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Criminal Justice Coordinating Council
of Georgia**

**Savannah's
Weed and Seed Program Evaluation
(1999)**

**Final Report
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for the

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and the
Justice Research and Statistics Association**

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Technical Summary

In 1999, the Armstrong Atlantic State University Public Service Center contracted with the Georgia Governor's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council to conduct a reevaluation of select "weed" side programs and services of the City of Savannah's ongoing Weed and Seed Project for Calendar Year 1999. The program had been initiated in January 1995 and had last been evaluated by the University of Charleston Institute for Public Affairs and Policy Analysis at year-end 1997.

The current evaluation employed three sources of information to arrive at the findings contained herein: 1) A household community satisfaction survey of a randomized sample of residents in the Savannah Weed and Seed area; 2) A survey of police officers participating in the "weed" portion of the program, along with Weed and Seed committee meeting minutes and quarterly reports; and 3) Reported crime incident data from the target area and from the City of Savannah. The household survey, conducted over the period of about 45 days, contacted at random 1,190 target households to obtain a sample of 341 respondents for a 95 percent confidential interval and an error rate of ± 5 percent. To permit comparability, this survey was constructed to reflect as closely as possible the University of Charleston door-to-door survey conducted in the same target area in September, 1997.

The following summarizes some of the major findings of this study:

Perceptions of Weed and Seed Residents

- In 1997 and 1999, respondents were similarly likely to believe their neighborhoods were safe and to believe that their neighborhoods were safer than the previous year.
- Slightly more of those responding to the 1999 community satisfaction survey believed drug dealing was a larger problem than 1997.
- Slightly more respondents in the 1999 survey believed drug sales had *increased* in their neighborhoods over the previous year than did respondents in the 1997 survey.
- On the contrary, a higher proportion of 1999 respondents also believed that neighborhood drug sales had *decreased* than those responding to the 1997 survey. A larger percentage of respondents to the 1997 survey indicated that drug sales had remained about the same .
- A higher proportion of 1997 respondents than 1999 respondents believed the incidence of violent crime in their neighborhoods had not changed from the previous year. Conversely, more respondents in the 1999 survey believed both, that violent crime had increased (12.5 percent) or had decreased (25.6 percent) than did their counterparts in 1997.

- Respondents to the 1999 survey were slightly more likely than 1997 respondents to have known someone victimized by a crime within the previous 12 months. However, the same surveys show that these victims were equally likely to have contacted the police regarding their victimization.
- The vast majority of respondents in both surveys believed that the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in their neighborhood was for the neighborhood residents to help themselves.
- There appears to be a positive shift in the residents' assessment of police in controlling crime and drugs in the target area from 1997 to 1999. These findings are particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that police manpower allocation to the target area had been markedly cut due to precipitous declines in federal funding over the last two years of the project. Yet respondents during both periods appear to feel equally safe.
- Moreover, respondents in 1999 claimed they saw the police more frequently, saw them engaged in more proactive work, and viewed them as doing a better job in controlling crime and drugs in the target area than in the previous two years, when staffing was higher.
- Resident awareness of the Weed and Seed Program in Savannah remained unchanged and even though an integral part of the Weed and Seed program (the St. Pius Family Resource Center) was well known to the respondents, awareness of it had declined from 1997 to 1999. Paradoxically, respondents in the 1999 survey reported a higher frequency for having visited, participated in, or otherwise used the facility than 1997 residents. Last, the 1999 results also showed a notable increase over 1997 in resident participation in neighborhood crime watch programs.

Perceptions of Weed and Seed Police Officers

- There was some dissonance among the Chatham County Counter Narcotics Taskforce (CNT) and Savannah Police Department (SPD) officers concerning the program's "weed" mission. About half of the CNT officers emphasized the mission of reducing or controlling crime in the target area. The remainder were more sharply focused on a mission that dovetailed with their specific role in the target area--chiefly, if not solely, the eradication of drugs, their dealers, and their distribution. The SPD understanding was more fractured and included a variety of objectives, to wit improving the quality of life for the residents, the impression that residents had ownership in the neighborhood and the solution for its problems, to restore vacant buildings, to beautify neighborhoods, to gain the trust of the community, to weed out crime and the criminal element, and to eliminate drugs in the neighborhood.
- In terms of the sufficiency of resources (personnel, equipment, money, and materiel), CNT officers thought they were adequate to the task of pursuing the

“weed” mission of the program. Most SPD officers, on the other hand, said they were not.

- Regarding the level of cooperation among law enforcement (a primary concern of this part of the evaluation), most law enforcement officers, supervisory, and managerial personnel, including those of the Savannah Weed and Seed and U.S. Attorney’s Office maintained that cooperation, particularly between SPD and other agencies could have been better. SPD officers, on the other hand, had a more favorable view of the extent and level of cooperation among the various Weed and Seed law enforcement agencies.
- CNT officers cited few problems in implementing the Weed portion of the program. SPD officers cited “upper management” or the “command structure” as impediments to implementation.
- The majority of respondents from both agencies maintained that they understood their respective roles well or very well and made similar claims about other law enforcement agencies in the target area. In addition, the vast majority of officers reported few gaps in the weeding portion of the program.
- Strategies for improving the Weed and Seed project included better cooperation, especially regarding videotaping and photographing street subjects for the purpose of improving suspect identification, redrawing Weed and Seed neighborhood boundaries, and redirecting money and resources for investigations to areas outside the target area. Other strategies that could impact drug trafficking in that area include “putting officers in low-cost housing with low mortgage rates in the target area,” more community leadership to make the program effective, more funding, planning and budgeting decisions at the operational level, and consolidation of duplicative seed programs.

Crime Analysis

- Crimes (violent crime, public nuisances, drugs, and simple assault) are disproportionately higher in the Weed and Seed target area than the rest of the city. Only four percent of the City’s population live in the target area but the incidence and rates of crime are disproportionately higher. This disparity remains fairly consistent from 1996 through 1999.
- Whether measured as a proportion of offenses in the target area by rate of occurrence per capita, or as trends within the target area, there is no evidence that violent crime and drug trafficking have changed very much for the residents in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods since the inception of the Weed and Seed Program through 1999.

- By any measure, the analysis of crime data in the target area for the four-year period shows that Weed and Seed neighborhoods are still severely over-represented violence, drugs, public nuisances, and simple assaults. In sum, the frequency of crime over the life of the Weed and Seed project has changed little.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Weed and Seed represents a collaborative effort of federal, state, and local government agencies and private organizations to improve the quality of life in targeted high-crime areas of American cities. First launched by the U. S. Department of Justice (DOJ) in 1991, the Weed and Seed strategy appears to be deceptively simple but is, in reality, extremely complex and ambitious: drug trafficking and violent crime are carefully targeted for intervention and enforcement and community-oriented policing activities, human services programs, and neighborhood improvement initiatives are introduced to infuse new life into the community and deter future lawbreaking.

By and large these are, by themselves, conventional law enforcement goals. What makes the Weed and Seed concept distinctive and innovative is the means by which these goals are achieved: Community-focused human services programs and neighborhood improvement initiatives are strategically linked with intensified, geographically targeted law enforcement efforts by the police. The Community-oriented Policing program serves as a partner and a bridge between these two aspects of the Weed and Seed project.

The City of Savannah received its first Weed and Seed grant in 1994 and has been functioning officially since January, 1995. The Savannah Weed and Seed effort was built on several successful programs and collaborative projects that were in existence prior to the grant award. According to the Office of the Project Director:

...this City has been a leader in Community Oriented Policing for several years and has been fortunate to have had effective collaborations dedicated to crime control and youth development. As a result, Savannah was able to implement the Weed and Seed program with the cooperation

of law enforcement and social service agencies, schools, community organizations, and residents who had already been working in partnership to transform the target area (p. 1, Weed and Seed Program site summary).

From January 1 through December 31, 1999, in conjunction with the Georgia Governor's Criminal Justice Coordinating Council, the Public Service Center at Armstrong Atlantic State University conducted a reevaluation of select "weed" components of Savannah, Georgia's Weed and Seed program for the Executive Office of Weed and Seed and the Justice Research and Statistics Association. The first full-scale evaluation of this program's status and effectiveness (for years 1995 through 1997) was conducted by the University of Charleston Institute for Public Affairs and Policy Analysis. The report which follows presents the findings of this reevaluation. No such program analysis had been done since the evaluation in 1997.

Another impetus for this investigation was that while Savannah maintained a considerable local investment in the program (approximately \$280,000 annually), federal funding fell precipitously (from \$790,000 per year in 1995-97 to \$225,000 per year in 1998 and 1999). In short, what were the consequences for the program, if any, given this decline in federal funding.

Savannah's Weed and Seed project area is located in the northeastern section of Area C (refer to Appendix A for site location map), a section of the city with the highest crime and poverty rates. Five distinct neighborhoods and one public housing development are located in the .75 square mile area.

As previously mentioned, the Weed and Seed program entails using an innovative coalition of agencies, residents, and public officials to coordinate the traditional policing

activities of crime control and enforcement (the “weed” component) with attempts to address the daunting social and economic conditions that foster high crime rates (the “seed” component). Within this concept, community-oriented policing joins local law enforcement to neighborhood residents as “co-producers of public safety” and serves as a bridge between the “weed” and the “seed” components. Nonetheless, the program’s success depends not only on the efficacy of community-oriented policing efforts, but on the community residents’ perceptions of safer, more secure, neighborhoods.

Throughout the first phase of Savannah’s Weed and Seed Program (1995-1997), evaluators from the Institute for Public Affairs and Policy Analysis reported a significant drop in reported incidents of violent crime and an overall decline in drug trafficking/sales in the Weed and Seed target neighborhoods.

Moreover, data from community survey questionnaires suggested that a majority of local residents noticed an increase in police activity, were eager to participate in community policing activities, noticed an improvement in the conditions of their neighborhoods, and believed that the quality of life had improved since the inception of the program. Albeit the data indicated that the overall sense of “well-being” tapered off in the third and final year of the evaluation (1997), the Institute concluded that “Weed and Seed had made a difference in Savannah.”

The current evaluation examines the effectiveness of select “weed” side components of Savannah’s Weed and Seed program in 1999, by analyzing data gathered from the target area residents and interviewing police line officers as well as supervisory and management personnel with responsibilities in Weed and Seed neighborhoods. Other methods include Weed and Seed committee meeting minutes and quarterly reports; and, from crime data bases aggregated by both target area and city-wide crime incident data.

First, the perceptions of residents living in the target area are a key to understanding the value and usefulness of the “weed” side components of the Weed and Seed program. Do the residents, for example, feel secure from crime? Do they see the police actively engaged in activity that they believe will make their neighborhoods safer? Do they believe crime has improved or worsened? Are residents in these neighborhoods more likely or less likely to be victimized by a criminal offense than when the program began? Do they have confidence in the police, and are the police responsive to neighborhood crime and related problems? Do the residents see themselves as active participants with police in reducing drug trafficking and violence? Are the residents aware of social and economic services available to them by virtue of the Weed and Seed Program? Do they avail themselves of these services? Do residents participate in neighborhood crime watch associations, the purpose of which are to improve the quality of life in their neighborhoods? And finally, do the residents of the target area believe their quality of life has improved or worsened since the inception of the Weed and Seed project?

To answer these kinds of questions, Public Service Center research staff developed and field tested a household community satisfaction survey which was administered by telephone over the period of about 45 days in November and December, 1999. During this period, research staff contacted at random 1,190 target households to obtain a sample of 341 respondents for a 95 percent confidence interval with an error rate of ± 5 percent. To permit comparability, this survey was constructed to reflect as closely as possible the University of Charleston’s door-to-door survey conducted in the same target area in September, 1997.

Another component of the present study was an evaluation of the extent of collaboration among multi-agency law enforcement officers assigned to the target area. It seems self-evident that cooperation among agencies with overlapping responsibility

to reduce drug trafficking and suppress violent crime would be critical to program success.

To assess the level of inter-agency cooperation, a police officer survey was administered to line officers from the Savannah Police Department (SPD) and the Chatham County Counter Narcotics Task Force (CNT) who had participated in the “weed” portion of the program during the evaluation period. In addition, supervisory and managerial personnel from both agencies, as well as the leadership of the Savannah Weed and Seed office, were interviewed. Staff also analyzed Weed and Seed Committee meeting minutes and Quarterly Reports for 1998 and 1999.

Crime data are the third leg of this evaluation. Important as they are, the perceptions of target-area residents and the views of police and others who provide program services are in some ways less dependable than are the rates of reported crime for the target area. As a bottom-line indicator for the dependent variable, crime rates provide a firm calibration for describing and assessing what occurred--whether in terms of actual crime or in the citizen propensity for reporting it. While, for example, it is important to know that residents believe they are safer, it is no less important to know whether, in fact, crime data confirm that perception.

Lest there be a misunderstanding, evaluation staff hold that perceptions of safety and crime data are complementary measures, not substitutes for each other. The Savannah Police Department furnished these data for the period of January, 1996 through December, 1999. Staff then analyzed four categories of crime: six classifications of violent crime (homicide, rape, non-commercial robbery, non-commercial burglary, aggravated assault, and weapons violations); two classifications of drug offenses (possession for sale and sales of illicit drugs); four classifications of public nuisance offenses (disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, and loitering); and, simple assaults.

The chapters that follow provide a detailed discussion, first of the methodology used to conduct the evaluation (Chapter Two), then of the various findings from this report. Chapter Three, for example, presents frequency distributions of the 1999 Community Satisfaction Survey. A comparison of the results of the 1997 and 1999 Community Satisfaction Surveys comprise Chapter Four. Chapter Five follows with a presentation of the results of the interviews with police, supervisory, and management personnel with responsibilities in the target area. Chapter Six consists of a discussion of crime rates between the comparative evaluation periods (1997 and 1999) as well as a comparison of rates between the target area and the city as a whole. The study's conclusions follow in Chapter Seven.

Chapter 2

Research Methodology

Section I: Household Telephone Survey

Survey research is perhaps the most well-known and utilized method of scientific inquiry used by social scientists to collect quantitative data. From one perspective, the term survey research refers to any systematic collection of data from people at large--a method of data collection in which information is obtained directly from individual persons who are selected to provide a basis for making inferences about a larger population.

Survey research is especially suited for providing evaluation data in which individual persons (or another discrete unit such as a household) are the units of analysis and the particular programs employed pertain to individuals. Surveys provide five types of information about the respondents: *demographics* (background characteristics and personal history which may be relevant to the interpretation of the other data collected); *perceptions* (statements of what individuals know, or think they know about a situation); *opinions* (statements about individual preference or belief about specific events or subjects); *attitudes* (evaluation of events and ideas); and, *behavioral reports* (statements of how people act (Manheim, 1986).

Our focus is on survey questionnaires, a series of standardized questions and question-like items in which researchers ask questions of respondents. The three possible approaches to obtain survey information by direct questioning are face-to-face interviews, mailed or self-administered questionnaires, and telephone surveys (Bainbridge, 1986).

Previous surveys of the Savannah Weed and Seed program (1995, 1996 and 1997) utilized face-to-face interviews with residents in the target neighborhoods. Two disadvantages of face-to-face interviews are the high cost and low rate of return. For example, interview surveys require more than one interviewer to canvas a neighborhood with a high probability of numerous call backs before the survey is completed.

As part of the comparative analysis for this report, the evaluation team decided a telephone survey would provide the most useful data. Telephone surveys follow most of the same guidelines as other methods of survey research and provide a number of advantages over the face-to-face interview. First, they save time and money and provide an element of protection and safety for the interviewer working in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods, an area of the city in which a definite threat to the safety of individuals exists. Second, respondents are more honest in giving socially disapproved answers if they don't have to look the interviewer in the eye. Similarly, it is possible to probe into more sensitive areas. Finally, telephone surveys provide greater control over data collection when several interviewers are engaged in the project (e.g., survey interviewers calling from the same location are able to obtain clarification from a supervisor whenever problems occur, as they inevitably do).

Survey Design/Sampling Methodology

The 1999 survey essentially followed the 1997 survey with a few additional questions added to capture information from the 1998 Twelve City Community Criminal Victimization Survey--which included the city of Savannah--(Smith et al, 1999), conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS).¹ The aim of the 1999 survey was to capture the most important aspects of Weed and Seed from a neighborhood perspective

¹ Smith, S. K., Steadman, G. W., and Minton, T. D. (1999). Criminal Victimization and Perceptions of Community Safety in 12 Cities, 1998.

in a ten minute interview. The length of the survey was dictated by two factors: 1) Prior experience showed that it would limit the number of refusals; and, 2) It is more manageable for inexperienced surveyors. A copy of the 1999 Community Satisfaction Survey is located in Appendix B.

The telephone sample for the 1999 Weed and Seed evaluation was prepared for the Public Service Center by the Geographic Information Systems (GIS) department in the City of Savannah. A GIS programmer extracted the sample from a database version of the Polk City of Savannah Directory. The boundaries of the Weed and Seed target area were used to create a polygon and all identified addresses within that polygon were extracted for the sample. All telephone numbers within the Weed and Seed target area were entered into the CATI database.

We used the Computer Assisted Telephone Interview (CATI) software to randomly sample respondents from the pool of phone numbers provided. Telephone calling was conducted at a variety of times during the sampling period to ensure reaching the sample target. Residents were called on Tuesday and Thursday evenings and Saturday mornings. Four to five interviewers worked with guidance from a system supervisor during the sessions. Interviewers were trained at the workstations prior to the start of sampling to ensure their familiarity with the instrument, possible outcomes based on answers to questions and how to handle callbacks and termination's. Telephone interviewers were drawn from a pool of students in research methods classes at the graduate level and individuals experienced with telephone customer service.

The CATI method supplied a sample of 1190 telephone numbers from which to dial.² The targeted number of households for completing the survey was 330, a number that

² Within any GIS sample identification some number of listings will not be identified by the system due to non-standard or incomplete address listings which the GIS software cannot locate.

would allow an error margin of ± 0.05 percent with a 95 percent level of confidence.³ The 1999 survey was pre-tested by the research staff, using different individuals who had no prior exposure to the survey. After this, the survey was sent to Weed and Seed staff for review. Suggested modifications were made and the survey was again tested by Public Service Center staff. Finally, the survey was tested by using it in the interviews for respondents surveyors. Final adjustments were made based on their comments.

The value of Computer Assisted Telephone Interview software, in addition to managing the randomizing of telephone sample and handling the callback schedule automatically, is that the interview responses are captured during the interview reducing the possibility of data entry error by eliminating the need to enter the survey responses after the interview is completed. For example, if contact was not made on the first call (e.g., no answer, answering machine, busy signal), the phone number was reintegrated into the number pool for recall at a later session. If an adult resident was not at home or if the timing was bad (e.g., too busy, just leaving, sitting down to dinner, etc.), interviewers were instructed to reschedule the residence for recall at a subsequent interview session--the CATI system was programmed to automatically recall the number at a prearranged time. After the third attempt, non-responding households were dropped from the list.

In addition, the 1999 survey was designed to be a "household" survey, and not one of individuals. In effect, this means that the individual who was interviewed was interpreted to be speaking for the household and not just themselves. Interviewers were instructed to interview adults from the household meaning a member of the residence age eighteen or older. If a child answered the phone, interviewers were instructed to ask if the child's mother, father or an adult who was in charge was at home.

³ Krejcie, R. V., and Morgan, D. W. (1970). Determining sample size for research activities. Educational and Psychological Measurement, 30, pp. 607-610.

Interview staff reported no serious problems with the survey instrument. In order to avoid biasing questions they were instructed to read the questions exactly as written on the computer screen and to avoid engaging in conversations with respondents. If questions were asked, they were to explain politely that they did not know and they were just to ask the questions the way they were written. They were instructed to avoid judgmental comments, and to maintain a friendly manner.

Finally, it should be noted that although some respondents refused to answer certain questions dealing with personal demographic characteristics, the overall number of households that declined to participate in the survey was extremely low (less than .05%). The target number of completed interviews was reached by December 20, 1999. We achieved a ratio of one complete interview for every four dialing attempts. Analysis of the response data began immediately after the sample target was reached.

Error Margin in Evaluating Differences Between 1999 and 1997 Surveys

A good deal of the survey analysis conducted in 1999 was done in conjunction with data collected in 1997. Essentially, the 1997 survey established baselines for the current study of Weed and Seed. Thus, a reasonable hypothesis would be that household perceptions, attitudes, and reports on expected behavior would hopefully “improve” or, at the very least, “remain the same” between the two survey periods as a possible result of Weed and Seed activities. For example, an additional two year’s police work focusing on Weed and Seed should result in households reporting increased police visibility. Similarly, households should have better information with respect to social programs.

When comparisons between two survey data sets are made, the error margin for the data becomes important in a comparative sense. If for example, 34 percent of the population reported an attitude during one period and 37 percent reported the attitude

at a later period, one might conclude that an increase had occurred; however, with an error margin of ± 5 percent, making such a conclusion is risky. The error margins of the two data sets are such that no actual increase occurred. Rather, the differences between the two percentages may be accounted for entirely within the respective margins of error.

Reported Frequencies

Throughout this report, frequencies are reported for the survey responses. Although a total of 341 surveys were completed, in certain instances, the reported frequencies total a number less than 341. In such cases, it should be understood that there are missing data for certain questions. For example, Table 2A.1, below, reports on a number of demographic variables of the survey respondents as compared to the US Census data for the Weed and Seed target area. Respondents reported by ethnicity numbered 325. This data was collected at the end of the survey interview, if the respondent refused to answer this question the interviewers so noted the refusal on the computer screen. Failure to answer demographic questions (e.g., ethnicity, age, income, etc.) did not constitute an incomplete survey. These are to be interpreted as part and parcel of the survey process.

Survey Validation

The issue of the generalizability of the survey from a statistical standpoint is discussed above. Another way of addressing this issue is by comparing the survey population with the larger population where the attributes of the latter can be definitively established. US Census Department data do exist for the Weed and Seed area, albeit somewhat dated (1990), and these can be used to further explore the validity of the data reported here. In general, the closer the match of the survey population with the total population, the more confidence one can have in the survey data.

The hypothesis being tested here is that for the survey to be judged as valid for making inferences to the larger Weed and Seed population, there should be no significant differences between the basic demographic characteristics obtained in the

Table 2A.1

Comparative Demographics (1999 Survey Respondents vs. 1990 US Census)

Demographic Indicator	1999 Survey Respondents		1990 US Census	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ethnicity				
African-American	274	84.3%	6,043	94.0%
Caucasian	51	15.7%	388	6.0%
Other	0	0.0%	0	0.0%
Totals	325	100.0%	6,451	100.0%
Gender				
Male	111	32.6%	2,915	45.2%
Female	230	67.4%	3,536	54.8%
Totals	341	100.0%	6,451	100.0%
Home Ownership				
Home Owner	196	59.8%	647	27.1%
Renter	132	40.2%	1,741	72.9%
Totals	328	100.0%	2,338	100.0%
Average Number of Persons per Household				
	2.8		2.9	
Average Family Income				
	\$18,992		\$18,141	

survey from those in the US Census data. Table 2A.1, above, reports these frequencies.

As can be readily seen, the 1999 survey indicates a decline in the number of African-Americans during the time span since the 1990 US Census data. However, these

numbers were not totally unexpected as this trend was evident in previous survey data of Savannah's Weed and Seed program (see Felts et al., 1997). This consistent decline in the number of African-American residents over a ten year period may indicate some increasing degree of gentrification in certain parts of the Weed and Seed area.

As expected, the surveyed group reflects a larger percentage of female respondents for the households than the actual Weed and Seed population. Research staff had hypothesized that women were more likely than men to be available to answer the survey questions. Since the responses were for households, this deviation should not affect the survey results in any significant way. Moreover, gender percentages for the 1999 survey are not significantly different from those reported in the comparative 1997 survey.

Table 2A.1, above, shows a variation from the US Census data in favor of owner occupied households responding. Again, this was anticipated. Renters are typically more transient; not having a home to care for will make them less likely to be home. The deviation from the actual Weed and Seed population could have implications for data interpretation, though not in any consistent manner. Once again, these differences in home ownership dissolve when compared with the 1997 survey data.

Other comparisons indicate survey data mirrors the larger Weed and Seed population. Census data indicate an average household size of 2.9 persons in the Weed and Seed area and an average family income of \$18,141. The survey data showed an average family or household size of 2.8 persons and an average family income of \$18,992.

Overall, the divergence between the survey and Census data should not be a cause for general lack of confidence in the survey results. The number of households within the Weed and Seed area is fairly small and the sample is comparatively large. Thus, if anything, interpretation might assume a larger margin of error rather than any

significant differences between the households surveyed and all Weed and Seed households.

Data analyses for the 1999 Community Satisfaction Survey are located in Chapter Three; comparative analysis between the 1997 and 1999 Community Satisfaction Surveys are located in Chapter Four of this report.

Section II: Police Officer Survey

This portion of the evaluation sought to survey the opinions of those police officers assigned to the Weed and Seed area for the period of 1997-1999. The research staff wanted to ascertain officer views on any obstacles they experienced during the implementation of the Weed and Seed program, the extent of interagency cooperation, the adequacy of resources to meet the demands of the project, levels of understanding program responsibilities, programmatic gaps, and any recommendations for change.

Initially, the evaluation proposal restricted its prospective respondents to about five Chatham County Counter Narcotics Task Force (CNT) officers and ten Savannah Police Department (SPD) officers assigned to the target area. The evaluation staff expanded the number of CNT officers surveyed to nine. Few SPD officers had been assigned to the program over the three years; consequently only eight officers could be surveyed for this report.

In order to compile candid assessments from the officers, anonymity and confidentiality had to be guaranteed. To accomplish this, person-to-person interviews were rejected. Instead, an open-ended survey was developed and distributed to the respondents to be completed in private. A copy of the survey instrument is located in Appendix D.

The researchers made themselves available by phone and in-person to each respondent for questions of clarification and follow-up. In addition to line personnel, the evaluation

team administered the instrument to project supervisors. These respondents included the Executive Director for Savannah Weed and Seed, the U. S. Attorney's representative to Weed and Seed, the Commander of CNT, and the commander in charge of SPD's role in the Weed and Seed Program.

Although it was outside the scope of the proposed evaluation, in an effort to render a fuller account of the variables of interest for this study (e.g., program obstacles, interagency cooperation, gaps in service, and the like), evaluation staff reviewed the content of quarterly Weed and Seed Reports issued from the Savannah Weed and Seed Department for the period of 1997 through 1999. In addition, staff reviewed the minutes from the Weed and Seed Steering Committee quarterly meetings for the same period. Special attention was paid to those parts of the reports which referred to, for example, joint street enforcement operations, interagency communication, intelligence sharing, and any interpretations (explicit or implicit) of the remarks found therein.

Given the nature of the quarterly reports and meeting minutes, they are representative of supervisory and management perspectives regarding program implementation and effectiveness. Presumably, information from street officer surveys would not show such predictability. Data gleaned from the reports and minutes were then compared with information from the surveys of street personnel assigned to the target area for consistency and dissonance. Data analyses for this portion of the study are located in Chapter Five of this report.

Section III: Reported Incident Data

All crime incidents in the City of Savannah from January 1, 1996 through December 31, 1999 were provided to the research team in DBF format by the Savannah Police Department for analysis. The type of information provided, included the UCC number identifying the type of crime, the location of the crime, and the date and time the crime

occurred. Weed and Seed neighborhoods were also identified, thus enabling researchers to compare crime incidents in Weed and Seed neighborhoods to the rest of the City of Savannah and to examine trends in the Weed and Seed target area. Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software.

Crime incidents of interest fell into four categories: violent crimes (homicide, rape, aggravated assault, non-commercial burglary, non-commercial robbery, and weapons violations), drug crimes (possession, distribution and sale of illicit drugs and narcotics), public nuisance crimes (disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, and loitering, and simple assaults. Absolute and relative frequencies for these categories along with the substantive differences in incident data over the four-year period are presented in Chapter Six of this report.

In addition, crime rates for the four crime categories of interest were computed within Weed and Seed neighborhoods and compared to rates within the entire City of Savannah. Differences being noted are identified as “significant” or “nonsignificant,” according to Chi-square tests of significance. Differences identified as being “significant” have a high probability that they are not the product of chance, but are instead associated with the subgroup characteristics being analyzed. Generally, in order for a difference to be considered, observed significance levels should be .05 or less. If the probability is .051 or greater, the null hypothesis of no difference is not rejected. For the purposes of this report, most of the significant differences noted in the crime incident data analysis will be among crime incidents over the four year period within the Weed and Seed target area.

Chapter 3

1999 Community Satisfaction Survey Frequency Analysis

Throughout this section of the report, absolute and relative frequencies are reported for the 1999 survey responses. The survey instrument and the simple frequencies for the 1999 survey, in table format, are included in Appendix C. What follows is an interpretation of these data, although we have limited discussion of bivariate analysis to variables with significant correlation's. Relevant observations and significant analysis for each section are highlighted at the beginning of each segment.

Respondent Qualification

The primary purpose of this survey was to collect, analyze, and compare resident perception data similar to that collected in a 1997 study of the Weed and Seed target area (Felts, et al., 1998). In order to effectively evaluate attitudinal changes in the residents' perception of personal safety and neighborhood satisfaction, the effectiveness of police services, and the various programs and services in the neighborhood, it was crucial that respondents had lived in the neighborhood for a predetermined period of time.

Therefore, after having asked to speak to the "head of household" or an "adult resident of the household," it was necessary for the survey interviewers to prequalify the respondent based on the length of time they had lived in the neighborhood. The interview was terminated if the respondent indicated that he/she had not lived in the neighborhood for at least one year. Table 3.1, below, shows the respondents' length of residence in number of years.

As expected, the overwhelming majority of these respondents (75.7 percent/258), stated they have lived in the target area for five or more years, followed by three to five years

Table 3. 1

How long you have lived in this neighborhood?

Number of Years	Number	Percent
≥ 1 year but less than 2 years	30	8.8%
≥ 2 years but less than 3 years	22	6.5%
≥ 3 years but less than 5 years	31	9.1%
≥ 5 years	258	75.7%
Total	341	100%

(9.1 percent/31), one to two years (8.8 percent/30), and two to three years (6.5 percent/22). These findings are consistent with previous survey data.

Demographic Information

Survey respondents were asked to provide demographic information about themselves (age, gender, ethnic affiliation), their employment status, the annual income of the household, the number of individuals living in the household (≤ 55 years and > 55 years), and if they owned or rented their home. Table 3.2, below, lists the response frequencies for these variables.

Respondents age ranged from 18 years (nine respondents) to 90 years old (two respondents). The mean age of this group is 54.69 years (sd 20.33). For cross tabulation analysis the variable “age” was collapsed into two categories, “ < 55 years old” (171/50 percent), and “55 years and older” (170/50 percent).

Females represent two-thirds of the survey respondents (64.7 percent/230), males the other one-third (32.6 percent/111). These figures are almost identical to those indicated in the 1997 survey, however, as previously mentioned, they are somewhat different from US Census data. What are the implications of this skewing in favor of females for generalizability of the data?

Table 3.2
Demographic Variables

Variable	Number (n)	Percent (%)
Age		
< 55 years	171	50.0%
≥ 55 years	170	50.0%
Total	341	100.0%
Gender		
Male	111	32.6%
Female	230	67.4%
Total	341	100.0%
Ethnicity		
African-American	274	84.3%
Caucasian	51	15.7%
*Total	325	100.0%
Employment Status		
Working full or part-time	156	46.4%
Unemployed - looking for work	15	4.5%
Retired - not looking for work	140	41.7%
Other	25	7.4%
*Total	336	100.0%
Household Income (1998)		
< \$10,000	90	30.2%
\$10,000 - \$24,999	74	24.8%
\$25,000 - \$39,999	52	17.5%
≥ \$40,000	40	13.4%
Don't know/unsure	42	14.1%
*Total	298	100.0%
Number of Individuals in Household		
One	116	35.3%
Two	139	42.2%
Three or more	74	22.5%
*Total	329	100.0%
Home Ownership		
Own residence	196	59.8%
Rent residence	132	40.2%
*Total	328	100.0%

* Although a total of 341 surveys were completed, in some instances, the total frequencies reported number less than 341. In such cases, it should be understood that there are missing data for any particular question. The reason for this discrepancy is quite simple. Prior experience and pre-tests of this instrument indicate that many respondents are hesitant to provide personal information to the survey interviewer.

From one perspective, this issue of gender may be largely irrelevant for the interpretation of the data. This is because the survey is designed as a household survey and not an individual one. Thus, the individual answering the survey is presumed to be answering for the entire household, and his or her particular gender is not as relevant.

But from another perspective, one could speculate that if a male was speaking for the household, he might represent it differently. It would be reasonable to speculate, for example, that on issues of crime women will feel more vulnerable than men. Thus, they might not be as inclined to say their neighborhood was safe when a man might. Even if this were the case and this type of bias is present in the survey data, it should not be taken as a sign of invalidation. If women do not feel safe in their neighborhoods, then they represent a significant population that does not feel safe and it matters very little that a man would feel safe.

As expected, the overwhelming majority of survey respondents identified themselves as “African-American” (84.3 percent/274), with less than two in ten “Caucasian” (15.7 percent/51). A total of 16 respondents refused to answer this question.

Ethnic affiliation is significantly associated with two other demographic variables. Table 3.3, below, shows the crosstabulation of “ethnicity” with the variables “age” and “home ownership.”

Chi-square analysis indicates that African-American respondents were significantly more likely to be age “55 and older” (52 percent/161), and, to own their own residence (64 percent/196). Caucasian respondents were more likely to be “under the age of 55” (84 percent/21). and to be renters (96 percent/24).

Table 3.3***Crosstabulation: Ethnicity by Age and Home Ownership***

Respondents Ethnic Affiliation						
	African-American		Caucasian			
	n	(%)	n	(%)	X ²	df
Age					10.87***	2
< 55 years old	146	(48%)	21	(84%)		
≥ 55 years old	161	(52%)	4	(16%)		
Home Ownership					40.35***	2
Own residence	196	(64%)	0	(0%)		
Rent residence	101	(33%)	24	(96%)		

*** Significant at .001

Survey respondents were asked about their employment status and the total household income for calendar year 1998. More than four in ten of the respondents (41.7 percent/140) reported they were “retired and not looking for work.” The second largest group indicated they were “working full-time” (37.8 percent/127). Less than one in ten stated they were “working part-time” (8.6 percent/29), or were “unemployed and looking for work” (4.5 percent/15). Twenty-five respondents indicated “other” (7.4 percent), and five refused to furnish this information.

With regard to household income for calendar year 1998, the majority of respondents who answered this question reported a total income of less than \$25,000 (55 percent/164). Slightly more than one in ten households reported household earnings of ≥\$40,000 (13.4 percent/40), similar to the number who either “did not know” or were “unsure” (14.1 percent/42). A total of 43 respondents refused to provide this information.

Respondents were asked how many people under the age of eighteen lived in the household, with a follow-up question of how many adults, eighteen and over, lived at this residence. The average number of individuals residing in a Weed and Seed household was 2.75 with a median of 2; that is 42.2 percent of the households reported

two residents. As previously noted, the survey figure of 2.75 individuals compares favorably with the US Census data for Weed and Seed of 2.9.

As expected, home ownership is closely connected with the number of years of residence in the Weed and Seed area. Eighty-five percent (167/196) of the respondents who own their homes have lived in the neighborhood a minimum of five years. Somewhat of a surprise is the longevity of those who rent. Sixty-one percent (81/132) of the survey respondents who rent have lived in the area five or more years.

Section A: Personal Safety and Neighborhood Satisfaction

Introduction. The first set of questions deal with the respondents' perceptions of personal safety and general satisfaction with life in their neighborhood. Key findings in this section include the following:

- More than half (56 percent) of the survey participants see their neighborhood as safe, while almost three in ten (28 percent) of the respondents do not believe their neighborhoods are safe. The remaining sixteen percent stated they were either “unsure” or “don’t know.”
- Bivariate analysis revealed significant relationships between neighborhood safety perception and police visibility, and neighborhood safety and whether or not respondents perceive that the police are practicing community policing.
- Surprisingly, a large percentage of respondents who do not see the police a lot (55 percent) still believe that their neighborhoods are safe. An even larger percentage of those who do not think the police practice community

policing in their neighborhoods (61 percent) still feel their neighborhoods are safe.

- Nearly half of the survey respondents (49.6 percent), believe that their neighborhoods are safer today than they were a year ago.
- Of those respondents who perceived an increase in police visibility during the previous year, more than two-thirds (69 percent) also perceive that the neighborhood is safer--although almost one-third (31 percent) who perceived an increase in police visibility thought their neighborhood had grown less safe.
- Among respondents who think that drug sales and violent crimes have decreased in their neighborhood since the previous year, 89 percent and 83 percent, respectively, think the neighborhood is safer.
- About half of the respondents (51 percent) indicated that they were “somewhat fearful” to “very fearful” of crime in their neighborhood. Female respondents were significantly more likely to indicate fear of crime in neighborhoods than were male respondents (59 percent versus 43 percent).
- About a third (31.6 percent) of the Weed and Seed survey participants stated that their fear of crime has “increased” over the past twelve months. About half (49 percent) said their level of fear has “remained about the same,” and only 16 percent believed that their level of fear has “decreased.”
- More than six in ten (66.3 percent) respondents indicated that “illicit drug sales” are problems in their neighborhoods, and more than half (57.2 percent) think “violent criminal activity,” such as shootings, assaults, and robberies, are problems. One-third (33 percent) of respondents stated that

violent crime was not a problem, and one in five (20 percent) believed that drugs were not a problem in their neighborhood.

- About one third (33.7 percent) of respondents thought drug sales were “about the same” as they were a year ago, and more than a third (39 percent) thought violent crime was “about the same” as before. Less than a third (31 percent) thought that incidents within both categories had “decreased,” and less than two in ten (16 and 14 percent, respectively) felt that drug activities and violent crime had “increased” in their neighborhood.
- More than three fourths (75.4 percent) of respondents agreed with the statement that “The only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in your neighborhood is for neighborhood residents to help themselves.”

Neighborhood Safety. For Weed and Seed to achieve its objective of creating a safe environment within which families can grow and prosper, neighborhood safety is imperative. Indeed, a key portion of the Weed and Seed strategy in weeding out crime is to give residents confidence in their communities and create an environment which business will find hospitable. Quite simply, if Weed and Seed has successfully reduced and/or eliminated certain types of violent criminal activity and the overt sale and use of illicit drugs in the target area, resident perception of neighborhood safety would increase. Table 3A.1, below, reports the frequencies for this question.

If this table is an accurate representation of households within the Weed and Seed area, almost half of the respondents were either “unsure,” or did not believe their neighborhood was safe. The number of those who indicate they “don’t know/unsure,” is notable.

Table 3A.1*Do you think this is a safe neighborhood?*

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	192	56.3%
No	95	27.9%
Don't know/Unsure	54	15.8%
Total	341	100.0%

As previously stated, an important component of the Weed and Seed program is to increase the level of contact and interaction between the police and residents through Community Oriented Policing. Table 3A.2, below, crosstabulates the questions, "Do you see the police a lot around here?" and, "Do you think the police in your neighborhood practice community policing?" with the question "Do you think this is a safe neighborhood?"

Table 3A.2*Crosstabulation: Safe Neighborhood by Police Visibility and Community Policing*

Is the Neighborhood Safe?						X ²	df
Yes		No					
	n	(%)	n	(%)			
See Police A Lot					6.68**		1
Yes	137	(71%)	55	(29%)			
No	47	(55%)	39	(45%)			
Practice Community Policing					5.64*		1
Yes	81	(76%)	25	(24%)			
No	71	(61%)	46	(39%)			

* Significant at .05 ** Significant at .01

As expected, police visibility has a significant influence on the respondents' perception of neighborhood safety. Also, a significant number of respondents who believe the

police practice Community-Oriented Policing in their neighborhoods also believe their neighborhood is safe. What is somewhat surprising is the large percentage of respondents who do not see the police “a lot,” and those who do not think the police practice community policing in their neighborhoods, but still feel they live in a safe neighborhood (55 and 61 percent, respectively). This raises some questions about what criteria residents use to assess the relative safety of their neighborhood.

Question B7 on the survey asked respondents if they had first hand knowledge of a crime victim within the past year. Table 3A.3, below, crosstabulates Question B7 with respondents’ “perception of neighborhood safety.”

Table 3A.3

Crosstabulation: Safe Neighborhood by Firsthand Knowledge of a Crime Victim

	Is the Neighborhood Safe?				X^2	df
	Yes		No			
	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Know Crime Victim?					9.33**	1
Yes	51	(55%)	42	(45%)		
No	138	(74%)	49	(26%)		

** Significant at .01

As indicated, one in three survey respondents (31.4 percent) stated they had first-hand knowledge of a victim of crime within the past year. Of these, almost half (45 percent) were inclined to say their neighborhoods were not safe. Slightly more than half (55 percent) believed their neighborhood to be safe. The remainder, nearly two-thirds (65.1 percent), did not know a crime victim within the past year. Of these, more than 7 in 10 (74 percent) believed their neighborhood to be safe.

Neighborhood Safety (compared to last year). This question was included in the survey for the purpose of comparative evaluation. Quite simply, over time, have

resident attitudes about neighborhood safety changed dramatically in the Weed and Seed target area? The frequencies are reported, below, in Table 3A.4.

Table 3A.4

Do you think this is a safer neighborhood now than it was a year ago?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	169	49.6%
No	117	24.3%
Don't know/Unsure	55	16.1%
Total	341	100.0%

One measure of the overall success of the Weed and Seed project is a belief by residents that their neighborhoods are safer today than they were before the start of the Weed and Seed program. More importantly, if Weed and Seed is a viable paradigm, we should not expect to see a significant change in the respondents' perception of neighborhood safety since the previous survey.

The more pressing question is whether this variable is strongly linked with the respondents' perception of change in criminal activity and police visibility over the same time period. Table 3A.5, below, reports the crosstabulation of this question with Question B6, "In the past year have you seen any increases or decreases in police officer presence in your neighborhood?" and, Question C6, "In your neighborhood have drug sales and violent crime increased, decreased, or remained about the same?"

We know from Table 3A.3 that the perception of neighborhood safety is significantly associated with visibility of the police. That is, in Table 3A.3, of those who see the police a lot, more than seven in ten (71 percent) also indicate that their neighborhood is safe. Table 3A.5 can be interpreted as confirmation of the data. That is, there is a clear connection in the minds of the respondents between perception of neighborhood safety,

police visibility, and even the perception of the prevalence of criminal and drug-related activity. Table 3A.5 shows that of those household respondents who perceive an increase in police visibility during the previous year, 69 percent think this has made the neighborhood safer.

Table 3A.5

Crosstabulation: Neighborhood Safer Than 1 Year Ago by Perceived Changes in Police Visibility, Drug Sales and Violent Crime

Neighborhood Safer Now Than 1 Year Ago?					
	Yes		No		
	n	(%)	n	(%)	X ² df
Police Visibility in Past Year					7.04* 2
Increased	76	(69%)	35	(31%)	
Decreased	22	(56%)	17	(44%)	
No Change	59	(51%)	56	(49%)	
Drug Sales in Past Year					68.84*** 2
Increased	10	(20%)	39	(90%)	
Decreased	87	(89%)	11	(11%)	
Remained About the Same	50	(52%)	47	(48%)	
Violent Crime in Past Year					39.16*** 2
Increased	14	(33%)	28	(67%)	
Decreased	81	(83%)	17	(17%)	
Remained About the Same	55	(49%)	58	(51%)	

* Significant at .05 ** Significant at .01 *** Significant at .001

Among respondents who think there are less drugs and crime in their neighborhood compared to the previous year, 89 and 83 percent, respectively, believe the neighborhood is safer.

Fear of Crime (overall). One impact the crime problem has on the general population is the fear of crime. Fear limits freedom. Because they are fearful, many people confine their activities to “safe” areas and “safe” times. Perhaps most unsettling, the very persons who have the least chance of being victimized by crime are often the most fearful. Most responses to the fear of crime are costly and require adjustments in lifestyle. The economically better off are able to take steps that will help alleviate their

Table 3A.6

How Fearful are You About Crime in Your Neighborhood?
Are you....

Response	Number	Percent
Very fearful	53	15.5%
Somewhat fearful	121	35.5%
Not very fearful	88	25.8%
Not fearful at all	64	18.8%
Don't know/Unsure	15	4.4%
Total	341	100.0%

fears while the poor must endure their fears. Paradoxically, those who are most vulnerable are also least able to respond in ways that have a tempering effect. In an effort to measure fear of crime in the Weed and Seed area respondents were asked, “How fearful are you about crime in your neighborhood?” Table 3A.6, above, list the frequency responses to this question.

According to this table, about half of the respondents (51 percent) indicate they were “somewhat fearful” or “very fearful” (35.5 and 15.5 percent, respectively) of crime in their neighborhood. Less than half (43.8 percent) indicate they are “not very fearful” (25.8 percent), or “not fearful at all” (18.8 percent).

How do these figures compare with the City of Savannah? According to a recent study on citizen perceptions of criminal victimization, conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics (U. S. Department of Justice, 1999), one-third (33 percent) of the respondents from the City of Savannah reported they were either “somewhat fearful” (28 percent) or “very fearful” (5 percent) of crime in their neighborhoods.

Criminal victimization is not evenly distributed across the population in our country nor is the fear of crime commensurate with the statistical probability of actually being

Table 3A.7

Crosstabulation: Fear of Crime by Gender

	Fear of Crime in Neighborhood				X^2	df
	Fearful		Not Fearful			
	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Gender					15.12**	2
Male	46	(43%)	61	(57%)		
Female	128	(59%)	91	(41%)		

** Significant at .01

victimized. For example, in our society, males are far more likely to be crime victims, yet females are consistently more fearful of crime than their male counterparts. How do male and female respondents in this survey compare with the general population on this issue? Table 3A.7, above, reports the crosstabulation analysis of the question, “How fearful are you about crime in your neighborhood?” by the demographic variable “gender.”

According to this table, about six in ten (59 percent) female respondents indicated they are “somewhat fearful” to “very fearful” of crime in their neighborhood. An equal number (57 percent) of the male respondents stated they are “not very fearful” to “not fearful at all.” It should be noted that the percentages for male and female respondents

in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods are substantially higher than figures for the entire city.

Fear of Crime (compared to last year). In order to measure recent shifts in the level of fear expressed by residents, a follow-up question asked, “Over the past year, has your fear of crime increased, decreased, or remained about the same?” Table 3A.8, below, list the respondent frequencies for this question.

According to the data in this table, almost a third (31.6 percent/108) of the Weed and Seed respondents state their fear of crime has “increased” over the past twelve months.

Table 3A.8

Over the Past Year, Has Your Fear of Crime....

Response	Number	Percent
Increased	108	31.6%
Decreased	55	16.1%
Remained about the same	167	48.9%
Don't know/Unsure	11	3.4%
Total	341	100.0%

Few stated their level of fear has “decreased” (16.1 percent/55); and, almost half (48.9 percent/167) said their level of fear has “remained about the same.” How do these figures compare with the BJS survey of the entire city? In response to the question, “over the last 12 months, has fear of crime in your neighborhood increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?”, 23 percent of the Savannah respondents indicated their fear of crime had “increased,” 6 percent said their fear of crime had “decreased,” and, the majority of respondents, 71 percent, stated their level of fear had “remained about the same.”

Is there a significant link between an increased fear of crime and the perception of illicit drug sales and criminal activity? Table 3A.9, below, shows the crosstabulation of this question with Question C6a, "In the past year have drug sales on streets, street corners, or in other public places in your neighborhood, increased, decreased, or remained about the same?", and Question C6b, "In the past year have violent crimes in your neighborhood, increased, decreased, or remained about the same?"

The following table indicates a clear connection in the minds of respondents between perception of neighborhood safety, police visibility, and perception of the prevalence of criminal and drug-related activity. As expected, the same correlation exists among respondents who indicate a greater fear of crime.

Table 3A.9

Crosstabulation: Fear of Crime by Perceived Changes in Neighborhood Drug Sales and Criminal Activity

In the Past Year, Has Your Fear of Crime?								
	Increased		Decreased		No Change		X^2	df
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Drug Sales							41.63***	4
Increased	25	(64%)	1	(3%)	13	(33%)		
Decreased	8	(18%)	18	(41%)	18	(41%)		
About the Same	20	(28%)	11	(15%)	41	(57%)		
Violent Crime							29.98***	4
Increased	19	(63%)	2	(7%)	9	(30%)		
Decreased	10	(21%)	17	(35%)	21	(44%)		
About the Same	21	(31%)	5	(7%)	41	(61%)		

*** Significant at .001

Among respondents who think there are more drugs and crime in their neighborhood compared to the previous year, 64 and 63 percent, respectively, have a greater fear of crime.

Drug and Criminal Activity (overall). Weed and Seed survey respondents were asked if they thought illicit drug activity (sales on streets, street corners, or in other public places) and violent crime (shootings, assaults, robberies, etc.) are problems in their neighborhood. Table 3A.10, below, reports the response frequencies for this question.

As indicated in the following table, more than four in ten (43 percent) Weed and Seed respondents stated “drugs” are a big problem in their neighborhood, and about one in four (24.6 percent) think “violent crime” is a big problem. Somewhat unexpected are the number of individuals who believe “drugs” (20 percent), and “violent crime” (32.6 percent), are not a problem in their neighborhood. The fact that more than six in ten (66.3 percent) respondents indicate that “illicit drug sales” are problematic, and more than one half (57.2 percent) think “violent criminal activity,” such as shootings, assaults,

Table 3A.10

Now I am going to read a list of things that may be current problems in your neighborhood. After I read each one, please tell me whether you think it is a big problem, a small problem, or no problem in your neighborhood.

Current Problem	Big Problem		Small Problem		No Problem		Don't know /unsure	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
...drug sales on streets, street corners. or in other public places	147	43.1	79	23.2	69	20.2	46	13.5
...violent crime such as shootings assaults, robberies, and so forth	84	24.6	111	32.6	118	34.6	28	8.2

and robberies, are problems in their neighborhood is notable; it is hard to avoid the conclusion that these types of activities are still fairly prevalent throughout the Weed and Seed area. This issue directly addresses a Weed and Seed goal, that is, to concentrate on reducing high-intensity drug and crime areas.

Table 3A.11

Crosstabulation: Perception of Drug Sales and Violent Criminal Activity by Gender and Ethnicity

Respondents Perception of Drug Activity in Neighborhood								
	Big Problem		Small Problem		No Problem		X ²	df
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Gender							9.63*	3
Male	42	(38%)	36	(32%)	23	(21%)		
Female	105	(46%)	43	(19%)	46	(20%)		
Ethnicity							13.59**	3
African-American	138	(45%)	66	(21%)	63	(21%)		
Caucasian	4	(16%)	13	(52%)	5	(20%)		
Respondents Perception of Violent Crime in Neighborhood								
	Big Problem		Small Problem		No Problem		X ²	df
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Gender							11.61**	3
Male	24	(22%)	47	(42%)	37	(33%)		
Female	60	(26%)	64	(28%)	81	(35%)		

* Significant at .05** Significant at .01

Which of the survey respondents are more likely to perceive drug activity and violent crime as problematic in their neighborhood? Table 3A.11, above, shows the crosstabulation analysis of this question with the demographic variables “gender” (male/female) and “ethnicity” (African-American/Caucasian).

Chi-square analysis indicates that female respondents ($X^2=9.63$, $p<.05$) and African-American respondents ($X^2=13.59$, $p<.01$) are more likely to see drug activity as a “big problem” in their neighborhood; although a majority of both male and female respondents (70 and 65 percent, respectively), as well as a majority of African-American

and Caucasian respondents (66 and 68 percent, respectively), see drug activity as a neighborhood problem. On the issue of “violent criminal activity,” females ($X^2=11.61$, $p<.01$) are more likely than males to see violent crime as a “big problem” in their neighborhood; however, a larger percentage of males (64 percent versus 54 percent) perceive violent criminal activity as a “problem” in their neighborhood.

Changes in Neighborhood Drug and Crime Activity. In an effort to get a perspective on whether or not residents felt these activities had changed dramatically since the previous evaluation, a follow-up question asked respondents if they thought drug sales and violent crime had increased, decreased, or remained about the same. Generally, we hypothesize that throughout the life of the Weed and Seed program, residents should be able to notice a reduction in these activities. Table 3A.12, below, lists the frequencies for this question.

Table 3A.12

Have these same problems in your neighborhood increased, decreased, or remained about the same...

Current Problem	Increased		Decreased		Remained the Same		Don'tknow /unsure	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
...drug sales on streets, street corners, or in other public places	55	16.1	107	31.4	115	33.7	64	18.8
...violent crime such as shootings assaults, robberies, and so forth	47	13.8	106	31.1	133	39.0	55	16.1

Table 3A.12 is notable for the dispersion of responses. That is, nearly a third (33.7 percent) of the respondents thought drug sales, and slightly more than a third (39 percent) thought violent crime, were “about the same” as before; an almost equal amount (31.4 and 31.1 percent, respectively), thought that incidents within both categories had “decreased;” and, less than two in ten (16.1 and 13.8 percent,

respectively) felt that drug activities and violent crime had “increased” in their neighborhood.

Criminal Victimization. The following question (B7) was an attempt at an independent measure of the prevalence of crime in the Weed and Seed area, a method of gauging unreported crime, and also as a follow-up to the prior question. “Do you think the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug activity in your neighborhood?” The aforementioned question was also an attempt to validate residents’ perception of change in crime and drug activity in the neighborhood. The question asked survey respondents if they knew of someone who had been a crime victim within the past year. Table 3A.13, below, reports the frequency of responses to this question.

Caveat: The format of Question B7 is identical to a question asked in the 1997 survey, even though a number of shortcomings are fairly obvious. First, it is impossible to

Table 3A.13

Do you know someone who has been a victim of a crime in the last year?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	107	31.4%
No	222	65.1%
Don’t know/Unsure	12	3.5%
Total	341	100.0%

gauge the specific crime reported. Thus, “yes” responses may not indicate crime unreported but merely suspicious criminal behavior. For example, such cases as a group of male juveniles gathered on a street corner, in an area known as a drug “hot spot,” engaged in nothing more sinister than harmless conversation between friends, that is mistakenly interpreted by a respondent as nefarious criminal activity.

Moreover, the method of drawing the sample for the survey is a problem as well. That is to say, the reports of knowledge of a crime victim could be overlapping. If a crime happened to a neighbor, then the data reported here may reflect knowledge of the same crime. The sampling method used in this study increases the likelihood of this happening.

The frequency data in Table 3A.13 indicate that about one-in-three survey respondents (31.4 percent/107) in the Weed and Seed area had been either directly or indirectly affected by criminal activity during the past year (January 1 - December 31, 1999). By extrapolation, a comparable figure for the entire city of Savannah would be approximately 15 percent for 1999.¹ A reasonable guess would be that the personal knowledge of crime victims may be twice that for the remainder of Savannah and a significant portion of that may be in the form of more violent crimes in Weed and Seed.

Which of the survey respondents are more likely to either know, or have been, a crime victim in the past year? Table 3A.14, below, shows the crosstabulation analysis of the question, "Do you know someone who has been a victim of a crime in the past year?" with the demographic variables "gender" and "ethnicity."

Table 3A.14

Crosstabulation: Know a Crime Victim by Gender and Ethnicity

Know Victim of a Crime in the Past Year?						
	Yes		No		X^2	df
	n	(%)	n	(%)		
Gender					9.22**	2
Male	47	(42%)	61	(55%)		

¹ This figure is obtained by assuming there are three people who have personal knowledge of a crime victim. This entails multiplying the overall actual 1999 crime rate in Savannah by three (3) and then dividing by the population, approximately 138,000. Finally, we must account for the fact that the overall Savannah crime rate includes the Weed and Seed area; thus we would need to deflate the 31.4% figure by those crimes that occur and were reported in these neighborhoods.

Female	60	(26%)	161	(70%)		
Ethnicity					13.70***	2
African-American	88	(29%)	207	(67%)		
Caucasian	16	(64%)	9	(36%)		

** Significant at .01

*** Significant at .001

Chi-square analysis indicates significant differences between male and female respondents, with males more likely to know a victim of a crime ($X^2=9.22$, $p<.01$), and, between ethnic groups, with a significant number of Caucasian respondents ($X^2=13.70$, $p<.001$), being more likely to know the victim of a crime during the preceding year.

Question B7 had two follow-up questions for those that responded they did know a crime victim. These asked, respectively, whether or not the police were involved in the incident and how responsive the police are to community concerns. The frequencies for these questions are reported below, in Table 3A.15.

Table 3A.15

Police Involvement and Police Response to Community Concerns

Q. Were the Police Involved?	Number	Percent
Yes	83	77.6%
No	18	16.8%

Don't know/Unsure	6	5.6%
Total	107	100.0%
Q. How Responsive are the Police to the Concerns of the Community?		
	Number	Percent
Very responsive	33	30.8%
Somewhat responsive	45	42.1%
Somewhat unresponsive	11	10.3%
Very unresponsive	11	10.3%
Don't know/Unsure	7	6.5%
Total	107	100.0%

Table 3A.15 indicates substantial police involvement for those crimes about which the respondents indicated some knowledge. That is, more than three-quarters of the known crimes were reported to the police (77.6 percent/83)--although it should be noted that this does not necessarily lead to the observation that 20-25 percent of crimes in the Weed and Seed area go unreported.

Moreover, a majority of the respondents (72.9 percent/78) feel the police are responsive to community concerns. Conversely, more than one fourth (27.1 percent/29) state the police are either "unresponsive" or are "unsure" what to think. It is likely that an individual's perception of police officer "responsiveness" is related to "solving" the reported crime or taking action against another person. Thus the data in this table should be interpreted carefully.

The Community Oriented Policing paradigm involves the police in more proactive strategies with respect to citizen contact. That is, rather than simply recording a property crime, officers should take the opportunity to work with victims to avoid such incidents in the future through advising citizens of such strategies as recording serial numbers of electronic equipment, the use of dead bolts on their exterior doors, and so on. Observations such as this should lead, hypothetically, to greater satisfaction with,

and a more positive perception of, the police in their handling of crimes with respect to victims.

Community Involvement. The following question (C9) was designed to tap into Weed and Seed residents' opinions about the most effective means of making a difference in their neighborhood. It asked for agreement or disagreement with the statement "the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in the neighborhood is for the neighborhood residents to help themselves." The response frequencies are listed in Table 3A.16, below:

Table 3A.16

Agree or disagree that the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in your neighborhood is for the neighborhood residents to help themselves

Response	Number	Percent
Agree	257	75.4%
Disagree	47	13.8%
Don't know/Unsure	37	10.9%
Total	341	100.0%

The responses to this question are some of the most heavily slanted in the entire survey, with more than three quarters of the respondents (75.4 percent) in agreement. A little more than one in ten disagree (13.8 percent) with this statement or don't know (10.9 percent).

Which of the survey respondents are more likely to agree or disagree with the statement "the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in the neighborhood is for the neighborhood residents to help themselves? Table 3A.17, below, shows the crosstabulation of Question C9 with the demographic variables "age," "gender," and "ethnic affiliation."

Table 3A.17

Crosstabulation: Residents “Help Themselves” by Age, Gender and Ethnicity

	Residents Must “Help Themselves”						X ²	df
	Agree n (%)		Disagree n (%)		Don’t Know n (%)			
Age							9.51**	2
< 55 years old	126 (74%)		32 (19%)		13 (8%)			
≥ 55 or older	131 (77%)		15 (9%)		24 (14%)			
Gender							6.67*	2
Male	85 (77%)		20 (18%)		6 (5%)			
Female	172 (75%)		27 (12%)		31 (13%)			
Ethnicity							8.19**	2
African-American	238 (78%)		39 (13%)		30 (10%)			
Caucasian	13 (52%)		7 (28%)		5 (20%)			

* Significant at .05** Significant at .01

We already know from Table 3A.16 that a large majority of the residents “agree” with the statement “the only way to deal with drugs and crime is for neighborhood residents to help themselves.” According to Table 3A.17 this conviction holds true across demographic groups, with one exception: ethnic affiliation. Notable in this bivariate analysis are the variations between respondents “under age 55” (19 percent), and those “55 and older” (9 percent); and, between “African-Americans” (13 percent) and “Caucasians” (28 percent), who “disagree” with the statement that residents must help themselves. Respondents “55 and older” (14 percent), “female” (13 percent), “Caucasian” (20 percent), were almost twice as likely as their counterparts to state they “don’t know” or were “unsure” about how they felt.

Section B: Effectiveness of Police Services

Introduction. Community Oriented Policing (COPS) is the bridge between weeding and seeding (while literature on COPS is diverse, the conceptual underpinnings are not).

Quite simply, community policing dictates that the community become involved in protecting itself. In other words, citizens have a responsibility to assist the police, especially in their own neighborhoods. By gaining the trust and support of the community, police officers engage neighborhood residents as problem-solving partners in the law enforcement effort. Key findings in this section include the following:

- More than one third of survey respondents (36 percent) stated that they thought police in their neighborhood practiced community policing. Conversely, approximately two-thirds of this sample thought that the police did not practice community policing (39 percent) or answered “unsure/don’t know” (26 percent).
- Survey respondents reported a high perception of police visibility in their neighborhoods, with two-thirds (67 percent) indicating that they see the police “a lot” around their neighborhoods. A large majority of this group (71.4 percent) report seeing a police officer at least five times per week.
- Existence of strong community support for police is evidenced by the fact that more than half of the respondents (55 percent) feel the police are doing a “good” to “very good” job of maintaining order on the streets and sidewalks of their neighborhoods. About one in ten (11 percent) rated the police as doing a “poor” to “very poor” job.
- As hypothesized, “police patrolling in cars” is the major activity observed by survey participants, with more than half (52 percent) reporting that they have seen police patrolling in cars through the neighborhood during the past month. The second most visible activity/situation mentioned by the respondents is “making an arrest” (17 percent), followed by “chatting/having a friendly talk with residents” (16 percent).

- A majority of respondents (60 percent) believe that the police are working with the community to reduce drug dealing and violent criminal activity.
- Bivariate analysis indicated that respondents' (belief that) police are working with the community to reduce crime is related significantly to perceptions of police visibility, neighborhood safety, and satisfaction with the quality of life in the neighborhood. Likewise, survey respondents fifty-five and older (85 percent) were significantly more likely to agree that police are working with the community to reduce violent crime and drug dealing in their neighborhood than were respondents under the age of fifty-five (68 percent), although both groups exhibited high agreement with this statement.
- Whether or not survey participants see the police as working with the community to reduce crime was found to be related significantly in an inverse direction to firsthand knowledge of a crime victim. Almost seven in ten (68 percent) respondents who know someone who had been a victim of crime in the past year saw the police as working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing, compared to more than eight in ten (82 percent) respondents with no firsthand knowledge of crime victims who answered the same.
- Almost four in ten respondents (36.4 percent) indicated that they have seen an increase in the number of police officers in their neighborhood during the past year.

Knowledge of Community Policing. The implementation of Weed and Seed enabled the Savannah Police Department to expand and strengthen their ongoing commitment

to community policing by integrating law enforcement with seeding type activities. The initial assignment of dedicated officers to the Weed and Seed target areas was important in building relationships with residents. In addition, Weed and Seed provided a vehicle for mobilizing residents to participate in crime prevention. The first question in this section was an effort to ascertain citizen familiarity with the concept of community policing.

The overall success of the department's efforts to engage the neighborhood residents in a community policing partnership rests on a basic understanding of the concept by those engaged in the process. Quite simply, the citizens who live in the community policing neighborhoods must be familiar with, and understand the community policing model. The concept of community policing was operationalized for the respondent by the interviewer, who read the following descriptive definition to the respondent:

Now I want to ask you if police are doing community policing in your neighborhood. "Community policing involves police officers working hand-in-hand with the community through a wide range of activities to address causes of crime in an effort to reduce the problems themselves and the associated fear."

Based on this description of community policing, the respondents were asked if they thought the police in their neighborhood practice community policing. Table 3B.1, below, details the response frequencies of their answers.

Table 3B.1

Do you think the police in your neighborhood practice community policing?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	121	35.5%
No	133	39.0%
Don't know/Unsure	87	25.5%

Total	341	100.0%
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Table 3B.1 is notable for the dispersion. That is, when given the definition of “community policing,” a little more than one third of the survey respondents (35.5 percent/121) said they thought police in their neighborhood practiced community policing. However, approximately two-thirds of this sample thought the police either did not practice community policing (39 percent/133), or stated they were “unsure/don’t know” (25.5 percent/87).

Police Visibility. A constant of Community Oriented Policing is that police officers are to be more visible in the community. The following question (B1) was designed to tap residents' perceptions of police visibility. Table 3B.2, below, details the response frequencies to this question.

Table 3B.2

Do you see the police a lot around here?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	227	66.6%
No	103	30.2%
Don’t know/Unsure	11	3.2%
Total	341	100.0%

Perception of Police Presence (overall). A primary objective at the beginning of the Weed and Seed project was to supplement existing police support for the target area. Although funding initiatives have changed dramatically during the last two years of the program, the residents’ perception of increased police officer support may not have changed. As a way of measuring whether respondents’ perceptions of additional support have changed, or have remained about the same as they were in 1997, a follow-up question (B1a) asked those who answered "yes" to question B1, "How many times a week do you see the police in your neighborhood?" Table 3B.3, below, shows the

response frequencies to this question. A detailed analysis of these findings is discussed in the next chapter.

Table 3B.3

How many times a week do you see the police?

Police Observed in Neighborhood	Number	Percent
Less than once per week	3	1.3%
1 - 4 times per week	52	22.9%
5 - 10 times per week	104	45.8%
More than 10 times per week	58	25.6%
Don't know/Unsure	10	4.4%
Total	227	100.0%

According to this table, two-thirds (66.6 percent/227) of the survey respondents indicated they did in fact see the police around their neighborhoods. Moreover, many of the respondents indicated that the police maintain a high level of visibility in their neighborhoods. A large majority of this group (71.4 percent/162) reported seeing a police officer a minimum of five times per week.

Perception of Police Presence (change in the past year). The next question (B6) is an independent measure of police presence in the Weed and Seed area and offers at least some insight into the level of police officer visibility, vis-à-vis in previous years, in an era of decreasing officer deployment due in part to a reduction in funding allocations for the Weed and Seed project. Table 3B.4, below, reports the response frequencies to

Table 3B.4

In the past year, have you seen any increases or decreases in police officer presence in your neighborhood?

Perception of Police Presence	Number	Percent

Increase	124	36.4%
Decrease	43	12.6%
No Change	147	43.0%
Never see the police	6	1.8%
Don't know/Unsure	21	6.2%
Total	341	100.0%

the question, "In the past year, have you seen any increases or decreased in police officer presence in your neighborhood?"

Quite surprisingly, almost four in ten respondents indicated they have seen an increase in the number of police officers in their neighborhood during the past year (36.4 percent/124). A little more than one in ten (12.6 percent/43) reported a decrease in officer presence, with the largest number of reporting "no change" (43 percent/147) during the past twelve months.

Perception of Police Activities. A visible police force is, all other things being equal, highly desirable. To gain more insight on how the police in Weed and Seed are visible, the following question (B4) asked respondents what they see the police doing when they are visible. Table 3B.5, below, reports the frequencies in order of response: (note: although not prompted, respondents were allowed to give multiple answers to this question).

As was the case in the 1997 survey, the evaluators hypothesized that the major police activity/situation listed by the respondents in 1999 would be "police patrolling in cars." The frequencies listed in Table 3B.5 confirm this hypothesis. Patrolling in cars is what we have come to expect police to do. However, the real speculation was on what situations would occur other than patrolling.

Table 3B.5

Here are a few specific situations in which you might have seen the police.

During the past month, in your neighborhood, have you seen...

Situation/Activity	Number	Percent
Patrolling in their car	306	52.0%
On foot, outside of their car	63	10.7%
Chatting/a friendly talk with residents	94	16.0%
Making an arrest	99	16.8%
None of the above/Don't know/Unsure	27	4.6%
Total	589	100.0%

The second most visible activity/situation mentioned by the survey respondents is "making an arrest" (16.8 percent/99). The key question from this is whether such activity is viewed positively or negatively by the residents. The next most frequent activity, "chatting/having a friendly talk with residents" (16 percent/94) is certainly favorable.

Another key component of Community Oriented Policing (COPS) is a philosophy of prevention. That is, COPS should be oriented to address the causes of crime rather than its immediate manifestations. This philosophy is enacted in the Savannah Police Department through "Problem Oriented Policing" (POP). Unlike the traditional model of law enforcement--where a primary function of the police role is to respond to calls for service (reactive), POP represents a proactive approach to policing. This approach involves research and planning, and a shift from individual calls for service to a concern with underlying problems.

Moreover, POP represents an interactive philosophy of crime prevention between the police and the community. Not unlike POP, one of the goals of Weed and Seed is to involve residents in helping to address problems in their community. The following set of questions are indicators of the respondents' perceptions of whether or not Savannah

Police Department actively engages in the POP philosophy of prevention and community interaction to address criminal activity and drug dealing/use.

Perception of Police Effectiveness in Reducing Crime/Drugs in the Neighborhood.

Questions B2 and B3 were designed as more focused value questions on survey respondents' perceptions of police efforts in the neighborhood, asking them to rate on a scale from "very good" to "very poor" the police departments efforts in controlling crime/drug activity on the streets and sidewalks of their neighborhoods. Table 3B.6 , below, combines the response frequencies to these two questions.

The police appear to have strong community support among residents in the Weed and Seed target area. As indicated in this table, more than half of the respondents (55.4 percent/189) feel the police are doing a "good" to "very good" job of maintaining order and controlling crime on the streets and sidewalks of their neighborhoods. About one in ten (11.4 percent/39) rate the police as doing a "poor" to "very poor" job on this issue.

Conversely, less than half of the respondents surveyed (42.8 percent/146) felt the police are doing a "good" to "very good" job in controlling the sale and use of illicit drugs in their neighborhood. On the other hand, less than two in ten (17 percent/58) rate police performance on this issue as "poor" to "very poor." More than one-fourth of respondents (26 percent/89) see the police as doing a "fair job," while 14 percent are undecided or don't know.

Table 3B.6

Police Effectiveness in Controlling Neighborhood Crime and Drug Activity

Control Crime on Streets/Sidewalks	Number	Percent
A very good job	54	15.8%
A good job	135	39.6%
A fair job	98	28.7%

A poor job	30	8.8%
A very poor job	9	2.6%
Don't know/Unsure	15	4.4%
Total	341	100.0%

Controlling the Street Use/Sale of Drugs	Number	Percent
A very good job	49	14.4 %
A good job	97	28.4%
A fair job	89	26.1%
A poor job	44	12.9%
A very poor job	14	4.1%
Don't know/Unsure	48	14.1%
Total	341	100.0%

Police Involvement With the Community. The next question (B5) asked if the respondent thought the police were working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing. The guiding idea was that an affirmative answer would point to some sense of resident involvement as well as police commitment in addressing these persistent problems. Table 3B.7, below, reports the frequency of responses to this question.

Table 3B.7

Do you think the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing in your neighborhood?

Response	Number	Percent
Yes	205	60.1%
No	62	18.2%
Don't know/Unsure	74	21.7%

Total	341	100.0%
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As indicated above, a majority of the respondents surveyed (60.1 percent/205) believed the police were working with the community to reduce drug dealing and criminal activity. Of note, more than one-in-five respondents stated they were "unsure" or "didn't know" whether this was the case (21.7 percent/74), a figure slightly higher than the "no" category (18.2 percent/62).

One important aspect of both Weed and Seed and Community Oriented Policing is that police become "connected" with the community and integrated into neighborhood functions. The "connection" theme requires that police officers interact with residents on a personal level and familiarize themselves with sentiments and concerns of the neighborhood. In essence, the police must work hand-in-hand with residents to address a variety of social problems, not just react to reported crimes. Residents' perceptions of police visibility, neighborhood safety, and satisfaction over the quality of life in the neighborhood are indicators which lend support to this changing philosophy in police/citizen interaction.

Questions regarding these issues were asked on the survey. Table 3B.8, below, cross tabulates the questions, "Do you see the police around here a lot?"; "Do you think

Table 3B.8

Crosstabulation: Police Visibility, Neighborhood Safety, Quality of Life, by Police Working with the Community

	Police Working with the Community to Reduce Crime		X^2	df
	Yes n (%)	No n (%)		
Are police highly visible?			4.80*	1

Yes	150	(81%)	36	(19%)
No	51	(67%)	25	(33%)
Is neighborhood safe?				
			7.54**	1
Yes	126	(81%)	29	(19%)
No	45	(63%)	26	(37%)
Quality of life?				
			14.41***	1
Very satisfied/satisfied	176	(81%)	41	(19%)
Dissatisfied	24	(53%)	21	(47%)

* Significant at .05

** Significant at .01

*** Significant at .001

this is a safe neighborhood?"; and, "How do feel about the quality of life in your neighborhood?" with the question, " Do you think the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing in your neighborhood?"

Chi-square analysis on these issues indicates that an overwhelming majority of respondents who stated the police maintain a high visibility in the neighborhood, feel the neighborhood is safe, and are satisfied with the overall quality of life in their neighborhoods. In addition they feel the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug activity. These findings lend support to the residents' perceptions of police/citizen "connectedness."

Moreover, the age of the resident has a significant effect on the perception of police/citizen interaction in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods ($X^2=11.84$, $p<.001$). Survey respondents fifty-five and older (68 percent/116) were more likely to agree that the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing in their neighborhoods than their counterparts (under the age of fifty-five); although, more than half of the <55 group (52 percent/89) expressed the same sentiment.

Section C: Programs and Services in the Neighborhood

Introduction. Neighborhood programs and services provide residents with information and skills to mobilize themselves and leverage resources in order to take control and revitalize their community. Key findings from this section include the following:

- While more than half (53 percent) of the respondents indicated that they had heard about Savannah’s Weed and Seed program, less than two in ten (18 percent) of those persons knew it was a combined law enforcement/social services program.
- Homeowners were significantly more likely to have heard of Savannah’s Weed and Seed program than were renters. Likewise, African-Americans, when compared to Caucasians, were significantly more likely to have heard of the program.
- Nearly three quarters (73 percent) of respondents were aware of the St. Pius Family Resource Center. Of those, almost half (46 percent) indicated that either they or a household member had participated in a program at the center.
- Survey respondents did not indicate the same level of awareness and participation for the other three “Seed” programs and services. About one-in-five (22 percent) were aware of the Community Lab, while about one-in-six (16 percent) were aware of the Community Leadership Institute, and a little more than one in ten (11 percent) were aware of the Guild of Young Artists (GOYA) program.
- During the past year, more than sixty percent of survey respondents participated in police/community partnership programs and services like citizen patrol, neighborhood watch, and community clean-up programs.

- More than half of those residents surveyed are “somewhat” to “very” satisfied with the availability of “sports and recreation programs for youth” (53 percent), and almost eighty percent are “somewhat” to “very” satisfied with the overall quality of life in their neighborhoods. On the other hand, more than four in ten (42 percent) are “somewhat” to “very” dissatisfied with availability of job opportunities. Further, half of the respondents were either unaware or unsure as to the availability of community drug treatment/prevention programs.

Weed and Seed Program. The first question in Section C asked respondents if they had heard of Savannah's Weed and Seed program. A follow-up question asked those who indicated they had heard of Weed and Seed what they knew about the program. The CATI system was programmed to allow survey interviewers to immediately categorize responses to indicate whether Weed and Seed is a "police" or "social services" program, or a combination "police and social services" program (the accurate answer which could indicate complete understanding) or were otherwise unsure or non-responsive to the question.

The follow-up question was predicated on the hypothesis that some who indicated they had heard of Weed and Seed were doing so in order not to appear ill-informed to the survey interviewer. The frequencies for these two questions are reported in Table 3C.1, below.

The possibility that respondents who answer questions of this type may not want to appear uninformed to the survey interviewer; thus, they will affirm their knowledge rather than admit ignorance. Less than one in five (18.2 percent) respondents who indicated that they had heard of Weed and Seed were, without prompting, able to identify Weed and Seed as a combined law enforcement and social program. On the

other hand, more than six in ten (60.8 percent) were unsure what Weed and Seed was beyond stating that they had heard of it.

Table 3C.1

Have you heard about Savannah's Weed and Seed Program? Can you tell me what the Weed and Seed Program is about?

Awareness of Savannah's Weed and Seed Program	Number	Percent
Yes	181	53.1%
No	147	43.1%
Don't know/Unsure	13	3.8%
Total	341	100.0%

Knowledge About Savannah's Weed and Seed Program	Number	Percent
Police Program	20	11.1%
Social Services Program	18	9.9%
Police and Social Services Program	33	18.2%
Don't know/Unsure	110	60.8%
Total	181	100.0%

A method used to verify if residents are reporting actual knowledge of Weed and Seed is to see if there is an observable difference among homeowners and renters. This test can be made on the hypothesis that some knowledge of Weed and Seed would have a greater intrinsic value to a homeowner respondent--an individual who would maintain a greater stake in the overall welfare of his/her neighborhood. Table 3C.2, below, shows the crosstabulation analysis of Question A1, "Awareness of the Weed and Seed program" with the demographic variables "home ownership/rental" and "ethnicity."

Chi-square analysis indicates a significant difference between respondents who own their own homes and renters, with homeowners being more aware of the Weed and

Seed program ($X^2=12.46$, $p<.01$); and between ethnic groups, with African-American respondents ($X^2=12.64$, $p<.01$), being more likely to report awareness of the Weed and Seed program than Caucasian respondents. However, no significant "between

Table 3C.2

Crosstabulation: Respondent Awareness of Weed and Seed by Owner/Renter and Ethnicity

Respondent Awareness of Weed & Seed					
	Yes		No		
	n	(%)	n	(%)	X^2 Df
Owner/Renter					12.46** 2
Own Residence	117	(60%)	69	(35%)	
Rent Residence	59	(45%)	71	(54%)	
Ethnicity					12.63** 2
African-American	172	(56%)	122	(40%)	
Caucasian	6	(24%)	19	(76%)	

** Significant at .01

group" differences were noted for "actual knowledge" of Weed and Seed (question A1a), where a majority from each group either "did not know" or were "unsure" about the program.

Neighborhood Programs/Services. An agreed upon evaluative measure of the overall efficacy of a program like Weed and Seed is in the development, implementation, and participation in "Seed" side programs and services. Although, the next two questions were not a component of the 1997 survey, both were included in this survey as a baseline measure to gauge the extent these service components have extended themselves into the Weed and Seed area.

Question A2 asked respondents whether they had heard of four specific programs in their neighborhood. The follow-up question asked those who had heard of the

programs, whether they or other members of the household had participated in any of the programs. Table 3C.3, below, lists the frequencies for these two questions.

Table 3C.3

Are you aware that the following programs and/or services are available in this neighborhood? Have you or someone who lives in your household visited or participated in any of these programs?

Program Awareness	Yes		No		Unsure	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
St. Pius Family Resource Center	249	(73.0)	89	(26.1)	3	(0.9)
Community Leadership Institute	54	(15.8)	273	(80.1)	14	(4.1)
Community Computer Lab	75	(22.0)	259	(76.0)	7	(2.1)
Guild of Young Artists (GOYA)	37	(10.9)	296	(86.8)	8	(2.3)
Program Participation	Yes		No		Unsure	
	n	(%)	n	(%)	n	(%)
St. Pius Family Resource Center	114	(45.8)	132	(53.0)	3	(1.2)
Community Leadership Institute	24	(44.4)	28	(51.9)	2	(3.7)
Community Computer Lab	24	(32.0)	49	(65.3)	2	(2.7)
Guild of Young Artists (GOYA)	5	(13.5)	29	(78.4)	3	(8.1)

Nearly three-quarters (73 percent) of the respondents stated they were aware of the St. Pius Family Resource Center. Of those, almost half (45.8 percent) indicated participation, either by themselves or a member of the household, in a program at the center.

Unfortunately, survey respondents did not indicate the same level of awareness and participation for the other three programs. About one in five (22 percent) of the respondents were aware of the Community Lab--a third (32 percent) of which participated in this program. Less than two in ten (15.8 percent) were aware of

Community Leadership Institute; however, almost half (44 percent) of this group participated in or used the services of this program.

Finally, a little more than one in ten (10.9 percent) of the respondents were aware of the Guild of Young Artists program (GOYA), with about the same number of this group (13.5 percent) have utilized the services of this program. However, it should be noted that GOYA is a relatively new program--at the time of this survey GOYA had been open for less than one year.

The St. Pius Family Resource Center is a key component in the effective delivery of many portions of the Weed and Seed Program. The family resource center houses the individuals who manage the Weed and Seed Case Management Program. It provides a range of programs which are important for prevention and building resiliency, especially among youth. According to Felts et al. (1996), "...awareness of the [St. Pius] Family Resource Center and the services it provides may be more essential for the success of Weed and Seed than awareness of the Weed and Seed program itself" (p. 33).

Which of the survey respondents are more likely to be aware of the services offered by the Family Resource Center? Table 3C.4, below, shows the crosstabulation analysis of Question A2, "Awareness of the St. Pius Family Resource Center" with the demographic variables "home ownership/rental" and "ethnicity."

Chi-square analysis indicates that residents with an awareness of the Weed and Seed program are more likely to be aware of the program and services offered by St. Pius ($X^2=29.74$, $p<.0001$); as are homeowners when compared to renters ($X^2=6.25$, $p<.05$); and African-Americans, when compared to Caucasians ($X^2=36.79$, $p<.0001$).

Table 3C.4

Crosstabulation: Awareness of the Weed and Seed Program, Homeownership and Ethnicity by Respondent Awareness of the St. Pius Family Resource Center

Respondent Awareness of Family Resource Center					
	Yes		No		X^2
	n	(%)	n	(%)	
Aware of Weed & Seed					29.74***
Yes	153	(65%)	83	(35%)	1
No	27	(18%)	127	(82%)	
Owner/Renter					6.25*
Own Residence	153	(78%)	42	(21%)	2
Rent Residence	87	(66%)	43	(33%)	
Ethnicity					36.79**
African-American	239	(78%)	65	(21%)	2
Caucasian	6	(24%)	19	(76%)	

* Significant at .05

*** Significant at .001

Crime Prevention Programs. Community building programs enable residents to take charge of their own safety and the safety of their communities. Examples include prevention programs such as neighborhood watch and citizen patrol and community involvement events like neighborhood cleanup and antidrug rallies. Often these type of programs/events also provide a mechanism for community residents to work with and get to know the officers assigned to their neighborhoods.

The following question asked respondents if, in the past year, they had attended or participated in one or more association meetings or events in their neighborhood. Table 3C.5, below, shows the frequencies reported for participation in one or more of the five events listed.

Table 3C.5

During the past year, have you attended or participated in any of the following events in your neighborhood?

Event	Number	Percent
-------	--------	---------

	n/N	%
Antidrug rally, vigil, or march	46/341	13.5%
Citizen patrol	35/341	10.3%
Neighborhood watch program	102/341	29.9%
Neighborhood cleanup program	107/341	31.4%
Did not attend or participate	132/341	38.7%

As indicated by the above table, almost one-third of the respondents did participate in a neighborhood watch program (29.9 percent) and/or a neighborhood cleanup program (31.4 percent) during the previous year. The fact that about four in ten (38.7 percent) of the respondents did not attend or participate in any of the neighborhood events is notable.

A follow-up question for those who did not attend or participate asked them to list the reason(s) why they did not attend. These are reported, by order of importance, in Table 3C.6, below.

Table 3C.6

What are your reasons for not attending any of these events?

Reason(s) for Non-Participation	Number n/N	Percent %
Aware of event(s), did not know location/date/time	50/132	37.9%
Do not have the time to attend	35/132	26.5%
Unable to obtain transportation	23/132	17.4%
Time of event(s) occurred during work hours	23/132	17.4%
Don't know/unsure	17/132	12.9%
Unable to obtain child care	8/132	6.1%
Not especially concerned about crime in neighborhood	8/341	6.1%
Event(s) held in unsafe/scary part of community	7/132	5.3%
Event(s) were too far from my residence	6/132	4.6%
My attendance would not help the crime problem	3/132	2.3%

One key strategy for dealing with areas characterized by the demographics of the Weed and Seed area (high crime, drug dealing, neighborhood blight, etc.) is the ongoing development of police/community partnership programs and services like citizen patrol, neighborhood watch, and community cleanup programs. Success for these types of programs depends upon the level of community interest and participation. According to the above table, almost four in ten (37.9 percent) of the respondents who did not participate were unaware of the programs offered in their community.

Overall Satisfaction With Available Programs/Quality of Life. A meaningful indication of the changed living conditions in the Weed and Seed target area is the pattern of responses to the following survey question. Specifically, respondents were asked to rate the availability of services with respect to sports and recreation programs for youth, drug treatment/intervention, and job opportunities. In addition, respondents were asked to rate the quality of life in their neighborhood. Table 3C.7 shows the percentage distribution of their responses.

Table 3C.7

How satisfied you are with some things in your neighborhood. Are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied with the:

Program/Service	Very Satisfied n (%)	Somewhat Satisfied n (%)	Somewhat Dissatisfied n (%)	Very Dissatisfied n (%)	Don't know /Unsure n (%)
...availability of sports, recreation, and other programs for youth	46 (13.5)	136 (39.9)	57 (16.7)	41 (12.0)	61 (17.9)
...availability of drug treatment services	18 (5.3)	71 (20.8)	38 (11.1)	44 (12.9)	170 (49.9)
...availability of job opportunities	21 (6.2)	89 (26.1)	76 (22.3)	68 (19.9)	87 (25.5)
...overall quality of life in your neighborhood	74 (21.7)	198 (58.1)	33 (9.7)	28 (8.2)	8 (2.3)

Among those residents surveyed, and by extrapolation, the entire Weed and Seed area, Table 3C.7 indicates a moderate to high level of satisfaction with the availability of “sports and recreation programs for youth” (53.4 percent are “somewhat” to “very” satisfied), and, “the overall quality of life in the neighborhood” (79.8 percent are “somewhat” to “very satisfied”); respondents note a level of dissatisfaction with the availability of “job opportunities” (42.2 percent state they are “somewhat” to “very” dissatisfied). The response frequencies associated with “the availability of drug treatment services” is somewhat problematic with half of the respondents (49.9 percent) either unaware or unsure as to the availability of drug treatment/prevention programs in their community.

It should be noted that frequency data for many of the questions in this survey have little contextual value and are difficult to interpret without meaningful comparative analysis. Data analyses in this chapter are limited in their interpretation and value. A comprehensive evaluation and comparative analysis of these data are included in the following chapter.

Chapter 4

Community Satisfaction Survey Comparison

Introduction

Outside resources are necessary to address the overall goals of Weed and Seed, but all program elements also require active community input for success. Resident perceptions are key to evaluating the efficacy of personal safety and neighborhood satisfaction in a program like Weed and Seed. Therefore, the overall success of agencies involved in delivering key strategies and objectives not only depends on active community involvement, but also the continued “buy-in” of the overall logic of Weed and Seed.

For example, while law enforcement and criminal justice agencies continue their focus on reducing serious crime and drug activities in the Weed and Seed area, residents must sustain their intolerance for such activities and work with law enforcement officials to eliminate drug trafficking and reduce the number of violent crimes. Community policing is predicated on officer-resident interaction. Successful intervention and treatment requires awareness of programs as well as a belief that such programs will make a difference. Moreover, the long-term success of these programs and services requires the steadfast commitment and active participation of area residents, otherwise the positive gains a project like Weed and Seed made in these neighborhoods will quickly deteriorate.

A community satisfaction survey of Savannah’s Weed and Seed target area residents was conducted at two separate time intervals--from August to September 1997 (by the University of Charleston’s Institute for Public Affairs and Policy Studies) and from November to December 1999 (by Armstrong Atlantic State University’s Public Service

Center). The comparison of these surveys is a step toward evaluating continuing community commitment and “buy-in” of Savannah’s Weed and Seed program. The following discussion refers to these data collection efforts as the 1997 and 1999 surveys, respectively.

The objective of the 1999 survey data collection and analysis was to measure changes in residents’ perceptions on issues like personal safety, quality of life, performance and effectiveness of police services, as well as a knowledge about, and the availability of, neighborhood programs and services. The survey instrument and the frequency data for the survey, in table format, are included in Appendix B and C, respectively.

What follows here is an extensive comparative analysis between the 1999 and 1997 data, utilizing a simplified “user friendly” format. For example, we have reduced the number of key sections from seven to three: 1) Personal Safety and Neighborhood Satisfaction; 2) Effectiveness of Police Services; and, 3) Neighborhood Programs and Services. Relevant observations and significant analysis for each section are highlighted at the beginning of that segment.

In the interest of comparing the findings obtained from the two surveys, the 1999 survey was designed with the following features:

- The geographical boundaries of the survey area were the same as in 1997. That is, the northeastern section of area “C” in the city of Savannah--a section of the city with the highest crime and poverty rates. The Weed and Seed target area is comprised of five neighborhoods and one public housing development covering a geographical area of .75 square miles.
- With minor exceptions, the wording of questions from the 1997 survey

was retained verbatim in 1999. For the purpose of clarity, a few additional questions were added in 1999 that were not part of the 1997 survey, and are so noted in the body of this report.

- As previously discussed, there were also some notable differences in the methods used in the two surveys. The 1997 survey consisted of in-person interviews, based on city-provided address lists. The 1999 interviews were conducted by telephone, based on a city-provided list of telephone numbers for residential addresses within the survey area.

The decision to proceed in 1999 with telephone interviews was based on the difficulties experienced in 1997. The 1999 survey design called for 330 completed interviews; thus, the final count of 341 completed surveys exceeded our goal.

Survey Validation

The issue of the generalizability of the 1999 survey from a statistical standpoint was discussed in a previous chapter of this report. As a mechanism for comparative validation, the demographic attributes of the 1999 survey population should favorably compare with those indicated in 1997 data. In general, the closer the match of the 1999 sample population with the 1997 sample population, the more confidence one can have in the survey data.

The hypothesis being tested here is that for the 1999 data set to be judged as a valid comparative tool with the 1997 data set, there should be no significant differences on the basis of broad demographic characteristics--ethnicity, gender, and home ownership--between the survey's respondents. Table 4.1, below, shows the combined data from the two surveys.

As indicated in Table 4.1, below, there is a similarity between respondents from both surveys. Within the margin of error, comparative analysis indicates an equal number of male/female respondents, with a slight under-representation of African-Americans and renters noted in the 1999 data set.

Table 4.1
1999/1997 Survey Comparison on Ethnicity, Gender and Home Ownership

Variable	1999 Survey Data		1997 Survey Data	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Ethnicity				
African-American	274	84.3%	306	91.6%
Caucasian	51	15.7%	19	5.7%
Other	0	00.0%	9	2.7%
Totals	325	100.0%	334	100.0%
Gender				
Male	111	32.6%	107	35.2%
Female	230	67.4%	197	64.8%
Totals	341	100.0%	304	100.0%
Home Ownership				
Own residence	196	59.8%	175	53.7%
Rent residence	132	40.2%	151	46.3%
Totals	328	100.0%	326	100.0%

What if any are the implications of the apparent under-representation of African-American respondents in the 1999 survey? According to the 1990 US Census data, approximately 97 percent of the population in the Weed and Seed target area were African-American. In 1997, 92 percent of those sampled were African-American. By 1999, the number of African-American respondents had dropped to about 84 percent of

the survey sample. This slight, but consistent decline in the number of African-American residents over a ten year period may indicate some increasing degree of gentrification in certain parts of the Weed and Seed area.

A survey bias in favor of homeowners versus renters is also evident in the above table. Does this make a difference for the data reported? The most plausible explanation is that the 1997 survey, conducted by a random sample of Weed and Seed blocks, selected a few blocks which were heavily populated with rental units, which tend to cluster in the Weed and Seed area. Moreover, the over-representation of homeowners may be better for the survey's intention of giving an accurate picture of how residents view things. Homeowners are more likely to be aware of neighborhood activity because they have a vested interest in what is going on. Thus when asked about perceptions of their neighborhood, they may well be reporting more accurately. In any case, the divergence is within the survey margin of error.

Other comparisons also indicate survey data mirrors the larger Weed and Seed population. Census data indicate an average household size of 2.9 persons in the Weed and Seed target area. The survey data from 1997 showed an average size of 3.0 persons, while the 1999 data showed an average of 2.8 persons per household. Additional favorable comparisons are found on household income categories as well.

Based on this analysis, the evaluation team believes that the survey data are comparative. Overall, the divergence between the 1999 and 1997 surveys should not be a cause for general lack of confidence in the survey results. Additionally, by most available measurements, both data sets appear to sufficiently mirror the Weed and Seed target area.

Comparative Analysis

A. Personal Safety and Neighborhood Satisfaction

Introduction. The first set of questions pertain to resident perceptions of personal safety and general satisfaction with the neighborhood. Key findings in this section include the following:

- Respondents' perceptions of neighborhood safety have not changed over the two year period, and remain significantly higher than "pre" Weed and Seed figures.
- At the time of the 1999 interview, half of the respondents indicated their neighborhood was safer now than in previous years. However, more than half stated they were "somewhat" to "very fearful" of crime in their neighborhood--a perception that increased for a third of the respondents over previous years.
- Residents' perception of neighborhood drug sales and criminal activity continue to be problematic even though a slightly larger percentage of respondents believe these activities have decreased in the past year.
- A greater percentage of survey respondents in 1999 knew someone who had been victimized by crime during the previous twelve months than did the 1997 respondents. Moreover, a high percentage of crime victims in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods report their victimization to the police. Whether this indicates an increase in crime is debatable. It is just as reasonable to assume that these results show an increased awareness of crime & a greater willingness to acknowledge it.

- As in 1997, three out of every four respondents believe that the only way to handle crime and drug problems in their neighborhood is for the residents to help themselves.

Neighborhood Safety (overall). For Weed and Seed to achieve its objective of creating a safe environment within which families can grow and prosper, neighborhood safety is imperative. Indeed, a key portion of the Weed and Seed strategy in weeding out crime is to give residents confidence in their neighborhoods, and create an environment which business will find hospitable.

In both surveys, respondents were asked if they thought their neighborhood was safe. The operant hypothesis is that, if the “Weed” side of the project successfully reduced drug dealing and violent criminal activity in the area, neighborhood safety should first increase, and, over time, remain at a level higher than it was before the

Table 4A.1

Do you think this is a safe neighborhood?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	192	56.3%	174	55.8%
No	95	27.9%	101	32.4%
Don't know/Unsure	54	15.8%	37	11.9%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

start of the Weed and Seed program. Comparative frequencies for this question indicate if the program continues to make a difference in the perception of resident safety. The data from the comparative groups are listed in Table 4A.1, above.

Table 4A.1 is remarkable on two counts. First, and most obvious, is the slight increase in the percentage of households who answered “yes” to this question. Although, this increase is within the margin of error, the evaluation team feels comfortable in making the observation that there has not been a significant change in perceived neighborhood safety between 1997 and 1999.

Table 4A.1 is also notable for what is not shown. That is, both the 1997 and 1999 frequency data on residents’ positive perception of neighborhood safety are significantly higher than the “pre” Weed and Seed response frequency of 51.3 percent (see Felts, et al., 1996). From a Weed and Seed perspective, this is a positive indicator of the long-term effects of the project. Moreover, it may well lead to more appropriate behaviors with respect to neighborhood safety such as a willingness to report suspicious activities to the police.

Neighborhood Safety (compared to last year). One measure of whether or not conditions are improving in the neighborhood was to ask respondents if they felt their neighborhood was safer now than it was a year ago. The comparative frequencies are reported, above, in Table 4A.2.

Table 4A.2

Do you think the neighborhood is safer now than it was a year ago?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	169	49.6%	142	45.5%
No	117	34.3%	90	28.8%
Don’t know/Unsure	55	16.1%	80	25.7%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

Table 4A.2 indicates a marginal gain in the percentage of respondents who said “yes” in 1999--overall, about half of the 1999 respondents (49.6 percent) thought the neighborhood was safer, compared to 45.5 percent in 1997.

As was the case in 1997, there is a significant correlation between the number of times the respondent reported seeing the police and whether or not they believed their neighborhood safer ($X^2=6.68$, $p<.01$). That is, the more frequently they saw the police, the more likely they were to say their neighborhood was safer.

Fear of Neighborhood Crime. One area that was not explored in the 1997 survey has to do with the gap between resident fear of crime and the real risk of victimization. As previously indicated, more than half of the respondents in this survey are over the age of fifty-five. Survey data repeatedly suggest that the elderly are much less likely to be the victims of crime than younger persons.

Moreover, the connection between criminal activity and fear is not isolated only to the elderly. A number of surveys pertaining to the sources of public fear indicate that on average, three-fourths of all adults express a high rate of fear in their neighborhoods and their communities. In response to fear, people avoid one another which weakens controls. Sometimes they call the police. If the residents perceive the police to be ineffective and uncaring, they may soon stop calling which only serves to widen the gap between the two forces; a result, needless to say, that is counterproductive to the genesis of Community Oriented Policing.

As part of a twelve city crime victimization survey, conducted by the U. S. Department of Justice in 1998, researchers from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS) asked residents how fearful they were of crime in their neighborhood. According to their report, one-third (33 percent) of the Savannah respondents reported they were “somewhat” to “very fearful” of crime in their neighborhoods (U. S. Department of Justice, 1998, p. 12).

In order to find out how residents in the Weed and Seed target area compare with the rest of city on this issue, respondents to this survey were asked, "How fearful are you about crime in your neighborhood?" Not completely unexpected, about half (51 percent), of the residents in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods indicate they are "somewhat" to "very fearful," a figure 18 percent higher than indicated on the BJS city wide survey for Savannah.

Does fear of crime correlate with the perception of neighborhood safety? The answer to this question is an unequivocal yes. Among the 182 respondents who stated that the neighborhood was safe, 132 (69 percent) indicate they are "somewhat" to "very fearful of crime." This figure jumps to 86 percent (82 of 92) among those who did not think the neighborhood was safe ($X^2=8.90$, $p<.01$).

Illicit Drug Activity. Another key goal of Weed and Seed is to reduce/eliminate drug dealing on the streets and in other public places within the target area. The 1999 respondents were asked if drug dealing is a problem in their neighborhood, followed by a question which asked if, compared to last year, the sale of drugs on the street corners and other public places in their neighborhood had increased, decreased, or remained about the same. The respondents in 1997 were asked, "Is there a lot of drug use or dealing in your neighborhood?"

Table 4A.3, below, displays the 1997 and 1999 frequencies on the respondent's perception of drug activity in their neighborhood. As noted below, survey response patterns for this particular question were not identical.

The 1999 data indicate a significant increase in the residents' perception about drug dealing in the neighborhood, an unfortunate trend that was also problematic in previous years. For example, in 1997, more than one-third (34.9 percent) of the survey

Table 4A.3***Illicit Drug Activity in the Neighborhood***

Q. How problematic are drug sales and/or the use of drugs in your neighborhood?	1999 Survey	
	Number	Percent
Big Problem	147	43.1%
Small Problem	79	23.2%
No Problem	69	20.2%
Don't know/Unsure	46	13.5%
Total	341	100.0%

Q. Is there a lot of drug use or dealing in your neighborhood?	1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent
Yes	109	34.9%
No	122	39.1%
Don't know/Unsure	81	26.0%
Total	312	100.0%

respondents answered “yes” when asked if drug dealing was a large problem in their neighborhood. According to the evaluation team’s final report, “the 1997 survey showed dramatically higher percentages responding “yes” to this question than either of the two previous years” (p. 219).

In addition, the data in Table 4A.3 clearly present some problems for interpretation. First, differences between the two surveys in the way this question was asked and answered are cause for concern. In 1999, respondent answers to the question “How problematic are drug sales/use in your neighborhood?” were drawn from a “Likert” type, 5-step ordinal scale (“big problem” to “no problem”). Conversely, in 1997, respondents answers to this question were selected from a simple “yes/no” option.

Second, a comparison of respondent answers from the two surveys are, at best, ambiguous on these two questions with respect to the “size” of the problem and

whether or not there has been an increase in perceived drug activity. Also, the way the questions are asked is problematic--as is perhaps indicated in the relatively high numbers of those "unsure" (13.5 and 26 percent, respectively) in answering. It is possible, for example, that residents are aware of drug dealing, but do not know if it is a "big problem" or a "small problem" or if the problem has really "increased," or "decreased." These questions call for subjective assessments which may vary from respondent to respondent. The other possibility is that residents truly do not know of any drug dealing and are saying so in their response. Thus, "unsure" responses could indicate awareness or lack thereof concerning drug dealing.

Drug Activity in the Past Year. As a means of developing a comparative assessment of drug activity in the Weed and Seed target area, survey respondents were asked if they thought incidents of drug sales/use had "increased," "decreased," or "remained about the same" during the past year. The hypothesis being tested, and a key goal of Weed and Seed, is to steadily reduce drug activity in the targeted area. Generally, if the program is working, residents should be able to notice fewer incidents. Table 4A.4, below, lists the comparative frequencies for this question.

As indicated by this table, there is a small rise in the number of respondents who reported the situation had "increased." There is also a more substantial rise (though close to the margin of error) among the number of respondents who reported that drug activity had "decreased." According to the respondents in the 1999 survey, it would appear that some gains have been made in the fight against drug activity in the target area.

Table 4A.4

Compared to a year ago, do you think drug sales on streets, street corners, or in other public places in your neighborhood have increased, decreased, or remained about the same?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Increased	55	16.1%	39	12.5%
Decreased	107	31.4%	80	25.6%
Remained about the same	115	33.7%	183	58.7%
Don't know/Unsure	64	18.8%	10	3.2%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

* Drug and Crime data combined into one question

Violent Criminal Activity. As a means of developing a comparative assessment of crime in the Weed and Seed target area, survey respondents were asked if they thought incidents of violent criminal activity (shootings, assaults, robberies, and so forth) had “increased,” “decreased,” or “remained about the same” during the past year. The hypothesis being tested and a key goal of Weed and Seed is to steadily reduce violent crime in the targeted area. Generally, if the program is working, residents should be able to notice improvements. Table 4A.5, below, lists the comparative frequencies for this question.

As indicated by this table, there was a small rise in the number of respondents who reported the situation had “increased.” There was also a more substantial rise (though close to the margin of error) among the number of respondents who reported that violent crime had “decreased.” Thus, according to the respondents in the 1999 survey, it would appear that some gains have been made in the fight against crime in the target area.

Table 4A.5

Compared to a year ago, do you think violent crime such as shootings, assaults, robberies, and so forth, have increased, decreased, or remained about the same?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Increased	47	13.8%	39	12.5%
Decreased	106	31.1%	80	25.6%
Remained about the same	133	39.0%	183	58.7%
Don't know/Unsure	55	16.1%	10	3.2%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

Moreover, it appears that resident attitudes have stabilized over time. That is, given the frequencies in Table 4A.5, one could argue that, over time, the lack of significant change is exactly what we would expect within the paradigm of the Weed and Seed program. Conversely, one could argue that perception of crime and actual crime are not necessarily related in any linear fashion. However, a resident's perception of criminal activity in the neighborhood can create a self-fulfilling prophecy. That is, a neighborhood perceived to be "unsafe," that in reality is relatively safe, will undoubtedly gradually become unsafe as individuals withdraw from community life in the neighborhood. Similarly, a neighborhood perceived to be "safe," that in reality is relatively unsafe, will gradually change as individuals witness criminal activity.

Criminal Victimization. In addition to questions regarding the perceived severity of crime and drug activity in their neighborhoods, residents were asked about victimization. In an effort to gain some insight into the prevalence of unreported crime and victimization in the Weed and Seed area, respondents on both surveys were asked if they knew anyone who had been the victim of a crime within the past twelve months. Table 4A.6, below, reports the comparative frequencies for this question.

Table 4A.6*Do you know someone who has been a victim of a crime in the last year?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	107	31.4%	69	22.1%
No	222	65.1%	235	75.3%
Don't know/Unsure	12	3.5%	8	2.6%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

According to Table 4A.6, a larger percentage of survey respondents in 1999 (31.4 versus 22.1 percent) knew someone who had been victimized by crime during the previous twelve months. Whether this indicates an increase in crime is debatable. It is reasonable to hypothesize, given the data that supports an increase in the number of times per week residents see the police (above), that current survey results show an increased awareness of crime and a greater willingness to acknowledge it.

Police Involvement. The question on crime victimization had two follow-up questions (the second of which was asked for the first time in 1999), for respondents who stated they knew someone who had been victimized in the previous year. The first question asked respondents if the police were involved. Table 4A.7, below, shows the comparative frequencies for this question.

Table 4A.7*Were the police involved?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	83	77.6%	53	75.7%
No	18	16.8%	10	14.3%
Don't know/Unsure	6	5.6%	7	10.0%
Totals	107	100.0%	70	100.0%

As indicated by Table 4A.7, a large majority of crime victims in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods reported their “victimization” to the police--the survey figures are statistically identical. These figures offer some evidence that a high percentage of residents in the Weed and Seed target area are willing to report crimes to the police.

As researchers, we were curious to know how this same group of residents perceived police “responsiveness” to the needs of the community. Therefore, 1999 survey respondents who indicated they knew the victim of a crime, were asked “How responsive are the police are to the needs and concerns of the community?”

A large percentage, more than seven in ten (72.9 percent) of these respondents, stated they thought the police were “somewhat” to “very” responsive to citizen concerns. As previously mentioned, it is likely that an individual’s perception of police officer “responsiveness” is related to “solving” the reported crime or taking action against another person. However, observations such as this should lead, hypothetically, to greater satisfaction with the police in their handling of crimes with respect to victims.

Community Involvement. The final table in this section compares respondents agreement/disagreement with a statement that community residents have to “help themselves” in the fight against crime and drugs. At least hypothetically, this question also taps the extent to which they see outside resources as available. In effect, then, it is a measure of some perceived autonomy. Table 4A.8, below, shows the comparative frequencies for this question.

These data in this table show a small, but statistically significant, decline in the percentage of households agreeing with the statement. Interpreting this is difficult considering that most of the data in the 1999 survey indicates positive movement in most areas. It may well be that the data in Table 4A.8 indicates an increasing, albeit slight, awareness by area residents that they do need some outside help in addressing

fundamental problems. The 1997 data may reflect a state of mind where no help was expected or residents were more suspicious about the efficacy of outside help.

Table 4A.8

Do you agree or disagree that the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in your neighborhood is for the neighborhood residents to help themselves.

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Agree	257	75.4%	262	84.0%
Disagree	47	13.8%	16	5.1%
Don't know/Unsure	37	10.9%	33	10.9%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

B. Effectiveness of Police Services

Introduction. By any reasonable standard, as Community-Oriented Policing (COP) supplants traditional approaches to policing, it should result in more police visibility and contacts outside the more traditional activities of patrolling in vehicles, responding to requests for service, and dealing with crime. Key findings in this section include the following:

- Respondents indicated a slight reduction in police visibility, however, this change is not considered to be significant. Moreover, police presence (e.g., the number of times per week residents see the police) almost doubled. Overall, the results of these data are impressive considering the reduction in project funding.
- As might be expected, respondent observations in both 1997 and 1999 indicated that the major activity of the police is patrolling in their cars. The

real speculation concerned what answers would occur other than patrolling. The fact that making arrests is second on the list is interesting-- what this response does not indicate is whether such activity is viewed positively or negatively by the residents.

- Comparative data indicate a dramatic increase in the perception that police are working with community residents. This finding supports an observation that the time between the two survey periods was not only one of sustained police activity, but, perhaps one of intensified activity in Weed and Seed neighborhoods.

Police Visibility. Community-Oriented Policing (COP) and one of its component methodologies, Problem-Oriented Policing (POP) is central to the Weed and Seed concept. Numerous studies suggest citizen surveys as valid methods of measuring COP. Visibility is, of course, crucial. A base idea of COP is that police officers become a more integral part of the community. As a way of measuring whether increased visibility was evident to the residents, both surveys asked whether they saw the police “a lot” in their neighborhood. Table 4B.1, below, shows the comparative frequencies for this question.

Table 4B.1

Do you see the police a lot around your neighborhood?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	227	66.6%	221	70.8%
No	103	30.2%	82	26.3%
Don't know/Unsure	11	3.2%	9	2.9%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

It is important to observe here that a change in perception of something as basic as police visibility is likely indicative of a larger change than the actual percentages indicate. That is, police are a relatively constant presence in the lives of Savannians. Given this, the police are more or less taken for granted--and a documented movement in police visibility means that something has occurred to either increase or decrease awareness of their presence.

Although the frequencies in Table 4B.1 indicate a slight reduction in police visibility between 1997 and 1999, this change is within the probability of error and is not considered to be significant. The results of these data are impressive considering the overall reduction in Weed and Seed funding allocations during the past two years.

In an effort to help clarify residents perception of police visibility since the last survey, respondents in the 1999 survey were also asked, "In the past year, have you seen an increase or decrease in police officer presence in your neighborhood?" More than one-third (36.4 percent/124) replied they have seen an "increase" in police presence, about one in ten (12.6 percent/43) a "decrease," and almost half (43 percent/147) cited "no change," in answer to this follow-up question.

Perception of Police Presence. As a means of quantifying police visibility, a follow-up question was asked of those respondents who answered "yes" to the question, "do you see the police a lot around your neighborhood?" This group was asked how often they saw the police in their neighborhood. Table 4B.2, below, details the comparative frequencies to this question.

Note: A large number of residents who participated in the 1999 survey indicated they observe the police in their neighborhood "more than ten times per week." This category was not an option on the 1997 survey. Data in Table 4B.2 have been adjusted to reflect these differences.

Table 4B.2*How many times a week do you see the police in your neighborhood?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	n	%	n	%
1 - 2 times per week	16	10.3%	73	33.0%
3 - 4 times per week	36	23.1%	69	31.2%
5 - 6 times per week	34	21.8%	46	20.8%
7 - 8 times per week	53	34.0%	17	17.7%
9 - 10 times per week	17	10.9%	12	5.4%
More than 10 times per week	(58)*			
Totals	156	100.0%	217	100.0%

* Response not included in the 1997 survey and are not included in the "totals" of the 1999 survey.

According to Table 4B.2, the mid-point answer, at which half fall above and half fall below, is three-to-four times per week in 1997, and five-to-six times per week (discounting respondents who answered "more than 10 times per week") in 1999. Clearly, police visibility in these neighborhoods increased during the two year period, a somewhat unexpected, but highly desirable result.

Perception of Police Activities. To gain additional insight into police visibility in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods, a second follow-up question asked the respondents to indicate, when seen, what they observed the police doing in their neighborhood. The relevance of this question relates to a measure of Community- Oriented Policing--an effort to find out if nontraditional methods (e.g., activities other than patrolling by automobile, such as making an arrest, walking or riding on a bicycle through the neighborhood, talking in a friendly manner to residents) are evident to the respondents. Table 4B.3, below, reports, by order of response, the comparative frequencies for this question.

Table 4B.3

What do you see the police doing the most in your neighborhood?

Situation in Which Residents Observed the Police in Their Neighborhood	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	n	%	n	%
Patrolling in their car	306	52.0%	326	85.1%
Making an arrest	99	16.8%	21	5.5%
Chatting/friendly talk with residents	94	16.0%	8	2.0%
Outside their car on foot, bicycle, walking	63	10.7%	18	4.7%
Other/unsure	27	4.6%	10	2.6%
Totals	589	100.0%	383	100.0%

As might be expected, the majority of respondents from both surveys indicate they saw police patrolling in cars, which is what we have come to expect police to do. However, this activity experienced a statistically significant drop among residents between 1997 and 1999 (85.1 versus 52.0 percent).

The real speculation was on what answers would occur other than patrolling. As indicated in Table 4B.3, a larger number of respondents in the 1999 survey observed police doing a variety of activities. The fact that making arrests is second on the list is interesting. The key question from this response is whether such activity is viewed positively or negatively by the residents. The fact that “chatting/having a friendly conversation” with residents was mentioned practically as often as “making an arrest” in 1999 must be viewed favorably.

Perception of Police Effectiveness in Reducing Drugs/Crime in the Neighborhood.

The next question(s) asked residents to gauge police efforts in reducing and/or eliminating the availability of drugs and violent criminal activity in the Weed and Seed target area. Respondents were asked to rate police effectiveness in controlling drugs and crime in the neighborhood.

Note: comparative interpretation on this question is difficult. The 1997 survey included both categories (e.g., drugs and crime) in one statement and asked respondents if they “agreed” or “disagreed” with the police department’s efforts in dealing with these activities--a very subjective statement without contextual clarity.

We made a conscious decision to separate the activities into two questions on the 1999 survey; and, to allow for a greater range of answers--changing the rather restrictive “either/or” (yes/no), to the preferred “Likert” type ordinal scale. This change allowed respondents to select one of five possible answers (ranging from “a very good job,” to “a very poor job”). Table 4B.4, below, lists the frequency differences for this question.

Below differences aside, a number of comparative assumptions regarding these data are not without foundation. Data from 1997 indicate that four in ten (40.2 percent/125) of the respondents agreed with the statement “the police are doing as much as they can to deal with crime and drug problems in your neighborhood.” In 1999, more than half of the respondents (55.4 percent/189) thought the police were doing a “good” to “very good” job controlling crime in their neighborhood -- a number that increases to more than eight in ten (84.1 percent/287), when “a fair job” is factored into the positive mix. More than four in ten (43.2 percent/146) felt the same way about the department’s effort to control the sale of drugs--once again, a number that increases to about seven in ten (68.9 percent/235), when “a fair job” is included.

Moreover, it appears that the largest movement between the years was from the “unsure” cells. This suggests that residents’ opinions about police efforts are becoming firmer and tending toward a more positive appraisal. Such a conclusion is tentative, however, because of the differences in question wording. Clearly, in 1999, respondents’ answers to these questions show movement in a positive direction.

Table 4B.4***Perception of Police Effectiveness in Controlling Crime/Drugs in the Neighborhood***

1999 Survey Control Crime/Maintain Order		Number	Percent (%)
A very good job		54	15.8%
A good job		135	39.6%
A fair job		98	28.7%
A poor job		30	8.8%
A very poor job		9	2.6%
Don't know/unsure		15	4.4%
Total		341	100.0%
1999 Survey Control Drug Problems			
A very good job		49	14.4%
A good job		97	28.4%
A fair job		89	26.1%
A poor job		44	12.9%
A very poor job		14	4.1%
Don't know/unsure		48	14.1%
Total		341	100.0%
1997 Survey Control Crime and Drug Problems			
Agree		125	40.2%
Disagree		105	33.8%
Don't know/unsure		81	26.1%
Total		311	100.0%

As might be expected, the 1999 responses to both of the questions on crime and drug control correlated significantly with whether the respondents see the “police a lot” in their neighborhood. Among those who agreed with the statement that the police were doing a “good” to “very good” job in controlling crime, 66 percent also agreed that they

saw the police a lot in their neighborhood. Among those who disagreed with the statement, the percentage of those saying they saw the police a lot dropped by half to 33 percent ($X^2=17.12$, $p<.000$). Among those who agreed with the statement that the police were doing a “good” to “very good” job in controlling the sale of illicit drugs, 49 percent also agreed that they saw the “police a lot” in their neighborhood; for those who disagreed with the statement, the percentage saying they saw the “police a lot” dropped to 28 percent ($X^2=7.91$, $p<.01$).

Police Working With the Community. Another goal of Community-Oriented Policing and the Weed and Seed program, is to involve residents in helping to address problems in their community. In order to measure community involvement, respondents were asked if they thought the police were working with the community to reduce crime and drug activity in their neighborhood. The guiding idea was that an affirmative answer

Table 4B.5

Q. Do you think the police are working with the community to reduce crime and drug dealing in your neighborhood?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	205	60.1%	152	48.7%
No	62	18.2%	78	25.0%
Don't know/Unsure	74	21.7%	82	26.2%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

would point to some sense of resident involvement as well as police commitment to addressing these persistent problems. Table 4B.5, above, compares the frequency of responses to this question.

This table shows a dramatic increase in the perception that police are working with community residents. This finding supports an observation that the time between the two survey periods was not only one of sustained police activity, but, perhaps one of intensified activity in Weed and Seed neighborhoods.

As might be expected, in the 1999 survey, this question had a significant level of association with police visibility. When responses to this question were cross-tabulated with the question asking if the respondent sees the police a lot in their neighborhood, those who report they did see the police a lot were far more likely to agree that the police are working to reduce crime and drug problems ($X^2=38.61$, $p<.000$).

C. Programs and Services in the Neighborhood

Introduction. Neighborhood programs and services provide residents with information and skills to mobilize themselves and leverage resources in order to take control and revitalize their community. Key findings from this section include the following:

- Resident awareness of the Weed and Seed program remained unchanged. Although the sustained visibility of Weed and Seed may be a function of several factors, it tends to support the continued organizational objectives of those responsible for the project's success.
- Resident awareness of Weed and Seed is one thing--knowing about its multi-faceted focus is another. Less than half of the respondents in both surveys who indicated they had heard of Weed and Seed were able to successfully identify its purpose.
- The St. Pius Family Resource Center is an integral component of the Weed and Seed program. Although an overwhelming majority of respondents

indicate an awareness of the center, current frequencies represent a significant drop in these numbers during the past two years.

- However, current data indicate a significant increase in those who utilize services provided by the St. Pius facility. The number of households who participated in a program at the center in 1999 indicates that the facility serves approximately one-third of the Weed and Seed households. These figures show that St. Pius continues to be well-utilized by the area residents.
- Somewhat of a surprise is the increase among residents who participate in a Neighborhood Watch program. These data would offer more conclusive evaluative evidence of enhanced police/resident interaction if there were not such a dramatic increase in the “unsure” category. Also of interest are the reasons given for non-attendance--“lack of information/knowledge about the program” was the reason most often cited by the respondents.
- A significant change is evident in residents’ perception of police effectiveness in dealing with drugs and crime in the neighborhood. Clearly, respondent answers on this question show movement in a positive direction.

Weed and Seed Program. The first set of questions in this section dealt with respondents’ awareness of, and knowledge about, Savannah’s Weed and Seed program. Respondents in both surveys were asked if they had heard of the Weed and Seed program. Those who indicated an awareness of Weed and Seed were asked a follow-up question to elicit their level of knowledge about the program. Table 4C.1, below, shows the comparative frequencies for the first question, “Have you heard about Savannah’s Weed and Seed program?”

Table 4C.1*Have you heard about Savannah's Weed and Seed program?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	181	53.1%	173	55.1%
No	147	43.1%	132	42.0%
Don't know/Unsure	13	3.8%	9	2.9%
Totals	341	100.0%	314	100.0%

As indicated in this table, respondent awareness about the Weed and Seed program is virtually unchanged in the two year period between surveys. While slightly more than 55 percent (173) of Weed and Seed residents reported they had heard of the Weed and Seed program in the fall of 1997, more than 53 percent (181) of those surveyed in 1999 reported they also were aware of the program. Although the sustained visibility of Weed and Seed may be a function of several factors, it tends to support the continued organizational objectives of those responsible for the project's success.

Having heard of Weed and Seed is one thing--knowing about its multi-faceted focus is another. The frequencies Table 4C.2, below, are for the follow-up question to those who indicated they had heard of Weed and Seed, specifically, whether they are knowledgeable about what type of program it is, again in comparison to the 1997 survey.

Table 4C.2*Can you tell me what the Weed and Seed program is about?*

Type of Program	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Police Program	20	11.1%	22	12.7%
Social Program	18	9.9%	21	12.1%
Police and Social Program	33	18.2%	36	20.8%
Don't know/Unsure	110	60.8%	94	54.2%
Totals	181	100.0%	187	100.0%

Less than four in ten (39.2 percent/71) of those who indicated they had heard of Weed and Seed were able to successfully identify it as a police or social program or combined police and social program. This figure compares with 45.6 percent (79) of the respondents who were able to successfully identify it in 1997. The 1999 frequencies represent a drop of 6.4 percent in respondents who are knowledgeable about the program--a figure that falls within the statistical margin of error.

The negative side of Table 4C.2 is the high percentage of households from both surveys who answered “don’t know/unsure” to this question. Interpreting this is difficult because of the lack of separation between respondents who really “don’t know” and those who were “unsure.” That is, how many of the 110 respondents (1999 survey) and the 94 respondents (1997 survey) stated they “don’t know” the answer and how many were “unsure” of the answer. Moreover, it is not clear that “unsure” has any consistent meaning from household to household. For example, a respondent could casually state “I don’t know” to the question and really not know or report they were not sure even though they had a rough idea about the multi-faceted purpose of the Weed and Seed project.

St. Pius Family Resource Center. Since the St. Pius Family Resource Center is so integral to the delivery of the Weed and Seed program, respondents were asked if they know about the center. Table 4C.3 shows the comparative responses to this question. Although an overwhelming majority of respondents in the 1999 survey are familiar with the Family Resource Center, the substantial decrease in awareness (12.9 percent), over the past two years, is of note. It is the Weed and Seed designated Safe Haven, and thus an integral part of the program.

Table 4C.3*Have you heard about the St. Pius Family Resource Center?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	249	73.0%	267	85.9%
No	89	26.1%	43	13.8%
Don't know/Unsure	3	.9%	1	.3%
Totals	341	100.0%	311	100.0%

A follow-up question to the recognition of the St. Pius Center asked those who responded affirmatively whether or not a member of the household participated in a program there. Table 4C.4, above, compares the results of this question. Although a smaller percentage of the 1999 respondents were aware of the St. Pius Center, almost half of this group (45.8 percent/114), compared with about one-third (35.9 percent/102) of the 1997 respondents, utilize the services provided by the center. Moreover, the number of households who participated in a program at the center in 1999 indicates

Table 4C.4*Have you or someone else who lives in your household visited or participated programs at the St. Pius Center?*

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	114	45.8%	102	35.9%
No	132	53.0%	178	62.7%
Don't know/Unsure	3	1.2%	4	1.4%
Totals	249	100.0%	284	100.0%

that the facility serves approximately one-third of the Weed and Seed households. These figures show that the facility continues to be well-utilized by the area residents.

Crime Prevention Programs. The next question dealt with residents' participation in an organized neighborhood crime prevention program, which are designed to enable residents to take charge of their own safety and the safety of their neighborhoods. Examples of programs in this category include neighborhood and crime watch programs such as "Neighborhood Watch," a program that involves volunteer community residents patrolling their neighborhoods to look for and report suspicious or criminal activity. Moreover, programs like Neighborhood Watch provide a mechanism for residents to work with and get to know the police officers assigned to their neighborhoods. It should be noted that all the areas inside Weed and Seed do have neighborhood associations. Table 4C.5 shows the comparative responses to this question.

Table 4C.5

In the past year, have you participated in a neighborhood association program like Neighborhood Watch?

Response	1999 Survey		1997 Survey	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Yes	107	31.4%	58	18.6%
No	132	38.7%	243	77.9 %
Don't know/Unsure	102	29.9%	11	3.5%
Totals	341	100.0%	312	100.0%

Somewhat of a surprise is the dramatic change in response patterns to this question. Analysis of these data indicate a significant increase in the number and percentage of 1999 respondents who participated in a local Neighborhood Watch program. Also of note is the substantial increase in the number of respondents who stated they were "unsure" (from 3.5 percent in 1997 to 29.9 percent in 1999). Table 4C.5 would offer more

conclusive evaluative evidence of increased police/resident interaction if it did not have such a dramatic incline between survey increase in the “unsure” category.

The final question in this area covered a topic which was not asked in the previous survey (1997). It was a follow-up question that asked of those who did not attend, or participate in, a crime prevention program in their neighborhood. This group of respondents were asked “why” they did not participate. Analysis of these data indicate a “lack of information/knowledge about the program” was the most often cited reason (50/132 or 37.9 percent); followed by, “time constraint” (35/132 or 26.5 percent); and, “the inability to obtain transportation,” and, “the inconvenient timing of the event” (23/132 or 17.4 percent) were the third most cited reasons given.

Chapter 5

Law Enforcement Survey Interviews

Section I:

Survey Results from members of the Chatham County Counter Narcotics Task Force and the Savannah Police Department.

Nine (9) Chatham County Counter Narcotics Task Force (CNT) officers with enforcement duties in the Weed and Seed target area responded to the survey. According to the quarterly and annual *Weed and Seed Reports* “CNT is a collaboration between law enforcement agencies of the City [of Savannah], the County [Chatham], and the five surrounding municipalities to eliminate drugs from these communities.” From the inception of Weed and Seed in Savannah and according to the same *Reports*, the CNT had “the primary responsibility for drug suppression in the Weed and Seed target area.”

The evaluation staff was also able to locate and survey eight (8) Savannah Police Department (SPD) officers who had assigned duties in the target area sometime between 1997 to the present. These police officers served either with the Crime Suppression Unit (CSU), COPS AHEAD, or with the Violent Crimes Task Force. A copy of the police officer survey questionnaire is located in Appendix D.

The first question on the survey asked the respondents to identify the chief mission(s) of the “weed” part of Weed and Seed. There was some dissonance among the CNT respondents concerning this item in that a few had a narrower view of the mission than the rest. For example, about half emphasized the mission of reducing or controlling crime in the target area. The remainder were more sharply focused on a mission that dovetailed with their specific role in the target area--chiefly, if not solely, the eradication of drugs, their dealers, and their distribution.

More divergent dissonance was evident in the responses from SPD officers. Some viewed the chief mission to be one of improving the quality of life for the residents or enhancing the impression that residents had ownership in the neighborhood and the solution for its problems. Two officers responded that the mission was to restore vacant buildings and to beautify the neighborhoods. Another said that the mission required gaining the trust of the community so that police and citizens could be “of one accord” to bring about a safe, clean environment. Three mentioned weeding out crime or the criminal element and only one officer of the eight respondents mentioned elimination of drugs.

In terms of the sufficiency of resources (Question #2), seven of the nine CNT officers responded to this question and all agreed that the personnel, equipment, money, and materiel were adequate to the task of pursuing the “weed” mission of the program. Two others offered no response.

Only three of the eight SPD officers said resources were adequate to the task. Three others remarked that manpower was insufficient to the mission. One stated that more money was needed to assist in finding low-income housing. Last, one officer noted that there was insufficient equipment and personnel and that “people making the decisions on equipment did not have a concept of what was needed.”

When asked to describe the level of cooperation among the various law enforcement, police, and investigative agencies participating in Weed and Seed (Question #3), the CNT responses ranged from “very good” and “adequate” to “poor.” Typical of a minority number of responses was that the cooperation was good at first, but degenerated with the arrest of 11 SPD officers for drug trafficking offenses in 1998. The CNT played a role in those arrests, which naturally created barriers to coordination, communication, cooperation, and intelligence sharing between SPD and CNT. One stated that after the arrests, SPD officers made reference to CNT officers as the

“enemy.” However, another responded that much of this “negativity” had been overcome with a “recent retirement,” a veiled reference to the recent retirement of the Chief of the Savannah Police Department. Two others offered that the potential for cooperation existed but, as one of the two pointed out, “higher forces [a reference to supervision or management or both] cause[d] friction between agencies which inhibit[ed] cooperation.” Another officer simply reported that “at times” there were problems with cooperation and communication with “certain departments.”

Interestingly, although one CNT officer stated that he “was not aware that other agencies participated in W&S [Weed and Seed],” another said all the other participating agencies “dumped the drug problems on CNT;” that is, when they observed open-air drug activity, they would not engage in enforcement but would simply report that information to CNT for action.

On the whole, officers from SPD exhibited a far more favorable view of the extent and level of cooperation among the various Weed and Seed law enforcement agencies. For example, one stated that “joint operations proved highly effective,” another stated that the “units worked well together,” another that, “for the most part, the police worked well together,” and still another that “cooperation was very good.” Only one was critical, remarking that cooperation was “subpar” and resembled “a dog and pony show.”

Question #4 asked the officers about obstacles to implementing the “weed” portion of the program. Five of the nine CNT officers responding to this question said they were not aware of any problems. Other respondents stated that inadequate intelligence on drug dealing was a hindrance, along with the early release from prison and return to the neighborhood of convicted drug offenders, and the inability to readily identify drug dealers. The last complaint stems from the fact that many suspects carry no identification, which makes confirmation as known dealers difficult. Last, one officer

lamented that the absence of addresses on many houses and businesses in the area made drug enforcement more challenging than it already was.

Three SPD officers said that there had been no obstacles to “weeding.” Four cited “upper management” or “command structure” as impediments to implementation. One of these offered that upper management was concerned more with “that good-look PR [public relations] image” than substance. Another stated that the command structure did not appear to understand which agency had what responsibilities “for street corner drug enforcement.” A third officer complained that management was not as competent to make budgeting and spending decisions on “weeding” as were the street officers themselves. The fourth officer noted that manpower and hours of operations were poorly organized and administered.

The fifth question asked respondents how well they understood their areas of program responsibility and how well they thought members of other participating law enforcement agencies understood their own roles in the Weed and Seed program. The majority of CNT respondents maintained that CNT officers understood their roles, and often “very well,” but that officers of other agencies either did not or that CNT officers did not or could not know whether or how well officers from these other agencies perceived their own roles. All SPD officers reported that they understood their roles “well” or “very well” and made similar claims about other law enforcement agencies in the target area.

Question #6 asked officer respondents if they observed any gaps in the “weed” part of the program. The vast majority of CNT officers remarked that they saw none; two officers did not respond to the question. Other officers replied that inadequate intelligence sharing, missing street addresses, and the inability to identify known trafficker and dealers constituted gaps in “weeding” the target area. Like CNT officers, most SPD respondents noted no gaps in the weeding part of the program. Two SPD

officers cited too much emphasis by management on short-term results; another stated “saturation” enforcement should be done on a continuous basis. One officer suggested that there was too much overlap of responsibilities among “seed” agencies in the target area.

Questions #7 and #8 asked respondents what recommendations they would make to change both the “weed” and “seed” portions of the program. Several CNT respondents recommended strategies for improving the program. Two advocated better cooperation, especially regarding videotaping and photographing street subjects for the purpose of improving suspect identification. Another proposed redrawing Weed and Seed neighborhood boundaries. A fourth officer, recognizing the widespread network of drug trafficking, advanced the idea of redirecting money and resources for investigations to areas outside the target area which nonetheless impacted drug trafficking in that neighborhood. One promoted the notion of “putting CNT officers in low-cost housing with low mortgage rates in the target area.” One respondent noted that “agencies [operating in the target area] should stop blaming other agencies for problems and accept responsibility.” Three officers had no recommendations to make; one of these simply stated that “everything was [j]ust fine the way it is!”

Savannah Police Department officers suggested that additional community leadership was needed to make the program effective. In addition, more funding was needed; too little [money] is being divided by too many agencies. SPD respondents also recommended that planning and budgeting decisions be moved to the operational level and such decisions be made by officers implementing the program on the street. Duplicative seed programs should be consolidated or superfluous ones cut. Moreover, one officer suggested that seed personnel be required to visit the target neighborhoods from time-to-time rather than “just attending community meetings where only political activists show-up.” Three officers did not make any recommendations.

Section II:

Survey Results from Weed and Seed Managers

Four managers were surveyed: Dan Drake of the U. S. Attorney's Office; Anne Roise, the Director of Savannah's Weed and Seed program; Deputy Chief Dan Reynolds, Savannah Police Department; and Captain Steve Smith, Commander of the Counter Narcotics Unit.

The Weed and Seed Program Director stated that the primary mission of the "weed" component was to intensify crime and drug suppression (in a coordinated manner) in the target area. The U.S. Attorney's representative saw the main mission as one of re-establishing the community's confidence in law enforcement by making the community a working partner in the identification of crime, setting goals and priorities, and to weed out the criminal element in the target area. He also saw the promotion of collaboration among federal, state, and local agencies as part of that mission. The Counter Narcotics Team Commander viewed the "weed" mission to be that of removing, in as far as possible, the criminal elements that can dominate an inner city neighborhood. Savannah Police Department's Deputy Chief saw the mission as one of focusing resources on the criminal element in the target neighborhood for the purpose of removing criminals from the area. Police were also expected to report neighborhood blight and other signs of physical deterioration to government agencies responsible for removing these problems.

The Deputy Chief of the Savannah Police Department believed certain program resources were inadequate. For example, he stated that the offices of the district attorney, probation, parole, and the U.S. Attorney should have shown higher levels of participation. He thought the police were left to "fend for themselves" and that what was needed was more funding for these agencies to encourage their participation.

The Weed and Seed Director maintained that the funding for these objectives during the first three years of the program (that is, the period preceding the period of the present evaluation) was more than adequate. However, she noted that the substantial drop in funding during the past three years sufficiently affected the weeding component to show that increased patrols and involvement with the community prior to funding declines made a difference. The U.S. Attorney's representative believed resources were sufficient to successfully pursue the "weed" mandate.

Both the Program Director and the U.S. Attorney's representative remarked that, on the whole, cooperation between the various police and enforcement agencies working in the target area was "good." The SPD Deputy Chief expressed similar sentiments. However, the Director pointed out that cooperation varied among the agencies, with some alliances stronger than others and noted a certain degree of "conflict" did exist from time to time. She cited the Violent Crimes Task Force, an amalgamation of local, state and federal officers exemplified a strong alliance. The relationship between CNT and SPD, on the other hand, was spotty, which in turn hampered law enforcement operations. According to Mrs. Roise, the strained relationship between CNT and SPD officers was a barrier to "weeding" out crime and drug trafficking.

The U.S. Attorney's representative remarked that SPD's interest in Weed and Seed fell after funding began to dry up in 1997. According to Mr. Drake, responsibility for the program frequently shifted within the agency after this date, and he believed that the lack of a designated Weed and Seed coordinator from the Savannah Police Department made overall interagency cooperation more difficult. He did note, however, that the eventual designation of the finance analyst in SPD to coordinate budget matters, coupled with an increased level of interest expressed by the Precinct #2 commander in Weed and Seed, improved their participatory efforts. In addition, the Program's Director believed that SPD administrators did not effectively use equipment such as the command vehicle nor was there room for input concerning its use.

The CNT Commander saw a mostly cooperative effort between his unit and SPD units marred by the arrest and conviction of eleven SPD officers for drug trafficking. The CNT was involved in overall investigation, along with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and Georgia Bureau of Investigation (GBI). The Commander also observed that since the creation of CNT, it appears that other area police agencies have passed all the drug problems to them as if these agencies no longer had responsibility for drug enforcement. The SPD Deputy Chief asserted that what was needed, but never provided, was the appointment of a chairperson or leader for the “Weed” side of the program to provide more focus and direction.

The most evident gap in the “weed” portion of the program, according to the Director, was the need to improve coordination and communication. The U.S. Attorney’s representative saw the chief problem as one of sustaining the interests among the participating law enforcement agencies. Nonetheless, both believed law enforcement units assigned to work in weed & seed understood their respective roles. The CNT Commander commented that he believed his unit had a major impact in the Weed and Seed target area, but that the boundaries should be redrawn to include new areas with similar drug and crime problems. The Director of Weed and Seed added that prioritizing cases for swift prosecution and better data keeping & analysis to track drug hot spots were in order. She also recommended that multi-jurisdictional agencies review progress & challenges specific to the Weed & Seed target area. Currently, this type of evaluation is done on a city or county-wide basis.

Due to the depletion of grant moneys, the Director also recommended that new funding sources be sought to sustain “weeding” efforts. The U.S. Attorney’s representative recommended greater deployment of bicycle patrol, the development of Y-Team programs, expansion of the crime prevention units, coordination of the Problem Oriented Policing (POP) program, and more street-officer involvement in the programs daily work. The SPD Deputy Chief recommended the appointment of a chairperson to

lead the “Weed” effort and more funding for other criminal justice agencies to encourage participation.

Section III:

Examination of Weed and Seed Quarterly Reports and Minutes of Quarterly Meetings.

An analysis of Weed and Seed quarterly reports and minutes of quarterly meetings was undertaken to determine the extent of written documentation of multi-agency coordination and cooperation among law enforcement agencies for the past three years of the grant (1997-1999).

The quarterly meeting minutes for the three-year period indicate a fairly routine acknowledgment of the need to improve communication and cooperation among city and county law enforcement assigned to Weed and Seed. Beginning with the 1/31/97 minutes, both SPD and CNT representatives recognized the problem of coordination and the need to resolve it. In the 4/16/97 minutes, the SPD Deputy Chief stated the SPD and CNT would continue to work together and that the SPD Crime Suppression Unit would maintain its participation in corner sweep actions. By July of that year, the SPD Chief announced plans to work in conjunction with CNT to arrest drug buyers and dealers. However, no report on this action was discussed in subsequent meeting minutes. At the last quarterly meeting of 1997 (10/22/97), the CNT Commander reported that his unit and Precinct #2 officers had worked together to identify drug dealers in the target area.

Quarterly minutes at the first meeting of 1998, describe a discussion among top Savannah officials (e.g., the City Manager) and the CNT Commander that focuses on better coordination. An example of this is working with SPD to sharpen the concentration on drug enforcement operations with officers of either unit posing as

drug buyers, even though Recorder's Court judges had not been receptive to this investigative and enforcement strategy. The 10/28/98 minutes report that SPD's Gang Unit had been active in the target area, but this had not been a collaborative effort to end the presence of gangs in the target area.

Again in 1999 (1/20/99 minutes) the need to improve the collaboration between SPD and CNT is conceded by representatives from both units. It was reported that an increase in CNT drug arrests, coupled with a decrease by SPD officers, may have been indicative of a communication breakdown between the two groups. Both the SPD's Patrol Commander and the CNT Commander reported the need to encourage SPD officers to turn in their "Green Sheets." This is an administrative mechanism whereby SPD officers complete green reports advising of drug activity in the target area and then pass them on to CNT. At the next quarterly meeting (4/21/99), and the last in which there was any documented discussion of coordination or cooperation, the CNT Commander reported that there was still room for improvement in filing these reports. SPD representatives reported that they were working to correct these problems.

Quarterly Weed and Seed reports attested to a joint operation called "Corner Sweep" among the COP/CSU and CNT units during the second quarter of 1997 as well as collective efforts on the part of SPD and the Violent Crimes Task Force to coordinate drug suppression in the target area. In 1998, quarterly reports disclose joint operations in the target area involving COPS AHEAD, and CSU officers with CNT, TRAP, the Robbery Squad, the Chatham County K-9 Unit and SPD Criminal Investigations. Joint operations were also reported in May 1998 involving CPU, CSU, SPD Patrol, TRAP, CNT, and Chatham County Sheriff K-9 units. In 1999 similar joint operations were cited by the COPS AHEAD and CSU (with TRAP serving warrants, SPD patrol conducting traffic checks, and City Inspections to deal with derelict and abandoned vehicles). However, none of the details of these operations were described.

Moreover, it should be noted that most of these joint operations consisted of units *within* the same agency. For example, CSU, CPU, Patrol, Criminal Investigations, TRAP, and COPS AHEAD are all housed in the Savannah Police Department. By contrast, the CNT and the Violent Crimes Suppression Unit, both of which focus their activities outside of the target area as well, are the only multi-jurisdictional units in the area.

Conclusions

The following is suggested by an analysis of the results of the open-ended survey, quarterly Weed and Seed Meeting minutes (1997-99), and Quarterly Weed and Seed Reports (1997-99).

- Cooperation and collaboration among the various law enforcement agencies operating in the target area appears to be viewed by most program participants as adequate. Nonetheless, it is also true that the need to improve both, particularly between SPD and CNT, was frequently and universally recognized in the surveys, the reports, and the minutes. Further, the absence of consistent, reliable cooperation between the two units was seen as a barrier to effective weeding.
- As federal funding began to decline in 1997, so did the interest of some police units operating in the Weed and Seed area. Personnel were often reassigned outside the target area.
- Evidence of collaborative effort among police agencies is sparse; nonetheless, the source for this conclusion consists of quarterly reports and minutes which by their intended nature are succinct and concise.

- The collaboration noted in these reports and minutes is mostly comprised of joint efforts among *intra*-agency units. Inter-agency cooperation seems to be sporadic and not well-organized.

Chapter 6

Crime Incident Data Analysis

Introduction

A reduction in crime and drug trafficking is viewed as one of the most important goals of Weed and Seed. Thus, the extent to which crime and the sale of illicit drugs were reduced in the target area is an important indicator of Weed and Seed's overall success, recognizing, of course, that a variety of factors unrelated to Weed and Seed can affect crime rates.

In general, the Weed and Seed strategy is built on the logic that objective changes in a community--removing drug dealers, reducing crime through vigorous enforcement practices, followed by improving existing services and creating some opportunities--will create an upward spiral of socio-economic success. One indicator of the degree of success in "weeding" is the number of incidents reported to or observed by law enforcement officers. Analysis of these objective factors is straightforward. It calls for measuring select Part I and Part II crimes during the life of the Weed and Seed project.

As explained in Chapter 2, all crime incidents reported to or observed by law enforcement officers in the City of Savannah from January 1, 1996 through December 31, 1999 were provided to the researchers by the Savannah Police Department for analysis. The type of information provided included the UCC number identifying the type of crime, the location of the crime, and the date and time the crime occurred. Neighborhoods within the Weed and Seed target area were also isolated, thus enabling researchers to compare crime incidents in Weed and Seed neighborhoods with the rest of the city.

Data were analyzed using SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Sciences) software. Crime incidents of interest fell into four categories: six classifications of violent crime (homicide, rape, non-commercial robbery, aggravated assault, non-commercial burglary, and weapons offenses), two classifications of drug offenses (possession for sale and sales/distribution of illicit drugs), four classifications of public nuisance incidents (disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, and loitering), and simple assaults. Before discussing the data analyzed in this chapter, three areas of concern need further discussion.

1. Possible contributing factors. Criminologists, law enforcement personnel, and city officials have offered a variety of explanations for the nationwide drop in crime, including zero tolerance measures, changing demographics, community policing, a healthy economy, and increasing incarceration. Explaining crime rate changes in the Weed and Seed target area and the City of Savannah must obviously consider two additional factors; the Weed and Seed program and other law enforcement or social programs that either existed prior to Weed and Seed or that started during Weed and Seed. A change in the rate of crime (in either direction) is the result of any number of factors. It is not possible, therefore, to state definitely the extent to which specific factors contributed to these fluctuations. That said, it is nevertheless useful to qualitatively discuss possible contributing factors.

2. Crime trends in nontarget areas. By design, neighborhoods in the Weed and Seed target area constitute a small part of the jurisdiction to which they belong. Savannah's target area contains about four percent of the city's population. Given the size of the target area relative to the entire city, it is reasonable to assume that crime trends in the rest of the city would have some effect on the trends in the target area. For this reason, select crime incident data within the Weed and Seed neighborhoods are also compared with the same data for the entire city (excluding the target area). Moreover, because the

target area is so much smaller geographically (.75 square miles) than the rest of the city, greater variation in year-to-year crime rates would not be unexpected.

3. Program intensity. Program intensity refers to the concentration of program resources. A possible measure of program intensity is the level of monetary resources directed to the target area. As previously discussed, starting in 1998, annual federal funding for this project was severely reduced (from \$750,000 to less than \$250,000). As was the case in the discussion of the relationship between crime trends in the target area and the rest of the city, some relationship between crime trends and program intensity would not be unexpected, but difficult to ascertain with any certainty.

A comparative analysis of these data for calendar years 1996, 1997, 1998, and 1999 are examined in the following three sections. Section A compares the absolute and relative frequencies of crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area with the rest of the City of Savannah. Section B examines crime *rates* in Weed and Seed neighborhoods compared to crime rates in the rest of the city. Section C focuses only on Weed and Seed neighborhoods, looking at trends over the four-year period within each of the crime incident categories and for specific crimes within each category.

Section A

Crime Incident Comparison: Weed and Seed Target Area vs. City of Savannah

1. Violent Crimes: 1996 - 1999

The crimes of homicide, rape, aggravated assault, burglary, robbery, and weapons violations were designated as violent crimes for purposes of this comparative analysis. Commercial or non-residential burglaries and robberies were excluded from this distribution. Weapons violations constituted the crimes of carrying a concealed weapon, possession of weapon, and firing a weapon.

Collectively, in 1996, violent crimes constituted 32 percent of the four crime categories (violent crime, drug offenses, public nuisance violations, and simple assaults) discussed

Table 6A.1

Violent Crime Incidents: Weed and Seed Area vs. Remainder of the City (1996-1999)

Years	Weed and Seed		City of Savannah*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1996	251	8.4%	2749	91.6%
1997	288	10.0%	2601	90.0%
1998	221	8.6%	2334	91.4%
1999	226	8.1%	2551	91.9%

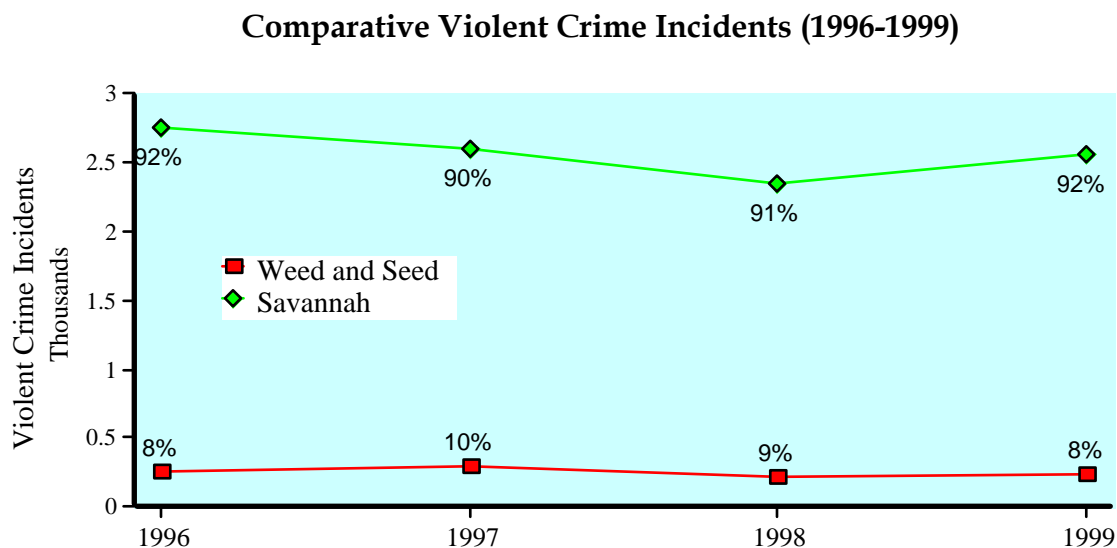
*Excluding Weed and Seed neighborhoods

in this report. A slight decline in the overall percentage of violent crime was noted in 1997 (30.3 percent) and again in 1999 (29.4 percent). Table 6A.1, above, details the absolute and relative frequencies of violent crime incidents over the four year period, comparing Weed and Seed neighborhoods to the rest of the City of Savannah. As indicated, relative to the rest of the City, violent crime incidents in Weed and Seed neighborhoods were fairly constant over the four years, 8.4 percent in 1996, increasing to 10 percent in 1997, 8.6 percent in 1998, and 8.1 percent in 1999.

A Chi-square test of significance reveals that the percentage of change across the four years are not significantly different ($X^2=7.2$, $p=.065$). However, frequencies of violent crime incidents in 1997 are significantly different from 1996 frequencies of violent crime incidents ($X^2=4.54$, $p=.033$) and from 1999 frequencies ($X^2=5.75$, $p=.016$). There were no significant differences between the frequency of violent crime incidents in 1997 and 1998, nor were 1996 figures significantly different from 1999 figures.

Can these data support the hypothesis that law enforcement efforts connected with Weed and Seed to reduce violent crime were successful? The meaningful test of this is a comparison of the violent crime incident data for Weed and Seed against the remainder of the city. Figure 6A.1, below, shows that after the second year of the project (1996), the percentage of violent crime incidents had actually increased in the Weed and Seed

Figure 6A.1



target area and decreased in the rest of the city. Although a slight decrease in violent crime incidents was noted in the target area during the following two years (1998 and 1999), the general trend over a four year period is certainly less than promising.

By any and all measurable standards, violent crime not only persists but remains disproportionate in the Weed and Seed target area, and has not been significantly reduced over the life of this project.

2. Drug Crimes: 1996 - 1999

For purposes of this analysis, drug crimes included possession for sale and sales/distribution of illicit drugs. Collectively, in 1996 and 1997, drug crime incidents comprised 4.2 percent and 4.5 percent, respectively, of the four crime categories we examined. In 1999, that percent had increased by more than three percentage points to 7.8 percent of the four categories. Table 6A.2, below, details the absolute and relative frequencies of drug crime incidents over the four year period, comparing Weed and Seed neighborhoods to the rest of the City of Savannah.

Table 6A.2

Drug Crime Incidents: Weed and Seed Area vs. Remainder of the City (1996-1999)

Years	Weed and Seed		City of Savannah*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1996	41	10%	358	90%
1997	44	10%	381	90%
1998	60	10%	557	90%
1999	52	7%	684	93%

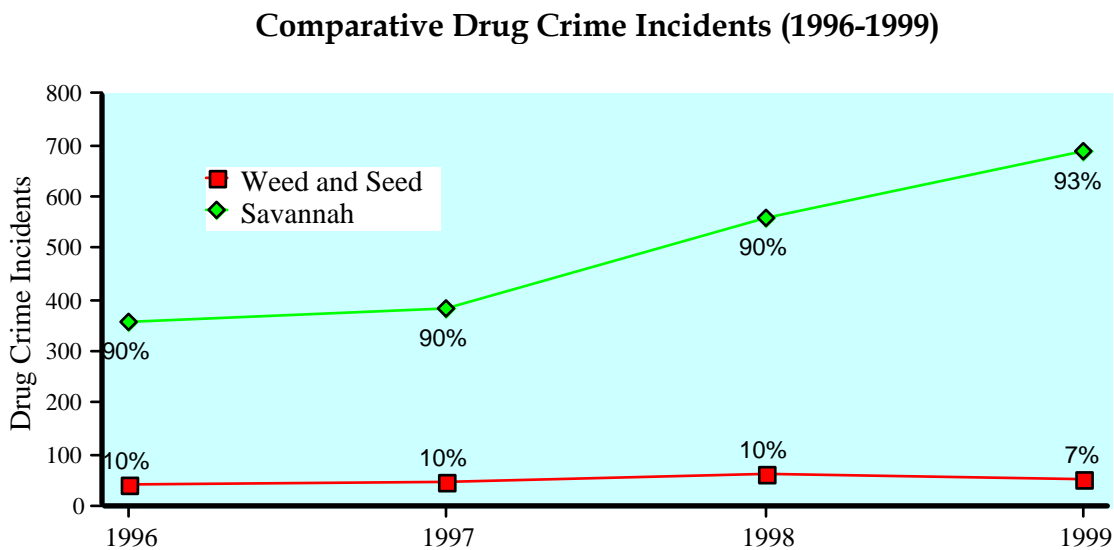
*Excluding Weed and Seed neighborhoods

As the above table indicates, relative to the rest of the city, the percentage of drug crime incidents in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods were fairly constant over a three year period (1996-1998). In 1999, that percent declined to seven percent of the total drug crime incidents.

As with the trend of violent crime incidents across this four year period, the Chi-square test of significance reveals that the change in annual percentage rates are not significant for this category ($X^2=5.47$, $p=.14$). However, frequencies of drug crime incidents in 1997 are significantly different from 1999 frequencies ($X^2=3.84$, $p=.05$). There were no significant differences between any of the other annual periods.

The goal of eliminating drug trafficking in the Weed and Seed area was undoubtedly overly ambitious if it is taken literally. (Although, a significant drop in drug crime incidents over previous years was evident in 1999, by any measurable standards, drug activity persists in the target area, and has not been eliminated or substantially reduced at any time during the grant period). The relevant evaluation question is whether or not activities that can be linked to Weed and Seed had an impact in diminishing drug activity in the target area during 1999. Relevant to this is whether or not any measured reductions in drug activity in the target area have occurred through displacement of this activity to other parts of the city.

Figure 6A.2



As indicated in Figure 6A.2, above, the actual number of drug crime incidents in the rest of the city increased annually over the term of the project.

The bottom line is that drug dealing is a dynamic activity. Open-air drug dealers may tend to congregate in a certain area, but in reality, are free to move about as they wish. Drug dealers are typically transient, working certain areas for a few months, and then readily moving to a new location when selective law enforcement measures target a

specific area. By associating or identifying drug problems with a certain area (like the Weed and Seed neighborhoods), an overall understanding of the scale of drug dealing can be skewed. That is, progress may appear to be being made when the number of incidents in an identified area show a significant decline; however, if it has merely moved outside the area of selective enforcement, then it becomes a false assumption.

3. Public Nuisance Crimes: 1996 - 1999

For this analysis, public nuisance crimes included disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, loitering, and curfew violations. Collectively, in 1996 and 1997, public nuisance crimes constituted 12 percent and 11.4 percent, respectively, of the four crime categories

Table 6A.3

Public Nuisance Crime Incidents: Weed and Seed Area vs. Remainder of the City (1996-1999)

Years	Weed and Seed		City of Savannah*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1996	84	7%	1045	93%
1997	61	6%	1024	94%
1998	42	5%	786	95%
1999	60	7%	747	93%

*Excluding Weed and Seed neighborhoods

examined. By 1999, that percent had decreased to 8.6 percent of the four categories. Table 6A.3, above, details the absolute and relative frequencies of public nuisance crime incidents over the four year period, comparing Weed and Seed neighborhoods to the rest of the City of Savannah.

As the above table indicates, relative to the rest of the City, the percentage of public nuisance crime incidents in Weed and Seed neighborhoods show a constant decline of

one percent per year from 1996 through 1998. In 1999, the overall percentage of public nuisance crimes increased to their 1996 level of seven percent.

A Chi-square test of significance reveals that the differences across the four years are not significant ($X^2=6.99$, $p=.072$). However, frequencies of public nuisance violations in 1996 are significantly different from 1998 frequencies ($X^2=4.45$, $p=.035$), and 1998 frequencies are significantly different from 1999 frequencies ($X^2=3.90$, $p=.048$).

Although a significant drop in the number of public nuisance crimes was evident from 1996 through 1998 in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods, the remainder of the city experienced a similar decline in the number of public nuisance incidents during the same period of time. Moreover, the 1999 figures for the city, excluding the Weed and Seed target area, indicate a continuation of this trend while incidents in the target area showed a significant increase, from a low of forty-two in 1998 to sixty in 1999.

Figure 6A.3

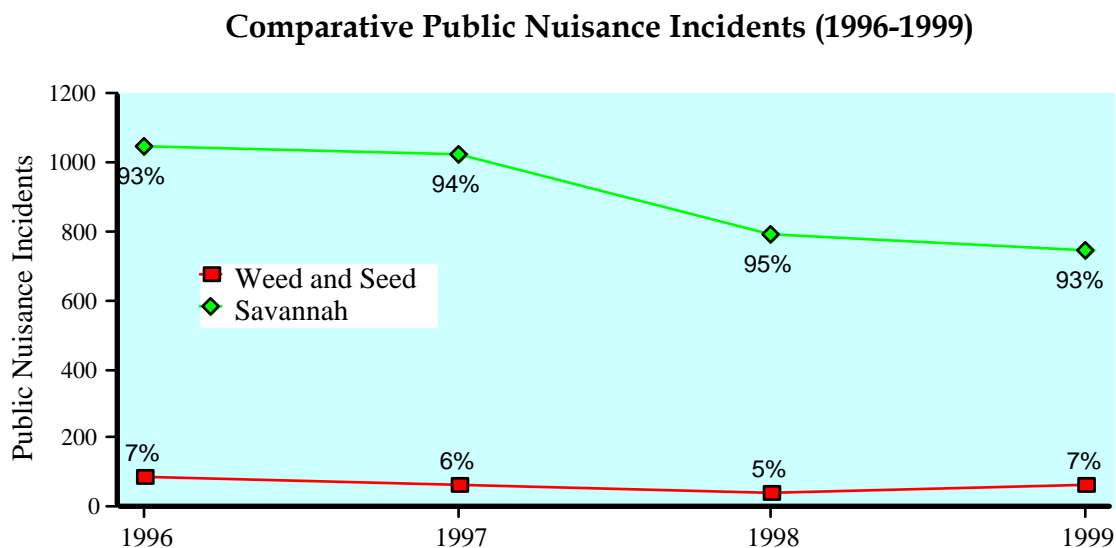


Figure 6A.3, above, compares the four year trend of public nuisance incidents for the Weed and Seed target area against the remainder of the city.

4. Simple Assaults: 1996 - 1999

By far, simple assaults represent the largest single category of crime incidents in the present analysis. In 1996, simple assaults comprised 52 percent of the total number of crime incidents in the four categories. In both 1997 and 1999, simple assaults accounted for 54 percent of the total crime incidents we examined.

Table 6A.4

**Simple Assault Incidents: Weed and Seed Area vs. Remainder of the City
(1996-1999)**

Years	Weed and Seed		City of Savannah*	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1996	451	9%	4432	91%
1997	500	10%	4638	90%
1998	460	9%	4576	91%
1999	452	9%	4662	91%

*Excluding Weed and Seed neighborhoods

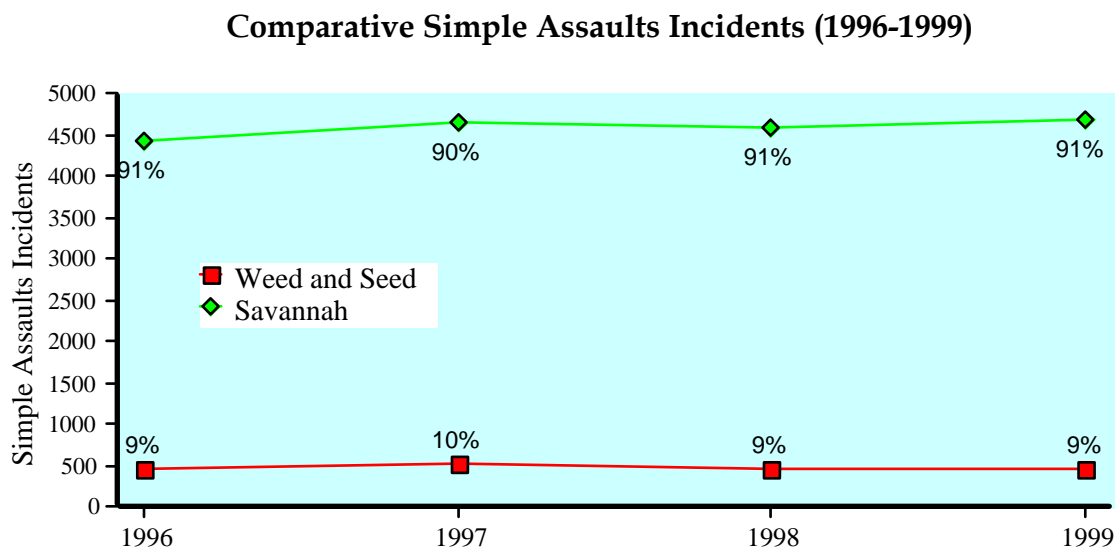
Table 6A.4, above, details the absolute and relative frequencies of public nuisance crime incidents over the four year period, comparing Weed and Seed neighborhoods to the rest of the City of Savannah.

As Table 6A.4 indicates, the percentage of simple assaults in the Weed and Seed target area have remained fairly stable throughout the four year period from 1996 through 1999. Nine percent of simple assaults occurred in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods during 1996. The percentage of simple assaults show a slight increase in 1997 to ten percent, with equal declines of one percent in 1998 and 1999. No significant differences in frequencies were observed across any of the annual periods.

Figure 6A.4, below, compares the four year trend of simple assault incidents for the Weed and Seed target area against the rest of the city. As previously indicated, minimal

variation of crime incidents in this category occurred in the Weed and Seed target area and the City of Savannah during the course of this project.

Figure 6A.4



Section B

Crime Rates: Weed and Seed Target Area vs. The City of Savannah

While the discussion, the tables, and the figures in Section A show that there are substantially *fewer* crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area compared to the rest of the City of Savannah, the population total of the Weed and Seed neighborhoods constitutes only about four percent of the City population. A better comparison would take into account the different population sizes using a measure of the incidence of crime expressed as the number of crimes per unit of population, frequently reported as “crime rates.” In other words, crime rates are often used instead of total numbers because they are more comparable across differing population sizes.

Moreover, crime rates may be computed for groups of offenses (such as our violent crime category, which is an accumulation of six specific crimes), or for a specific offense within a category (such as homicide). Expressing the amount of crime in terms of rates shows whether an increase or a decrease in crime results from a change in population or a change in the amount of crimes committed.

In an effort to equalize this inequity, crime rates per 1,000 population living in the Weed and Seed target area and for the remainder of the City (excluding Weed and Seed neighborhoods) were computed using incidents in each of the four crime categories (violent crimes, drug offenses, public nuisance crimes and simple assaults) over the four year period (1996 - 1999). Figure 6B.1, below, shows a diagrammatic representation of the crime rate formula used for our calculations between these two differing populations.

For example, suppose we want to compare violent crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area and the rest of the city for 1996. To enable such a comparison, a population base, for our purposes “per 1,000 people” was arbitrarily chosen. Then the total number of violent crime incidents for 1996 in a given area (e.g., Weed and Seed or

Figure 6B.1

Crime Rate Calculation Formula

$\text{CRIME RATE} = \frac{\text{NUMBER OF CRIME INCIDENTS}}{\text{TOTAL POPULATION}} \times 1,000$

the City of Savannah, excluding Weed and Seed) is divided by the total population of that area. When those calculations are made for the target year of 1996, the rate of

violent crime incidents is 45.8 per 1,000 people for the Weed and Seed target area and 21.5 for the remainder of the city. Therefore, according to these figures, in 1996, the rate of violent crime incidents in the Weed and Seed area was more than twice the rate for the remainder of the city.

As illustrated by this example, a much different picture of crime emerges when we examine these data proportionate to the population of the two areas. Table 6B.1, below, compares the crime rates for these two subpopulations for each of the four crime categories for calendar years 1996 - 1999.

As this table indicates, crime rates across all four categories and for all four years are markedly higher in the Weed and Seed target area as compared to the rest of the City. For example, violent crimes in 1997 were 2.6 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed neighborhoods than in the rest of the City. By 1999, that proportion had fallen to 2.1. Drug crimes in 1997 were 2.7 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed neighborhoods than the rest of the City. In 1999, drug crimes were 1.8 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed neighborhoods. Public nuisance crimes were 1.4 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed areas than the rest of the City in 1997; by 1999, that proportion had risen to 1.9. In 1997, simple assaults were 2.5 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed neighborhoods than in the rest of Savannah. In 1999, simple assaults were 2.3 times more likely to occur in Weed and Seed areas. Figures 6B.2 through 6B.5, below, detail the comparative trend in crime rates in the Weed and Seed target area and for the City of Savannah for each crime category over the four year period discussed in this report.

Table 6B.1**Crime Rates: Weed and Seed Target Area vs. Remainder of the City (1996 - 1999)¹**

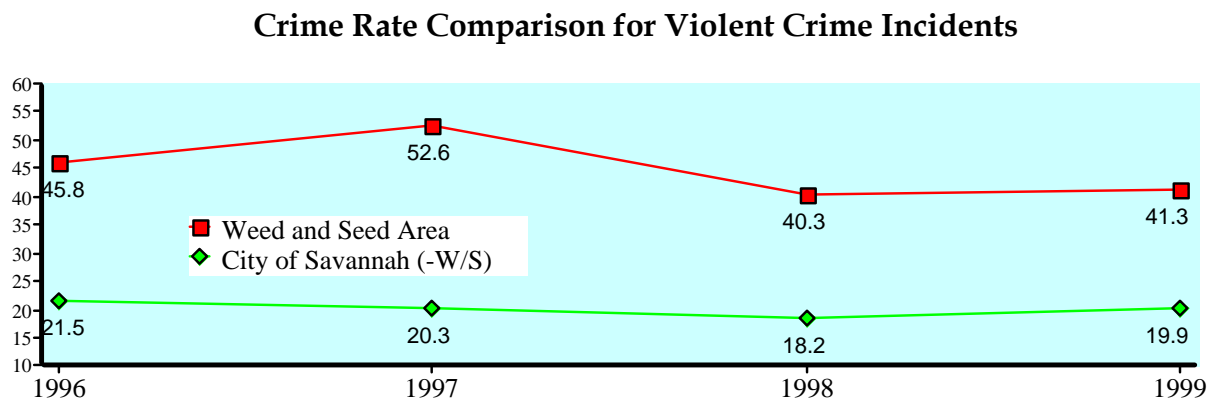
Crime Incident Category	Year	Weed and Seed Crime Rate²	City of Savannah Crime Rate²
Violent Crimes	1996	45.8	21.5
	1997	52.6	20.3
	1998	40.3	18.2
	1999	41.3	19.9
Drug Crimes	1996	7.5	2.8
	1997	8.0	3.0
	1998	11.0	4.3
	1999	9.5	5.3
Public Nuisance Crimes	1996	15.3	8.2
	1997	11.1	8.0
	1998	7.7	6.1
	1999	11.0	5.8
Simple Assaults	1996	82.3	34.6
	1997	91.3	36.2
	1998	84.0	35.7
	1999	82.5	36.4

1. Base total populations were derived from 1990 census populations. While the base denominators are only approximate estimates of the populations of the two areas, it is not likely that these populations have changed dramatically over the four-year period.

2. Crime rate = x incidents per 1,000 persons.

Figure 6B.2, below, indicates a relatively consistent trend in the crime rate for violent crimes in the City of Savannah over the four year period. When compared to 1996, a slight decline in the violent crime rate is noted for both 1997 and 1998; however, an increase in the rate almost equal to the two year decline is evident for 1999.

Figure 6B.2



Although significantly higher than the rest of the city, the crime rate for violent crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area are less consistent than the rates in this category for the rest of the city. During the four year period, rates for violent crime show a substantial increase from 1996 through 1997, followed by a larger decrease in 1998. Similar to rates for the rest of the city, a slight increase is evident for 1999, although significantly lower than the 1997 rate.

Figure 6B.3, below, shows the crime rate comparison for drug crime incidents. As indicated, the four year crime rate for drug offenses show a less consistent and more disturbing trend than the rate for violent crime in the City of Savannah. The crime rate for drug crime incidents increased steadily from 1996 through 1999. In 1996, the crime rate was 2.8; in 1997 it was 3; in 1998 it was 4.3 and in 1999 it was 5.3, for an overall increase of more than 89 percent from 1996 to 1999.

Although significantly higher than the rest of the city, the crime rate figures for drug offenses in the Weed and Seed target area are somewhat more consistent than the drug crime incident rates for the remainder of the city. Crime rates in this category did increase at an alarming rate from 1996 through 1998 (from 7.5 to 11, respectively). However, the drug incident crime rate declined in 1999 from the previous four year

high noted in 1998. The 1999 rate of 9.5 was more than 25 percent higher than the rate in 1996.

Figure 6B.3

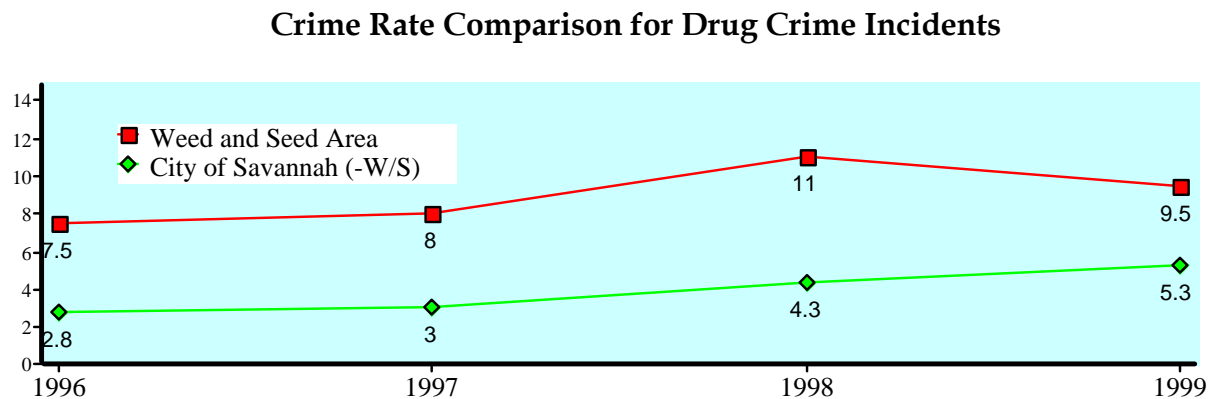


Figure 6B.4, below, shows the comparative rate for public nuisance crime. As indicated, the four year crime rate trend for public nuisance crimes in the City of Savannah show a general downward trend. In 1996, the crime rate for public nuisance incidents was 8.2; in 1997 it was 8; in 1998 it was 6.1 and in 1999 it was 5.8, for overall decrease of more than 29 percent from 1996 to 1999. Although significantly higher than the rest of the city, the crime rate figures for public nuisance incidents in the Weed and Seed target area declined during the first three years (from a high of 15.3 in 1996 to a low of 7.7 in 1998). This trend reversed in 1999 when the crime rate figure for this category increased by 3.3 crimes per 1,000 to match the 1997 rate of eleven.

Figure 6B.4

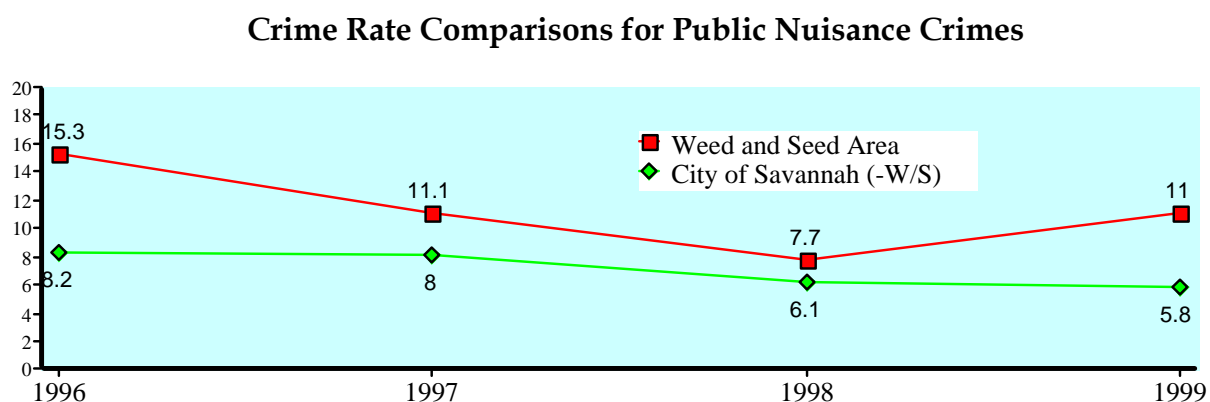


Figure 6B.5

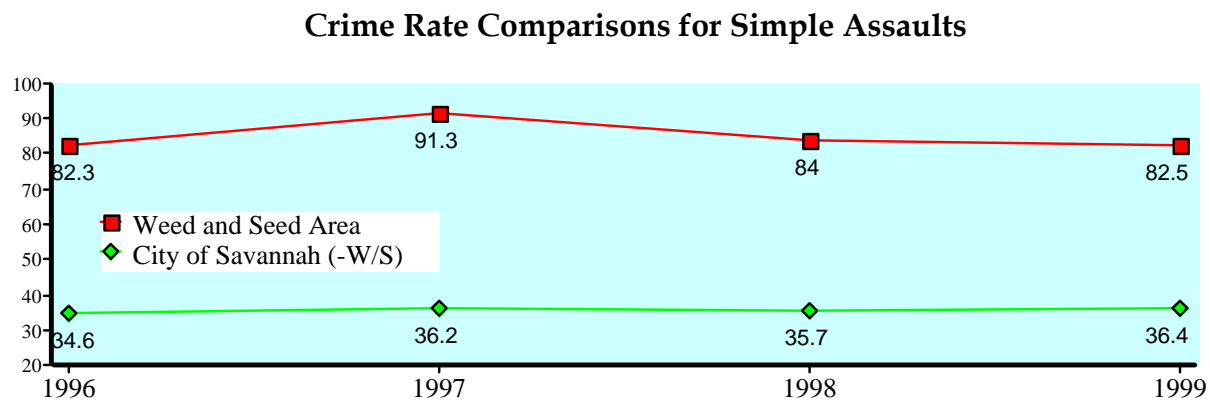


Figure 6B.5, above, details the comparative crime rates for simple assaults. As indicated, the four year crime rate trend for this category remained relatively consistent in the City of Savannah over the four year evaluation period. In 1996, the crime rate was 34.6; in 1997 it was 36.2; in 1998 it was 35.7; and, in 1999 it was 36.4. The 1999 rate for this category indicates an overall increase of less than 5 percent when compared to the 1996 rate.

In the Weed and Seed target area crime rates for simple assaults were relatively consistent over the four year period. Similar to rates for the rest of the city, a slight increase is evident from the 1996 rate of 82.3, to the 1997 rate of 91.3. The rate continued to drop in 1998 and 1999 to 84 and 82.5 respectively. The 1999 rate for this category is virtually identical to the rate indicated for 1996.

Section C

Crime Trends in the Weed and Seed Target Area

This section includes a collective and individual trend analysis of crime and drug incidents in the Weed and Seed target area from 1996 through 1999.

1. Collective Crime Incident Trend Analysis (1996 - 1999)

Table 6C.1 and Figure 6C.1, below, show the collective crime incident frequency data using the four crime categories previously discussed. The percentages indicated refer to the percent of incidents in a specific category relative to the rest of the City for that particular year.

Table 6C.1

Crime Incident Data in the Weed and Seed Target Area (1996 - 1999).

Crime Incident Category	1996		1997		1998		1999	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Violent Crimes ¹	251	8%	288	10%	221	9%	226	8%
Drug Crimes ²	41	10%	44	10%	60	10%	52	7%
Public Nuisance ³	84	7%	61	6%	42	5%	60	7%
Simple Assaults	451	9%	500	10%	460	9%	452	9%

1. Includes homicide, rape, aggravated assault, non-commercial burglary, non-commercial robbery, and weapons violations.

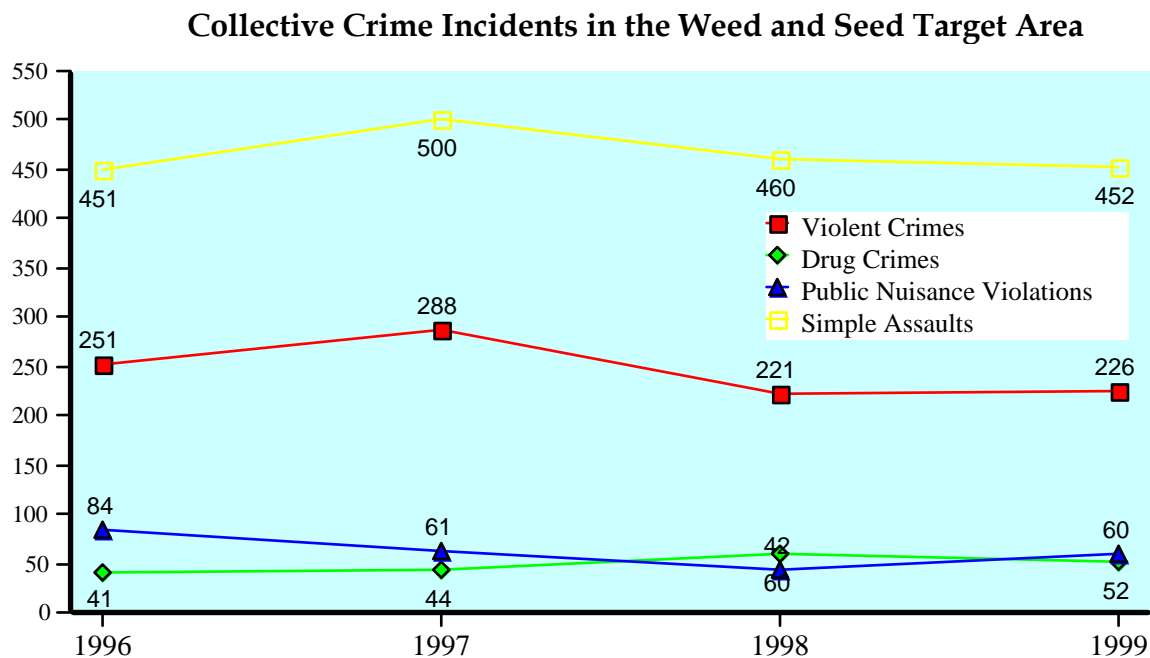
2. Includes possession for sale and sales of illicit drugs.

3. Includes disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, and loitering.

As indicated in Table 6C.1, the number of violent crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area in 1999 (n=226), declined by about 10 percent since 1996 (n=251). During the same period of time, drug crime incidents increased by about 27 percent (52 vs. 41, respectively); public nuisance violations declined by about 29 percent (60 vs. 84, respectively); and the number of simple assaults varied only slightly (452 vs. 451, respectively).

As indicated by Figure 6C.1, the frequencies of violent crimes, drug crimes, public nuisance violations, and simple assaults in 1996 differed significantly from 1998 incidents ($p < .000$). Likewise, crime incident frequencies were significantly different in

Figure 6C.1



1997 compared to 1998 ($p < .001$). Crime incident frequencies in 1996 were not significantly different from 1997 and 1999, nor were they significantly different for our target years of 1997 vs. 1999. In fact, there were no significant differences between any of the three previous years and 1999.

2. Individual Crime Trend Analysis (1996 - 1999)

A more meaningful picture of violent crime and drug activity in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods is achieved when the individual offenses are examined. Table 6C.2 and Figure 6C.2, below, show the number of homicides, rapes, aggravated assaults, non-commercial burglaries, non-commercial robberies and weapons offenses in the Weed and Seed target area from 1996 - 1999. Drug activity is also broken down into possession for sale and distribution/sales of illicit drugs. The percentages in Table 6C.2 represent the percent of specific offenses relative to the rest of the City of Savannah.

Table 6C.2**Specific Crime and Drug Incidents in the Weed and Seed Area (1996 - 1999)**

Crime Incident Category	1996		1997		1998		1999	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
Violent Crimes								
Homicide	2	9.5	3	12.0	3	11.5	5	11.9
Rape	6	6.6	2	2.2	4	5.3	12	14.0
Robbery	63	8.8	48	9.4	39	8.2	30	5.7
Aggravated Assault	39	8.2	59	12.6	64	14.3	52	10.6
Burglary	123	8.1	155	9.8	98	7.1	115	7.7
Weapons Offenses	18	9.6	21	9.8	13	8.5	12	8.9
Totals	251	8.4	288	10.0	221	8.6	226	8.1
Drug Offenses								
Distribution/Sales	5	9.8	8	17.0	6	10.0	3	21.4
Possession for Sale	36	10.0	36	9.5	54	9.7	49	6.8
Totals	41	10.3	44	10.4	60	9.7	52	7.1

An examination of the total number of violent crime incidents detailed in Table 6C.2, indicates that over the four-year period, violent crimes in the Weed and Seed target area peaked at ten percent of the City's total in 1997; by 1999, this category had declined to 8.1 percent of the total. A closer analysis of the individual crimes within the violent crime category reveals a somewhat different picture, particularly with respect to rape offenses. In 1997, rape incidents in the Weed and Seed area represented 2.2 percent of all rapes in the City of Savannah; however, in 1999, rape incidents in Weed and Seed neighborhoods were 14 percent of the total for the city.

Compared to 1997, by 1999, non-commercial robberies and aggravated assaults in the Weed and Seed area had decreased relative to the overall incidents of reported non-

commercial robberies and aggravated assaults in Savannah, but these percentages were still not as low as they were in 1996.

In addition, non-commercial burglaries in the Weed and Seed area constituted almost ten percent of the total burglaries in Savannah in 1997. By 1999, however, the percentage of non-commercial burglaries in the Weed and Seed neighborhoods declined to 7.7 percent of the total for the city. Likewise, the number of weapons offenses in the Weed and Seed area were down in 1999, compared to 1996 and 1997; however, the percentage of these offenses remained relatively consistent over the four-year period.

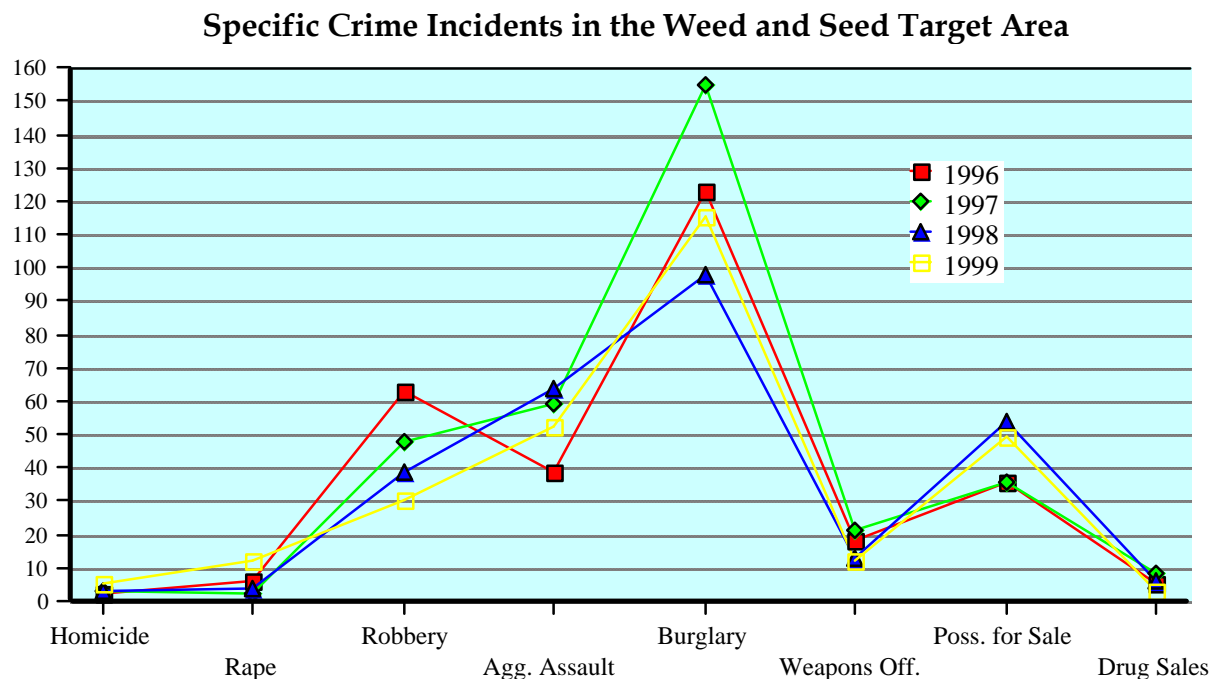
The pattern of specific drug offenses reveals a similar picture, although the actual numbers were higher, the percentage of reported incidents of possession for sale in 1999 were 6.8 percent of the total reported incidents for the City of Savannah, considerably less than reported in 1996 and 1997 (10 and 9.5 percent, respectively). Reported incidents of distribution/sales of illicit drugs, however, increased over time from 17 percent in 1997, to more than 21 percent in 1999.¹

Figure 6C.2, below, details the four-year trends for homicide, rape, non-commercial robbery, non-commercial burglary, aggravated assault, weapons offenses, possession of drugs for sale, and the sale/distribution of illicit drugs.

What does this analysis of specific violent crime offenses from 1996 through 1999 really tell us? While 1999 occurrences for four of the offenses--non-commercial robbery, aggravated assault, non-commercial burglary, and weapons offenses--are down from the 1997 figures, the decreases are slight. Aggravated assault and burglary are down

¹ This analysis of drug activity should be interpreted with extreme caution and may not reflect a true assessment of drug related activity within the Weed and Seed area and the rest of the City. Recorded incidents involving drug offenses are only maintained by the Savannah Police Department if the incident is not related to some other type of criminal activity. For example, if an individual commits a more serious violent crime during an drug transaction, the data entry will only reflect the more serious violation.

Figure 6C.2



about two percent relative to the rest of the city; weapons offenses are about one percent lower; and, relative incidents of non-commercial burglaries are almost four percent lower than they were in 1997. However, homicides in the Weed and Seed area are still 12 percent of the total homicides in Savannah, and reported rape offenses in the Weed and Seed area have increased by 12 percent since 1997. As an aside, we need to remember that we have no way of knowing the true incidence of rape, and these figures only report an increase in reporting behavior, not actual incidents.

By all measurable standards, the analyses of reported crime incident data in this chapter show that Weed and Seed neighborhoods are still severely over-represented by violent crimes, drug crimes, simple assaults, and public nuisance violations. Unfortunately, little has changed over the life of the Weed and Seed project.

Chapter 7

Conclusions

Introduction

This evaluation was conducted to compare certain elements of Savannah's Weed and Seed program with findings noted in the last documented assessment of this project. Baseline data for this comparison were provided by a program evaluation of this site conducted by the University of Charleston in September, 1997.

The present evaluation employed three sources of information to arrive at the findings contained herein: 1) A household telephone survey of a randomized sample of residents in the Weed and Seed target area; 2) A survey of police officers participating in the "weed" portion of the program, along with Weed and Seed committee meeting minutes and quarterly reports; and 3) Reported crime incident data from the target area and from the City of Savannah.

The household survey, conducted over a period of about 45 days, contacted at random 1,190 target households to obtain a sample of 341 respondents for a 95 percent confidence interval and an error rate of +/- 5 percent. To permit comparability, this community satisfaction survey was constructed to reflect, as closely as possible, the University of Charleston's 1997 door-to-door survey conducted in the same target area.

The police officer survey was administered to eight Savannah police officers and nine Chatham County Counter Narcotics Task Force officers, all of whom had participated in the "weed" portion of the program at some time during the period of the Weed and Seed project. In addition, supervisory and managerial personnel from both agencies, as well as the leadership of the Savannah Weed and Seed office, were interviewed.

The Savannah Police Department provided for analysis, crime data for the period of January, 1996 through December, 1999. Four categories of crime were analyzed: violent crime (e.g., homicide, rape, non-commercial robbery, non-commercial burglary, aggravated assault, and weapons violations); drug offenses (possession for sale and sales); public nuisance offenses (disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, and loitering); and, simple assaults.

Community Satisfaction Survey Comparison

1. Personal Safety and Neighborhood Satisfaction

In 1997, 91.6 percent of target area survey respondents were black, compared to 84.3 percent in 1999. Respondents for both periods were overwhelming female (64.8 percent in 1997; 67.4 percent in 1999). Home ownership was slightly higher for 1999 respondents (59.8 percent owned homes) compared with 1997 respondents (53.7 percent).

For both periods, respondents were similarly likely to believe their neighborhoods were safe (55.8 percent in 1997; 56.3 percent in 1999) and to believe that their neighborhoods were safer than the previous year (45.5 percent and 49.6 percent, respectively). With regard to drug dealing and trafficking in the target area, 34.9 percent of the 1997 survey respondents believed there was “a lot” of drug activity in their neighborhoods, compared with a slightly higher percentage (43.1) of the 1999 respondents.

In addition, slightly more respondents in the 1999 survey believed drug sales had *increased* in their neighborhoods over the previous year than did respondents in the 1997 survey (16.1 percent vs. 12.5 percent). However, a greater proportion of 1999 respondents believed drug sales had actually *decreased* than those responding to the 1997 survey (31.4 percent vs. 25.6 percent). Finally, a larger percentage of respondents

in the earlier survey, compared to the later survey, indicated that drug sales had remained about the same (58.7 percent vs. 33.7 percent, respectively).

The findings regarding perceptions of trends in violent crimes closely followed those concerning drug sales. A higher proportion (58.7 percent) of 1997 respondents than 1999 respondents (39 percent) believed the incidence of violent crime in their neighborhoods had not changed from the previous year. In addition, more respondents in the 1999 survey believed both that violent crime had increased (13.8 percent) or had decreased (31.1 percent) than did respondents in the 1997 survey (12.5 percent and 25.6 percent, respectively).

Survey results also showed that 1999 respondents were more likely than their 1997 counterparts to have known a crime victim (31.4 percent vs. 22.1 percent) in the previous year. However, the same surveys show that these victims were equally likely to have contacted the police regarding these crimes (77.6 percent in 1999 and 75.7 percent in 1997). Moreover, slightly fewer respondents in the 1999 survey (75.4 percent) than in the 1997 survey (84 percent) believed that the only way to get anything done about crime and drugs in their neighborhood was for the neighborhood residents to help themselves.

2. Effectiveness of Police Services

For both survey periods, residents were equally likely to report the presence of police in their neighborhoods (70.8 percent for 1997; 66.6 percent for 1999). However, respondents in the 1999 survey reported seeing them more frequently (66.7 percent at least six times a week) than 1997 respondents (43.9 percent six times per week or more). Not only were police reported more frequently visible in 1999, they were also observed to be more “proactive.” For example, in the 1999 survey, making arrests, chatting with

residents, and conducting foot patrol comprised 43.5 percent of respondent observations of police activity as compared to 12.2 percent for the same activity in 1997.

In terms of police effectiveness in controlling drugs and crime in their neighborhoods, 40.2 percent of 1997 respondents agreed that the police were doing as much as they could. In 1999, 55.4 percent of respondents believed the police were doing a “good” or “very good” job in controlling neighborhood crime and 42.8 percent in doing a “good” or “very good” job in controlling neighborhood drug problems. If added to those percentages were opinions that the police were doing at least a fair job, the effectiveness ratings would rise to 84.1 percent and 68.9 percent, respectively. In short, there appears to be a positive shift in the residents’ assessment of police in controlling crime and drugs in the target area.

These findings are particularly noteworthy in light of the fact that police manpower allocation to the target area had been markedly cut due to precipitous declines in federal funding over the last two years of the project. Yet respondents during both periods appear to feel equally safe. Moreover, respondents in the latter period claimed they saw the police more frequently, saw them engaged in more proactive work, and viewed them as doing a better job in controlling crime and drugs in the target area than in previous years, when staffing was higher. And although a greater percentage of respondents in 1999 believed drugs and violence had increased in their neighborhoods than in 1997, a greater proportion of them also reported that violence and drugs had declined compared to 1997 responses.

3. Programs and Services in the Neighborhood

Neighborhood programs and services provide residents with information and skills to mobilize and leverage resources to revitalize their communities. In comparing the 1997 and 1999 survey periods, results showed that resident awareness of the Weed and Seed

Program in Savannah remained unchanged. For example, slightly more than half (55.1 percent of 1997 respondents and 53.1 percent of 1999 respondents) were aware of the program. Furthermore, most respondents did not know or were unsure of the program's purpose (54 percent in 1997; 60.8 percent in 1999). In addition even though an integral part of the Weed and Seed program (the St. Pius Family Resource Center) was well known to the respondents, awareness of it had declined from 1997 to 1999 (from 85.9 percent to 73 percent). Paradoxically, respondents in the 1999 survey reported a higher frequency for visited, participating in, or otherwise using the facility than 1997 residents (45.8 percent to 35.9 percent). Last, the 1999 results also showed an increase over 1997 in resident participation in neighborhood association programs (from 18.6 percent to 31.4 percent).

Police Officer Survey, Quarterly Reports and Committee Meeting Minutes

This portion of the evaluation sought to survey the opinions of those officers assigned to the Weed and Seed area for the period of 1997-1999. Staff wanted to ascertain officer's views on any obstacles they experienced to program implementation, the extent of interagency cooperation, the adequacy of resources to meet the demands of the project, levels of understanding program responsibility, programmatic gaps, and any recommendations for change.

In an effort to render a more complete account of the variables of interest in this study (e.g., program obstacles, interagency cooperation, gaps in service, and the like), evaluation staff also reviewed the content of quarterly Weed and Seed Reports issued from the Savannah Weed and Seed Department for the period of 1997 through 1999, and the minutes from the Weed and Seed Steering Committee quarterly meetings for the same period. Special attention was paid to those parts of the reports which referred to joint street enforcement operations, interagency communication, intelligence sharing, and any interpretations (explicit or implicit) of the remarks found therein.

Both Chatham County Counter Narcotics Taskforce (CNT) and Savannah Police Department (SPD) officers with enforcement duties in Weed and Seed responded to the survey. There was some dissonance among the CNT and SPD respondents concerning the program's "weed" mission in that a few had a narrower view of the mission than the rest. For example, about half of the CNT officers emphasized the mission of reducing or controlling crime in the target area. The remainder were more sharply focused on a mission that dovetailed with their specific role in the target area--chiefly, if not solely, the eradication of drugs, their dealers, and distribution.

Some SPD officers viewed the chief mission to be one of improving the quality of life for the residents, or enhancing the impression that residents had ownership in the neighborhood and the solution for its problems. Others said the mission was to restore vacant buildings, to beautify neighborhoods, to gain the trust of the community, weed out crime and the criminal element, or to eliminate drugs in the neighborhood.

In terms of the sufficiency of resources, most of CNT officers responded that the personnel, equipment, money, and materiel were adequate to the task of pursuing the "weed" mission of the program. Most SPD officers on the other hand, said they were not. They cited insufficient manpower, inadequate funding, and insufficient equipment.

In terms of the level of cooperation, CNT responses ranged from "very good" to "adequate" to "poor." Cooperation was apparently good at first, but degenerated with the arrest of 11 SPD officers for drug trafficking in 1998. (The CNT played a role in those arrests, which naturally created barriers to coordination, communication, cooperation, and intelligence sharing between SPD and CNT). SPD officers on the whole exhibited a far more favorable view of the extent and level of cooperation among the various Weed and Seed law enforcement agencies.

In terms of problems to implementing the “weed” portion of the program, most CNT officers claimed not to be aware of any. SPD officers cited “upper management” or the “command structure” as impediments to implementation because it promoted “image-over-substance,” did not understand or failed to articulate agency responsibilities for drug enforcement, and was guilty of shoddy program budgeting, spending decisions, and poor organization

The majority of respondents from both agencies maintained that they understood their respective roles well or very well and made similar claims about other law enforcement agencies in the target area. In addition, the vast majority of officers reported few gaps in the “weeding” portion of the program. Those that were mentioned included inadequate intelligence sharing, missing street addresses, and the inability to identify known traffickers and dealers in the target area, and too much emphasis on short-term results,

Strategies for improving the Weed and Seed program included: better cooperation, especially regarding videotaping and photographing street subjects for the purpose of improving suspect identification; redrawing Weed and Seed neighborhood boundaries; and redirecting money and resources for investigations to areas outside the target area which could impact drug trafficking in that area. Other strategies include “putting officers in low-cost housing with low mortgage rates in the target area,” more community leadership to make the program effective, more funding, planning and budgeting decisions be moved to the operational level, and consolidation of duplicative seed programs.

The Weed and Seed Director stated that the primary mission of the weed component was to intensify crime and drug suppression in the target area in a coordinated manner. The U.S. Attorney’s representative saw the main mission as one of re-establishing the community’s confidence in law enforcement by making the community a working

partner in identifying crime, setting goals and priorities, and to weed out the criminal element in the target area. He also saw the promotion of collaboration among federal, state, and local agencies as part of that mission. The CNT Commander viewed the weed mission to be that of removing, in as far as possible, the criminal elements that can dominate an inner city neighborhood.

The Weed and Seed Director noted that the drop in funding in 1997 affected the weeding component sufficiently to show that increased patrols and involvement with the community prior to funding declines make a difference. The U.S. Attorney's representative believed resources were sufficient to successfully pursue the "weed" mandate.

Both the Program Director and the U.S. Attorney's representative remarked that, on the whole, cooperation was good among the various police and enforcement agencies working in the target area. However, the Director pointed out the level of cooperation varied among the agencies, with some alliances stronger than others and some in conflict from time to time. Responsibility for the program then frequently shifted within that agency, and he believed that the lack of a designated Weed and Seed coordinator for SPD made coordination with them difficult. The CNT Commander saw a mostly cooperative effort between his unit and SPD units marred by the arrest and conviction of eleven SPD officers for drug trafficking. The CNT was involved in that long-term investigation, along with the FBI and the GBI. The Commander also observed that since the creation of CNT, it appears that other area police agencies have passed all the drug problems to them as if these agencies not longer had responsibility for drug enforcement.

The most evident gap in the "weed" portion of the program, according to the Director, was the need to improve coordination and communication. The U.S. Attorney's representative saw the chief problem as one of sustaining the interests among the

participating law enforcement agencies. Nonetheless, both believed law enforcement units assigned to work in Weed and Seed understood their respective roles. Due to the depletion of grant moneys, the Director recommended that new funding sources be sought to sustain weeding efforts. The U.S. Attorney's representative recommended greater deployment of bicycle patrol, the development of Y-Team programs, expansion of the crime prevention unit, coordination of the POP program, and more street-officer involvement in the programs daily work.

An analysis of Weed and Seed quarterly reports and minutes of quarterly meetings was undertaken to determine the extent of written documentation of multi-agency coordination and cooperation among police for the last three years of the grant (1997-1999). The quarterly meeting minutes and quarterly reports for the three-year period indicate a fairly routine acknowledgment of the need to improve communication and cooperation among city and county law enforcement assigned to Weed and Seed

In short, cooperation and collaboration among the various law enforcement agencies operating in the target area appears to be viewed by most program participants as adequate. Nonetheless, it is also true that the need to improve both, particularly between SPD and CNT, was universally recognized in the surveys, the reports, and the minutes. Further, the absence of consistent, reliable cooperation between the two units was seen as a barrier to effective weeding. As federal funding began to decline in 1997, so did the interest of some police units operating in the Weed and Seed area. Personnel were often reassigned outside the target area. Evidence of collaborative efforts among police agencies are sparse. Nonetheless, the source for this conclusion consists of quarterly reports and minutes which by their intended nature are succinct and concise. The collaboration noted in these reports and minutes is mostly comprised of joint efforts among *intra*-agency units. Inter-agency cooperation seems to be sporadic and not well-organized.

Crime Incident Data Analysis

Reducing crime and drug trafficking is viewed as one of the most important goals of the Savannah Weed and Seed Program, and as such, is an important indicator of the program's overall success. For the purpose of this evaluation, violent crimes included homicide, rape, non-commercial robbery, non-commercial burglary, aggravated assault, and weapons violations. Staff evaluated crime data in terms of 1) the proportion of crime incidents in the Weed and Seed target area, relative to the entire city; 2) crime rates within the target area compared to overall city crime rates; and, 3) crime trends within the target area.

First, crime is disproportionately higher in the Weed and Seed target area than the rest of the city. Only four percent of the City's population is in the target area but the incidence and rates of crime are higher. Second, this disproportion remained fairly consistent from 1996 through 1999. Third, there is no evidence from any of these perspectives that crime has changed very much for the residents in the target area from the inception of the Weed and Seed Program to the present.

The research staff found, for example, that violent crime in the target area (as a proportion of the City's overall incidence of crime) did not show an overall statistically significant fluctuation during the period of 1996 through 1999 (e.g., 8.4 percent in 1996, 10 percent in 1997, 8.6 percent in 1998, and 8.1 percent in 1999). The same was true of drug crimes (10 percent for years 1996-1998 and 7 percent for 1999), public nuisance crimes such as disorderly conduct, disturbing the peace, curfew violations, loitering (7 percent, 6 percent, 5 percent, and 7 percent, respectively), and simple assaults (9 percent, 10 percent, 9 percent, and 9 percent, respectively).

A comparison of target area rates with overall city rates (to control for population) showed slightly less consistent trends in violence, drugs, nuisances, and simple assaults

within the target area than the city, but given the small baseline numbers relative to the overall city rates, this was not surprising. In short, small annual deviations in the target area would be exaggerated in comparison. The same observation was evident when crime trends within the Weed and Seed area were analyzed.

By any measure, the analysis of crime data in the target area for the four-year period shows that Weed and Seed neighborhoods are still severely over-represented by violence, drugs, public nuisances, and simple assaults. In sum, the frequency of crime over the life of the Weed and Seed project has changed little.

What to make of these findings? From its inception, annual federal funding for the Savannah Weed and Seed Project declined 72 percent (from \$790,000 to \$225,000). As a result, police staffing levels in the target area dropped. Indeed, a difficulty in surveying police for this study was in finding personnel still assigned to the target area. As funding decreased, interest in the project waned. Management reassigned officers to other areas and other duties demanding their urgent attention.

Ironically, the target area residents' favorable perceptions of the quality of police services persisted and, on some items, actually increased from 1997 to 1999. This was the case in spite of the prevailing opinion that inter-agency cooperation and collaboration could have been better, particularly between SPD and CNT officers. Paradoxically, as funding decreased, officer opinions about the adequacy of resources to implement the program did not change. Officers of one agency believed, on the whole, that staffing, equipment, and materiel were adequate to the task. Another agency's officers consistently maintained that the resources were sparse and the management of those resources deficient.

In view of the drop in funding and staffing declines, it is also interesting to note that the incidence of violent crime, drug trafficking, public nuisances, and simple assaults in the

target area remained fairly steady from 1996 through 1999. In short, there was neither a reduction of crime inside the target area nor displacement of crime to areas outside the Weed and Seed neighborhoods. At the same time, residents' perceptions of neighborhood safety in the target area remained unchanged--as did their view that the only way to get things done about crime and drugs in the neighborhood was for the residents to help themselves.

What these findings seem to suggest is that Weed and Seed may have made little substantive difference in the quality of life, at least in the short run, for the residents of the target area. It constituted a symbolic change, to be sure, but beyond the measures provided us by the neighborhood survey, it is difficult to assess how meaningful that symbolism is.

It does raise important policy questions, however. For example, can programs with such high-dollar costs be justified in light of the sparse results noted in this study? And if so, is it not debatable as to what those grounds for continuation might be? Are there more effective and more efficient ways of expending tax revenue to help residents who live in such blighted neighborhoods? What are the effective limits to government intervention in the lives of those who seem to need society's help the most?

Moreover, aside from its public relations value to the residents it serves, what can be deduced regarding the efficacy of Community and Problem-Oriented Policing, especially when compared to the traditional model of policing. Does this shift in policing "paradigms" constitute a real, much less a more effective, model of policing? Finally, given the fairly steady state of conditions (e.g., crime rates, perceptions of neighborhood safety, utilization of social programs, and awareness of program services) in the target area over the five-year life of the project, what compelling justifications exist to warrant continued local funding of the program?

These are questions that this evaluation cannot satisfy. Only policy makers, using their considerable expertise to judge these findings and the results of similar studies, can provide adequate clarification.