighborhood watch program?
 - b. A neighborhood cleanup project?
 - c. Any anti-drug or anti-violence marches, rallies, or vigils?
6. During the past two years, did you **attend or participate** in any of the following taking place in your neighborhood:
 - a. A neighborhood watch program?
 - b. A neighborhood cleanup project?
 - c. Any anti-drug or anti-violence marches, rallies, or vigils?

Police response

7. In general, how responsive are the police in your neighborhood to community concerns? Are they very responsive, somewhat responsive, somewhat unresponsive, or very unresponsive?

8. How good a job do you think the police are doing to prevent crime? Would you say they are doing a very good, good, poor, or very poor job?
9. In general, how good a job are the police doing in controlling the street sale and use of illegal drugs in your neighborhood? Would you say they are doing a very good, good, poor, or very poor job?
10. In general, how good are the police in your neighborhood to keep order on the streets and sidewalks? Would you say they are doing a very good, good, poor, or very poor job?
11. In general, how polite are the police when dealing with people in your neighborhood? Are they very polite, somewhat polite, not very polite, or not polite at all?
12. In general, how helpful are the police when dealing with people in your neighborhood? Are they very helpful, somewhat helpful, not very helpful, or not helpful at all?
13. In general, how fair are the police when dealing with people in your neighborhood? Are they very fair, somewhat fair, not very fair, or not fair at all?
14. During the past month, have you seen ... (yes/no)
 - a. A police car driving through your neighborhood?
 - b. A police officer walking around or standing on patrol in your neighborhood?
 - c. A police officer pull someone over in your neighborhood?
 - d. Police officers patrolling in the back alleys, or in the back of buildings in your neighborhood?
 - e. A police officer chatting or having a friendly conversation with people in your neighborhood?
 - f. A police officer confronting or questioning someone suspected of causing trouble or committing a crime in your neighborhood?
15. Do you know the names of any police officers who work in your neighborhood?
16. Other than times when you might have called the police, in the past year have the police come to your door to ask about problems in the neighborhood or to give you information?
17. In the past two years, have you...
 - a. Reported a crime to police?
 - b. Reported a suspicious person or noises you thought might be connected to a crime?
 - c. Contacted the police to ask for advice or information?
 - d. Contacted the police for any other reason?

18. Thinking about the most recent time that you had contact with the police, how satisfied were you with the way they responded? Were you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

Neighborhood Crime

19. Do you think drug dealers on the streets or in other public places are a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
20. Do you think drug sales out of homes or apartments are a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
21. Do you think burglary or other property crimes are a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
22. Do you think robbery and other street crimes are a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
23. Do you think violent crimes (such as shootings, assault, and so forth) are a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
24. In general, how safe do you feel out alone in your neighborhood during the day? Do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe?
25. In general, how safe do you feel out alone in your neighborhood at night? Do you feel very safe, somewhat safe, somewhat unsafe, or very unsafe (or don't go out at night)?
26. Do you think that drug use in your neighborhood is a big problem, small problem, or no problem in this neighborhood?
27. Do you think that gang activity in your neighborhood a big problem, small problem, or no problem?

Victimization

28. In the past two years, has anyone broken into your home, garage, or another building on your property in this neighborhood to steal something?
29. In the past two years, has anyone damaged or defaced your home, garage, or other property where you live (for example, by writing on the walls or fences, or breaking windows)?

30. During the past two years, has anyone caused criminal damage to your car, such as breaking a window or antenna, stealing a radio, or stealing the car itself (include attempted thefts)?
31. In the past two years has anyone stolen something from you or a family member by force or threat of force in this neighborhood?
32. Other than the incidents already mentioned, in the past two years have you or a member of your family been beaten up, attacked, or hit with something such as a rock or bottle in this neighborhood?
33. Other than the incidents already mentioned, in the past two years have you or a member of your family been knifed, shot at, or attacked with some other weapon *by anyone at all in this neighborhood trying to steal something [highlight this to differentiate from question above]*?

Perception of social services and other programs

34. In general, how satisfied are you with the availability of sports, recreation, and other programs for youth in this neighborhood? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
35. In general, how satisfied are you with the availability of drug treatment services for people in your neighborhood? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
36. In general, how satisfied are you with the availability of job opportunities for people in your neighborhood? Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?
37. Have you heard of a program called Weed and Seed?
38. Are you aware that the following programs are available in this neighborhood
 - a. Safe Haven for youth at Madison Avenue
 - b. Mentoring and tutoring programs for local youth
 - c. Free lunch program for youth
 - d. Computer training classes

Demographic information

39. Now I would like to ask you a few background questions to help us analyze the data. In what year were you born?

40. Are you presently employed full-time, part-time, unemployed and looking for work, retired or otherwise not looking for work, a homemaker, disabled, full-time student, part-time student, other?
41. Do you own or rent your home?
42. Are you currently married, living with someone as a couple, widowed, divorced, separated, or never married?
43. How many children under age 18 live with you?
44. Not including yourself, how many adults 18 and older live with you?
45. Are you African American, White, Asian/Pacific Islander, or American Indian?
46. Are you Hispanic or Latino?
47. Are you male or female?
48. What is the highest grade or year of school that you have completed?
49. Considering all the sources of income and all salaries for all members of your household, what was your total family income in 2003, before deductions for taxes or anything? Was it less than \$10K, \$10K-\$20K, \$20K-\$30K, \$30K-\$40K, or \$40K-\$50K, \$50K-\$60K, \$60K-\$70K, \$70K or more?