If you have issues viewing or accessing this file, please contact us at NCJRS.gov.

**U.S. Department of Justice**
Office of Justice Programs
*National Institute of Justice*

# National Institute of Justice

**Research Report**

# *Community Prosecution in Washington, D.C.*

## The U.S. Attorney's Fifth District Pilot Project

181052
c.1

ɔara Boland

il 2001

U.S. Department of Justice
Office of Justice Programs
810 Seventh Street N.W.
Washington, DC 20531

John Ashcroft
*Attorney General*

Office of Justice Programs
World Wide Web Site
*http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov*

National Institute of Justice
World Wide Web Site
*http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij*

181052
C.1

# Community Prosecution in Washington, D.C.

## The U.S. Attorney's Fifth District Pilot Project

*Barbara Boland*

PROPERTY OF
National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000

April 2001

NCJ 186274

NIJ

Andrew Goldberg
*Program Monitor*

This work was supported by Grant No. 97–IJ–CX–0058 awarded by the National Institute of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view in this document are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

*The National Institute of Justice is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.*

# Preface

Since 1993, the appointed U.S. Attorneys for the District of Columbia have worked to expand their capacity to respond to neighborhood public safety complaints. In this respect, Washington's community prosecution effort is similar to those in other cities initiated by locally elected District Attorneys. These efforts most often focus on neighborhood quality-of-life complaints that intensified with the rise in street drug crime and associated problems of public order in the mid 1980s. Responses commonly include legal remedies other than court conviction.

A distinctive characteristic of Washington's experiment is the role that office attorneys have played in pushing for organizational changes to the traditional task of prosecuting cases in court. In response to the neighborhood-based drug violence of the 1980s and 1990s, a number of Assistant U.S. Attorneys argued successfully for the geographic assignment of experienced trial attorneys to prosecute serious violent crimes. Thus, a unique feature of the Fifth District Pilot Project was the assignment of trial attorneys to each police beat in Washington's Fifth Police District. Attorneys who worked on the project were asked to prosecute serious cases involving drugs and violence and to address quality-of-life concerns of neighborhood residents. They were not told exactly how to respond to any given problem.

Because it was not clear just how the work of the pilot project would proceed, the purposes of this study were (1) to document what, in fact, attorneys ended up doing, (2) to identify and characterize activities that appeared both effective and different from traditional practice, and (3) to suggest ways to assess the value of these activities with respect to the project's stated mission of reducing crime and improving the quality of life in D.C. neighborhoods. An important assumption underlying the approach of the study is the observation, derived from earlier research (Boland 1998a, 1998b; Coles and Kelling 1998), that community prosecution is not a research-based program. Rather, it is an evolving experiment in organizational change that is proceeding step by step and neighborhood by neighborhood in response to citizen complaints.

**Barbara Boland**

# Contents

**Preface** ..... iii

**Community Prosecution in Washington, D.C.** ..... 1

Introduction ..... 1

Background ..... 3

Reform at the Metropolitan Police Department ..... 7

Emerging Benefits of Community Prosecution in the Fifth District ..... 8

The Crime-Control Process in Two Patrol Service Areas ..... 13

How Do You Evaluate These Efforts? ..... 32

**Notes** ..... 39

**Appendix** ..... 43

**References** ..... 45

**Exhibits**

Exhibit 1. Citywide Narcotic Calls for Service: January 1–July 31, 1996 ..... 10

Exhibit 2. Fifth District Patrol Service Areas ..... 11

Exhibit 3a. Part 1 Crimes in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (trends) ..... 19

Exhibit 3b. Part 1 Crimes in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (data points) ..... 19

Exhibit 4a. Stolen Autos in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (trends) ..... 21

Exhibit 4b. Stolen Autos in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (data points) ..... 21

Exhibit 5. Excerpt from a Letter Notifying a Property Owner of a Pending Lawsuit ..... 30

Exhibit 6. Part 1 Crimes, by Police District ..... 36

Exhibit 7a. Part 1 Crimes in the Fifth District: 1996–1998 (trends) ..... 37

Exhibit 7b. Part 1 Crimes in the Fifth District: 1996–1998 (data points) ..... 37

# Community Prosecution in Washington, D.C.

## Introduction

The U.S. Attorney's Office for the District of Columbia is responsible for both Federal and local prosecution in Washington, D.C. Nearly two-thirds of the Office's 300-plus attorneys practice in the Superior Court Division, prosecuting local adult felony and misdemeanor crimes in Washington, D.C.'s Superior Court. The work of the attorneys assigned to Superior Court is similar to that of attorneys in a large District Attorney's Office. The Criminal Division of the Office prosecutes Federal crimes in U.S. District Court. Juvenile crimes and local ordinance violations are prosecuted by the D.C. Office of the Corporation Counsel.

The Fifth District community prosecution pilot project is a project of the Superior Court Division's Community Prosecution (CP) Section. In June 1996, 19 Assistant U.S. Attorneys were assigned to the Section to work exclusively on matters arising in the Metropolitan Police Department's (MPD's) Fifth District, one of seven police districts in Washington. Traditional Superior Court sections are organized by type of crime (misdemeanor, general felony, homicide, violent crime, and sex and domestic offenses). The CP Section was organized by geography.

Two of the 19 attorneys were assigned to do community outreach for all of the Fifth District and had no trial caseloads. Trial attorneys were assigned to specific neighborhoods. Each trial attorney handled a range of cases arising in his or her neighborhood and prosecuted cases in either Superior or U.S. District Court, depending on the nature of the offense. Prosecution in the CP Section is vertical; that is, the same prosecutor handles a case from arrest through final disposition. This arrangement differs from the bulk of Superior Court cases, which are prosecuted horizontally by the Misdemeanor and General Felony Sections, with screening and Grand Jury presentations performed by the Grand Jury Section prior to assignment for trial.

This Research Report documents the genesis of community prosecution in the U.S. Attorney's Office, briefly describes reforms in the MPD that are significant to the work of community prosecutors, characterizes the benefits of the pilot project, and provides case studies of observed results in two

police beats to illustrate how the new arrangement in CP contributes to the crime control process in particular neighborhoods. The case studies were designed to illustrate the significant variation in criminal behavior and crime problems among neighborhoods and over time and how CP attorneys tailored their responses to fit the problems accordingly. The emergence in the Fifth District of an organizational capacity to work with citizens and police to implement crime control strategies that fit the crime problems of specific neighborhoods is, I argue, the pilot project's most significant achievement. The final section of the Report discusses ways in which the U.S. Attorney's Office might monitor the results of future community prosecution efforts.

The Fifth District pilot project was initiated in 1996 under former U.S. Attorney Eric Holder. U.S. Attorney Wilma Lewis implemented community prosecution citywide in the fall of 1999. The information for this Report was collected from November 1997 to December 1998 through interviews and observation. The primary sources of information were the attorneys, police officers, and citizens who worked on crime problems in the Fifth District. Initial interviews were conducted with all CP attorneys in November and December 1997. From December 1997 through the end of 1998, interviews and observation centered on the ongoing activities of attorneys, citizens, and police officers in the Fifth District.

Unforeseen reforms in the MPD afforded a unique opportunity to systematically track crime problems and citizen, police, and attorney responses to them on a monthly beat-by-beat basis, as well as to elicit the independent perspective of the citizens, police, and attorneys involved in the process. At weekly crime strategy (Compstat) meetings (begun in the spring of 1997), Fifth District beat sergeants reported on the crime and disorder problems in their beats, based on their analysis of citizen complaints, beat crime statistics, and officers' street intelligence. They also presented action plans to address priority problems. Citizen complaints at monthly beat community meetings (begun in July 1997) added detail and perspective to the sergeants' reports. Citizen complaints were typically consistent with the sergeants' assessments, but more graphic and sometimes more impassioned.

Using information gathered at the citizen and police meetings, I was then able to query attorneys on their involvement in police and citizen efforts, as well as about their work on specific cases. Monthly beat-by-beat crime statistics were regularly available at the Fifth District Compstat meetings. Special requests for data were readily fulfilled by Sergeant Joe Snell in the Fifth District and Sergeant Douglas Jones in the Planning Division at police

headquarters. The U.S. Attorney's Office provided me office space adjacent to the Community Prosecution Section.

Day-to-day admission to this process facilitated access to a flow of information on crime and the response to it that would have been impossible to capture in such a short time period through traditional research interviews, observation, or formal focus groups.

## Background

Community prosecution officially started in the U.S. Attorneys' Office in June 1996, with the Fifth District pilot project. The genesis of the initiative, however, began a decade earlier, when Office executives and senior trial attorneys began to implement changes in traditional Office operations to address the violence that followed "the introduction in 1985 and rapid spread thereafter of 'crack' cocaine to large portions of the city" (Schertler 1994).

The early stages of Washington's crack epidemic followed a pattern similar to that observed in other large East Coast cities. The arrival of crack cocaine in 1985 resulted in an immediate explosion of street dealing. Adult felony drug arrests rose from 2,400 in 1982 to 5,800 in 1986 and to 7,800 in 1987. By 1987, felony drug cases accounted for 68 percent of the U.S. Attorney's indicted felony court caseload (Boland 1989, 1990). The sharp rise in violence, exemplified by the rise in homicides, lagged by about 2 years. Having fluctuated around 200 per year from 1970 to 1987, homicides in Washington jumped 64 percent—from 225 in 1987 to 369 in 1988—and rose again in 1989 to more than 400. The 1989 homicide rate (more than 70 per 100,000 residents) was more than twice the rate of the 1970s and early 1980s (Federal Bureau of Investigation 1989; see appendix A). For almost a decade, Washington had the highest homicide rate of any large city in the country.[1] Compared to other large cities, the level of violence in Washington following the introduction of crack was particularly severe.

At the time drug-related violence erupted in 1988, Cliff Keenan—then a line assistant in the U.S. Attorney's Chronic Offender Unit—noticed that after homicide, the most serious cases coming into the Office were shifting from cases involving chronic offenders (active offenders who commit burglaries, robberies, and other primarily property crimes) to increasingly complex cases involving violence. Under the Office's case assignment system, the experienced senior trial attorneys in the chronic offender unit (the only vertical prosecution section in the Office at the time) were handling cases involving problem defendants, but not particularly difficult crimes. Complex,

difficult-to-prove crimes of violence—involving complicated interconnections among events and intricate relationships among victims, defendants, and witnesses—were going to less experienced attorneys. When Keenan became chief of the Chronic Offender Unit in 1990, he and Ramsey Johnson (then head of the Superior Court Division) persuaded U.S. Attorney Jay Stephens to shift the focus of the Chronic Offender Unit to violent crime. Stephens had set up a vertical homicide unit in 1989.[2]

In April 1991, the Chronic Offender Unit became the Violent Crime Section. As head of the Section, Keenan screened all cases prior to attorney assignment, distributing cases to individual attorneys based on apparent interconnections. A neighborhood focus immediately emerged. Within a matter of months, Keenan formally organized the Section along police district lines. When David Schertler became head of the Office's Homicide Section in 1992, he adopted a similar geographic focus for homicide prosecutions. In prosecuting the increasing number of homicides, attorneys faced previously unknown difficulties in getting the information and witness testimony needed to prove cases in court. Shortly after leaving office, former U.S. Attorney Stephens, in a letter to the *Washington Post,* described the changes in the character of homicides that had accompanied the dramatic increase in killings.

> The investigation and prosecution of most homicides in the District today bear little resemblance to the process of 10 years ago. Rarely can police now make an arrest and prosecutors secure a grand jury indictment by obtaining statements and testimony from two or three eyewitnesses corroborated by a straightforward autopsy report. Crack-house shootings, drive-by executions, senseless revenge killings, and gang violence usually are not witnessed by cooperative, reliable, uninvolved citizens.
>
> To make these cases, police and prosecutors must: win the confidence of a terrorized witness and stash an entire family in witness protection for months; spend weeks cajoling and building rapport with a crackhead witness who may have heard something about the case on the street; develop and analyze complex forensic evidence; "flip" a culpable insider from a gang or carload of thugs; develop a chronological pattern of gang violence; sort out the responsibility of several persons involved; build a convincing case against an accomplice, convict him and use his "tainted" cooperation against a shooter; and untangle a web of difficult investigative issues....

> And finally, unless the defendant pleads because the case against him is strong, the prosecutor must try a difficult case involving impeachable and frightened witnesses, a process that now takes, on average, three weeks instead of only one week a few years ago. (Stephens 1993)

Because these violent behaviors are neighborhood based, attorneys had to adopt a neighborhood focus to prosecute effectively.

In October 1993, Eric Holder became U.S. Attorney. As a Superior Court judge from 1988 to 1993, he had observed the difficulties that Assistant U.S. Attorneys faced when prosecuting cases in Superior Court. He was particularly struck, in his words, by "the number of Superior Court juries that returned verdicts unrelated to the evidence presented at trial."[3] He believed that too many Washington citizens perceived the criminal justice system in general, and local law enforcement in particular, as alien forces. As U.S. Attorney, he wanted the Office to get connected to the community. He wanted attorneys in the Office to open channels of communication so people would tell them what was going on. He thought that citizens should have an opportunity to influence the priorities of the Office. Holder's views coincided with those of many attorneys in the Office, who saw community-oriented prosecution as the way to improve the quality of their day-to-day work. Neither Holder nor any other proponent in the Office viewed community prosecution as mere public relations. The Office's priority was, and remains, to do its part to reduce the city's high level of crime and violence. The Fifth District community prosecution experiment was an effort to try a new approach.

In the fall of 1995, a formal steering committee (with subcommittee working groups) was established to plan the community prosecution pilot project. The Fifth District was selected by the MPD. Superior Court officials approved the project, but (at this writing) have had no active involvement. Several iterations of draft plans were widely circulated for comment within the Office. The project was announced officewide in March 1996 and staff were recruited in April.[4]

The project, launched in June 1996, had two components: a field outreach component located in the Fifth District and a geographic-based trial component, located in the U.S. Attorney's Office downtown. The outreach component consisted of two field attorneys who worked out of the Fifth District police station. Field attorneys attended community meetings, responded to citizen quality-of-life complaints, facilitated cooperative efforts with city agencies, and provided onsite advice to Fifth District police officers. They

also screened all Fifth District arrests. The two field attorneys alternated screening duties on a weekly basis but did not prosecute cases in court.

The CP trial component included 15 trial attorneys and the Section's two supervisors, Section Chief Cliff Keenan and Deputy Chief Brenda Johnson. From the start, trial attorneys were assigned to particular neighborhoods. The original project plan called for trial attorneys to handle all Fifth District homicides, serious crimes of violence (except sex and domestic cases), and U.S. District Court arrest-generated narcotics cases—on the theory that this set of cases includes the interconnected neighborhood-based behaviors observed by attorneys in the Violent Crime and Homicide Sections. In addition to the violent and serious drug cases, the planners anticipated that CP trial attorneys would also handle a certain number of other cases. These would be cases important to the community (such as quality-of-life offenses) or significant to the work of CP attorneys (such as defendants with known connections to more serious crimes or defendants).

The idea that a narrow geographic focus on a selected group of crimes would enhance attorneys' ability to address the interconnected violent behaviors associated with the drug trade has, in the opinion of CP attorneys, worked. One early lesson of the pilot project, however, was that it is not possible to specify in advance which cases need to be prosecuted or what legal skills brought to bear to address the problems that affect a particular neighborhood. In some neighborhoods, high rates of lesser felonies are a major citizen concern; in others, drugs, serious violence, and disorder are the predominant problems. Even in the worst neighborhoods, not all homicides or serious crimes of violence are part of the interconnected crime problem mix. To address neighborhood crime, case selection needs to flow out of the particular problems of specific geographic locations.

To accommodate geography, CP Section supervisors recognized the need for two adjustments in staffing assignments. First, staffing was adjusted to include a mix of experienced trial attorneys and younger, less experienced attorneys to handle a wider range of criminal behaviors. Original staffing of the Section included only experienced senior trial attorneys.[5] Second, as it became clear that it is not necessary to prosecute in CP all of any particular type of crime, supervisors argued that taking too many cases actually reduces the ability of attorneys to address neighborhood problems. When attorneys try to prosecute all cases arising out of a particular neighborhood, they become overwhelmed by the dictates of case processing on cases that do not need special attention and have no time for the extra effort required on the cases that do. Case selection in CP thus became more selective than the planners originally anticipated. Finally, a third adjustment, made in

July 1997, aligned attorney neighborhood assignments to match reforms implemented in the MPD.

## Reform at the Metropolitan Police Department

When the CP pilot project began in mid-1996, the MPD did not have a community-oriented focus. Patrol operations were organized by scout car beats, but officers' beat assignments rotated on a daily basis, and there was no formal community outreach to connect officers with neighborhood anticrime efforts. More generally, the department was in a state of crisis. When the city's finances appeared headed toward bankruptcy in 1995, nowhere was the impact more apparent than in the police department. Reports that officers had to buy gasoline for their cruisers, could not issue warrants because they were out of forms, and lacked bullets for their service weapons (when the city's homicide rate was the highest in the country) became standard fare in local news accounts.

In early 1996, U.S. Attorney Holder wrote a two-part article for the *Washington Post* to draw attention to these and more serious management problems (Holder 1996). By the end of the year, the Fraternal Order of Police and community groups were calling for a Federal takeover of the department. In December, the D.C. Financial Responsibility and Management Assistance Authority (the Control Board), set up by Congress in 1995 to oversee the city's finances, hired the consulting firm of Booz-Allen & Hamilton to examine problems in the department, including the mayor's authority over internal operations (Pierre 1996; Vise 1997; Vise and Thompson 1997).[6]

In late 1996, about the time the Booz-Allen consultants began their work, the department announced a community policing initiative with the assignment of permanent beat sergeants to existing scout car beats. Through the spring of 1997, police officials launched various specialized, but temporary, initiatives. Significant changes in police operations, however, did not occur until July 1997, some months after formal authority over the police department was transferred from the Mayor's office to the Control Board in early 1997. The admittedly partial July 1997 reforms (the "rollout," in MPD language) brought to D.C. certain aspects of community policing that were in place in other large cities.

Beat boundaries within districts were redrawn to create larger Patrol Service Area (PSA) beats. A PSA sergeant and a team of 15 to 17 officers were permanently assigned to each PSA. Initially, the concept of beat integrity (officers work only in their assigned PSA) was rigidly enforced.[7] Community outreach began, as did monthly PSA community meetings. At weekly

district station meetings, PSA sergeants used the Compstat process developed by the New York City Police Department to present, on a rotating basis, a monthly account of the crime and disorder problems in their beats and action plans for addressing priority problems. Results and progress were reviewed the following month. District commanders made similar presentations for the entire District at monthly meetings downtown, conducted by the chief of patrol. Although limited to the function of patrol,[8] the PSA reforms had immediate observable results. Officers focused on the problems within their beats, they connected with citizens, and—to the extent that problems could be ameliorated by the resources available to patrol—they devised tailored tactical responses that had measurable impacts on crime.

The PSA reforms had significant benefits for CP attorneys. Keenan and Johnson adjusted attorney neighborhood assignments to correspond to PSAs. The new arrangement allowed attorneys, police, and citizens to focus on the same geographic area, the same crime and disorder problems, the same problem locations, and the same problem people. The aligned focus allowed critical information to be shared and previously independent efforts to be coordinated. It also provided attorneys with routine structured access to officers and citizens to leverage their legal skills. CP attorneys now work daily with the same officers. Monthly community meetings facilitate regular communication with the same citizens. One CP attorney who formerly worked in homicide articulated a common theme in the attorney interviews: By working with the same officers—who, in turn, are always in the same neighborhoods—and by being in regular contact with the same neighborhood residents, she has gained access to an intimate network of neighborhood intelligence not possible working in even a single District or with detectives. Because she knows daily what is going on in her PSA, she knows how to target her efforts to have an impact.

## Emerging Benefits of Community Prosecution in the Fifth District

The benefit of the Fifth District pilot project that CP attorneys most commonly mentioned is the enhanced ability to "target." Sometimes attorneys used the term to refer to their ability to target individual problem defendants who kept showing up in their caseloads. In other instances, they were referring to the emergence of more sophisticated tactical capacity to exploit the linkages among criminal actors and events to make cases and solve crimes. Numerous examples of both occurred during the course of fieldwork for this study. Targeting, however, is but one aspect of a larger change in organizational capacity that is emerging in the Fifth District.

The more general and more significant benefit of the CP pilot project—as it evolved in conjunction with the police department's PSA reform—is the emergence of the organizational capacity to work with citizens and police to implement crime control strategies that fit the crime problems of specific beats. Criminal behavior and crime problems vary (sometimes dramatically) among beats and within beats over time. To be effective, line operatives not only need to develop intimate day-to-day knowledge of PSA crime patterns, but also need to tailor their responses and coordinate their efforts with various other actors as the need arises. Conventional case-processing arrangements do not allow this kind of operational flexibility.

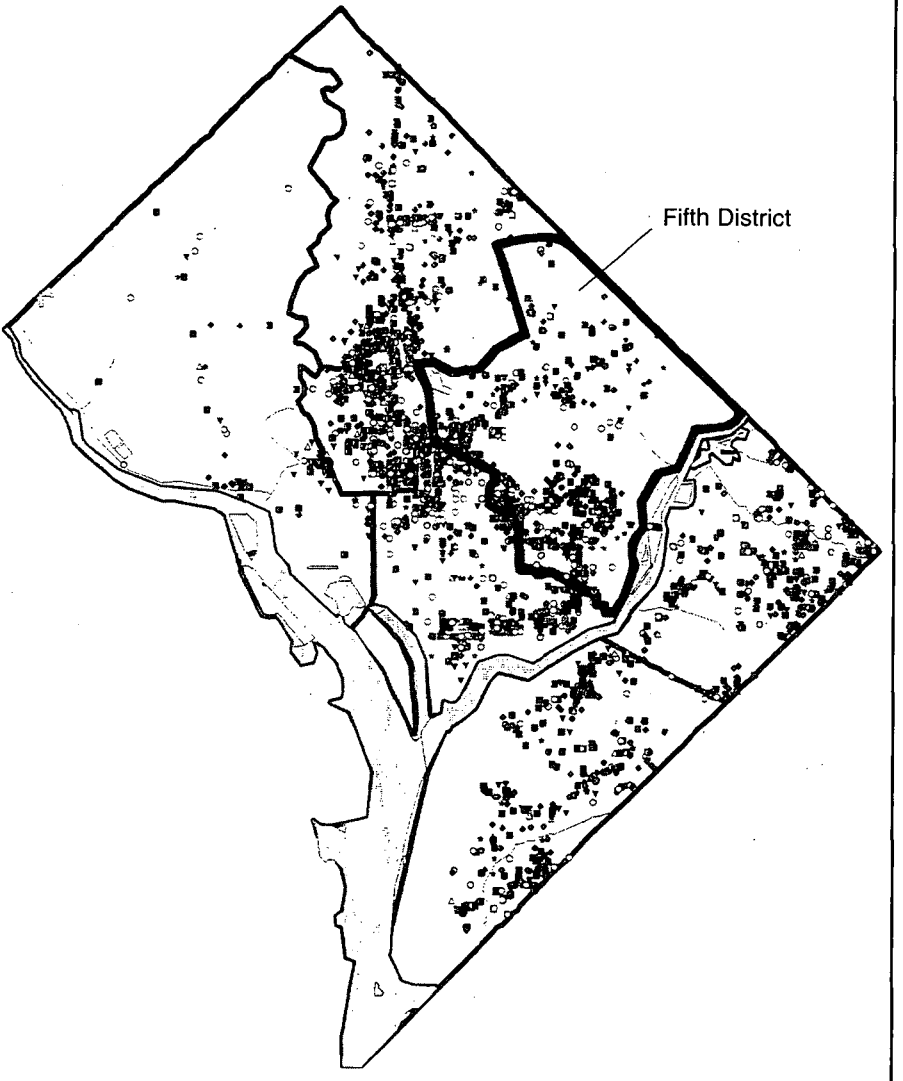
The Fifth District contains some of the city's toughest neighborhoods, but the most striking feature of crime in the district is how crime patterns vary among PSA beats. The broad swath of open-air drug markets and homicides that runs south through the center of Washington and then rings eastward around downtown and Capitol Hill cuts through the southern half of the district. PSAs 508, 509, 510, and the northern parts of 512 and 513 (in the Fifth District's Sector Two) all serve neighborhoods seriously affected by drugs, violence, and extreme forms of disorder. In 1996 two-thirds of all Fifth District homicides occurred in these relatively small geographic areas. (See exhibits 1 and 2.)

In sharp contrast to Sector Two's dense concentration of violence, drugs, and disorder, several of the district's 13 PSAs can be characterized as predominantly Part 1 property crime beats (Sector One's PSAs 501 and 503, for example).[9] Several PSAs lie somewhere between these two extremes, with a mix of drugs, disorder, and conventional Part 1 crimes. In still others, unique situational problems (the go-go clubs in PSA 506, for example) drive both the crime rate and character of the crime problem—if not for the whole PSA, then at least for parts of it. All PSA beats, though, have some unique crime or disorder problem that needs to be specifically addressed for law enforcement to be effective. PSA sergeants and CP attorneys recognize and respond to this by customizing strategies to deal with the crime problems in their assigned beats. Conventional case processing, with its case-by-case focus on procedural justice and serious crime, is not designed to generate this kind of adaptive response.

In the conventional system of justice, a line prosecutor's work is dominated by the demands of procedural justice that govern all participants in adversary proceedings: formal rules of evidence, statutory definitions of crimes and punishments, and local court norms about the seriousness of crimes most worthy of judicial attention. In the routine business of prosecution, this means sorting through the daily stream of arrests brought to the court

by the police and judging, case by case, from the facts the police deliver whether, according to the procedural constraints imposed by the law, a particular individual can be proven legally culpable for having committed a specific criminal act. The all-important issue for the downtown system of justice is not what is destructive to a neighborhood, but whether the facts available in the particular case meet the procedural standards of justice to

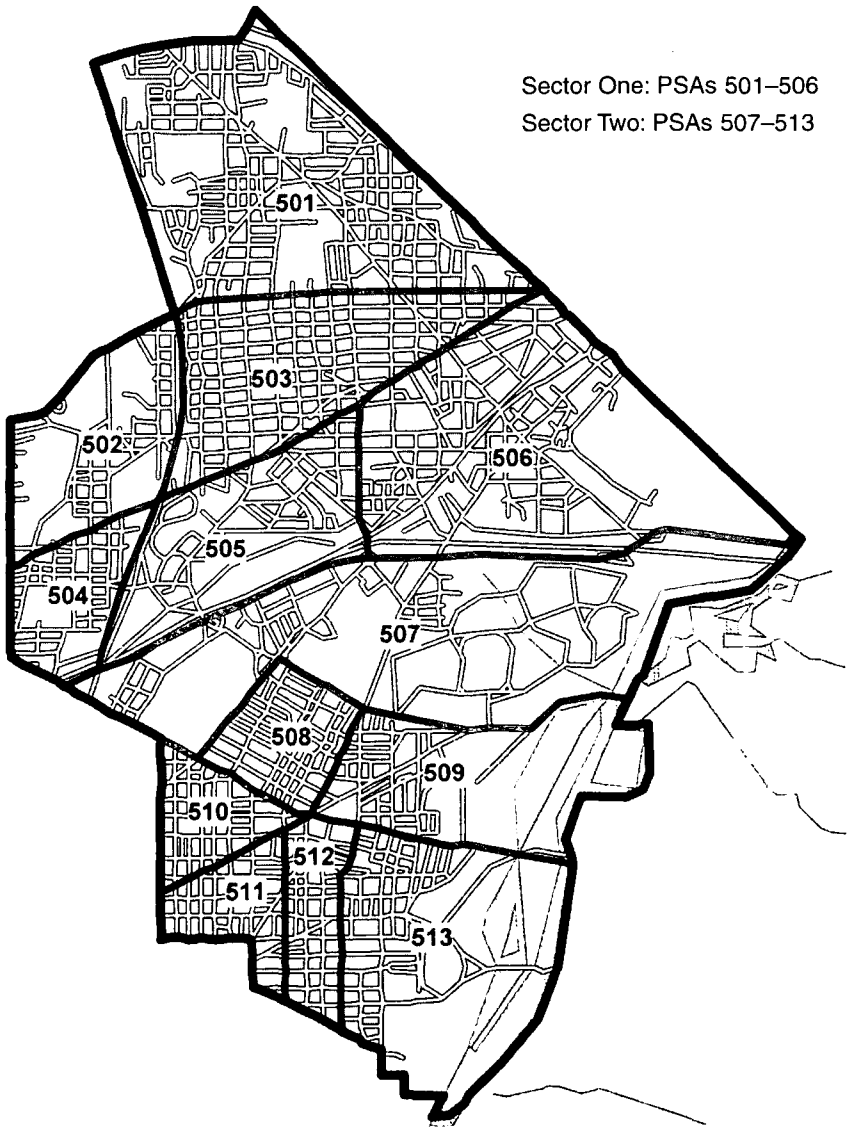
**Exhibit 1. Citywide Narcotic Calls for Service: January 1–July 31, 1996**



demonstrate legal guilt in court. The interests of individual victims and the rights of the accused are paramount.

Over the past 25 years or so, the trend in prosecution management has been to concentrate in the hands of a few senior attorneys the critical discretionary decision about which matters are appropriate to take forward for

**Exhibit 2. Fifth District Patrol Service Areas**



prosecution. Not surprisingly, the organization's front-line operatives (i.e., trial attorneys) judge their professional success by how well they do in court on cases sent forward for prosecution.10 They are intensely focused on obtaining convictions on the individual cases assigned to them and on acquiring the trial skills necessary to validate the organizational judgment that a given defendant is legally guilty. They are not remiss in thinking that what they do is fundamental to crime control—academic thinking, public opinion, and common sense support this view. But it also means the average trial attorney does not really think much (or have time to think much) about crime per se—that is, how it happens in the street, what situational conditions give rise to specific incidents of crime, or how to stop it—other than holding the guilty to account after the fact, with the highest priority accorded to the victims of serious crimes.

The arrangement in CP allows attorneys to shift their focus from the singular task of pursuing conviction in the individual case to the broader perspective of figuring out how to use their legal skills to stop crime. This shift neither dispenses with individualistic procedural justice nor downgrades the priority accorded to serious crimes; rather, it stresses figuring out what else is required to promote order and prevent crime in particular neighborhoods. Attorneys charged with the task of working with citizens and police to address crime problems in specific locations come to understand that a neighborhood's needs differ from those of individual victims. Their perspective broadens to include behaviors that conventional case processing overlooks because crimes are considered minor, the knowledge required to link specific incidents to larger patterns of criminal behavior is missing, or conventional adjudication is an ineffective solution.

But there is no prescribed format for action. To address the crime problems of communities, in addition to those of individual victims, a community prosecutor needs the flexibility to supplement conventional prosecution with a range of tools—from aggressive pursuit of a misdemeanor arrest, to an indictment in U.S. District Court, to the use of civil remedies to ameliorate underlying problems of disorder. CP attorneys also need the flexibility to coordinate their efforts with others, especially PSA officers and citizens. In general, the more complex the crime problem, the greater the variety of tools needed to craft effective solutions and the greater the number of actors whose activities need to be coordinated. The critical elements of effective coordination are common knowledge, common focus, and a continuous flow of information among citizens, officers, and attorneys about the crime problems of particular locations.

## The Crime-Control Process in Two Patrol Service Areas

The idea that a major benefit of community prosecution flows from an organizational focus on crime by location is difficult to articulate, partly because crime as a day-to-day phenomenon is not well understood or often studied. Criminologists' primary focus is not crime per se; their interest is criminality, particularly the social factors that cause individuals to engage in criminal behavior at various stages in life. From the perspective of a neighborhood beat officer or resident, however, dealing with crime is a constant (daily, weekly, monthly) process focused on always keeping track of what is occurring (where, when, how, why) and figuring out how to stop it. Viewing crime control from a small geographic, time-bounded perspective opens up an infinitely greater array of options for stopping it than does the way we traditionally think about dealing with criminality, where reforming or punishing the individual dominates discussion. Without firsthand field observation, it is difficult to imagine the seemingly endless variety of circumstances that give rise to criminal acts, or some of the breathtakingly simple things the police can do to make a big difference in a neighborhood. Community prosecutors see this (that there is a lot they never see downtown) and start to figure out how to apply their legal skills to help out.

To illustrate how the process works, I describe the crime-control process in two PSA beats as it occurred during the course of the study period. The two beats, PSA 501 and PSA 508, represent extremes in terms of the character of crime. Yet both are predominately residential beats with homogeneous crime patterns within PSA boundaries, permitting relatively brief narrative accounts.

### Community prosecution in Patrol Service Area 501

Geographically, PSA 501 is one of the two largest PSAs (with PSA 506) in the Fifth District. This middle-income residential beat is generally viewed as the quietest in the district. Of 72 businesses, only 4 are liquor stores. Only three drug houses are known to law enforcement (one was shut down after the PSA rollout). Outdoor drug dealing is minor and disorder is not a problem. In both 1996 and 1997, there were three homicides in PSA 501. There were two in 1998—a double homicide involving a drug deal gone bad among individuals from outside PSA 501, in a very quiet area with no other known drug activity. This fact pattern is consistent with PSA Sergeant John Rowlands' view that PSA 501 homicides are more likely to be committed by drug-trade people passing through than by neighborhood residents.

From a law enforcement perspective, crime in PSA 501 is significantly less serious than in other Fifth District beats. Nonetheless, when monthly PSA community meetings began in the summer of 1997, citizens came with legitimate public safety complaints. They thought thefts, especially auto thefts, were a serious neighborhood problem. Conventional Part 1 crime statistics confirmed resident complaints. In 1996 and the early months of 1997, Part 1 crimes were high, with 70 reported crimes per month—the third highest in the Fifth District. Stolen autos averaged 20 per month, the second highest in the Fifth. Roughly 60 percent of all Part 1 crimes in PSA 501 were auto related, counting auto theft and theft from autos.

At early PSA community meetings, citizen frustration with the auto theft problem translated into frustration with the criminal justice system. At one meeting, a citizen specifically charged the U.S. Attorney's Office with failing to prosecute cases involving unauthorized use of a vehicle (UUV). It is often very difficult to prove that a person caught driving a stolen car is the same person who took it, but it may be possible to prove a UUV—that is, that the owner of the car did not authorize the driver to use it. Anne Pings, the CP Attorney for PSA 501, responded with a two-minute mock trial (drafting citizens to play victim, defendant, and impartial jury) to demonstrate the difficulty of establishing proof beyond a reasonable doubt in a common UUV situation. A stolen car is loaned several times through a series of friends, and the person caught driving it claims to have permission from "someone" to use it. Plus, the driver has keys; there is no evidence of tampering with the steering column, no evidence of forced entry, no inconsistent statements by the driver to police, nor any other shred of evidence to suggest a theft—a fact pattern prosecutors call "a pure key" case. The U.S. Attorney's Office would not pursue this kind of UUV case. As Pings explained to the assembled citizens, it would be virtually impossible to prove at trial that the driver of the car knew he did not have permission from the true owner to use it.

Educating citizens on the constitutional constraints within which the police and the prosecutor must operate is an important function of CP attorneys. Citizens are almost always more receptive to legal explanations when they hear them from an attorney, but Pings and Rowlands did more than explain constitutional issues at community meetings. Over a period of about 6 months, they developed a set of tactics that worked to reduce auto theft and other Part 1 crimes in PSA 501. Little, if any, of what they did was preordained, dictated by supervisors, or prescribed by organization guidelines. Rowlands states very simply that his initial tactic was to "talk to his officers."

Rowlands knew Part 1 crimes were high and citizens were complaining about auto theft. Daily crime sheets, prepared by Fifth District crime analyst Sergeant Joe Snell, told him when and where crimes were occurring. To figure out what to do about the problem, however, Rowlands needed some idea about who was committing the crimes. He needed information on likely suspects. His officers were in the street daily talking to people. Two had worked in the area for 20 years and knew the people who lived there; they knew the local troublemakers and those who came into the normally stable neighborhood from outside. Rowlands directed his officers to ask citizens what they might know, might have seen, or might have heard. In areas where crimes were concentrated, he assigned tactical officers to engage people on the street in conversation and to ask similar questions.[11]

The following picture emerged from this routine (but focused) intelligence-gathering exercise. In 1997 the crime problem in PSA 501 was being driven by a small handful of assorted chronic offenders: some active, but mostly petty, UUV offenders; occasionally, a juvenile on a crime spree; and a few potentially serious offenders who committed auto theft, among other crimes. There was also a host of local street corner wannabes who committed mostly minor offenses (such as smoking marijuana and drinking in public), with some marginal opportunistic involvement in Part 1 crime.

With this information, Rowlands developed an action plan with two elements: (1) target and lock up the chronic offenders; and (2) let the wannabes know his officers were out there. The wannabes Rowlands and his officers could handle on their own with conventional patrol tactics: directed patrols in known hangout areas, diligent and visible traffic enforcement, and enforcement of quality-of-life offenses. Rowlands talked to the parents of juveniles to let them know what their adolescents were up to. The general idea was to have the wannabes always looking over their shoulders. For a while, Capitol Car Auction, a Fifth District business, provided officers with a different old car every day. Officers made sure potential lawbreakers saw them driving the borrowed vehicles. Rowlands wanted the wannabes to know they could not predict when and how his officers might show up. In other words, he wanted them to think that if they did something, they were not likely to get away with it.

Effectively targeting chronic offenders was more difficult. PSA officers could identify the individuals, and with sustained teamwork among officers, detectives, and residents, they could catch them. They could not, however, always apprehend chronic offenders for an act sufficiently serious to get them held by the court. Getting the chronic offenders off the streets required legal backup from Pings.

On a case-by-case basis, the property offenses in PSA 501 do not appear (and, in fact, are not) as serious as the armed carjackings, homicides, and other violent crimes that fill up the court dockets downtown; but their collective impact hurts a neighborhood. Similarly, on any one case, a chronic property offender might not appear serious in court; the offender's persistence is the problem. Working together, PSA officers and Pings were able to develop a tactical response to overcome the limitations of traditional case-by-case adjudication. By sharing information and coordinating efforts on a regular basis, they knew and could convey to the court the continuous pattern of criminal behavior sufficient to justify incarceration.

From street intelligence, Rowlands' officers came up with the names of suspects and obtained addresses, prior records, and photo identification. They passed the information around to all PSA officers, showed the photos to the community, gave people phone numbers to call, and continuously fed information to Pings on the people they were targeting (only about two or three individuals at any one time). All CP trial attorneys reviewed the daily arrest lockup list (e-mailed by the CP field attorneys who screened Fifth District arrests) to spot names of known defendants.

The specific tactic Pings developed for PSA 501 (which she would not have had the flexibility to pursue in conventional prosecution units) was to aggressively pursue minor cases (which would be dismissed under general office guidelines) against the targets as a hook for keeping defendants under the jurisdiction of the court while pursuing every possible justification (multiple cases, prior abscondences, parole and probation violations) to ensure incarceration. The following account documents, from the late summer of 1997 to the spring of 1998, how it worked.

Crime began falling in the PSA 501 area when John Rowlands became beat sergeant in March 1997.[12] Crimes in PSA 501 averaged 73 per month in 1996, 70 per month in the first quarter of 1997, and 55 per month in the second quarter of 1997; they hit an 18-month low of 32 per month with the PSA rollout in July. In August, crimes jumped back up to 56 per month, driven by a substantial increase in all Part I property crimes including robberies, burglaries, stolen autos, theft from autos, and other larcenies.

PSA 501 officers identified the primary suspect as a young, potentially serious career criminal, who lived outside the neighborhood but hung out with a group of wannabes in PSA 501. In the preceding 9 months, the suspect had been arrested three times at various locations in northeast and southeast Washington. All three arrests—for unlawful entry, marijuana possession with intent to distribute (PWID), and UUV with an associated cocaine

PWID—had been declined for prosecution by the U.S. Attorney's Office. Just 10 days after the third arrest was declined for prosecution in late August, one of Rowlands' patrol officers, Drew Smith, was eating lunch at McDonalds when he saw the suspect drive by in a stolen car. Smith immediately gave chase and lost the suspect, but he aggressively pursued the stolen car case. He retrieved the Montgomery County police report on the underlying carjacking in Maryland. A Fifth District detective helped him write an arrest warrant. An intensive effort in PSA 501—involving officers, citizens, and Pings—began, both to find the suspect and to build a case.

Every day, Rowlands assigned an officer to look for the suspect and let residents know he was wanted. Pings tracked down another pending UUV case in Prince George's County, Maryland. She called to get the suspect held at his next court appearance, but the suspect had already failed to appear in Prince George's County court and had a pending warrant. PSA officers went to a house in PSA 501 where they thought the suspect might be staying and found the stolen vehicle out front. Pings arranged for two Fifth District detectives who lived in Maryland to interview the gas station cashier who had witnessed the original Maryland carjacking.

The carjacking victim, a Vietnamese immigrant, spoke very little English, so Pings got a member of MPD's Asian Task Force (in Chinatown) to talk with the victim and his wife to ensure their cooperation in her UUV case. Pings could not charge the carjacking because it had occurred in Maryland, but she still needed the Maryland victim at her UUV trial to state he owned the vehicle and that he had not given the suspect permission to use it. When the victim's wife told the Asian Task Force officer about a roll of undeveloped film recovered from their stolen car, Pings herself drove out to Maryland that day to get the film and have it developed. Rowlands assigned officers to look for a PSA 501-style house with distinctive bars shown in one of the photos (the apparent site of a marijuana party).

In short, Pings and Rowlands left no stone unturned in their effort to locate and talk to individuals who might have knowledge of the suspect's whereabouts or information on his criminal activities. After 3 weeks of intensive effort, PSA 501 officers arrested the suspect in the vicinity of the wannabe hangout in PSA 501. For all of Pings' and PSA 501 officers' efforts, she was still able to charge only unauthorized use of a vehicle. The suspect was released pending trial, but at least this time he was charged. Two days later, the suspect and others committed a gang rape. Arrested again at the wannabe hangout a month later (in early November), the suspect was finally held by the court.

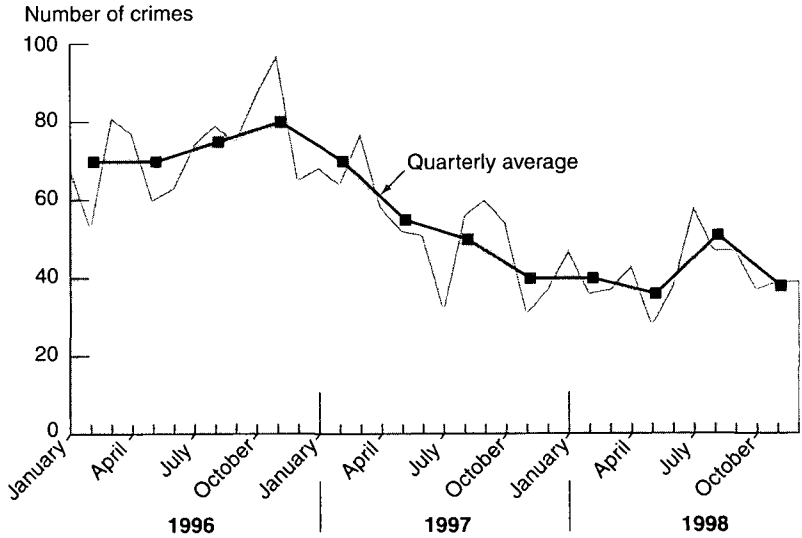
The gang rape went to the U.S. Attorney's Sex Offense Section. Pings helped with parts of the investigation. She thinks it may have helped to have two pending cases to get the defendant held on the sex charge. Rowlands thinks her efforts made a big difference in getting the suspect off the streets. Even though the sex offense was a more serious crime than his prior UUVs and PWIDs, at this point he still had no adult conviction record. The effect of his detention on crime in PSA 501 was immediate and dramatic: Crimes per month in November 1997 fell back to 31, roughly a 50-percent drop from the high of 60 in September. (See exhibits 3a and 3b.)

Even with rigorous scientific methodologies, it is doubtful one could demonstrate with a high degree of certainty that the 50-percent drop in crime was due to the arrest of a single suspect. On the other hand, based on the observed activities and results in PSA 501, it is unreasonable to deny PSA 501 officers and Pings credit. Their efforts exemplify the type of inductive methods scholars often use to develop theories and draw tentative conclusions from field observation (Maxfield and Babbie 1998). Real-world actors (Pings, Rowlands, and PSA 501 officers) had a theory about what was driving crime up in PSA 501 (the activities of a particular suspect) and implemented an intervention (target and remove the suspect from the streets). The observed result (crime went down) supported their theory of the problem.

Furthermore, because the unit of observation in this case is controlled in terms of both time (a few months) and space (a single police beat), conventional academic explanations for fluctuations in crime—economic conditions, demographic changes, social structure—all of which change slowly, cannot reasonably be said to be operating. There was, however, one other factor possibly contributing to the November decline. Sergeant Rowlands made sure the suspect's wannabe friends were informed that the crime with which the suspect was now charged carried a potential penalty of 30 to 50 years. The suspect was clearly incapacitated and unable to commit new crimes, but some crimes may have been prevented because his friends feared getting caught.

Because chronic property offenders are the predominant crime problem in PSA 501, Rowlands' and Pings' tactics had, by early 1998, evolved into something akin to standard operating procedure. No sooner had they locked up the summer-of-1997 suspect in November, when, in late December and January, PSA 501 property crimes rose again. The collective effort to identify, target, and build a case started again. This time, PSA 501 officers identified two suspects: a crack-addicted car thief, who operated back and forth across the D.C.-Prince George's County line, and his partner, who lived in PSA 501. The victim of an early-December armed robbery identified both

## Exhibit 3a. Part 1 Crimes in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (trends)




## Exhibit 3b. Part 1 Crimes in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (data points)

| | Number of Crimes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | |
| | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. |
| **First Quarter** | | | | | | |
| January | 69 | | 68 | | 47 | |
| February | 53 | | 64 | | 36 | |
| March | 81 | 67 | 77 | 70 | 37 | 40 |
| **Second Quarter** | | | | | | |
| April | 77 | | 58 | | 43 | |
| May | 60 | | 52 | | 28 | |
| June | 63 | 67 | 51 | 54 | 38 | 36 |
| **Third Quarter** | | | | | | |
| July | 74 | | 32 | | 58 | |
| August | 79 | | 56 | | 47 | |
| September | 75 | 76 | 60 | 50 | 47 | 51 |
| **Fourth Quarter** | | | | | | |
| October | 87 | | 54 | | 37 | |
| November | 97 | | 31 | | 39 | |
| December | 65 | 83 | 37 | 41 | 39 | 38 |
| **Annual Monthly Average** | 73 | | 54 | | 41 | |

Source for exhibits 3a and 3b: Fifth District crime analyst Sergeant Joe Snell prepared this information for the Fifth District crime analysis and FBI Uniform Crime Reports.

men as the perpetrators. The partner was arrested shortly after the robbery, but the addict-thief eluded arrest, and PSA 501 crime remained high.

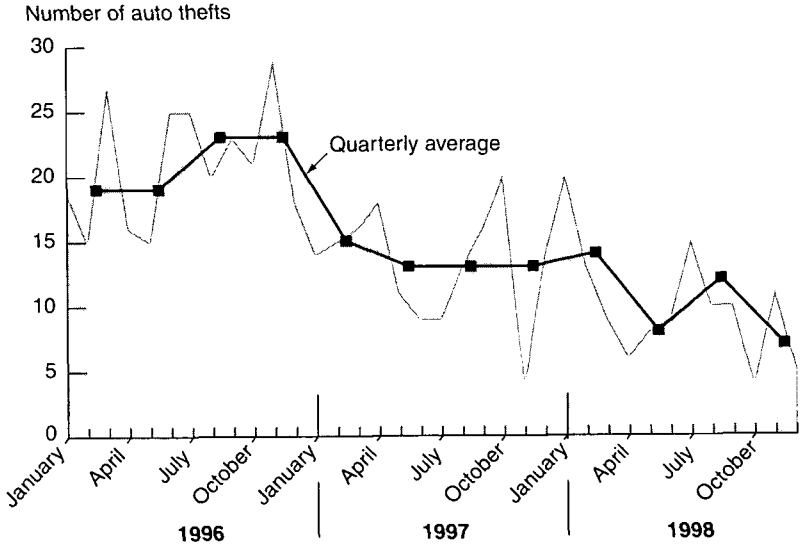
In this situation, to develop a strong case, Pings had to keep the partner in custody until police could arrest the addict-thief. To try defendants one at a time in a two-man crime requires evidence to counter the defense that the other guy is the one who really did it. With Rowlands' help, Pings resurrected a 2-year-old shoplifting case at Neiman Marcus (where the PSA 501 partner regularly stole his Calvin Klein underwear and had made a memorable statement to that fact to the Neiman's security guard who caught him), a case that had been dismissed and long forgotten by the overburdened Misdemeanor Section. Pings prepared both the misdemeanor shoplifting charge and the suspect's subsequent abscondence for trial. When she answered ready for trial in court on both cases, the defendant pleaded guilty to the abscondence and was immediately sentenced to 6 months in jail. When the addict-thief was finally caught in early February, crime again fell in PSA 501, back to 36 crimes from 47 in January.

The crime decline that began in PSA 501 when Sergeant Rowlands became beat sergeant in March 1997 steadily continued into 1998, with intermittent ups and downs. Average crimes per month dropped from 73 in 1996 to 54 in 1997. Total crimes per month in the first six months of 1998 averaged 38, a 48-percent drop from the high levels of 1996. Similarly, reports of stolen autos in PSA 501 dropped from an average of 21 per month in 1996 to 10 per month in the first half of 1998.

In June 1998, both Tad Dibiase, the new PSA 501 attorney, and Sergeant Rowlands described the situation as stable. Citizens at the May 1998 community meeting had literally no complaints. At the June meeting, citizens anticipated a rise in thefts over the summer with teenagers out of school. Dibiase told Rowlands to let him know if he needed help with suspects or specific cases. Crimes did rise, but no particular suspects appeared responsible. With routine patrol and the beginning of school, crimes fell again in the fall. In 1998, total Part 1 crimes fell by another 24 percent from 1997. From 1996 to 1998, Part 1 crime in PSA 501 was reduced by 43 percent. Auto thefts were cut in half. (See exhibits 3a, 3b, 4a, and 4b.)

Because chronic property offenders are the primary crime problem in PSA 501, it is easier to observe the statistical impact of locking up specific suspects there than it is in beats with a greater variety of criminal behaviors generating aggregate crime statistics. The same tactic, however, is used by officers in other PSAs. PSA 511, encompassing the northeast corner of Capitol Hill, is another predominantly property crime beat where

## Exhibit 4a. Stolen Autos in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (trends)




## Exhibit 4b. Stolen Autos in Patrol Service Area 501: 1996–1998 (data points)

| | Number of Crimes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | |
| | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. |
| **First Quarter** | | | | | | |
| January | 19 | | 14 | | 20 | |
| February | 15 | | 15 | | 13 | |
| March | 27 | 20 | 16 | 15 | 9 | 14 |
| **Second Quarter** | | | | | | |
| April | 16 | | 18 | | 6 | |
| May | 15 | | 11 | | 8 | |
| June | 25 | 19 | 9 | 13 | 9 | 8 |
| **Third Quarter** | | | | | | |
| July | 25 | | 9 | | 15 | |
| August | 20 | | 13 | | 10 | |
| September | 23 | 23 | 16 | 13 | 10 | 12 |
| **Fourth Quarter** | | | | | | |
| October | 21 | | 20 | | 4 | |
| November | 29 | | 4 | | 11 | |
| December | 18 | 23 | 14 | 13 | 5 | 7 |
| **Annual Monthly Average** | 21 | | 13 | | 10 | |

Source for exhibits 4a and 4b: Fifth District crime analyst Sergeant Joe Snell prepared this information for the Fifth District crime analysis and FBI Uniform Crime Reports.

the targeting of individual Part 1 suspects has had an observable impact on crime. In PSA 511, robberies and burglaries are more common problems than auto theft; drugs and violence occasionally spill over into PSA 511 from PSAs to the north and east where open-air drug markets and violence are serious problems. Still, at district Compstat meetings, Officer Albert Mercer of PSA 511 characterized the general PSA 511 action plan as "know the suspects." The number of crimes per month in PSA 511 also dropped by about 40 percent after the PSA rollout, with CP attorneys providing legal backup to officers, as Pings had done in PSA 501.[13]

These reductions in crime could not have occurred without police efforts, and the same results might conceivably have been achieved without the involvement of CP attorneys. Sergeant Rowlands, however, holds a very definite view on the benefits to police (and ultimately citizens) of community prosecution: "Things happen that would not have happened before, because CP attorneys know who the people are and make an extra effort on cases that would normally not get it." Officer Mercer made a virtually identical statement in a Compstat presentation.

## Community prosecution in PSA 508

If all PSAs had crime problems like those in PSA 501, all that would be needed to bring down Washington's crime rate is Cliff Keenan's old Chronic Offender Unit reorganized by location. Unfortunately, as Keenan observed a decade ago, the city's most serious problem is violence. Dealing with the violence that came with the drugs and disorder of the crack epidemic in a neighborhood like PSA 508 is a different and significantly more difficult task.

PSA 508, whose boundaries are the same as the northeast neighborhood of Trinidad, is situated within the swath of open-air drug markets and violence that cuts through the southern half of the Fifth District. Crime in this roughly 50-square-block area (one of the small, dense residential beats in the Fifth District's Sector Two) is, in the words of one lieutenant, "among the most challenging in the fifth." The number of incidents of serious assaultive violence in PSA 508 (and neighboring PSA 509) is twice as high as the average in the rest of the Fifth District. The most extreme form of physical disorder, abandoned housing, is a major problem.[14] Trinidad's Bladensburg Road and Montello Avenue and the street corners of Montello and Oates, Montello and Queens, and 16th and Levis rank among the most entrenched drug markets in the city. At the start of the PSA reform, the PSA 508 sergeant, in deference to citizen fears, approached community outreach with caution. The popular community policing "knock and talk" technique (used in most of MPD's community outreach efforts) would, on virtually every

block in Trinidad, be observed by drug dealers. Persons seen talking openly to police risked retaliation.

To outsiders, the most visible sign of Trinidad's decline is the blight on Bladensburg Road, a major city thoroughfare that forms the neighborhood's eastern boundary. In the 1970s, Rose's Liquor at Bladensburg and Morris drew customers from nearby Capitol Hill. Now, the sidewalk outside is a hangout for crackheads and low-level addict-dealers. Up the street, a methadone clinic attracts addicts from all over the city and the suburbs. In the 1970s, the same large brick building housed a group of independent auto-repair businesses. Across Bladensburg Road from the clinic is a fenced-in field of weeds where a three-story Sears department store once stood. The riots of the 1960s, the heroin epidemic of the 1970s, and the continuous flight of middle- and working-class families to the suburbs have all taken their toll on Washington's inner-city neighborhoods.[15] Recent accounts of Trinidad's problems, however, invariably begin with crack.

Rayful Edmond, an early and still-infamous Washington crack dealer, located one of his two major dealing operations in Trinidad.[16] The other was on Orleans Place, a few blocks west. By 1988, Washington's "most violent drug gangs were at war in Trinidad, leaving 20 people dead in one 5-month period" (Ripley 1998). In 1989, Edmond and other members of his drug crew were targeted by the U.S. Attorney's Office, the FBI, and the MPD. Edmond was sentenced to life without parole after conviction in U.S. District Court. Trinidad murders now are not as numerous as they were at the height of the crack epidemic, but even at seven per year in 1997 (in a neighborhood with at most 5,000 residents) the homicide rate is over twice the city average.

Since Edmond's incarceration, no Trinidad drug dealer has grown as large or as powerful as he once was, but those who followed in his footsteps have, in contrast, the appearance of being immune to law enforcement. One major drug dealer, commonly known to citizens and police, controlled dealing at 16th and Levis for well over a decade, with little interruption from law enforcement. He had no felony convictions. In 1997, intelligence files compiled by PSA 508 attorney Kathleen O'Connor suggested that there were at least a half dozen other Trinidad dealers like him (with similar long-term involvement in the drug trade, but no significant criminal record). The difficulty of addressing the drug problem in Trinidad worsened in the mid-1990s, when established dealers shifted their operations into high-grade marijuana, attracting a steady stream of suburban buyers. No matter what the weight, selling marijuana in Washington, D.C., was then only a misdemeanor.[17] At PSA 508 community meetings, residents regularly complained

about buyers in cars with Virginia and Maryland tags, who streamed through the neighborhood on weekends, and about limousines and taxis that came in the early morning hours.

Rayful Edmond lived in another neighborhood; today, a typical Trinidad drug dealer grew up in Trinidad, belongs to a family that has lived there for two or three generations, and has childhood friends as drug associates. Personal loyalties are intense, not only among the participants in the drug trade, but also among dealers and nonparticipating relatives, friends, neighbors, and acquaintances. Traditional narcotics enforcement tactics often do not work, because people will not snitch. Witness intimidation is a serious problem.

Drugs still underlie Trinidad's violence, but much of it does not fit the popular image of drug-related crime: elimination of rivals, disputes over turf, punishment of subordinates. Much of the violence arises out of commonplace personal conflicts, disputes, and predatory crimes that have always characterized a substantial share of serious felony crime. Now, however, participants—defendants, victims, and witnesses—are frequently all involved in the drug trade. In dealing with the violence, law enforcement is confronted with the same problem as dealing with drugs. People won't talk. The crime situation, in other words, makes the performance of the prosecutor's traditional mission—bringing to justice people who have committed serious crime—extremely difficult.

CP attorneys think that the arrangement in CP helps them address this situation by enabling them to tap into neighborhood intelligence and PSA officers' personal relationships with residents to find witnesses and bring them in. This access, combined with the flexibility attorneys have to handle all types of crimes, allows them to follow leads and make connections they could not make in other sections of the Office. One of O'Connor's early successes in Trinidad involved an unsolved shooting into a group of eight children playing on a sidewalk. Unraveling the interconnecting threads between two other apparently unrelated crimes led her 2 months later to the shooters. Eventually, three defendants were indicted for the shooting. Although the case fell apart at trial when a key witness recanted her Grand Jury testimony, O'Connor was successful in obtaining a significant sentence for one of the shooters (a second pleaded guilt to yet another crime) because she was able to pursue all of the interconnected offenses. (See "Connecting the crimes, convicting the offenders.")

Crimes of violence like these and dozens of others dominate the courtroom efforts of CP attorneys assigned to neighborhoods like Trinidad. CP attorneys, however, also come to realize that drugs and violence are but one part of the

larger problem. Even in neighborhoods plagued with drug dealing and violent crime, citizens come to community meetings with another perspective.

Trinidad residents are well aware that violence is associated with the drug dealing in their neighborhood (many are genuinely afraid of the dealers who dominate the streets), but at community meetings they rarely complain about specific incidents of violence or serious crime. At PSA 508 community meetings, citizen complaints focus on the conditions they confront on a daily basis: abandoned autos, prostitution in public spaces, illegal dumping in alleys, squatters in abandoned buildings, street harassment, high-speed drag racing late at night, and a variety of problems at uncared-for properties (from illegal activity to trash). But these classic order-maintenance complaints always mix with complaints about drug dealing—on street corners, in alleys, in abandoned buildings, on vacant lots, and from occupied apartments and houses. Drug dealing and intolerable quality-of-life conditions are as synonymous to citizens as drugs and violence are to officers and attorneys; and their consistently expressed disorder complaints are drug related. Abandoned cars are used to stash drugs. Squatters and prostitutes are drug users. Problem properties often house dealing operations. Even the late-night drag racing is by dealers who like to restore and show off old cars.

Both O'Connor and PSA 508 Sergeant William Douglas recognized that to make a dent in Trinidad's problems they could not focus solely on serious violent crime. They also needed ways to address the conditions citizens complain about, partly because these are the behaviors that affect citizens' daily lives, but also because these conditions are an integral part of the larger crime problem mix. As O'Connor explained to skeptical citizens at one PSA 508 community meeting when she needed their active participation to get a civil law project started in Trinidad: "I can't address everything in court. We need to address *this* [the 508 crime problem] every way we can."

Crime in PSA 508 (Trinidad) differs, in the extreme, from that in PSA 501. By targeting and locking up a small number of active suspects, officers and the CP attorney in PSA 501 had an observable and substantial impact on the PSA 501 crime problem (defined by both community complaints and conventional crime statistics as Part 1 property crime). In contrast, crime in Trinidad is a complex mix of interrelated behaviors that includes—in addition to Part 1 property crimes—serious violence, disorder, personal disputes and conflicts, drug dealing, and a variety of enabling conditions (especially abandoned, uncared for property) that facilitate drug-dealing operations. Because the violence is serious, removing from the streets the individuals who commit it is essential. However, in this milieu, specific individuals (even major drug dealers) are only a part of a larger complex of interconnected

behaviors—including noncriminal, but civilly irresponsible behavior (particularly negligence by property owners)—that interact with and feed one another. Single tactics used alone are not sufficient. A greater variety of tools, actors, and coordinated efforts are needed to have an impact.

In response to citizen's concerns, Sergeant Douglas focused the patrol resources under his command on Trinidad's visible drug and disorder prob-

## Connecting the Crimes, Convicting the Offenders

In February 1997,[1] unknown gunmen fired shots into a group of eight children playing on a Trinidad sidewalk. Seven of the children were hit by bullets and rushed by ambulances to hospitals. All survived their injuries, but none was able to identify the shooters. Nor could the bystanders interviewed by police provide an eyewitness account or a motive to explain the attack. The PSA 508 community prosecutor, Kathleen O'Connor, knew about the shooting the day after it occurred, but she had no other information.

Roughly a month later, in March, O'Connor filed an armed robbery case that had occurred at about the same time and location as the sidewalk shooting. Initially there were no obvious links. In time, however, investigating the first robbery linked to a second, which led to a witness who was a girlfriend of one of the shooters—and she had detailed knowledge of the sidewalk shooting.

The first robbery victim, teenager Damien Woodville, was robbed as he walked home from visiting a friend early one February evening by a person he knew only by the street name "Spook." Spook pulled up, got out of his car, and demanded Woodville's new Eddie Bauer coat. When Spook pushed a 9-mm gun into Woodville's stomach, Woodville gave up his coat. Spook drove off with a person later identified as his cousin, someone Woodville knew only as "Tweet." Woodville ran home and his mother immediately called the police. Police and Woodville canvassed the area with no results.

A month later, police arrested Spook for the Woodville robbery after Tweet's mother told police that Spook had committed the robbery. Upon being formally charged, Spook claimed he bought the Eddie Bauer coat from Woodville. Tweet and a third friend, Larry Thomas, both told defense counsel investigators they had seen Woodville sell the coat to Spook.

In pressing the investigation of the Woodville case, which had no other witnesses, O'Connor and PSA 508 officers learned that Woodville's cousin had been the victim of a similar Eddie Bauer coat robbery, also committed by Spook, a few days before the Woodville incident. Woodville's cousin had refused to give up his coat and did not report the incident to police. However, this robbery, which also involved a gun, had three witnesses—one of whom was Tweet's girlfriend, who knew about the sidewalk shooting. Linkages with the shooting began to emerge.

lems. When the targeting of individual suspects was needed, he handed the task off to detectives, vice officers, and attorneys. He thinks the greatest benefit of CP was the help he got in dealing with citizens' quality-of-life complaints, particularly the legal tools attorneys bring to this task.

O'Connor backed up Sergeant Douglas' efforts in PSA 508. She helped coordinate the CP field attorneys' nuisance-property initiative to board up

From an offhand comment about the street names Spook and Tweet made by a detective who had been at the scene of the sidewalk shooting, O'Connor realized the robbery defendants she was dealing with were likely suspects in the shooting. She joined the two robbery cases and pulled in all the witnesses for Grand Jury testimony. O'Connor and PSA 508 officers were now interested in information these witnesses might have about the shooting, as well as about the Eddie Bauer coat robberies. Eventually, Tweet's girlfriend provided testimony to the Grand Jury that implicated Spook, Tweet, and Thomas in the shooting.

The girlfriend had not witnessed the shooting but was present the next day when Spook, Tweet, and Thomas reenacted the shooting of the previous evening. The eight children were not the intended target. Spook, Tweet, and Thomas—all Trinidad drug dealers who also committed conventional predatory crimes—had been shooting at Woodville for telling police that Spook had stolen his coat. O'Connor charged Spook, Tweet, and Thomas with seven counts of assault with intent to kill while armed, among other charges. (A fourth defendant was killed in Prince George's County prior to the D.C. indictment.)

At trial, Tweet's girlfriend changed her story, and the judge granted a defense Motion for Judgment of Acquittal on the charges against Tweet and Thomas. Thomas had pleaded guilty to a separate assault charge prior to trial. The jury convicted Spook of obstruction of justice but hung on the other counts. He subsequently pleaded to the Eddie Bauer robbery charges upon learning that O'Connor was preparing to retry the shooting case. The judge sentenced Spook to 3–9 years for the assault with a deadly weapon, concurrent with 3–9 years for the robbery, consecutive with 1–3 years for obstruction of justice, for a total sentence of 4–12 years in prison.

Although the shooting case fell apart when Tweet's girlfriend changed her testimony, O'Connor still got a significant prison sentence for Spook because she had charged him with the two robberies and obstruction of justice in the shooting. Tweet eluded conviction, but—because she knew, and could pursue, the larger picture—O'Connor was able to convict two of the defendants on sufficiently serious charges to warrant incarceration.

---

1. In this account, dates and names (including "street names") have been changed.

abandoned properties. She backed up the effort of one CP field attorney to get the property owner of an abandoned liquor store—fully stocked and the site of numerous burglaries once word of that fact got around—to secure the liquor and the building; burglaries noticeably declined. She worked with Douglas and his Business Beat Officer to bring together neighborhood business owners to get Barring Notices issued to problem loiterers. Once individuals are officially barred from a particular private property, police are empowered to arrest them for unlawful entry. Attorneys pursue the arrests in court and then request Stay Away Orders from the judge as a condition of release. Barring notices and Stay Away Orders are not new tactics; systematic use of them by attorneys is.

The importance of CP field attorneys is most obvious in neighborhoods like Trinidad, where disorderly behaviors and physical conditions clearly facilitate the drug trade and serious crime. Stephanie Miller, one of the Fifth District field attorneys, recalls being bombarded with property-related nuisance complaints when she first came to work in the district. Since 1990 Washington's Ward 5 (which includes most of the Fifth District) has experienced the largest absolute population loss of all the city's eight wards and has the highest number of vacant properties (Washington Times 1998). A citywide map of abandoned properties Miller once posted on her office door exhibits the same geographic pattern as the city's drug trade and homicide problem.[18]

Early on, Miller went everywhere to get help on the property problems she could not handle on her own. Eventually she teamed up with Jim Delgado, an inspector at the Department of Consumer and Regulatory Affairs, who is extraordinarily adept at using his authority to fine property owners and business proprietors for code violations to remedy a variety of disorderly situations. Their work on a particularly notorious property on Kearny Street in PSA 502 and a city-owned property dubbed the Heroin Hotel by neighbors and police prompted other city agencies to join their effort. When the media acquired a video Miller had made to illustrate the problem and aired it on the evening news, the mayor's then-defunct Nuisance Property Task Force reactivated. The resurrected task force began by boarding up Miller's list of the 50 worst properties in the Fifth District and then expanded citywide. As of December 1998, 25 percent of the Task Force's abated properties were in Ward 5. At least 50 of the 285 abated properties in Ward 5 were in Trinidad (Nuisance Task Force 1998).

It would be hard to overstate the significance of the property issue to the overall crime problem in neighborhoods where violence, drugs, and disorder are the central problem. At the time of this study, Miller estimated that

80 percent of her time in the field was spent on property issues. Shortly after the PSA rollout, a particularly striking example of the interaction between property negligence and crime occurred in PSA 512, a beat with violence, drug, and disorder problems similar to those in Trinidad. The PSA 512 sergeant came to CP attorney Albert Herring for help with an apartment house that had been the site of four of the beat's seven murders in the first 9 months of 1997. Herring directed him to Miller and Delgado, who succeeded in getting drug-dealing tenants, the apparent source of the murder problem, evicted. In the next 6 months only two homicides occurred in PSA 512, neither at the targeted apartment house. In 1998, PSA 512 had four homicides, down from eight in 1997.

To augment the efforts of CP field attorneys in Trinidad, O'Connor introduced Operation Crackdown, a pro bono project of the Young Lawyers Section of the D.C. Bar Association. The project targets drug-ridden properties by invoking civil laws on behalf of citizen groups throughout Washington. Crackdown volunteer Seth Waxman, of the Washington law firm Shaw, Pittman, Potts, and Trowbridge, persuaded the firm to adopt the entire neighborhood of Trinidad. (Operation Crackdown typically deals with properties one by one. Citizens incorporate as a group and the firm represents them as clients, using civil laws to get owners of drug houses to take action against the dealing on their properties.) The Trinidad project, begun in the spring of 1998, had, by December 1998, generated "notice of pending lawsuit letters" to 51 property owners. Owners typically comply voluntarily; in only one case was a formal suit filed. An excerpt (see exhibit 5) from one of Waxman's letters (targeting a property where a number of well-known Trinidad drug dealers hung out) conveys both the seriousness of the problem and the range of available civil remedies, from actions under local ordinances to application of civil racketeering laws.

At the time of this study, the missing element in PSA 508 was a strategic narcotics-enforcement approach to the open-air drug markets that underlie other crime and disorder problems. Nonetheless, the CP and PSA reforms have had observable impacts. Part 1 crime declined by 22 percent (from an average of 50 crimes per month in 1996 and 1997 to 39 per month in 1998) after Sergeant Douglas implemented an aggressive order-maintenance and traffic-enforcement strategy in early 1998. Initially targeted on auto theft, the strategy affected virtually all Part 1 crimes.[19] Even with respect to the drug trade, individual tactics developed by PSA 508 officers, CP attorneys, and citizens started to come together to produce observable results by the end of 1998.

## Exhibit 5. Excerpt From a Letter Notifying a Property Owner of a Pending Lawsuit

**Re: NOTICE OF PENDING LAWSUIT**

Dear Sir(s) and/or Madam(s):

I represent a coalition of District of Columbia residents affected by your property at _____ [T]his letter constitutes formal notice that your property unreasonably interferes with the resident's health, safety, peace, comfort, and use and enjoyment of their property.

Your property at _____ has a history of police action that has disrupted the lives of neighborhood residents. Police officers from the 5th District Police Station have responded to several gun shootings in the past month, one of which resulted in a man being shot seven times. In addition, known drug dealers have been observed on and around your property at all hours of the night playing loud music and disturbing the peace. These drug dealers pose a threat to the safety of the community and should not be permitted to use your property as a staging ground for marketing and selling drugs.

As you know, drug trafficking and the other activities complained of above diminish the quality of life of neighborhood residents, particularly those raising families. The fear and intimidation that result from these activities inhibit normal interaction among neighbors and interfere with the rights of neighbors to use and enjoy their property free from nuisance and interference. In addition, drug trafficking lowers the value of neighborhood properties.

It is your responsibility to ensure that your property is not used in a manner that is unreasonably detrimental to the welfare of the surrounding area. Furthermore, you are presumed to be aware of what occurs on your property, even if you are not present when the activities complained of above take place. Simply put, your failure to take action against the activities described above has invited the many crimes that are in fact taking place on the premises.

Based on the many problems at [your property], I have advised my client that it has, at a minimum, the following actionable legal claims against you:

An action under the Drug-Related Nuisance Emergency Act of 1998, DC Code # 22–2713 *et seq.;*

An action under the bawdy house law, DC Code #22–2701 *et seq.;*

An action under Racketeer Influenced and Corrupt Organizations Act (Civil RICO);

A public/private nuisance action; and

A mental and emotional distress action.

You can be held liable for actual and punitive damages as well as attorney's fees if you fail to take reasonable actions and precautions to address the damages and nuisances that your property creates.

Note: The remainder of this letter outlines specific actions the property owner must take to avoid a suit and dates by which a reply is required.

In the summer of 1998, Anne Pings came to work in Trinidad and used her "multiple misdemeanor" tactic to target the major marijuana dealer who controlled drug dealing at 16th and Levis. She presented evidence in court to prove multiple probation violations on a misdemeanor marijuana distribution conviction. When the judge handed down a sentence of just 59 days instead of the maximum 1 year requested, Pings and PSA 508 officers were stunned. O'Connor, however, saw it as a major victory. In her mind, after a decade of nothing at all, anything was better than nothing. Pings also succeeded in convicting the dealer's sister and brother, part of the dealing operation, on misdemeanor distribution charges. Sentenced to probation, they also risked incarceration if they continued to sell drugs.

Simultaneously, Sergeant Douglas moved aggressively to thwart what looked like a new dealing operation (by the same dealer) in a rental property in the southern half of Trinidad, filling a void left by the murder of another established Trinidad drug dealer. Douglas identified the property owner and got Waxman to lay out the legal case against the owner if he did not move to evict the drug-dealing tenants. The owner readily agreed to cooperate after talking with Douglas. Pings drafted Barring Notices so officers could keep the dealers out.

Finally, a PSA 508 officer learned from a citizen that the same 16th and Levis dealer had committed a sex offense. While the dealer was still in jail serving his 59 days, Pings pursued the felony sex case and a related obstruction-of-justice charge. The judge detained the dealer pretrial in the sex case because of his misdemeanor arrests and probation violations. At the end of 1998, the dealer was in jail awaiting trial. Drug activity at 16th and Levis dramatically declined. Informants told PSA 508 officers that the dealer's marijuana suppliers had cut off the street-corner kingpin and would not supply younger dealers (who were attempting to fill the void) with the high-quality marijuana that attracted outside buyers into Trinidad.

Measuring the impact of law enforcement on the drug trade is, at this point, a tenuous business. One fact, however, consistently emerged at PSA 508 community meetings. The Trinidad citizens who had been working for almost a decade to reclaim their neighborhood from the drug trade believed they were now getting a response. At one well-attended PSA community meeting in the spring of 1998, residents were visibly upset by the statement of an elected city official, reported in the press as critical of the PSA concept. In their view, the reform was working in PSA 508 and they were angry that people "who talk and talk downtown" do not come out and ask them their opinion.

## How Do You Evaluate These Efforts?

Not long after taking office in early 1998, U.S. Attorney Wilma Lewis publicly stated her intention to expand community prosecution citywide. In the summer of 1998, she promoted six CP attorneys to supervisory positions in other Superior Court Sections that needed to integrate with CP to support an officewide effort. Executive staff began discussing how to bring CP to Washington's six other police districts. The administrative requirements of the CP expansion will determine the details of the Office's future evaluation efforts. Nonetheless, based on the experience of the Fifth District pilot project, it is possible to outline key principles and an initial approach to the task.

The original proposal for this study argued that traditional program evaluation methodologies are not well suited for monitoring community prosecution initiatives. Observation of CP in the Fifth District confirmed this presumption. Community prosecution (in Washington, D.C., and elsewhere) is not a program comprised of prescribed interventions uniformly applied across neighborhoods. Nor is it a mere collection of successful tactics and strategies (although it does generate these). Community prosecutors are not wedded to predetermined solutions. Rather, in the course of their day-to-day work they join with police officers and citizens to fashion responses that fit the unique crime and disorder situations of specific neighborhoods. What makes CP effective is precisely what makes it unamenable to traditional evaluation methodologies (which presume prescribed, standardized treatments, uniformly applied). The effectiveness of CP flows from its flexibility to address the unique situational character of the crime problems of small geographic areas.

The proposal argued that, rather than a conventional evaluation, the task at hand required new organizational performance measures suited to monitoring a new way of doing business. Traditional measures, most importantly crime rates and case-processing statistics, seemed insufficient to capture what community prosecutors (and community policing officers) are actually doing or whether their efforts are having an impact. This line of thinking—with respect to the reforms that are now taking place in Washington, a city with exceptionally high rates of serious crime—turned out to be incorrect. Observation of community prosecutors' involvement in the law enforcement process as it unfolded in the Fifth District (in conjunction with PSA police reforms) suggested not the inadequacy of conventional measures, but their cardinal importance.

Other types of information are needed. Regular input and feedback from citizens, for example, are critical. However, as quantitative measures of

law enforcement effort, conventional measures are still the most germane, even though the institutional arrangements among citizens, police, and attorneys for dealing with crime and disorder are changing. Conventional measures, however—particularly crime data—need to be used in new ways.

Police, prosecutors, local officials, research agencies, and scholars have worked for so long to figure out what to do about crime, with so little in the way of measurable results, that it is not surprising that many people came to accept the view that criminal behavior is immune to law enforcement control. In contrast, in observing the work of police and prosecutors in the Fifth District it was striking how sensitive crime is to official actions, yet—at the same time—how hard it is to coordinate and sustain the effort required for law enforcement to consistently have the upper hand.

Crime begin falling in the Fifth District in 1997, with the implementation of police reforms, and by the end of 1998 had fallen by 34 percent. This decline paralleled a steady beat-by-beat, month-by-month effort to identify the criminal behaviors that were driving crime and to implement immediate, tailored, and often multifaceted responses. This beat-by-beat law enforcement process is hard to both quantify and describe because of the seemingly endless variety of behaviors that generate aggregate levels of crime and the great variety of law enforcement activities required to respond.

During the field work for this study, numerous examples were observed in all Fifth District PSAs. In PSA 509, daytime thefts on H Street fluctuated with lunchroom policies at a nearby high school; thefts rose when school officials abandoned a closed-lunch and fell when PSA officers convinced officials to reinstate the closed-lunch rule. Theft from autos in PSA 513 declined when the PSA sergeant persuaded security guards at D.C. General Hospital to patrol outside the building; guards worked inside, but the sergeant's crime analysis showed crime was occurring in the parking lot. In PSA 506, crime consistently rose and fell with the sergeant's ability to get overtime help with the crowds at warehouse go-go clubs on nights and weekends. He estimated that at peak times as many as 5,000–6,000 young people came into the beat to go to the clubs.

In PSA 511 and the southern parts of PSAs 510 and 512, the appearance and capture of chronic offenders (usually burglars) on a crime spree regularly produced dramatic ups and downs in crime. Similar fluctuations occurred in PSAs 502 and 504, but the chronic offender was more often a tag thief who stole auto license tags for resale at illegal street markets ($35 to drug dealers, $10 to everybody else). In PSA 508 and the northern parts of PSAs 510, 512, and 513, the number of monthly crimes invariably

responded to order-maintenance tactics, such as enforcing traffic laws, making quality-of-life arrests, securing an abandoned liquor store, and evicting a murderous drug crew from a problem property.

The list of anecdotes goes on and on, but the mode of operation is repetitious—month by month, beat by beat, figure out the problem, devise tactics to thwart the behavior, check the results, and stay on it until the problem is solved. Certain beat crime problems are episodic, requiring swift episodic responses. Others are always there, requiring dedicated effort, constant monitoring, and maintenance. Although a narcotics takedown of a major drug gang did not occur in the Fifth District during the study period, they were occurring in other police districts. It is hard to imagine that such long-term tactics would not have an impact on beat crime, as well as on drug activity.

In short, so many of the actions taken by law enforcement in the Fifth District (whether aimed at crime or disorder, whether implemented by the police alone or jointly with CP attorneys) registered a decline in conventional crime counts that it does not make sense to look for alternative measures, at least not without looking at conventional crime measures first.

The Fifth District beat-by-beat, month-by-month anticrime and quality-of-life operations typically involved multiple actors: the beat sergeant who analyzes crime statistics and deploys patrol resources, detectives who help develop intelligence and track down suspects, citizens who risk retaliation by providing information to police, and the landlords and business proprietors who cooperate in abating nuisance activity on private property. In this process, CP attorneys have many functions: advising police on what they can and cannot do, explaining legal constraints to citizens to defuse frustration with law enforcement, facilitating the cooperation of other needed actors, and providing an alternative channel of communication for citizens to access the legal system. But their unique task as attorneys is providing strategic legal backup, not just on serious crime or according to predetermined criteria, but on a range of crimes and situations as the need arises. In the Fifth District, officers could handle many crime problems on their own, but when the coercive power of the law was required to target specific offenders or crimes or a legal rationale was needed to ensure compliance with an order-maintenance tactic, then officers could not do it alone. They needed access to the formal mechanisms of the law.

Conventional case processing also provides legal backup, but only on a specified set of cases, in accordance with predetermined criteria, with limited situational information, and typically with one legal tactic—move the individual case to conviction. Citizen access is limited to victims, who gain

access through the police. The arrangement in CP (with attorneys directly connected to citizens, officers, and criminal behaviors in particular neighborhoods) allows attorneys to respond to criminal behaviors that conventional case processing is likely to miss or does not have the flexibility to address. When attorneys come to know what citizens know and see what the police see, they begin to understand the neighborhood conditions giving rise to crime and they see there are other things they need to do that conventional case processing is not organized to handle.

The greatest difficulty of parsing out the statistical effect of prosecutors on crime is that the outcome of so much of what prosecutors do is a joint product of work with other actors, most importantly the police.[20] This is true of both conventional prosecution and CP. Few, if any, quantitative studies have attempted to measure the effect of prosecutors on crime, although there have been many such studies of police. In Washington, both observation and crime data suggest that the greatest impact on total Part 1 crime is arising from the police reforms begun in early 1997. This is not to suggest that the work of prosecutors does not contribute to crime control; rather, the statistical impact of what they do is intertwined with that of the police.

In terms of both level and duration, the high rates of crime in Washington from 1988 to 1996 were worse than any in the last 40 years. (See appendix A.) The number of Part 1 crimes rose from 52,600 in 1987 to 61,500 in 1988, and averaged over 64,000 per year for the next 8 years, while the city's population steadily declined. Finally, the number of reported crimes fell sharply in 1997 (to 54,800) and again in 1998 (to 47,800), concurrent with the beginning of police reform. In this 2-year period, all police districts and all crime types registered substantial declines. In the Fifth District, Part 1 crimes fell by 34 percent (above the city average of 29 percent), followed closely by the First District (33 percent) and the Seventh District (32 percent) (see exhibit 6). The declines across districts by year, however, were highly variable.

It was not part of this study to collect detailed information on crime patterns or crime-control initiatives in other districts that might explain differences in crime reduction across police districts. Crime-control initiatives were certainly occurring in other parts of the city at the time of the Fifth District pilot project. Police, prosecutors, and Federal agents dismantled major drug gangs in both the First and Third Districts. The D.C. Public Housing Receiver, David Gilmore, also achieved notable success in a number of notoriously crime-ridden housing complexes (including cleaning up Montana Terrace in the Fifth District, Benning Heights in the Sixth District, and Potomac Gardens in the First District and closing the Arthur Capper

complex, also in the First District). Half of the drop in homicides in 1997 occurred in public housing.

The important point, however, is that aggregate, annualized cross-district comparisons are not the most useful way to use conventional crime data as a measure of law enforcement performance. To develop information on the effectiveness of law enforcement, one needs to track crime month by month in smaller geographic areas, where it is possible to relate fluctuations in crime levels to specific criminal behaviors and law enforcement actions. The argument that law enforcement is having an impact on crime requires not only statistics, but also a parallel explanatory narrative.

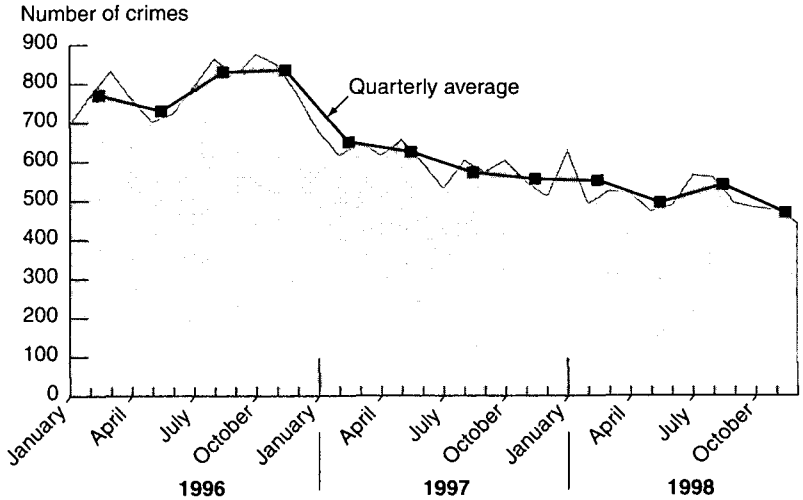
Crime in the Fifth District began to fall in January 1997, with the assignment of permanent beat sergeants; hit a low in July 1997, with the PSA rollout; and continued a downward trend through 1997 and 1998, with intermittent ups and downs similar to the pattern described in PSA 501. Explanations for the overall declines are embedded in the underlying patterns and associated activities of the 13 individual PSAs, but even at the district level, some of the fluctuations can be related to specific criminal and law enforcement behaviors. (See exhibits 7a and 7b.)

For example, the 23-percent crime rise from December 1997 to January 1998 so concerned Fifth District Commander Reginald Smith that he personally analyzed the PSA patterns and discovered that some PSA sergeants had stopped assigning extra officers to work nights and weekends (to match patterns of criminal behavior). After patrol assignments were readjusted, crime went back down in February. High counts in July and August 1998 were primarily the result of opportunistic summertime thefts and a ring of burglars operating in the Capitol Hill area of the First and Fifth Districts.

**Exhibit 6. Part 1 Crimes, by Police District**

| | Police District | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1st | 2nd | 3rd | 4th | 5th | 6th | 7th | Total |
| **Number of Crimes** | | | | | | | | |
| 1995 | 14,470 | 9,990 | 12,009 | 9,607 | 9,071 | 7,367 | 6,091 | 68,500 |
| 1996 | 13,508 | 9,737 | 11,418 | 9,516 | 9,429 | 6,982 | 6,338 | 66,900 |
| 1997 | 9,654 | 7,916 | 9,366 | 8,576 | 7,219 | 6,051 | 5,975 | 54,700 |
| 1998 | 9,072 | 6,889 | 8,174 | 7,315 | 6,227 | 5,816 | 4,329 | 47,800 |
| **Annual Change** | | | | | | | | |
| 1996 | -7% | -3% | -5% | -1% | 4% | -5% | 4% | -2% |
| 1997 | -28 | -18 | -17 | -9 | -23 | -13 | -5 | -18 |
| 1998 | -6 | -12 | -12 | -14 | -13 | -3 | -27 | -13 |
| **Change 1997 and 1998** | -33% | -29% | -28% | -23% | -34% | -17% | -32% | -29% |

## Exhibit 7a. Part 1 Crimes in the Fifth District: 1996–1998 (trends)




## Exhibit 7b. Part 1 Crimes in the Fifth District: 1996–1998 (data points)

| | Number of Crimes | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 1996 | | 1997 | | 1998 | |
| | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. | Mo. | Qtr. Avg. |
| **First Quarter** | | | | | | |
| January | 697 | | 681[a] | | 632[b] | |
| February | 772 | | 619 | | 495 | |
| March | 835 | 768 | 652 | 651 | 527 | 551 |
| **Second Quarter** | | | | | | |
| April | 765 | | 618 | | 521 | |
| May | 704 | | 659 | | 475 | |
| June | 726 | 732 | 600 | 626 | 490 | 495 |
| **Third Quarter** | | | | | | |
| July | 796 | | 535[c] | | 567[d] | |
| August | 867 | | 606 | | 562[d] | |
| September | 824 | 829 | 576 | 572 | 496 | 542 |
| **Fourth Quarter** | | | | | | |
| October | 878 | | 606 | | 484 | |
| November | 852 | | 550 | | 478 | |
| December | 777 | 836 | 514 | 557 | 445 | 469 |
| **Annual Monthly Average** | 790 | | 602 | | 514 | |

a. Assignment of permanent beat sergeants.
b. Commander Smith identifies change in patrol assignments.
c. PSA rollout.
d. Summer thefts and burglary ring in Sector 2.

Source for exhibits 7a and 7b: Fifth District crime analyst Sergeant Joe Snell prepared this information for the Fifth District crime analysis and FBI Uniform Crime Reports.

These problems largely account for the smaller decline in Fifth District crime in 1998 than that observed in 1997. The important point, however, is that the problems were identified, responses were generated, and crime continued to decline rather than to spiral up and out of control. The average monthly number of crimes in the last quarter of 1998 was 44 percent below the monthly average for 1996, and 22 percent below the monthly average for 1997. At the beat level, as exemplified in the case studies of PSA 501 and PSA 508, CP attorneys played an important role by providing the strategic legal backup that is their unique contribution.

As a measure of performance it is unreasonable to hold individual attorneys accountable for crime in a beat. This is a police function, and in 1997 and 1998 this is what Fifth District commanders were asking of the PSA sergeants. It does seem reasonable, however, to ask that attorneys know what the crime problems are, what citizens are complaining about, and what the police are trying to do and that they can articulate what they have done or are trying to do to contribute to the monthly crime-control process in their assigned beats.

If prosecutors want to know what they are contributing to crime control, they can do at least three things that do not require new measures or data collection. First, track crime on a monthly basis at the beat level, where it is possible to observe the impact of the immediate, but fine-grained activities that affect criminal behavior. These data are readily available from the police. In Washington, CP supervisors were already collecting this information during the course of the Fifth District pilot project. Second, attorneys—both individually and collectively—constantly need to ask themselves how they can use their legal expertise to contribute to the beat-level efforts of citizens and police. When the opportunity arises for strategic intervention, they need to make a note of it and check the data for results. Not every activity will register effects, but some will. If consistent effort does not produce results, then they may need to look for other feedback, which is likely to be variable and unique to specific situations. Finally, because effective crime control is a joint effort, prosecutors need to ask other key actors, most importantly citizens and police, what they think they are getting from community prosecution. The best answers to these questions lie not in citywide random surveys, but in the police beats where the crime issue is defined in terms that are specific and concrete.

# Notes

1. A National Institute of Justice study reported that for the period 1985 to 1994, Washington, D.C., had the highest average annual homicide rate among the 77 largest U.S. cities (Lattimore et al. 1997). In 1989, when the D.C. homicide rate was 72 per 100,000 residents, the rate among the seven U.S. cities with a population greater than 1 million was 27 per 100,000. Among the 19 cities with a population between 500,000 and 1 million the rate was 21 per 100,000. The District's population in 1989 was 604,000 (FBI, Uniform Crime Reports, 1989).

2. In 1989 and 1990, Stephens introduced a number of initiatives to address drugs and violence. In addition to forming the specialized homicide unit, he created a drug-homicide strike force to address gang violence, implemented a witness protection program, and secured additional attorney resources for the Superior Court Division, which was most affected by the rise in drug and violent crime caseloads.

3. Personal interview with former U.S. Attorney Eric H. Holder, Jr., May 15, 1995.

4. The structure of the CP pilot project came out of the attorneys' own experiences, consultation with prosecutors in District Attorney's Offices around the country that already had CP projects in place, Holder's personal outreach to countless citizens and community groups, and extensive internal discussions among Office supervisors whose traditional prosecution sections would be affected.

5. Attorney skills are used most effectively when the most experienced attorneys handle the most serious, complex crimes. In conventional case processing, this is accomplished largely by assigning attorneys by type of crime.

6. In the 1970s the Washington police department was considered to be among the best departments in the country. Under home rule granted to the District by Congress in the 1970s, the D.C. mayor has had the legal authority to make all appointments above the rank of captain within the department. Carl T. Rowan, Jr.—a Washington attorney, former FBI agent, and both champion and critic of the Washington MPD—chronicled MPD's two-decade decline and Mayor Marion Barry's destructive political interference in internal police affairs (Rowan 1998). A similar story is recounted by urban historian Fred Siegel (1997).

7. This was not without problems, but it did force PSA officers to get to know citizens and to focus on the crime and disorder problems in their PSA beats.

8. At the time of this study, the reform of MPD vice and investigative functions was in flux. Given the widespread presence of open-air drug markets in all police Districts except the Second, this has been a continuing source of frustration for citizens, officers, and attorneys.

9. For the purposes of the Uniform Crime Report, the Federal Bureau of Investigation defines the following offenses as Part 1 crimes: (1) murder and nonnegligent

manslaughter, (2) forcible rape, (3) robbery, (4) aggravated assault, (5) burglary, (6) larceny-theft, (7) motor vehicle theft, and (8) arson. Burglary, larceny-theft, and motor vehicle theft are considered Crime Index property crimes. (Because figures on arson are not consistently available, arson is not included in the Crime Index total, even though it is clearly a property crime. Arson figures are added to obtain the Modified Crime Index total.)

10. In the U.S. Attorney's Superior Court Division, screening is the responsibility of the Grand Jury Section, which handles cases from intake through indictment. Cases are assigned to trial attorneys after indictment. Initial screening decisions are supervised by two or three senior deputies.

11. The PSA Compstat process creates strong incentives for PSA sergeants to stay on top of daily crime statistics to spot emerging patterns. It also pushes them to combine the crime stats with street intelligence to figure out how to stop the specific behavior that is generating crime.

12. Rowlands came to PSA 501 as beat sergeant of old beat 138 in March 1997, shortly after the MPD announced community policing in November 1996. He became the PSA sergeant when the PSA reform was rolled out in July 1997. The Compstat process began somewhat earlier, in the spring of 1997.

13. In 1997, PSA 511 had one of the largest Part 1 crime declines in the city. Average crimes per month dropped from 56 in 1996 to 33 in 1997 (a 41-percent drop). In March 1998, though, Part 1 crimes jumped back up to 51, when several active chronic offenders began to operate across PSAs 510, 511, and 512. In May, crime in PSA 511 fell back to 31 crimes after the arrest in April of four chronic offenders, three of whom had distinctive modus operandi: the pillowcase burglar, who first stole a pillowcase from his victims and then filled the pillowcase with more valuable goods; the barman burglar, who specialized in ripping cheap window bars off the exterior walls of row houses; and a longtime neighborhood theft-from-auto man, recently returned from prison. CP attorneys Matt Olsen and Pat Woodward tracked the problem, paid special attention to the details of the cases, and got all four defendants held when officers made arrests.

Olsen handled three of the four cases, all burglaries. He gives credit to PSA 511 officers for getting the evidence he would need to prove cases in court. Proving a burglary case largely depends on catching the burglar in close proximity (in time and place) to the location of the crime and in possession of identifiable stolen goods. Officers did this by tracking offense patterns and adjusting their schedules and patrol locations to match those of the burglaries. To make a difference, Olsen vigorously argued in court that the perpetrators should be held pending trial even though this meant he had to be prepared to go to trial within 100 days on all three cases—i.e., a lot of extra work for him. The U.S. Attorney's Office routinely seeks pretrial holds on violent crimes. Property crimes are decided on a discretionary basis.

14. In recent years, scholars have documented what neighborhood residents have always known about abandonment. Squatters move in; drinking, drug use, prostitution, drug dealing, and all varieties of disorderly behaviors follow. The greatest fear felt by neighbors is a fire. Wesley Skogan (1990), in his book on disorder, identified abandonment as the most serious form of all behavioral and physical disorders.

15. In 1979, Washington had three quarters of a million residents, roughly 6 percent below the peak of 800,000 in the 1950s and 1960s. By 1990, the population had fallen to 607,000 (U.S. Census). According to Washington demographer George Grier (1997): "In the first 6 years of the 1990s the District of Columbia saw its decades-long trend in population loss accelerate, dropping by 10.7 percent and bringing the total below 600,000 for the first time since the 1930s." Grier estimates that Washington's population was 541,800 as of March 1996. He reports that the largest population losses were among the lowest income households. This is consistent with a series of ward profiles published by the *Washington Post* in 1998. The *Post* series reported the largest population losses in 1990–1997 (19 percent) were in Wards 6, 7, and 8. Wards 7 and 8 cover Anacostia and report the lowest incomes of all eight city wards. Part of Ward 6 is in Anacostia, but it also includes the relatively affluent Capitol Hill neighborhood (Wheeler 1998; Horwitz 1998; Fountain 1998).

16. The success of Edmond's Washington operation attracted the attention of Colombian cocaine suppliers in Los Angeles who recruited him as their Washington connection, an unusual arrangement for Colombian suppliers, who typically supply local drug rings through intermediate connections.

17. In early 2000, the D.C. City Council passed a law to make the distribution of marijuana a felony. The law is expected to take effect in 2001, pending congressional action.

18. An article in Washington's *City Paper* linked Edmond's choice of Trinidad for his drug business to a housing finance scandal that resulted in bankruptcies and numerous abandoned properties, adding to the neighborhood's vulnerability to an invasion of illegal activities (Ripley 1998).

19. The pattern of Part 1 offending in drug areas appears to differ from that of the Part 1 chronic offenders in PSA 501, described above. CP attorney Brad Weinsheimer, who worked in PSA 509, thought a lot of the property crimes in PSA 509 were crimes of opportunity committed by drug dealers. Because the dealers are always on the street, they know when residents are not home and who owns property worth stealing. Weinsheimer's observation was corroborated by an extraordinarily prolific burglar who operated in the Capitol Hill area in the late summer and early fall of 1998. When arrested, the burglar confessed to over 100 burglaries and verified his confession by riding with officers to identify his hits. He told officers he didn't go into drug-infested neighborhoods because there was less to steal and the "drug boys" did the stealing there. If these observations are

correct, they help explain the effectiveness of Sergeant Douglas' visible order-maintenance tactic. Even drug dealers tend not to commit crime when the police are present and visibly engaged in law enforcement. Sergeant Mack in PSA 512 and Sergeant Kucik in PSA 510 both regularly reported at Fifth District Compstat meetings that order maintenance was an effective tactic in reducing Part 1 crimes in their beats.

20. This comment applies only to the prosecutors' role in crime control. Their role in "pursuing justice" is much more—if not totally—independent, deriving from their unique authority to initiate the formal adjudication process.

## Index Crimes in the District of Columbia, 1960–1998

| Year | Population | Index | Violent | Property | Murder | Forcible Rape | Robbery | Aggravated Assault | Burglary | Larceny-Theft | Motor Vehicle Theft |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1960 | 763,956 | 20,725 | 4,230 | 16,495 | 81 | 111 | 1,072 | 2,966 | 4,587 | 9,905 | 2,003 |
| 1961 | 763,956 | 21,584 | 4,491 | 17,093 | 88 | 100 | 1,348 | 2,955 | 4,902 | 9,732 | 2,459 |
| 1962 | 784,000 | 22,208 | 4,750 | 17,458 | 91 | 82 | 1,572 | 3,005 | 5,022 | 9,855 | 2,581 |
| 1963 | 798,000 | 25,584 | 4,740 | 20,844 | 95 | 87 | 1,707 | 2,851 | 6,984 | 10,395 | 3,465 |
| 1964 | 808,000 | 30,334 | 5,112 | 25,222 | 132 | 96 | 2,279 | 2,605 | 8,910 | 10,920 | 5,392 |
| 1965 | 803,000 | 33,885 | 5,804 | 28,081 | 148 | 140 | 2,881 | 2,635 | 9,886 | 12,576 | 5,619 |
| 1966 | 808,000 | 39,937 | 7,155 | 32,782 | 141 | 134 | 3,703 | 3,177 | 10,498 | 15,719 | 6,565 |
| 1967 | 809,000 | 53,886 | 9,252 | 44,634 | 178 | 172 | 5,759 | 3,143 | 14,702 | 21,425 | 8,507 |
| 1968 | 809,000 | 63,653 | 12,180 | 51,473 | 195 | 260 | 8,622 | 3,103 | 17,950 | 22,169 | 11,354 |
| 1969 | 798,000 | 83,040 | 17,038 | 66,002 | 287 | 776 | 12,366 | 3,609 | 22,902 | 31,910 | 11,190 |
| 1970 | 756,510 | 82,334 | 16,846 | 65,488 | 221 | 720 | 11,816 | 4,089 | 21,740 | 32,638 | 11,110 |
| 1971 | 741,000 | 70,516 | 16,084 | 54,432 | 275 | 615 | 11,222 | 3,972 | 18,818 | 26,882 | 8,732 |
| 1972 | 748,000 | 58,832 | 12,607 | 46,225 | 245 | 714 | 7,751 | 3,897 | 12,801 | 27,603 | 5,821 |
| 1973 | 746,000 | 58,921 | 11,626 | 47,295 | 268 | 596 | 7,171 | 3,591 | 11,801 | 30,781 | 4,713 |
| 1974 | 723,000 | 54,644 | 11,590 | 43,054 | 277 | 561 | 7,941 | 2,811 | 14,126 | 25,004 | 3,924 |
| 1975 | 716,000 | 55,157 | 12,704 | 42,453 | 235 | 520 | 9,137 | 2,812 | 13,164 | 25,892 | 3,397 |
| 1976 | 702,000 | 49,726 | 10,399 | 39,327 | 188 | 508 | 7,044 | 2,659 | 11,869 | 24,506 | 2,952 |
| 1977 | 690,000 | 49,821 | 9,843 | 39,978 | 192 | 402 | 6,655 | 2,594 | 11,590 | 25,646 | 2,742 |
| 1978 | 674,000 | 50,950 | 9,515 | 41,435 | 189 | 447 | 6,333 | 2,546 | 12,497 | 25,744 | 3,194 |
| 1979 | 656,000 | 56,430 | 10,553 | 45,877 | 180 | 489 | 6,920 | 2,964 | 13,452 | 28,819 | 3,606 |
| 1980 | 635,233 | 63,668 | 12,772 | 50,896 | 200 | 439 | 8,897 | 3,236 | 16,260 | 31,068 | 3,568 |

Continued on next page

## Index Crimes in the District of Columbia, 1960–1998, continued

| Year | Population | Index | Violent | Property | Murder | Forcible Rape | Robbery | Aggravated Assault | Burglary | Larceny-Theft | Motor Vehicle Theft |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1981 | 636,000 | 67,910 | 14,468 | 53,442 | 223 | 414 | 10,399 | 3,432 | 16,832 | 32,845 | 3,765 |
| 1982 | 631,000 | 65,692 | 13,397 | 52,295 | 194 | 421 | 9,137 | 3,645 | 14,774 | 33,435 | 4,086 |
| 1983 | 623,000 | 57,776 | 11,933 | 45,843 | 183 | 406 | 7,698 | 3,646 | 12,483 | 29,405 | 3,955 |
| 1984 | 623,000 | 53,524 | 10,725 | 42,799 | 175 | 366 | 6,087 | 4,097 | 10,954 | 27,471 | 4,374 |
| 1985 | 626,000 | 50,075 | 10,171 | 39,904 | 147 | 337 | 5,230 | 4,457 | 10,005 | 24,874 | 5,025 |
| 1986 | 626,000 | 52,204 | 9,423 | 42,781 | 194 | 328 | 4,720 | 4,181 | 10,815 | 25,861 | 6,105 |
| 1987 | 622,000 | 52,569 | 10,016 | 42,553 | 225 | 245 | 4,462 | 5,084 | 11,244 | 25,012 | 6,297 |
| 1988 | 620,000 | 61,471 | 11,914 | 49,557 | 369 | 165 | 5,690 | 5,690 | 12,300 | 28,624 | 8,633 |
| 1989 | 604,000 | 62,172 | 12,937 | 49,235 | 434 | 186 | 6,542 | 5,775 | 11,780 | 29,164 | 8,291 |
| 1990 | 606,900 | 65,389 | 14,919 | 50,470 | 472 | 303 | 7,365 | 6,779 | 12,035 | 30,326 | 8,109 |
| 1991 | 598,000 | 64,393 | 14,671 | 49,722 | 482 | 214 | 7,269 | 6,706 | 12,405 | 29,182 | 8,135 |
| 1992 | 589,000 | 67,187 | 16,685 | 50,502 | 443 | 215 | 7,459 | 8,568 | 10,721 | 30,663 | 9,118 |
| 1993 | 578,000 | 67,979 | 16,888 | 51,091 | 454 | 324 | 7,107 | 9,003 | 11,534 | 31,495 | 8,062 |
| 1994 | 570,000 | 63,186 | 15,177 | 48,009 | 399 | 249 | 6,311 | 8,218 | 10,037 | 29,711 | 8,261 |
| 1995 | 554,000 | 67,441 | 14,744 | 52,697 | 360 | 292 | 6,864 | 7,228 | 10,185 | 32,319 | 10,193 |
| 1996 | 543,000 | 64,599 | 13,411 | 51,188 | 397 | 260 | 6,444 | 6,310 | 9,828 | 31,385 | 9,975 |
| 1997 | 529,000 | 51,986 | 10,706 | 41,280 | 301 | 218 | 4,499 | 5,688 | 6,963 | 26,748 | 7,569 |
| 1998 | 523,000 | 46,171 | 8,988 | 37,183 | 260 | 190 | 3,606 | 4,932 | 6,361 | 24,321 | 6,501 |

Source: FBI, Uniform Crime Reports.

Note: Definitions of the variables presented here are contained in *Crime in the United States, 1997* (FBI 1998). The numbers presented here are State-level estimates and, therefore, may vary from those previously published or available from other sources.

# References

Boland, Barbara. 1998a. "Community Prosecution: Portland's Experience." In *Community Justice,* edited by David Karp. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

———. 1998b. "The Manhattan Experiment." In *Crime and Place: Plenary Papers of the 1997 Conference on Criminal Justice Research and Evaluation.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

———. 1990. "Prosecutors and Drug Caseloads." Memorandum prepared for Stephan Goldsmith, Prosecuting Attorney of Marion County, Indiana. Washington, D.C.: Abt Associates.

———. 1989. *The Prosecution of Felony Arrests,* 1987. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Statistics.

Coles, Catherine, and George Kelling. 1998. "Prosecution in the Community: A Study of Emergent Strategies." Cambridge: Harvard University, Kennedy School of Government.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. 1989. *Uniform Crime Reports.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice.

———. 1998. *Crime in the United States, 1997.* Washington, D.C. U.S. Department of Justice.

Fountain, John W. 1998. "After Long Slide, Hope Peeks From Ruins." *Washington Post,* District Weekly, May 28.

Grier, George. 1997. "The Changing Population of the District of Columbia 1990–1996." Report prepared for the D.C. Tax Revision Commission, November 1997. Washington, D.C.: Grier Partnership.

Holder, Eric. 1996. "911 for the D.C. Police." *Washington Post,* January 31 and February 1.

Horwitz, Sari. 1998. "A Reflection of the City." *Washington Post,* District Weekly, May 21.

Lattimore, Pamela, James Trudeau, K. Jack Riley, Jordan Leiter, and Steven Edwards. 1997. *Homicide in Eight U.S. Cities: Trends, Context, and Policy Implications.* Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, National Institute of Justice.

Maxfield, Michael, and Earl Babbie. 1998. *Research Methods for Criminal Justice and Criminology.* pp. 32–35. Belmont, California: West/Wadsworth Publishing Company.

Nuisance Task Force. 1998. "Properties Cleaned, Repaired, and/or Barricaded as of December 1998." Washington, D.C.: Office of the Mayor, Nuisance Task Force.

Pierre, Robert E. 1996. "Barry Draws Up Major Crime Fighting Plans." *Washington Post,* November 8.

Ripley, Amanda. 1998. "Chronic Town." *City Paper,* October 30.

Rowan, Carl T., Jr. 1998. "D.C. Confidential." *The New Republic,* January 19.

Schertler, David. 1994. "U.S. Attorney's Office Homicide Section." Washington, D.C.: U.S. Attorney's Office.

Siegel, Fred. 1997. *The Future Once Happened Here.* Chapters 5 and 6. New York: Free Press.

Skogan, Wesley G. 1990. *Disorder and Decline: Crime and the Spiral of Decay in American Neighborhoods.* Los Angeles: University of California Press.

Stephens, Jay. 1993. Letter to the editor. *Washington Post,* November 9.

Vise, David A. 1997. "Barry to Cede Power Over Police." *Washington Post,* February 20.

Vise, David A., and Cheryl Thompson. 1997. "Consultant Finds Barry Stifles Police." *Washington Post,* February 19.

*Washington Times.* 1998. "City Still Razing Old Abandoned Houses." October 2.

Wheeler, Linda. 1998. "A Future Dependent on the Past." *Washington Post,* District Weekly, July 2.

PROPERTY OF
National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS)
Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849-6000

# About the National Institute of Justice

NIJ is the research and development agency of the U.S. Department of Justice and is the only Federal agency solely dedicated to researching crime control and justice issues. NIJ provides objective, independent, nonpartisan, evidence-based knowledge and tools to meet the challenges of crime and justice, particularly at the State and local levels. NIJ's principal authorities are derived from the Omnibus Crime Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968, as amended (42 U.S.C. §§ 3721–3722).

## NIJ's Mission

In partnership with others, NIJ's mission is to prevent and reduce crime, improve law enforcement and the administration of justice, and promote public safety. By applying the disciplines of the social and physical sciences, NIJ—

- **Researches** the nature and impact of crime and delinquency.
- **Develops** applied technologies, standards, and tools for criminal justice practitioners.
- **Evaluates** existing programs and responses to crime.
- **Tests** innovative concepts and program models in the field.
- **Assists** policymakers, program partners, and justice agencies.
- **Disseminates** knowledge to many audiences.

## NIJ's Strategic Direction and Program Areas

NIJ is committed to five challenges as part of its strategic plan: 1) **rethinking justice** and the processes that create just communities; 2) **understanding the nexus** between social conditions and crime; 3) **breaking the cycle** of crime by testing research-based interventions; 4) **creating the tools** and technologies that meet the needs of practitioners; and 5) **expanding horizons** through interdisciplinary and international perspectives. In addressing these strategic challenges, the Institute is involved in the following program areas: crime control and prevention, drugs and crime, justice systems and offender behavior, violence and victimization, communications and information technologies, critical incident response, investigative and forensic sciences (including DNA), less-than-lethal technologies, officer protection, education and training technologies, testing and standards, technology assistance to law enforcement and corrections agencies, field testing of promising programs, and international crime control. NIJ communicates its findings through conferences and print and electronic media.

## NIJ's Structure

The NIJ Director is appointed by the President and confirmed by the Senate. The NIJ Director establishes the Institute's objectives, guided by the priorities of the Office of Justice Programs, the U.S. Department of Justice, and the needs of the field. NIJ actively solicits the views of criminal justice and other professionals and researchers to inform its search for the knowledge and tools to guide policy and practice.

NIJ has three operating units. The Office of Research and Evaluation manages social science research and evaluation and crime mapping research. The Office of Science and Technology manages technology research and development, standards development, and technology assistance to State and local law enforcement and corrections agencies. The Office of Development and Communications manages field tests of model programs, international research, and knowledge dissemination programs. NIJ is a component of the Office of Justice Programs, which also includes the Bureau of Justice Assistance, the Bureau of Justice Statistics, the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, and the Office for Victims of Crime.

To find out more about the National Institute of Justice, please contact:

National Criminal Justice Reference Service
P.O. Box 6000
Rockville, MD 20849–6000
800–851–3420
e-mail: *askncjrs@ncjrs.org*

To obtain an electronic version of this document, access the NIJ Web site (*http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/nij*).

If you have questions, call or e-mail NCJRS.

**U.S. Department of Justice**
Office of Justice Programs
*National Institute of Justice*

*Washington, DC 20531*

Official Business
Penalty for Private Use $300

PRESORTED STANDARD
POSTAGE & FEES PAID
DOJ/NIJ
PERMIT NO. G–91