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East Side Wilmington Anti-Drug Abuse Program Evaluation June 1990

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East Side Wilmington Anti-Drug Abuse Program Evaluation

The goal of the East Side Wilmington Anti-Drug Abuse Program is to stabilize the neighborhood through its own resources and social networks so that illegal drug abuse can be limited. The objective is to convince the community that drug abuse is not only a problem for them as individuals; it is also bad for the neighborhood.

The mechanisms for bringing about change include three separate, but not independent efforts.

I. Enhanced community policing effort is underway. This includes the addition of community drug enforcement officers provided by Bureau of Justice Assistance funding. These special officers met routinely with anti-drug abuse community leaders to devise better methods of identifying and arresting drug traffickers in the neighborhood. The methods and length of time in the neighborhood change to meet the most serious threats. As the community networks strengthen, the objective is to move the special officers to another Wilmington neighborhood leaving the East Side with the normal police presence.

II. The community organization is being expanded. The East Side Substance Abuse Committee consists of 38 members representing state and local governments, police, schools, private social providers, churches, and community residents. One of the goals of this committee and the police is to establish a Block Captain network. The volunteer block captains are being trained to recognize drug use and marketing patterns. They are also being trained how to work with police without endangering themselves. In addition block captains are also being trained to identify those in need of social services and to provide direct referrals to participating social service agencies.

III. Social Services are focusing on meeting the needs of individuals and families to assist them in living drug free lives. It is a program hypothesis that a strong law enforcement presence is needed. This will provide the shield needed to vitalize the neighborhood through the identification and implementation of effective social services. When the police complement is returned to the city's normal levels, it is expected the community will be sufficiently organized to be of assistance to police in keeping illegal drug related activities under control.

AMENABILITY FOR EVALUATION

Perhaps, the most important condition that makes a viable evaluation possible is the East Side Substance Abuse Committee supports the collection and the analysis of information relating to the success and/or failure of different parts of the program. In fact, there is a continuing reassessment in the processes by the committee. Police activity and methods have changed as experience has dictated. The committee has also learned some services that may not appear directly related to drug use do have an impact. For example, nontraditional daycare was accepted as important social service goal when it was realized that the unsupervised youngsters on the streets in the evening was not due to neglect but economic reality of single parents working evening and nightshift jobs.

From a data collection perspective East Side Wilmington is uniquely situated. The East Side is a clearly defined geographical area within the City of Wilmington. It is bounded by the highrise downtown, a river and by raised Amtrack rails. These boundaries match the Census Bureau census tracks and represent a police district in Wilmington.

PRE/ DURING/ POST: EVALUATION DESIGN

The East Side Program has three distinct phases that provide a special research opportunity of measuring before, during, and after phases. Before 1988, the neighborhood only had normal city police patrols. In the "during" phase of the program, the neighborhood is experiencing community policing with increased manpower. Also during this period, significant efforts for increased social services and community organization are ongoing. The "after" phase will come when the police manpower levels return to the city's norm and the vitalized neighborhood is tested to determine if the social solutions are enough to keep illicit drugs at a minimum.

MEASURING TREATMENT EFFECTS

Examining "treatment effects" from the East Side program is important if the changes in the "outcome measures" are to be meaningfully explained.

The three "treatment effects" are:

- (1) Changed policing practices and manpower levels.
- (2) Increased number and more focused social services.
- (3) Establishment and maintenance of a community organizations.

Two methods are being used to measure changes in the program "treatment effects". First, substantive information is being recorded in logs. This includes program documents, meeting minutes, project progress reports, summaries of interviews. These sources are being used to document and describe both the activities and the intended purposes of the three "treatment effects". Second operational information is also being collected. For example, for the 72 social services the types of activities, funding, number of East Side residents participating, percentage of clients from the East Side, type of service provided, length of service, frequency of service, and perceived success are some of the variables that are being logged and monitored.

A pre/post perspective is being used to assess the amount and type of change for each of the treatment variables.

INTERACTION EFFECTS

The three treatment effects, although measured and monitored separately are not in intent or purpose independent. Very clearly from the outset interaction effects are expected. These too will be monitored and measured. For instance, the community policing practice involves routine meetings with community leaders to discuss issues, report progress, and make planned changes. In many instances the community policing approach results in better interaction between community and police expectations, social services, and the community organization efforts. Information documenting these interaction effects will be logged and used in the analysis. It is anticipated that most of this information will be substantive and contextual rather numeric.

CRIME ANALYSIS: AN OUTCOME MEASURE

For both the East Side and the other Wilmington police districts, the monthly number of reported crimes and arrests will be compared. Special emphasis will be given to illicit drug arrests and the relationship that these arrests have with manpower allocations, community policing efforts, and special enforcement measures. A demographic profile is being developed for persons arrested for drug offenses. The sources of data will be the requests for service received by the Wilmington Police and arrests logged with the department.

Another research goal is to ascertain whether or not there has been displacement to other parts of Wilmington. This will be determined by comparing the trends of drug crimes reported and arrests made in the East Side area and other sections of Wilmington.

SURVEY ANALYSIS:

Periodic survey of citizen opinions and attitudes will be conducted by the East Side Wilmington Substance Abuse Committee. Resources from the National Institute of Justice grant do not permit the funding of these surveys. The grant, however, does provide funding for technical assistance for survey design and implementation. The analysis and the reporting of the results would also be provided by the grant resources.

THE BOTTOMLINE

What happens to the vitalized community when the additional police manpower is taken away? Will the restructured social services and enhanced community organization be strong enough to resist the reestablishment of an illicit drug trade.

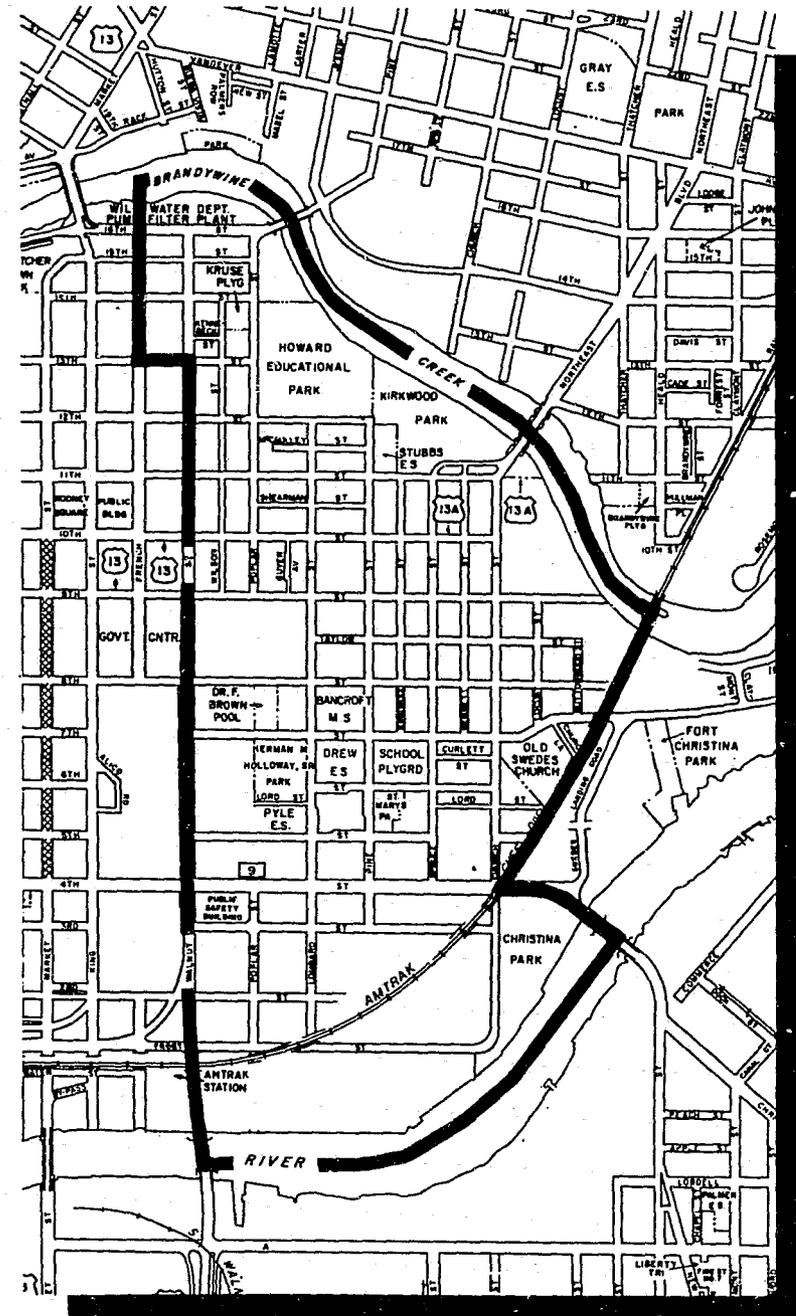
DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF WILMINGTON'S EASTSIDE

Like many inner city neighborhoods, a high proportion of households on the Eastside have incomes near or below the poverty level. According to the 1980 Census of Population and Housing, the mean income for households on the Eastside was \$8,891, approximately 54 percent of the mean household income for all Wilmington households.

Eighty-two percent of the households on the Eastside were classified as low income households, with over 28 percent of the households receiving public assistance income. Thirty-five percent of all families on the Eastside had incomes at or below the poverty level; 71 percent of these families were headed by single females. Nearly one-quarter of all families in the area are headed by single females with incomes at or below the poverty level.

In terms of educational attainment, the Eastside has a lower than average percentage of residents who completed at least four years of high school compared with other areas of the city. About two out of three (66 percent) Eastside residents ages 25 years and older did not complete high school; in comparison, less than half (45 percent) of all city residents ages 25 years and older failed to complete high school.

	Eastside		Wilmington	
	NO.	PCT.	NO.	PCT.
RACIAL COMPOSITION				
Black	5,304	93.7	35,858	51.1
White	303	5.3	31,663	45.1
Other	53	1.0	2,674	3.8
Spanish Origin	99	1.7	3,424	4.9
Total	5,660	100.0	70,195	100.0
ECONOMIC STATUS				
All Households	2,242	100.0	26,851	100.0
Low Income Households	1,840	82.1	16,410	61.1
Households Receiving Public Assistance Income	645	28.8	4,304	16.0
Mean Household Income	\$8,891	-	\$16,333	-
All Family Households	1,217	100.0	16,712	100.0
Families With Income Below Poverty Level	430	35.3	3,377	20.2
Female Head Families With Income Below Poverty Level	304	25.0	2,294	13.7
Mean Family Income	\$10,869	-	\$19,223	-
LAST GRADE COMPLETED (PERSONS 25 YEARS AND OLDER)				
0 to 8 Years	1,247	38.5	9,410	22.3
9 to 11 Years	866	27.4	9,486	22.5
4 Years of High School	804	24.8	12,449	29.5
1 to 3 Years of College	181	5.6	5,281	12.5
4 or More Years of College	120	3.7	5,540	13.2
Total	3,238	100.0	32,950	100.0



Legend symbols for various map features such as streets, parks, and landmarks.



CITY OF
WILMINGTON
DELAWARE

EASTSIDE



DELAWARE

RIVER

