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planning

is a

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National Crime Prevention Council
733 15th Street, NW, Suite 540
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Planning is not actually a verb. Technically, it's a gerund or in some cases a participle. For those who balked at this editorial license, we beg indulgence. The message that planning is inextricably entwined with action is too critical to be left to the gorgons of grammar.

Planning is at once the most exciting and the most mundane of subjects. Shaping the future is fun, there is no doubt. Plodding through the details is usually just hard work. And most plans, like many budgets, are honored more in the breach than in the adherence.

NCPC has written this book based on what practitioners themselves told us about what works in the field—why plan, what to plan, how to plan, how to plan better. It is written with the overriding premise that planning, if it is to fulfill its promise, must be a vibrant, ongoing, healthy process—not a document which is carefully structured, meticulously typed, and then shelved.

Another perspective distinguishes this book from more traditional planning texts. It focuses on bringing the community into planning, not just as one of many "inputs" but as an active and even dominant partner in the actual development and execution of your program. Whether in gritty urban core or in booming suburb, crime prevention works best when citizens themselves are planners and actors.

A third distinction is that this book is meant to be used by anyone, whether law enforcement or other criminal justice professional, or citizen concerned about crime and about rebuilding (or sustaining) the community. It does not presume crime prevention knowledge, bureaucratic expertise, or massive resources. It is for those who see something wrong and want to make it right, for those who don't like the community as it stands and seek to change it for the better. These are the people, whatever their profession, who are going to make some difference. Knowing how to develop an active, flexible plan will enable them to make a greater difference for more of their neighbors.

Developing this book has been a lengthy process. We owe tremendous thanks to many people in many locales—New York City, New Haven, Toledo, Wilkinsburg, Kansas City, Detroit, Winston-Salem, Dallas, Knoxville, Jacksonville, Portland, Minneapolis, Clifton, Raleigh, Mt. Lebanon, Topeka, High Point, and other communities large and small, urban, suburban, and rural, who have shared their knowledge and experience. Thanks go to those who read and critiqued drafts, to staff in Community Crime Prevention at the Bureau of Justice Assistance (Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice) for staunch support, needed criticisms, and hard questions. The Bureau is owed a debt of gratitude for funding the research for and development of this text.

This book emerged from the work of so many at NCPC—Jack Calhoun, Mac Gray, Maria Nagorski, Randy Lemke, Faye Warren, Terry Modglin, Allie Bird, Anna-Marie Montague, and others—that all of NCPC's staff deserve thanks for what is good. As the principal author, Jean O'Neil insists that the responsibility for errors is solely hers.

"I've got too much to do. There are too many demands for crime prevention services in this city, and too few of us. I don't have time to draw up plans."

"I did a plan once. We were applying for a grant and they wanted a plan in the application. I wrote something. But we didn't get the grant and I never did do much about the problem."

"My supervisor is the one who submits the budgets. That's who does the planning around here, not me. I have too much to do since last year's budget request was cut."

Sound familiar? Lots of problems—no time, no resources. But planning can help address these problems. Developing an action-oriented, community-grounded plan offers a host of benefits. It makes the best use of time; focuses effort where action is needed and productive, and maximizes existing resources. Sometimes, it can even uncover new resources!

Planning is a verb, an action word. Too often we think of a plan as a static document, a one-time affair. But what's important is the process—an ongoing self-renewing effort which continuously takes the pulse of the community, makes a diagnosis, and strives for a cure. Planning can be one of your most powerful tools because it allows you to make the best of all the other tools to reach your goals.

Planning should not produce a document which once and for all sets forth how crime prevention efforts will be undertaken in your jurisdiction. Effective planning is dynamic. It incorporates and reflects changes in the real world and in people's preferences and beliefs, updating and modifying goals and objectives to point in the appropriate direction for the times. It's never at rest.

This book examines why it's in your self-interest to plan, why you shouldn't do it alone, the elements of a good planning process, and some principles and techniques you can use (as well as how to use them). Naturally, we focus on planning for crime prevention at the community level. But the skills learned here apply to other community activities as well.

The book briefly reviews the key concepts of planning and gives ten reasons why it's vital to take the time to plan. It defines the key components of a good planning process and the critical elements of a good action plan. It provides an inventory of tools—official records, surveys, interviews, brainstorms, etc.—and shows how each of these enriches your plan. It reviews the way in which a plan can and should be renewed, rewritten, and redeveloped in an ongoing cycle. Finally, it provides some examples and some resources.

In order to plan effectively, you will need to

- identify sources of information about crime, fear of crime, and preventing crime in your community;
- locate and bring together as a functioning group the community leaders who can develop a realistic and effective plan;
- help that group determine the goals for the crime prevention effort;
- work with the group to develop strategies, tactics, and a timetable to meet these goals;
- enlist others to help make and execute specific plans for each program;
- use the overall plan and the program plans as ways to check progress and results as the programs unfold, and as a base for action in the next round of planning; and
- be prepared to meet and deal with a variety of contingencies, altering or updating the plan as needed.

This book is designed to help you with these tasks.

A frequent argument for not planning is "I don't have the time. I have too much to do."

Planning does take time. But it has its benefits: as a road map, a set of guideposts, a means to involve and invest people in your program, and a way to get feedback to correct your course. It can make a difference in convincing others to support your program. It can help shape a vision of the future to win people over to your cause.

There are at least ten excellent reasons why the busiest of people are precisely the ones who should plan. We'll start with the ones most personally relevant.

Ten Reasons

Reach Your Own Goals

You can plan around your own goals, both short- and long-range. If you know your goals, planning can help focus your energies on reaching them.

These goals can be short-term —"getting a haircut today," or long-term—"taking vacation two years from now." They can be as lofty as "expanding public awareness" or as pragmatic as "getting the promotion."

Planning, by enhancing your effectiveness, promotes your own goals.

Be Successful Professionally

A good plan and process allow you to demonstrate your success. You can show that your resources and energies are funneled into the most productive channels. You usually get more done, too. Planning positions you as a concerned and motivated manager—a pro.

One crime prevention officer set a goal of getting training to increase his effectiveness. Planning enabled him to schedule other activities to accommodate training opportunities, and to initiate programs which immediately took advantage of his training.

Planning helps reduce the potential for overload—the "over-promising and under-delivering" which is a staunch enemy of success.

Bring Problems into Manageable Focus

The planning process breaks issues (or problems) into component parts. Action can be on distinct units rather than an overwhelming tangle. Planning also helps define which problems need immediate attention, which can wait, and which are beyond your control.

Planning can also help focus on what the problem actually is instead of what it's thought to be. Perhaps the perceived problem is "no one knows of our services," as one crime prevention official complained. In the course of planning to meet this problem, two different problems became obvi-

ous. There just wasn't any demand for several services; information in some cases was being sent to the wrong audiences.

Achieve Substantive Program Goals

Planning gives your program a head start toward the hoped-for result. Good planning, in fact, can enable you to exercise program foresight—the result expected can be stipulated at the start of the plan, then planned for!

Actually developing a plan helps you refine goals and objectives, making them clearer, more solid, more achievable. Through the planning process, they are more likely to reflect community-supported priorities. One community, which set out initially with a goal to eradicate all crime decided after sitting down to work out a plan upon certain goals. Its first goal was to educate the community about crime prevention; the second, to hire a small staff to provide crime prevention assistance.

Make Best Possible Use of Limited Resources

If you have a limited quantity of time, money, volunteers, or staff, planning is a *must*! Looking at what needs doing, what the priorities are, how the tasks can be done, and how you will know when they are done makes it easier to maximize scarce resources.

In crime prevention, you might be faced with a question of whether or not to work intensively with those communities already known to be active or to reach out more broadly to a less active audience, in light of a given budget. Is it possible to activate citizens in the apathetic areas with routine presentations? Would more be done to reduce crime by supporting the currently active groups?

Identify and Surmount Obstacles

Foreseeing potential roadblocks, rough going, conflicts, or other obstacles means you're better equipped to deal with each.

For instance, local school officials might balk at the idea of sexual abuse prevention education for elementary students. But the parents of these youngsters, educated through their PTA about the problem, might join you in petitioning the school administration to reconsider.

With advance preparation, you can turn an obstacle into an opportunity. Perhaps there's a major civic group opposed to your efforts. By inviting that group to become part of your program early on, even to help with needs assessment and problem statement, you'll very likely address their concerns and wind up with their participation and support, maybe even enthusiasm, where you expected trouble.

Show Progress

It's hard to show how much crime has not taken place. But there are other ways to show your progress, if you plan to. First, planning helps you to identify milestones as you reach them. Second, as you plan tasks or activities, you can pinpoint measurable aspects of progress and measures of success.

By helping develop an accurate picture of the starting environment, planning also produces

first-rate baseline data for the measurement of records and eventual evaluation.

Energize Citizenry

People like to help solve problems. They enjoy feeling valuable and productive. The planning process itself gathers in civic enthusiasm and investment which will eventually support your whole program. The planning process itself can build the cohesion which helps prevent crime.

People are also energized by knowing they work toward a common goal. Planning helps establish these goals. Keep in mind that to succeed, these goals must be agreed upon by substantial segments of the community—not merely reflective of what one segment or group thinks the community should do or want.

Planning helps galvanize citizens in other ways. It details what tasks need doing, what steps need to be taken, and what kind of help is needed. When citizens see a role not just for their vision but for their particular talents, they become energized and invested.

The owner of a small business in Minneapolis recalled how a citizen-based planning process actually generated interest in doing more. "We got together and agreed on the main problem and ways to solve it. Everyone was eager to use this new-found network to attack other problems. We sensed our power," he pointed out. And other communities which have used a citizen-based model find that citizens and agencies (from police to sanitation, from social services to transportation) are productive and cooperative in planning solutions together instead of heaping the blame for problems on others or on one other.

Be Flexible

Opportunities can spring up beyond your grandest hopes; plans can be disrupted—even torpedoed—by any number of external forces.

But having a plan in place provides informed choices about your options. What had you wanted to do more of, but were barred from for lack of resources? What could be given up with least harm to the goal in the face of a 5% budget reduction? How can another set of goals and objectives be joined with your work?

If you've planned, you can take advantage of opportunities. The High Point Housing Authority received a tax windfall of several thousand dollars. Instead of tossing money into a general fund, H. K. Martin, the Authority Director, put a long-held plan into action. His staff worked with the local Boys' and Girls' Clubs to set up club programs in three public housing areas. Adapting quickly and productively resulted in the program being approved. It has been a resounding success.

React Well to Emergencies

No one can foresee emergencies. But you can plan for possible emergency scenarios, ranging from a natural disaster to a riot to a crime wave. Such "contingency planning" won't fit any one emergency, but it will give you a leg up on getting action under way.

The experience gained in developing plans enables you to think in planning terms when an emergency occurs. You'll know your resources, your other obligations and priorities, which activities can be put "on hold" most easily, and how to plan an emergency response.

The Support Center, a well-known resource group for non-profit agencies (which includes most community groups) offers six reasons such organizations should plan:

"• defines a course of action ...
• helps minimize staff confusion and frustration ...
• improves communication and reduces conflict ...
• helps sustain commitment to the organization ...
• improves an organization's ability to market itself ...
• helps an organization monitor and evaluate its achievements...."

Other Benefits

Planning

- helps identify goals and direction clearly;
- helps reassess the basic assumptions you have made as the plan is reviewed and revised;
- documents where you were and where you're going;
- puts new problems and issues into perspective;
- helps provide basis and substantiation for budget;
- makes your approach to work more professional;
- helps you control events instead of them controlling you;
- provides an excellent "selling tool," for funders, superiors, agencies, etc.

Ten Reasons to Plan

1. Reach your own goals
2. Be successful professionally
3. Bring problems into manageable focus
4. Achieve substantive program goals
5. Make best possible use of limited resources
6. Identify and surmount obstacles
7. Show progress
8. Energize citizenry
9. Be flexible
10. React well to emergencies

Planning, in the words of one crime prevention practitioner, is "what you do so you'll know how to get where you're headed." Another observed, "Planning is what enables my boss and me both to know what's *not* getting done while I'm handling a crisis." Planning is the activity which results in an *organized approach* toward a *desired future* outcome or result. To omit either the organization or the future objective is to doom the plan to eventual failure.

You already have many of the skills you need to develop an effective plan.

Developing a plan with a group of people—whether colleagues or members of a civic group or some other organization—requires more and different efforts than planning on your own. But the skills are essentially the same, and you will get better and better with practice.

Everyone Does It

Planning can be as basic as taking a few minutes to organize personal errands efficiently or as complex as a master plan for state highway development. It can be as simple as "I'll take $50 from the next paycheck to buy new shoes" or as complicated as a blueprint for a high-tech laboratory. It can be for as short a term as setting up a picnic lunch or for as long a term as financing a comfortable retirement.

Almost every human endeavor involves (or can involve) planning. We talk about funeral *plans*, family *planning*, *planning* and zoning for community physical development, *planned* giving, financial *planning*—and the list goes on.

Getting Where You Want to Be

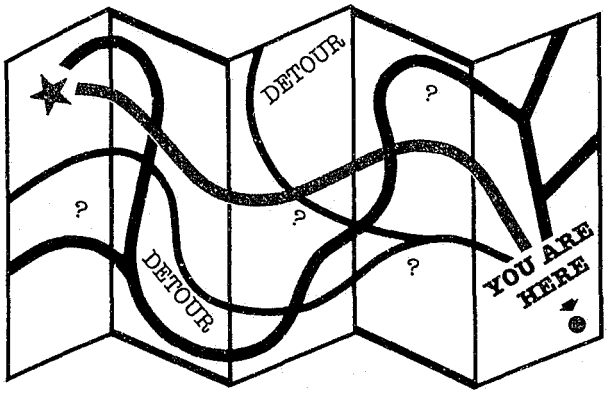
In this chapter, we review the basics of planning. Webster's *New Collegiate Dictionary* defines the verb "**to plan**" as

1: to arrange the parts of (design); 2: to devise or project the realization of achievement; 3: to have in mind.

"Plan" involves "a method devised for making or doing something or attaining an end."

Planning aims your actions toward a particular end goal or achievement.

Think of a plan as your choice of routes on a road map. You need to know where you are on the map, where you intend to be (your goal), and the best way for you to get there. There may be several perfectly good ways. Which one you choose may depend on other variables. Failing to choose a route can mean hours of wasted time, aimless driving, or halting in mid-trip.



Planning is a Key to Program Development and Management

Any program needs a plan. The plan may be based on a yearly budget or on a calendar year, or monthly or six-month or five-year intervals. The document is vital, but the planning process—an ongoing interaction which updates the document in light of events, and redirects the program activities as necessary—is absolutely critical. It enables you to manage your course and the effect of external variables (the outside world) instead of letting those variables manage you.

A planning process develops and self-corrects a program.

A plan aims toward a goal, to make a change in the current situation in your community. It suggests the resources needed to undertake a program and the actions or tactics necessary to carry out a strategy to meet the goal. A plan provides the opportunity to check on whether it is working (monitoring) and whether the process resulted in reaching its goals (evaluation).

A needs assessment ideally defines the community and its problems. It focuses on what the community desires or requires. A major advantage in doing such an assessment is that the community's realities—not a fad, a momentary media splash, or a short-term self-solving issue—drive the development of a plan.

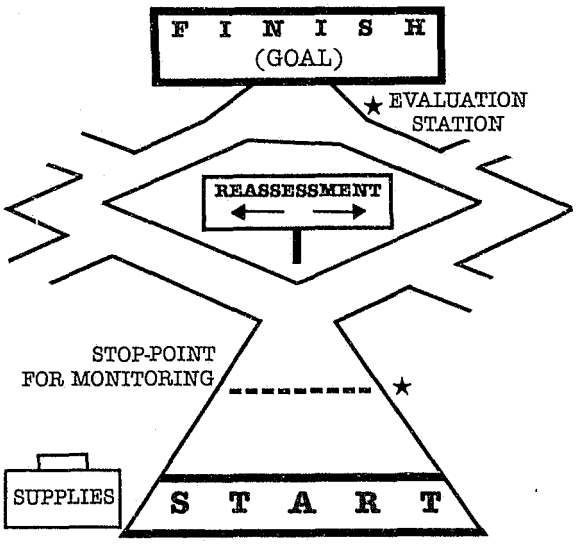
In Chapter 5, we will examine the kinds of information which might be gathered to help make a needs assessment.

A needs assessment must reflect consensus or broad agreement of community members. The needs assessment helps clarify what goals and objectives the community wants to reach. Building group agreement on the desired future lays the foundation for a viable plan and program.

With a goal spelled out, the community may want to set up objectives—subgoals or specifications for parts of goals. Having goals and objectives in mind and knowing the community's situation, the planner can devise a set of strategies, methods to reach the goals. These strategies could include a variety of programs, policy changes, and coordinations of efforts.

Each strategy will be implemented by specific activities or tasks. Once tasks or activities are

set forth, the following should be clearly indicated for each task: who will do it, when it will be done, what resources will (or could) be used, what checkpoints or monitoring should be done, and



what final evaluation will be made.

This is the flow of any good plan.

Different Kinds of Planning

There are a number of specialized versions of planning, all of which draw from the basic format. Which version is preferable depends on the result desired and the time and resources available for the job.

These planning types are neither exclusive or exhaustive. Definitions and uses of terms vary widely even among professional planners. What is termed "comprehensive planning" in one agency may be "strategic planning" in another. What one region calls "functional planning" might be called "project planning" in another.

Substance

Obviously, the *substance* of what is being planned will vary from case to case. Planning for crime prevention has different requirements from planning for highway construction. Planning for medical services differs from planning for school systems. The substance of the plan may vary from community to community, though each is termed crime prevention.

Duration

The *time covered* by a plan—hours, weeks, months, years, decades—can vary as well, even within the same subject area. A highway construction plan for the week might include grading and paving one turning lane on a major highway. For the next decade it might look toward more general transportation demands and ways to meet them. What is long-term in one discipline may be short-term in another. Zoning plans, for instance, may be made for the coming 20 years. But no teacher would devise a set of lesson plans for that length of time. A crime prevention plan might be devised for the coming year or the next five years.

Strategic/Project

Planning may be strategic or project/program-oriented. A project or program-oriented plan would detail how a particular focused activity (such as building a community center) or program (for instance, setting up a block parent network) will be imple-

mented. Strategic planning, by contrast, would look at how broader goals can be met (for instance, recreation activities for all areas and ages in the community; protection of children while not at home).

Strategic planning for a social services agency might involve looking at the consequences five years from now of certain key decisions, and at how the current decision and its consequences affect other social service providers, the medical services community, demands for office space convenient to clients, and need for interpreters for clients who do not speak English, to name a few possible factors. A plan for the agency could be to conduct the year's client intake effort. In some instances, the distinctions are clear. In others, they may be either unclear or irrelevant.

Depending on perspective and goal, what is a strategic plan in one context could be seen as a detailed plan in another.

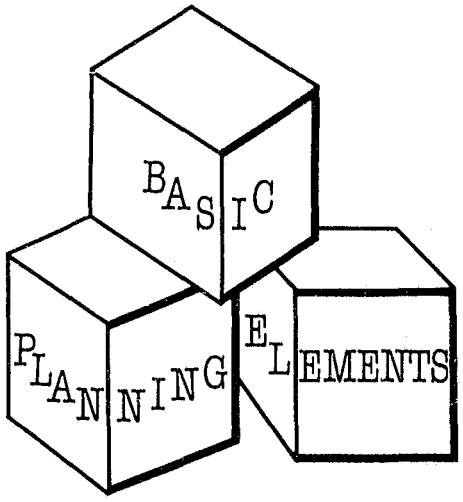
Comprehensive/Functional

Comprehensive planning is on the broader end of the planning view. It tends to cover all major aspects of a subject, includes the whole geographic unit under consideration, takes a relatively long-term perspective on the opportunities and challenges, and examines the relationships among goals, priorities, and concerns. A comprehensive plan does not solve all the problems, nor does it provide complete details of programs or projects. It acts as a framework for more specific action; it highlights consequences of major decisions; and it identifies interrelated interests and concerns of the organizations involved.

Functional planning, on the other hand, focuses on a single issue or task at a time. It may be long-term, but if so it examines the long-term questions surrounding the particular issue or task, rather than external forces, consequences, and relationships.

Part Art, Part Science

Planning has been raised to a high art—or maybe even a science—in a number of areas.



But it is far from precise. Experience in and knowledge of your community will go a long way toward helping you devise a methodology of planning that is most effective for you.

You may be asked to write your plans in another's terms; for instance in a grant application. Remember that the basic elements are the same, whatever they are termed and however they are grouped together.

The Support Center, which works extensively with non-profit institutions, has developed a useful glossary which illustrates rough equivalents among planning terms. It may help in restating your plans:

> The language of planning has not been standardized. Many authors have used the same words quite differently.
>
> Much of the literature of planning uses words such as those defined below. As used, they generally go from the general (broad) to the specific (narrow):

Words Describing Intended RESULTS

Purpose: the ultimate *result* your organization exists to achieve. (In other words, your purpose is your organization's reason for existence. It is an ideal state which may or may not be fully achievable.)

Goal: a broadly stated subsidiary *result*; or, the restatement of a key strategy.

Objective: a specific, measurable, time-phased *result.*

Words Describing Intended METHODS

Mission: a statement of the focus of your organization—which "business" are you in?

Strategy: a key, priority method for achieving the long- range vision of the organization. It must provide confidence that the implementation of the strategy is to have ten organizations progress toward the vision.

Program: a set of tasks designed to achieve (or contribute to the achievement of) your purpose, goal(s), or objective(s).

Task: an activity which contributes to the achievement of your plan (including the achievement of a purpose, goal, or objective)

To repeat, *these are not the only definitions used for these words.* The two most common alternatives are:

- to skip (or hurry past) the concept of "purpose," and begin with "mission".
- to interchange the definitions of "objective" and "goal" above (i.e., to make "objectives" broad and "goals" specific.)

Suggested Definitions of Words Used in Planning

A Plan:: A set of decisions about the future which guide and help determine current actions.

Strategic: An adjective which implies that the planning process has been conducted in a "strategic" way, i.e., that the organization has examined the environment in which it competes, questioned its fundamental assumptions about its business, and creatively attempted to conceive its role in a different, more effective way.
(Now an overused word with many meanings. It should not simply mean that the organization has strategies nor be a substitute for "long-range").

Vision: A description of the organization in its "ideal" future state—scale, scope, programs, personnel, finances, manage-

ment, and results being achieved. Often, this is the picture portrayed by the Long-Range Plan.

Long-Range: The time frame in which the organization can achieve its vision (a period of months, years, or decades).

Mid-Range: A time frame which is only used if the organization's long range is quite distant, and its vision is so big (or too big in the eyes of key stakeholders) that it cannot be used effectively to rally support or motivate personnel to effective current action. The "mid-range" period is that in which the organization can show significant movement toward the vision, enough so that it can serve the role of a vision in the corporate plans.

Operating Period: The current short-range planning period—almost always one year—for which the organization prepares detailed plans and budgets.

Precisely what it takes to get a good plan and planning process will vary. The issue and the scope of the desired plan will influence the choice of elements. Undertaking a citywide strategic plan unquestionably differs in degree from planning a monthly Neighborhood Watch meeting.

You are very likely to have most or all of the major ingredients at hand. The recipe for mixing them is all that's needed.

Basic Ingredients

The basic ingredients required for creating a community-based action plan are consistent, whatever the size of the community:

- a problem or concern which needs solving;
- a committed person (it often takes only one) or group to spark the process;
- people who want—and will work—to solve the problem;
- a process which develops a plan and a means of updating it as necessary, and a commitment to the plan by its creators;
- a way to show priorities in those plans with multiple tasks and goals; and
- some resources—information analysis, funds, expert advice, technical assistance—to help develop the plan.

Problem, Concern, or Need

Without a problem, concern, or need, there is no reason for action. The concern may be "crack houses on our block and dealers on our sidewalks." The issue may be that fear for personal safety has driven people away from parks and business districts, or that children are not growing up in the environment that concerned adults would like.

Whatever the problem, it should meet three basic tests to form a good starting point for community planning:

- Is the issue one which affects (or could affect) the quality of life of a sizable portion of the community (whether a region, a city, a neighborhood or a block)?
- Can the community take meaningful action on the problem, or cause such action to be taken?
- Do the facts verify the nature and extent of the problem, or do they suggest another problem?

If the issue doesn't affect a sizable part of the community in question, you may not find willing volunteers to solve it. One problem, in fact, may be the need to educate the community on how a problem *is* affecting it.

The group must stand a reasonable chance of success. If members are brought together in a spirit of solutions, not blame, you can marshal enormous high-quality energy, talent, and commitment. But the problem may be beyond the group's control or sphere of influence. It is doubtful that one community can isolate and purify its air supply, for example. The problem may have to be restated or recast to make it readily amenable to action.

Crime prevention specialists have long pointed out that larcenies, burglaries, motor vehicle thefts, and robberies are among the crimes more responsive to personal preventive actions. The community should probably first target a crime problem which is likely to produce some measure of success. With a track record of success, tackling the more complex crime issues—such as domestic violence, child abuse, computer fraud, homicide—becomes a more viable task.

Knowledge is Power

Getting the facts can be both the most difficult but also the most rewarding part of the whole endeavor. The Knoxville, TN, Police, as part of their comprehensive crime prevention effort, began with traditional crime analysis—examining patterns of crime by location, time of day, type of crime, type of offender, and other characteristics. To get an even more thorough and accurate picture of the community, a variety of surveys, including victimization surveys, were conducted.

But the Knoxville staff went even farther. All city agencies—recreation, sanitation, transportation, schools, public utilities, juvenile justice, social services, and more—were enlisted in a planning committee and asked to share data. Many of these agencies were extremely reluctant at first. But the Crime Prevention Unit kept emphasizing the benefits of sharing information, offered sound responses to inevitable questions about confidentiality of data, and kept illustrating how the agencies themselves would benefit from the interchange. A number of agencies quickly realized benefits from the shared data.

The facts can include some fairly simple truths. And those simple truths can be crucial. In Wilkinsburg, PA, a thoughtful consideration of news reports of crime showed that all crooks and victims with a 15221 ZIP code (which covers several communities) were reported as being Wilkinsburg residents. That helped to explain why people felt they had heard about a lot of crime in Wilkinsburg.

In Toledo, OH, C.A.R.E.S. (Chemical Abuse Reduced through Education and Support) found out that the facts were vital not only in defining the problem but in securing action—facts about lack of facilities for treating and preventing adolescent substance abuse, and the facts about what kinds of treatment *could* be provided.

Perceptions Count

Just as important as the actual level of crime (whether measured by victimization survey or reports to police) is how people perceive

crime. There is no doubt that residents' fear of crime—whether justified by the statistics or not—is just as important as how many crimes are committed.

Research has shown that *fear* is not a good motivator of community action. Instead of bringing people out to work on improving conditions, fear tends to drive them into their homes or out of the area altogether. Determination to change conditions, a lively sense of hope, and firm belief that change is possible are far more powerful motivators.

Perceptions Can Be Changed

Leaders of Detroit knew their city had a bad reputation locally and nationally. They felt their city lacked direction for the coming century. They conducted an extensive strategic planning process, which included employment and economic development, education, crime, race relations, and civic image, looking toward the year 2000.

Residents of Moloshu South Woodlawn, a New York City neighborhood, framed their problem more immediately—halting that day's drug traffic. Public housing residents in Winston-Salem wanted both immediate relief from crime and long-term improvements. Bankers in central Florida wanted to cut the high rate of bank robberies.

Business owners in Wilkinsburg, PA, saw their downtown deteriorating and knew fear of crime was a major cause of reduced business activity. They stated the problem plainly:

"... *the full potential of the Wilkinsburg business community to attract new customers, especially during the evening hours, is not being realized due to a feeling of insecurity in the Central Business District.*"

A Spark

Someone has to realize the potential for action, identify the core group of leaders, and call the first meeting. That's the spark. The spark could be an agency, an individual, an informal or formal group, a business, a political leader, a civic leader.

In one case, the spark was a New York City mother—a single person—who had had enough of violence and drugs in her neighborhood. In another instance, an existing non-profit Crime Commission acted as a community catalyst. In a third instance, the Police Department's crime prevention officer pulled together the first sessions for what eventually became a volunteer task force. In one community, the Economic Development Administration sparked crime prevention.

People Who Want to Solve the Problem

Once the spark is struck, you needs two groups of people—first the tinder, to sustain the flame, and then the kindling and firewood to stoke the blaze. The "tinder" group is usually a relatively small group; it may even be the same small group which provided the spark. It acts as a base in the early stages. From it, the group initially draws its leadership and organizing talents.

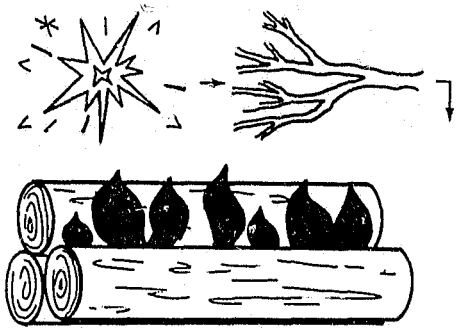
If the planning process and the plan are to be effective, especially over the long range, the "tinder" group cannot be or become a dominant clique. As soon as the larger group is formed and operative, that "tinder" group should blend into it as seamlessly as possible.

The "firewood" group is usually larger and more broadly representative of the community. It actually sets the goals and the plans for reaching them. Thus, it should include anyone or any agency with an interest in solving or the ability to help solve the problem. That interest may be personal, professional, economic, or civic. Its source is less important than its strength and the commitment to acting constructively on the problem.

This larger group may be called a committee, a task force, a planning group, an ad hoc committee, an advisory committee, or just a group. Experience suggests that many of the key people will have to be formally *invited* to attend. They may not automatically recognize their own potential to help and the benefits they could obtain. And it doesn't hurt to invite—people will feel even more committed from the start if their perspectives are specifically solicited.

The tinder group can range from two or three neighbors to a whole organization. It is a springboard with a crucial message—the process will not belong to one person or special interest group, but to the community.

The larger group might consist of a dozen neighbors in a small area or a hundred residents on behalf of an entire city, county, or region. It affirms that the *community,* rather than one person, will act to resolve the problem. And it provides the strength and resources for action on the plan it develops.



Some Examples

In Detroit, the Renaissance Foundation served as the spark and tinder; the major planning group was the Detroit Strategic Planning Project, five task forces of 30–40 members each drawn from business, community associations, cultural groups, local media, social service agencies, city services staff, and civic and fraternal organizations.

The Citizens' Committee for New York City brings together law enforcement, residents, and representatives of service agencies to examine and plan action on local problems.

In Toledo, a non-profit board drawn from health, criminal justice, juvenile justice, social services, mental health, parent groups, hospitals, churches, self-help groups, and schools runs and does the planning for the C.A.R.E.S. program. But the spark was Juvenile Court Judge Andy Devine, who found ready tinder among parents whose children were *already* involved with drugs.

Kent, Washington's volunteer Crime Prevention Task Force includes people from all walks of life. Its spark was the crime prevention officer, its tinder the core

group of about two dozen block captains still active after years of no formal program. But the fuel to get things done—the energy, enthusiasm, and determination—comes from the now self-governing and largely self-funding Crime Prevention Task Force.

In New Haven, CT, the Police Department's Crime Prevention Unit sparked a neighborhood plan, but moved quickly to ensure that area residents and representatives of other city services agencies were fully involved at the earliest possible point.

As these examples suggest, a remarkably wide range of community members can work effectively to develop crime prevention plans.

A Process

If your group is a new one just starting to plan, it's likely that you don't all know one another well or that you come from organizations which have not always gotten along. Having a planning process—a set of steps to develop the plan—helps build group identity. Not only does the group share in developing a goal or vision, but all have the chance to contribute to determining action to reach the goal.

Building a sense of fairness is important in many new groups. A process—a neutral mechanism—can help reassure participants that all points of view will be fairly heard, and that no single individual or subgroup can impose its view of appropriate action.

Planning, good planning, is an ongoing effort. Having a process gives a ready mechanism for reviewing, revising, and renewing plans periodically in light of change.

A process does not have to be elaborate. It needs to be clear and to allow for participation. Allowing for participation is vital in planning with community groups. Their members are volunteers, not obligated to stay active or to support the planning group if they do not feel they have a say in the group's effort. The process should be applicable to many situations and problems—not just the current issue or fad. It ought to be able to handle new problems which come up or changes in existing situations.

Different Choices

In helping to establish a crime prevention effort Dauphin County, PA, Crime Watch officials pointed out, the organizing was not crime-specific. The aim was to get the group together as a team which could take on crimes as circumstances required.

The Crime Commission of Central Florida assembles concerned parties into a task force for each major issue. It has established a three-step process: first, the problem is defined using facts; second, the possible strategies are laid out and selected; and third, a detailed action plan for the chosen elements developed. The Commission facilitates the discussion and takes whatever role the group requests in helping execute the plan. But its goal is for the task force to assume most or all of the program responsibility.

A task force also worked well in Alexandria, VA, when several of the City's agencies felt victim assistance and related prevention services could be substantially improved. A steering committee (the "tinder) suggested two main goals: reducing the trauma victim's experience through a sensi-

tive and coordinated response, and deterring violent crime through increased reporting and citizen participation in crime prevention efforts. Nearly a dozen city agencies joined, based on their desire or mission to meet these goals.

Though agency heads were welcome, the participation of frontline service providers was emphasized as the objectives were transmuted to action. Result? Substantially improved service administration, a Mayor's proclamation of support, and new or strengthened working relationships.

Citizens Committee for New York City

The Citizens Committee for New York City (CCNYC) was recruited to train community-oriented police officers to work with neighborhood groups. Its process reflects experience and understanding of how community groups function.

Given a problem, law enforcement, the citizen group, and relevant service agencies are asked to meet in separate groups to write up their vision of the ideal situation, ideas of strategies to get there, and barriers. Each group signs a written agreement to work with the other groups toward solution. Only then are the groups brought together in a neutral setting to develop a common vision and a plan.

The set-up for such a meeting suggests a good strategy for any meeting or community work session you are trying to conduct. Usually involving no more than 15-20 people, the session is held in a pleasant, well lit, and ventilated room. A tentative agenda is provided. Everyone states expectations about the meeting. Ideas and strategies developed before the meeting are shared; then the group brainstorms additional ones. Strategies are selected and each group makes specific commitments to follow through.

After taking part in such a session with community members, one New York City police officer commented, "I wasn't aware that there were so many organizations to be utilized. You felt like you were alone out there. But now it's a good feeling."

CCNYC has applied this approach to drug prevention as well as crime prevention at the community level.

Independence, Missouri

Independence, MO, has built neighborhood organizing and planning as a keystone of its civic operations. It has 42 distinct, well-organized neighborhoods. The independent nonprofit Neighborhood Services Corporation coordinates these and provides staff support for 20 city wide committees—ten on government and ten on cultural concerns. Every kind of statistic kept by the City is kept by neighborhood, so information is readily available to neighborhood councils in useful form.

Committees develop program ideas upon which each neighborhood can draw according to its

FROM CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR NEW YORK CITY

Learn to use *both* traditional strategies *and* creative problem-solving, such as strategies which involve the community.

Problem: _____

Who are the different actors (i.e., residents, parents, etc.)?	How could a a police officer address this problem?	What are the limits or barriers to success?	What could individual members or an organized group from the community do?	What are the limits or barriers to success?

FROM CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR NEW YORK CITY

AN ACTION PLAN

Task	Person Responsible	When Due

FROM CITIZENS COMMITTEE FOR NEW YORK CITY

PROBLEM SOLVING EXERCISE

Problem: _____

What are the causes of the problem?	Who are the key actors? (i.e., community residents, merchants, etc.)	What are the barriers to dealing with the problem?	What resources exist in the community?	What resources are needed?	Strategies (how to overcome the barriers?)

needs. The Neighborhood Services office provides how-tos and helps track neighborhoods' progress toward earning awards in each category. Currently featured or past programs can be used. Thus, a rich array of strategies is available to help meet various problems.

Over 30 police and public safety programs, for instance, are now "on file" for neighborhood use. The 1988 featured programs are shown on page 00.

In Detroit's Strategic Planning Process, the Crime Task Force was one of five named by the Renaissance Foundation. When it was assailed as being unrepresentative of the most crime-ridden areas, its leaders moved quickly to correct that omission. The resultant working group started with dramatically different perspectives on the crime problem and solutions. The group's first assignment was to set forth a vision of Detroit in the year 2000. Task Force Co-Chairs Dan Grady of Michigan Bell and Gerald Smith of Franklin Street Settlements had members state their individual visions, which artists then sketched. A vision had to depict a Detroit the task force member wanted to see at the turn of the century—for instance, "Detroit - America's Most Livable City" on the cover of *Time* magazine. Two writers on loan used pre-shot footage to devise a video based on these visions. Within just hours, the Task Force had its vision on videotape. Suddenly the group's meetings took a different tack. A group which had wallowed in current disagreement began focusing on a shared view of the future.

Priorities

Even a single goal can result in a long list of tasks to reach that goal. There may be encugh manpower and resources to undertake all the tasks at once—but it's highly unlikely.

The group will thus have to set priorities. There are many bases on which to do so. Sometimes there is a clear consensus on what tasks must be done first, second, third. But the problem usually arises when a group sees much to be done, few resources, and little manpower. It is vital for the group to determine which actions it will take first—to avoid swamping the members in a sea of frustration and a sense of doom.

Some tasks are dependent *on* and therefore necessarily follow others. The opportunity may be *seasonal*, so that the task must await the calendar—such as a holiday crime prevention campaign or the opening of school.

Priorities can be set on the basis of what can be done with the resources immediately at hand, or on the premise that resources can be found.

Another method is to seek group consensus on the most urgent problem or the most soluble problem. Members can be asked each to pick the five most important or most easily done items from the group's list of tasks, then to rank items from 5 (most desirable) to 1 (least desirable) within each group. The items with the highest total scores emerge as the group's priorities.

From:
Neighborhoods Council, Independence, MO

Public Safety Committee Criteria

POLICE COMMITTEE PROGRAMS

To help conduct programs to reduce crime—join the Police Committee.

Operation Crimestop

- *Kick-Off 2nd Thursday in March*
- *Recognition 2nd Thursday in October*

A program identifying valuables by engraving the homeowner's Social Security number, using diamond-tipped and/or invisible pens. A warning decal is placed on the front door or window of the home and the home is registered with the Independence Police Department. Trained volunteers would go door-to-door encouraging people to participate and offering to engrave up to five items.

NEIGHBORHOOD HALL OF FAME CRITERIA

Citywide recognition will be given to a neighborhood that meets any of the following criteria:

GOLD LEVEL: 30% of dwelling units, businesses, and institutions marked.

SILVER LEVEL: 20% dwelling units, businesses, and institutions marked.

BRONZE LEVEL: 10% of dwelling units, businesses, and institutions marked.

Need Addressed: Reducing burglaries and larcenies, the most frequently committed crimes in Independence. Identification is essential in recovering stolen articles.

Neighborhood Block Watch

- *Kick-Off 2nd Thursday in December*
- *Recognition 2nd Thursday in February*

Involves the recruitment and training of block watches who would watch for and report criminal happenings and suspicious activities to the police. (At least one block watch coordinator to each block.)

NEIGHBORHOOD HALL OF FAME CRITERIA

Citywide recognition will be given to any neighborhood that achieves (a), (b), and (c) and any of the levels indicated on (d):

(a) Preparation of a map clearly identifying all blocks; (b) Each block watcher to be issued a number and handbook; (c) Master list of names is kept and maintained by sponsoring neighborhood committee—the Administrative Services Committee.

(d) GOLD LEVEL: Recruiting and training of one block watch coordinator on at least 40% of the blocks in the neighborhood;

(d) SILVER LEVEL: Recruiting and training of one block watch coordinator on at least 30% of the blocks in the neighborhood;

(d) BRONZE LEVEL: Recruiting and training of one block watch coordinator on at least 20% of the blocks in the neighborhood;

Needs Addressed: Identifying, training, and mobilizing concerned citizens to increase the reporting and preventing of crime. Independence Police Chief estimates at least half of all crimes go unreported.

Youth and the Law

- *Kick-Off 2nd Thursday in January*
- *Recognition 2nd Thursday in May*

In this program a neighborhood would work with school(s), churches, or youth organizations to initiate the direct involvement of young people in helping them better understand the law and the criminal justice system. A variety of program activities will be developed from which a neighborhood could choose the ones most appropriate for its particular situation and the particular youth group it is cooperating with, such as mock trials, fuzz festivals, tours of corrective institutions and detention facilities, a kids and cops festival, etc. If a neighboorhood does not have a church or school, it may work directly with a youth group(s) in its neighborhood and do the same thing. A special pamphlet would be prepared for youth to explain the laws and justice procedures that apply directly to them.

NEIGHBORHOOD HALL OF FAME CRITERIA

Citywide recognition will be given to any neighborhood that meets any of the following requirements:

GOLD LEVEL: Conduct three activities and distribute a Youth & Law pamphlet to as many Junior High and Senior High youth as possible.

SILVER LEVEL: Conduct two activities and distribute a Youth & Law pamphlet to youth involved in the program.

BRONZE LEVEL: Conduct one activity.

Need Addressed: To increase understanding of and respect for the criminal justice system among our youth through exposure, education, and participation.

Resources

Having adequate resources to plan may be simple—a living room, pen and notepaper, typewriter, and access to a copier so all will have a record of the result. Or it may be complex—a 40-member Task Force meeting throughout the year as part of a more general planning mechanism for various aspects of an entire city's future.

Resources are not synonymous with money. Trading, borrowing, bartering, and bargaining can get you an amazing array of talents, goods and services.

Resources can include "outside" experts and information. Research may be necessary to unearth strategies which might be effective on a particular problem. A number of calls to the National Crime Prevention Council's Information Services seek just such leads.

In Knoxville, TN, the planning process itself—the Assessment Team—drew in the resources of other city agencies as they shared their data and helped analyze patterns and problems in light of the combined knowledge base.

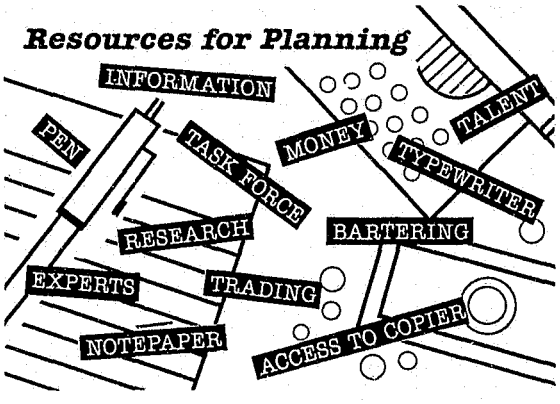
Neutrality

Neutral facilitators (discussion leaders) can be an important resource when the problem has already started generating tensions on all sides. Sometimes professional trainers or discussion leaders can be loaned from major corporations; arbitrators or negotiators or those with skills in organizational development can be extraordinarily helpful in the sometimes delicate process of gluing a new group together or recementing an old alliance.

Support

The Minneapolis Community Crime Prevention staff notes that in many neighborhoods, volunteer help is sharply limited. A paid staff member following up is vital to developing and sustaining the organization and its planning process. "We still have a foot mentally in the '50s, when half the world wasn't working," one staffer observed. "But that world doesn't exist any more." Some communities are fortunate to have discovered new resources—the abilities of teenagers and senior citizens to provide such vital services.

Another resource—often overlooked—is information about the community's other resources. Those developing a plan may be spurred to greater creativity or broader reach by knowing of services which might be useful and how they can be provided through different agencies or non-profit groups.



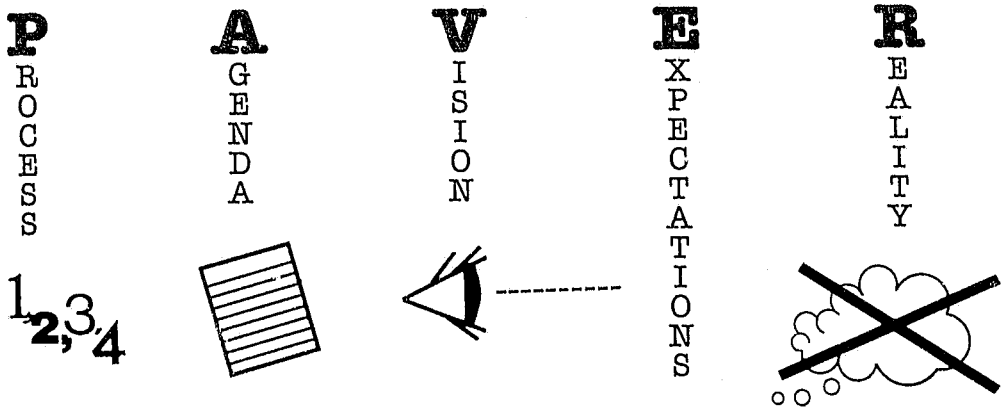
The resources needed for planning are not enormous in proportion to the problem. Just beware the false assumption that because planning involves "thinking about it," no physical assets are needed.

Now You're Ready

You know there's a problem. You've sparked some action. Your "tinder" group has done a first-rate job of assembling interested parties and helping to gather facts. You've come up with a process to follow and you've made sure resources to develop the plan will be available as required.

The next step—getting down to planning.

Six principles can help ensure that the planning process is smooth and contributes to a smooth-running program. Your road to success needs a



Process

No plan worth its salt gets done just once. Planning goes on and on as the organization discovers new problems, new challenges, new opportunities, new goals—or new ways to try reaching the current ones.

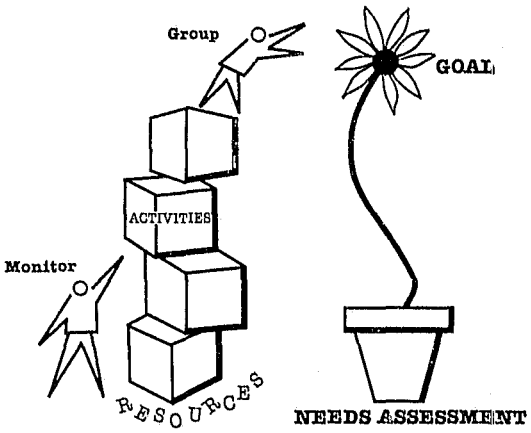
Having a systematic method for identifying needs, developing goals, determining objectives, and selecting activities to reach them means having a plan for planning. The process may be one we've described or one you developed yourself. Why have a plan to make a plan?

First, if you are dealing with volatile issues, subjects which can frighten people or anger them, a process which everyone knows and agrees to *in advance* greatly contributes to keeping the group on task. People can be reminded gently that there is a process that needs to be followed, and discussion can be focused on goals, not on blame or history.

Second, a process builds respect for and support of the plan. Everyone feels he or she has been heard; needs are clearly spelled out; goals are developed through a group decision; objectives are clearly understood in the context of needs and goals; tasks and assignments are parceled out with some degree of equity.

A process can range from simple—"how do we plan to send out the reports?"—to complex consultations and work groups—"what is the plan for transportation, both public and private, in this county for the next ten years?"

Its key elements include an assessment of needs—drawing from facts or fact-like findings wherever possible—and establishment of goal(s), objectives toward reaching the goal(s), tasks and activities which will lead to the objectives, and ways to monitor progress and evaluate results.



Agenda

It is not too productive to sit down around a table with a bunch of people and just say "let's plan about crime prevention." Everyone has a personal agenda, a list of concerns and priorities which will be brought into a planning process. This applies to organizations as well as individuals.

An agenda is not the final statement of the problem or the final list of concerns from the group. It is the starting point and a focus for discussion.

The agenda may be as straightforward as "taking action to stop vandalism on this block." It may be as neutral as "Child Abuse Think Tank," which the Crime Commission of Central Florida sponsored for law enforcement, prosecutors, health and rehabilitation, and social services. It may be as complex as "determining a strategy against crime for our city for the next 25 years," much like Detroit's. It may be phrased conditionally or tentatively—"to see if action against drug users in this housing development is possible"—but put in those terms it is less likely to draw concerned residents.

Don't confuse an agenda with a goal. An agenda can suggest the general subject matter (preventing child abuse) and a time frame for the plan (five years). It could also serve as an invitation ("everyone concerned about stopping arson").

Vision

Visions are not just dreams of what could happen. They are vital to the process of bringing a group together to build a plan for action.

Experience shows that *hope* for change, not fear of the current situation, is the better motivator of people to work together against crime. The vision—what the neighborhood, community, city, workplace, school should be like—embodies that hope and becomes something tangible to which the group can refer as it develops and executes the plan. It was vision which helped the Detroit Crime Task Force move away from disagreement and avoid stalemate.

The Citizens Committee for New York City asks each major group—law enforcement, citizens, and city services—to develop its own vision and bring that to the first meeting among the groups.

Goals Make It Real

The vision has generated a sense that the group can change the future. Now, that vision has to be translated into goals.

Sometimes the translation is easy. The vision: "This block is clean, buildings are well-kept, and flowers lend a touch of color." The goals: "Remove all trash and graffiti and keep them from returning. Persuade building owners to clean up and to meet the city code requirements for building maintenance. Plant and maintain flowers in public spaces on block."

Goals should be a basis for allocating resources. If the effort isn't important enough to be reflected in a goal, why should it get scarce resources?

Goals need to be clearly stated. They become the basis of all messages about the program, both within the group and to those outside it. Goals need to be stated in ways that make it possible to measure progress.

Wilkinsburg, PA, business owners and residents were starting from scratch, so their goals began at the beginning. Their five goals:

- To inform the Wilkinsburg Enterprise Development Area (EDA) of the Community Crime Prevention Program;
- To provide the EDA community with the skills needed to conduct crime prevention activities through an educational self-help process;
- To create a prevention center for the Wilkinsburg community from which resources will be available to foster and maintain citizen initiatives;
- To develop and maintain a method for monitoring and evaluating the impact of the crime prevention program;
- To undertake public sector support programs that complement citizen initiatives.

In *Working Together to Prevent Crime: A Practitioner's Handbook*, the Canadian Solicitor General's Crime Prevention Office suggests putting goals in a standard format—action, toward solving what problem, result expected, time frame (see illustration).

A Range of Strategies

Goals should not include statements about *how* the program will be executed: "Goals do not dictate strategies. They are targets that focus people's attention, time and energy," *Working Together* points out.

Once goals have been named, strategies can be selected. The most appropriate strategy will depend on the type of crime and the cause or causes. Many basic strategies for reducing immediate personal and household vulnerability to crime are still valid. Judith Fines, in *Partners for A Safe Neighborhood*, provided an excellent list of a number of standard approaches:

Crime prevention has gone beyond hardware enhancements, "target building," and Operation ID to such strategies as community-oriented or problem-oriented policing, in which the police are seen as providers of community assistance and resources for solving community problems—not chiefly as enforcers of laws. In Maryland, Baltimore County's COPE (Community Oriented Police Enforcement) unit has helped citizens in a variety of ways, such as finding out how to put the owner of a neighborhood tavern out of business when he refused to control his clientele's behavior or cooperate with police in doing so,

*Crime Prevention Tactics**

Direct Resident Activities

Police/Community Boards
Street Observation
Privately Sponsored Crime Hotlines
Block Clubs
Tenant Organizations
Block Watch
Block Watch Variations
Apartment Watch
Citizen Patrols
Radio Patrols
Escort Services
Block Houses
Victimization Surveys
Home Security Surveys
WhistleSTOP
Operation ID
Neighborhood Directories
Self-Defense Courses
Police Directional Aids

Working Within the Criminal Justice System

Police/Community Boards
Victim/Witness Assistance Programs
Court Watch
Crime Hotlines
Crime Reporting Projects

Direct Police Activities

Neighborhood Beats
Police Mini-Stations
Crime Analysis Units
Police Department Environmental Design Review
Community Service Officers
Police/Community Boards
Police/Community Relations Programs
Street Observation
Crime Prevention Educational Projects
Police Telephone Projects
Victimization Surveys
Home Security Surveys
Operation ID
Police Directional Aids
Crime Prevention for Business

Changing the Physical Environment

Police Department Environmental Design Review
Home Security Surveys
Improving Street Lighting
Changing Traffic Patterns
Police Directional Aids
Neighborhood Clean-up
Installing Emergency Telephones
Crime Prevention for Business

**When tactics can be appropriately placed in more than one category, they have been listed in each.*

and securing a safe playground for a neighborhood bereft of recreation facilities for kids. Problem-oriented policing has recast police roles toward addressing and resolving problems, not merely handling after-the-fact complaints.

In another untraditional strategy, the Housing Authority of High Point, NC, has determined that part of its crime prevention work includes starting Boys' and Girls' Club programs right in the public housing projects so that young people will have constructive alternatives immediately available. Another Authority strategy is to help older teens create their own business—a teen-run corporation which will undertake a variety of tasks. Their first contract? Building replacement window screens for the Housing Authority!

Police, victim service agencies, and other community prevention professionals in 19 cities are working in 300 high schools as part of teams to teach teens how to avoid victimization by crime and how to help the school and community become safer and better. Projects which have resulted from this strategy, part of NCPC's Teens, Crime and the Community Initiative, include citywide Teen Crime Prevention Councils in Dallas, TX, and Knoxville, TN, as well as teens teaching substance abuse prevention and personal safety to younger children in several cities, Mediation Programs, and teens in Miami operating their own Youth Crime Watch.

Expectations

Expectations about **benefits** are primary motivators to action. Everyone presumably gets some benefit, large or small, out of achieving the group's vision or goals. What other interests do members of your planning group have? Is one of the agencies looking for favorable publicity? Does an individual have artistic talents which could be put to work painting a mural over graffiti? Are there teens who would like the chance to lead and organize their own clean-up project or a tutoring program for younger children?

Don't promise benefits that can't be delivered. But if benefits are possible, make use of them.

Expectations about **responsibilities** are the other side of the coin. People who have planned action usually expect to help make the plan work. They expect to know how the strategies will operate, who will coordinate efforts, which tasks are assigned to whom (and them in particular), and what resources can be used (especially on their assigned tasks).

Failure to make these decisions and communicate them can hurt severely. No plan gets executed by wishing or by assuming "somebody" will do it. If no one has been told, asked, or assigned to do anything, nothing (or very little) will get done. Some members of the planning group will be diverted by other demands on their time when they perceive no follow-on role for them in the plan. If action does start, three different people may do the same thing and get mad at one another for interfering while two vital tasks languish untouched.

Realities

Any plan, to be believable, must be grounded in the realities of the neighborhood or community toward which it is directed. And the intent of the plan—its goals and objectives—must be believable as well.

Working Together to Prevent Crime makes that point tellingly in relating a story about the earlier days of modern crime prevention:

> *Setting realistic target figures for results and dates is important. It is better for the morale of participants, most of whom will be volunteers, to exceed modest goals than to fall short of more ambitious ones.*
>
> *An example of the kind of problem that can occur ... was illustrated by Minnesota Crime Watch. A major goal ... was to effect a reduction by 1979 in the property crime rate in Minnesota from the 1972 rate. A related objective was to enlist 20 percent of all households and businesses in Operation Identification by the end of the second year.*
>
> *At first glance, their goal and related objective ... seemed reasonable enough. Evaluators ... pointed out that these goals could not possibly be attained ... First, since 1972 was the first year since 1965 that property crime rates had dropped, the program was measuring itself against a very demanding standard. Secondly, Operation Identification is properly directed at burglary, not at all property crimes ... burglaries constituted only 29.1 per cent of property crimes ...*
>
> *Finally, without massive resources, the goal of enlisting 20 per cent of all residences and businesses in Operation Identification was unrealistic. In fact, in its first two years the project achieved an enlistment rate of 8.6 per cent—better than that achieved by other projects using indirect enrollment methods. The project could not possibly have succeeded when measured against these unrealistic goals.*

This is one juncture where goals and visions may differ sharply. It is possible to hold a vision of a community with sharply reduced property crime. But that vision must be stated in goals which can be reached in a reasonable future. If the vision is a community where every child has a trustworthy adult to whom to turn for help in emergencies, fine. But the program will move much better if the initial goal is establishing McGruff House programs in every elementary school in the neighborhood—using that vision to inspire those slogging toward the goal.

"R" for reality might also stand for the realities of resources. One of the tasks of planning is to examine the resources available to the community as well as those needed to reach objectives. A program which requires resources far beyond the group's range may be headed for trouble. The vision may require vast resources, but many of the appropriate goals might only need a small boost in what's out there now.

Planning for crime prevention—like planning for every other activity—has its unique features. Those unique features have to do more with crime prevention than planning, however. Good planning follows those principles you've already seen. Putting the principles into action means dealing with special crime prevention issues.

Crime Prevention Reacts

Many crime prevention practitioners find that their efforts tend to be reactive. "The program" is based on the Mayor's latest pronouncement, the newspaper's most recent crime-related editorial, the fear-provoking incident that happened just last week, not the community's goals.

Responding to immediate needs is appropriate, but constantly being responsive and reactive leaves little incentive to plan and no reason to establish priorities. The result—the power of planning is lost.

Topically Reactive

There's no doubt about it—crime prevention practitioners will always have to be prepared to respond to topics which vault into the public view. A crime against a child will cause an upsurge in request for child protection information and presentations. A rape will generate concern and interest in self-protective measures for women and girls. A rash of burglaries will result in a rash of calls for security surveys and other advice on locks and alarms.

Television news, newspaper headlines, feature articles in magazines, concerns of elected officials, the seasonality of certain types of crime, and other factors beyond your control will to some extent dictate the subject matter which must be covered or featured as part of your crime prevention education presentation. But having a plan lets you decide how much is to be done, and how it fits with other priorities.

Turning Reaction Around

If a community group has expressed interest in crime prevention and asks for your help, you start in a reactive position. But it's an opportunity to be proactive. The fact that people are coming together for change—to solve a problem, to alter the future for the better—offers the chance to harness that energy toward a forward-looking crime prevention plan.

A practitioner who works at a major college pointed out that her system of one-, two-, and five-year plans has offset rampant reactivity. "If the college administra-

tors can see what direction you are headed in, they will allow you to get away from the reactive mentality," said this pro. "Without a plan, the program is very reactive. The squeaky wheel gets the grease."

Vision and Flexibility

Planning can help create a positive vision of the community's or neighborhood's future and enhance residents' sense of control over their environment. Planning actually strengthens your ability to take on new topics and identify those which can be let go. But flexibility does not require sacrificing your basic direction and goals. In one sense, it is a positive form of reaction.

Just because the initial contact was reactive does not mean it has to stay that way. In fact, reaction can create visions. Once a subject has been put on the agenda, you can encourage citizens and colleagues to examine it in terms of "where do we want to be in a year" rather than "where we've been placed by fate today."

Productive Partnerships Result

A number of crime prevention strategies and subjects overlap with other disciplines. A planning process can help you discover that another group has similar or nearly identical goals and purposes. This can permit highly creative and cost-effective partnerships, which can result in more program per crime prevention dollar.

Block Watch in New Haven has formed a productive alliance with the local rape crisis center to provide Watch information and crime prevention tips as part of helping rape victims feel empowered to prevent future attacks. The Chamber of Commerce is an important ally for the Mid-Florida Crime Commission in addressing business-related crimes.

The needs assessments conducted by Knoxville Police and by the Jacksonville (FL) Sheriff's Office created in alliances among city agencies. They realized that they shared many goals and confronted many of the same problems in the community.

In Detroit, the experience of working together on a Crime Task Force brought together civic leaders who had had little or no previous contact. And the Task Force, which started out sharply divided, has been the only one of five to remain together to oversee implementation of "their" anti-crime strategy.

Crime prevention officers who have planned programs aimed at protecting children have found strong partners in parent associations, child protection agencies, and non-profit groups which share crime prevention's goals in these areas.

Planning a program around Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design could identify goals shared with building permit and code enforcement agencies, zoning bodies, and the traffic control staff. Environmentalists applaud CPTED's anti-graffiti approaches.

Crime Prevention Plans Include All Sizes, All Types

Many planners work for one jurisdiction—a county, city, region, town or state. Though the plans may be drawn up for specific areas, sectors, or neighborhoods, they are executed, by and large,

through one government unit. Some citizen input is generally desirable, but the planner is preparing for *government*, not citizen volunteer groups. In crime prevention, the same planner/practitioner may be dealing simultaneously with a dozen or more blocks, three neighborhoods, a central business district, and a countywide coalition, as well as with the same government unit(s) as other planners. The best planning process to use, the character of the planning group, and the type of problem may be radically different from situation to situation.

The fact that crime prevention is used in so many situations means that practitioners especially need the efficiencies which planning can bring.

Measuring Crime Prevention

Like other prevention disciplines, crime prevention has the difficult task of proving success based on what didn't happen, and then proving that the preventive measure caused nothing to happen. There are, however, evaluation measures related to crime prevention which can provide invaluable planning information and guidance.

The evaluation task is even more daunting for crime prevention because experts suggest many causes (or potential causes) of crime. A change in any of these could diminish crime. How can the crime prevention plan be tested for concrete results in such a situation? How can mileposts and benchmarks be fairly established?

Two types of information beyond crime analysis (examination of data on offenses reported to police) need to be gathered. First, **citizen attitudes and perceptions**—beliefs about crime, whether and how much residents fear crime, residents' sense of community cohesion and control —need to be determined. These can and do change, and can help document program progress.

Second, **data from other sources**—other government agencies, civic leaders, merchant groups, etc.—can be gathered to assess the structure of the community and how a broad crime prevention strategy can best serve the particular community.

Fear and Behavior

If citizens feel and act safer, crime prevention can be deemed to have worked—if changing those feelings and actions was among the goals at the outset.

A follow-up evaluation of Asylum Hill's crime prevention project (Hartford, CT) documented that three years after the program in that community, crime (which had dropped) was back up on par with other Hartford neighborhoods. But Asylum Hill residents still felt safer and more in control of their neighborhoods.

Newark and Houston were the sites for studies in how police can help to reduce fear of crime in 1985-86. The Police Foundation, which conducted the study, pointed out that:

> *Recent research ... shows that fear of crime is a major problem in our society. Other research, however, has shown that the level of fear appears to be far out of proportion to the objective risks of crime. Part of this incongruity seems to result*

from the fact that fear derives from concerns about various "signs of crime" and other sources ... including impersonal relationships. . .(Reducing Crime and Fear of Crime in Houston and Newark, Summary Report, The Police Foundation).

Experts have documented that a sense of community is in itself a strong prevention tool. In an intensive two-year study of block associations, New York City researchers found, among other things, that:

... (block) organizations tend to form where crime is a problem, but residents of organized blocks are, as a group, less fearful than others in their neighborhood. Given the demographic similarity of organized and unorganized blocks (in this study), this suggests that general purpose block associations contribute to reduced fear. (Block Booster Draft Study, Citizens Committee for New York City).

Survey the Field

One way to reach the issues of perception and attitude is through surveys. On the following pages, we have provided some samples of surveys others have used, along with notes on how citizen volunteers might help conduct such a study.

Several of these surveys combine questions on fear of crime and citizen behavior with information on how the neighborhood or community functions, information you will find useful in combination with the community profile discussed below.

Surveys can measure what people do, what they think, or what their status or condition is. A great deal is known about the science of building surveys and calculating the results—but knowing the best questions to ask to get the accurate information you need is still an art.

The basic tenets of surveying, can help avoid some common pitfalls which could make your survey incorrect. The more qualified help you can corral, through your subcommittee, advisory board, or other sources, the better the results and the better your information.

What Vehicle for Your Survey—Mail, Telephone, In-Person Interviews?

There are many trade-offs and choices to be made depending on how much money and time you can spend on your survey and how much volunteer help you have—not to mention how accurate you want the results to be. The first issue is the survey vehicle.

Mail

It looks easy. Just mail questionnaires to everyone in the neighborhood. Ask them to fill out and return the survey. But several problems creep in. The first is "self-selection." Only the specially interested respond. They have biases and prejudices much stronger than the general population. The second is non-response. Some people just throw their mail out unless it's personal or a bill. Others never manage to find the time; others fill out the form but never mail it. Some misread or can't read the questions or don't accurately reflect their feelings in their answers. Still others open

the survey, read it, and say to themselves, "It's none of their business how I feel." The people you hear from in a mail survey are usually those who (a) read their mail; (b) don't mind writing down answers; (c) don't lose the survey; (d) are interested in your topic; (e) feel like spending 25 cents.

In spite of these warnings, such surveys can be helpful, and they're certainly inexpensive. Techniques like follow-up mailings can help improve effectiveness but add to costs.

In-Person

In-person interviews ensure that, if the interviewer is trained and the interview is granted, the form will be filled out, will accurately state the interviewee's response, and will not be mislaid. These interviews can also help fuel volunteer and participant enthusiasm.

It takes time for interviewers to get from house to house, to get someone to answer the door, to establish their credentials, to ask questions and write down answers. Interviewer security can become an issue, and some interviewer training is necessary. You will have to provide some sort of positive identification for your interviewers—perhaps photo ID's through the local policy department. Nighttime as well as daytime interviews must be scheduled.

Telephone

Telephone interviews are an attractive option. They do have drawbacks. Just as with in-person interviews, if your calls are made during the day, you will only reach people who are in their homes during the day—not a representative sample of your community or neighborhood. So calls must be made during both day and evening hours. Some people are naturally (and appropriately) suspicious about calls asking personal questions, such as habits, fears, and anti-crime measures. So publicizing your survey (to legitimize it) and providing for respondents to be able to call back and check the validity of the survey are good practices.

Although at least 95% of American households have telephones, you will not find phone book listings for all the numbers. Unlisted numbers, added to those who do not have phones, can exclude many people you want to be sure are represented. In a community-wide setting, you can select numbers at random based on telephone exchanges (the first three digits of the phone number) and random numbers (more later). But in a neighborhood setting, one exchange may serve several neighborhoods, or one neighborhood may have several exchanges. Then a directory such as a telephone-street criss-cross is your best alternative. Most local libraries or city planners have them.

Phone surveys require training of the interviewers and a means of verifying the survey response. But overall, they are generally regarded as the least expensive for the amount of accurate data obtained.

They can involve partners. Illinois Bell opened its bank of 20 phones for local non-profits for fund raising and for crime prevention surveys. Universities might make phone banks available, too. Imagine 20 volunteers calling for five days!

What To Ask?

Once you know what method of surveying is going to fit with your resources and budget, you need to determine what you will ask and how to ask it.

We've provided sample surveys —one for planning data and two for monitoring progress. But carefully determine whether your objectives can be met by the questions, whether the questions can be answered with the responses listed, and whether the questions —and responses—give you enough information for your evaluation needs. This is one area where expert help can be enormously beneficial.

If you are designing your own survey, here are several tips. Write up the questions you want to ask and see if a local professor or market researcher or public opinion pollster will check them over and help you with phrasing.

- Ask interesting questions first, such as: Do you think this neighborhood is safe? Have you personally been hit by crime? Such "routine" details as age, length of residence, income level should be left to the end.
- Don't overwhelm the subject with choices. Usually you will want no more than five. Better two short questions than one long one which asks too much and confuses interviewee's. Three (such as yes-undecided-no) will suffice in most surveys.
- Pre-test questions. This can simply mean handing the survey to several people in the community and getting them to answer it. They may read the questions entirely differently than you intended. Better to find it out before all that effort.
- Keep your questions neutral. Avoid "leading" questions. "Have you attended a Neighborhood Watch meeting?" is much preferable to "Why haven't you at least come to meeting?"
- Brevity is the soul of wit. Make your questionnaire relatively brief.

Executing the Survey

There are three areas in which mistakes with surveys are most often made: **selecting the sample, writing and administering the questions,** and **interpreting the results.**

Selecting the Sample

You have read that the Gallup, Harris, Roper and other national polls undertake surveys supposedly covering the whole nation, but only interview about 2,000 people! Yet a statistics professor will tell you that for your community of 50,000, you should take a sample of 400—or that for the neighborhood in question, population 5,000, your sample should be 200 or 250.

You're not being led astray. The simple numerical truth is that the larger the "population" the smaller (in proportion) the sample has to be to ensure a given level of accuracy. Thus, you may wish to talk with 200 citizens in a community of 5,000 to get the same confidence level Gallup does talking with 2,000 in a nation of 240,000,000!

Another technique is to check with someone in a planning or research office, to see what sample size they have used previously for similar areas.

Once you know the size of the sample, you need to decide how you will select it. There are other methods but simple random sampling is generally the best choice unless a trained statistician with survey experience is helping you.

Random sampling means that everyone in the "population" (group you are trying to measure) has an equal chance of being picked, compared with every other member. Since you will be interviewing people, you will usually want to use the method known as "random sampling without replacement" (that is, you don't want to interview the same person twice).

"Random numbers" are found in tables which are available in statistics books, or almost any computer can generate a list.

Your population list? That might come from a city telephone book, a "criss-cross" directory which lists telephones by their street location, or from another listing, such as an address list. The difficulty with using telephone lists, including the criss-cross, is that not everyone has a phone, and not everyone with a phone has a listed number. Why random numbers instead of "close your eyes and point?" Frankly, that method simply hasn't proved as reliable and involves nearly as much hassle, sometimes more. But if you think that's a hassle, close your eyes and point. Just try to equalize selection opportunities for all.

Administering the Survey

The basic steps to take in a survey are fairly self-explanatory. Most of the hard work consists of scrupulous attention to detail and assurance of consistency.

However you've decided to survey—mail, phone, in-person—you will need to train survey operatives. First, interviewers need to think of themselves as a conduit, not a filter. They are tasked to accurately record the interviewee's comments—not offer their own suggestions, interpret responses, or otherwise "put down what I though they meant." Second, interviewers must understand that talking to the specific person or household is an important guarantee of randomness. If there's no one at 877, the interview should not be conducted with the neighbor in 875! If guidelines are flexible, fine. Just be sure they are consistently followed. Third, interviewers need to be reminded to write as they interview. Memorizing the interviewee's replies is impossible. In survey administration, the important point is consistent adherence to the guidelines and uniform interpretation.

Interpreting the Survey

Surveys will usually provide you either "yes/no" type answers or gradations ("Strongly Agree" through "Strongly Disagree," for example). The simplest and most frequently used method of interpretation is percentages. For EACH question, tally the number of responses for each possible response ("Yes," "No," "Don't Know," "Refused Answer"—each is a response) and add up the total of responses for that question. If there are 300 responses to the question, then the percentage replying yes is the number of "yes" answers divided by 300.

Embarrassing as they may be, math errors are not nearly as dangerous to your program as errors in interpreting the findings. At its most basic, your survey represents the opinions,

views, and actions of those who responded on the day they responded.

Because of what statistics tell us about groups, we are able to predict with a fair amount of confidence that if we had asked everyone in the group the same question that day, the group's response would have been roughly the same.

Interpreting your survey need not be complicated. In most cases, clear majorities of those questioned will take one position or the other, or a clear majority will either "agree" or "strongly agree" (or the opposite) with one view or another. Keep in mind that a finding that there is no dominant view ("No clear consensus emerged on legislating the closure of some streets in Hilldale") is a perfectly valid and sometimes highly useful conclusion. Knowing that there is no agreement on an issue may provide the best signals available that you need to renew education and outreach efforts on the topic.

Be sure not to overlook the obvious conclusions. "Ninety-nine out of 100 residents of Countville believe the police are doing a good job" is a legitimate finding. Even low scores ("17% of our students have enrolled in abuse prevention courses") can be pluses—especially if you point out that before, no one had enrolled. These low scores also can demonstrate the need for more funding or more focus in a particular area. "Only two of every ten families have home inventories" can highlight the need for help in encouraging families to prepare such listings.

Interpreting your survey is essentially a matter of common sense. If you're in doubt, go back to the original question and phrase the answer only within its limits. If one in ten residents could recall seeing a Neighborhood Watch sign, don't report that "no one knows about Neighborhood Watch." Report instead "One in ten survey respondents recalled seeing a Neighborhood Watch sign." Period.

A Planning Questionnaire

You can't know a neighborhood as well as those who live there, but doing some planning surveys will help overcome that. Doing a survey to determine a baseline in the community can help in knowing where to start.

The questions in the Planning Questionnaire help you gain a clear picture of the particular neighborhood—what its problems are, how it is operating, how its citizens view it and live in it.

One of the most critical questions is #10, "How do you find out about events in your neighborhood?" This will tell you how to (and how not to) spread the word about your program. Question #8 will tell you the key persons, the persons who must be included if you want to engage actual, or acknowledged, community leaders.

In addition to these questions, you should ask the Neighborhood Check-up questions (except for Question #6) as part of your initial survey. The Neighborhood Check-up Questionnaire is the one you will want to use regularly to assess the health of the community. The only question you want to alter on the Check-up is #6. The list of specific problems should be "freshened" to reflect developing neighborhood realities. Draw initially from the problems cited in your planning survey and update

it with the results of the most recent past survey. Other than that, the questions should not change from survey to survey—to enable you to compare the results.

Neighborhood Check-up

The Neighborhood Check-Up questionnaire is designed to give you data about three things:

- neighborhood cohesion and satisfaction (are people working with each other, talking to one another; are problems being solved?);
- crime prevention actions and results (are residents less fearful of crime?; have crime prevention tips been put to use?; has the neighborhood become safer?); and
- crime victimization (have people been victimized but failed to report crime?).

Crime victimization surveys are difficult to undertake in great detail and require intensive cross-checking and sophisticated survey methods to produce the national reports you see in the National Crime Survey by the Bureau of Justice Statistics. Because some crimes are, relatively speaking, very infrequent in the population, your sample for a community survey would have to be prohibitively large to approach acceptable accuracy.

But the simple barometer—"Has a personal or property crime hit you?" "Did you report it?"—will provide the kind of benchmark you need.

You may want to consider—if you have services available through Neighborhood Watch or your local victims' services agency—a follow-up question: "Did you know that counseling and other types of assistance are available through _____ at no/little cost? Would you like that telephone number?" It's a good way to reach out while gathering data in!

High levels of fear do not necessarily mean high levels of crime. The elderly tend to have high rates of fear and low victimization rates. Their fear drives them to caution and personal crime prevention measures, but probably bars them from a great deal of civic activity (especially at night). High fear levels will probably be bad for business (fewer shoppers) and civic interest. If fear levels are high, strategies must be implemented to reinvolve frightened citizens in community activity (e.g., transportation, patrolling the park with teens, etc.).

Testing knowledge of crime prevention programs can help pinpoint activities the public needs to know more about. It can also provide a check of whether people have translated their attitudes into action. And we all know actions speak louder than words. Being able to report on what people did lends weight and substance to your claims of success.

Questionnaires from *What, Me Evaluate?* and from Minneapolis Community Crime Prevention, Orange (NJ) Block Watch, and Eisenhower Foundation's Neighborhood Anti-Crime Project, on community assessment are provided for your reference.

The Planning Questionnaire

1. In general, would you say this area has become a better place to live in the last year, a worse place, or is about the same?

   BETTER _____ WORSE _____ SAME _____

   DON'T KNOW _____ REFUSED _____

2. Here are some problems people often mention in their neighborhoods. Can you tell me whether any of these is a big problem, something of a problem, or little or no problem for *your* neighborhood?

	Big	Some	Little	Don't Know	Refused
Shopping Facilities	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Crime	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Schools	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Noise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trash	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Traffic	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Kinds of Residents	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Abandoned/Rundown Bldgs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vandalism/Graffiti	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Unsupervised Kids	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

3. Would you agree or disagree with this statement: "There's little my neighbors and I can do to solve problems in this neighborhood."

   AGREE _____ DISAGREE _____ UNSURE _____
   REFUSED _____

4. What kinds of community groups are you active in? (check all that apply)

   Church _____ School _____

   Fraternal _____ Block Ass'n _____

   Service Club _____ Sports _____

   Social Club _____ Youth _____

   Political _____

5. How do you feel about going out for meetings at night?

Walking? Very Unsafe ____ Pretty Safe ____

Somewhat Unsafe ____

Very Unsafe ____ Don't Go ____

Driving? Very Safe ____ Pretty Safe ____

Somewhat Unsafe ____

Very Unsafe ____ Don't Go ____

6. Do you and your neighbors get together for social events?

Often ____ Sometimes ____ Occasionally ____

Rarely/Never ____

For community needs discussion/meetings?

Often ____ Sometimes ____ Occasionally ____

Rarely/Never ____

Here are some contrasting ways to describe this neighborhood. Please pick the one that is close to how you feel:

7. ____ A real home ..... or ... ____ Just a place to live

8. ____ People help each other ..... or ... ____ People go their own way

9. ____ Easy to tell a stranger from those who belong ..... or ...

10. ____ Hard to know who's a stranger here versus who belongs.

11. If you really wanted to get something done for the neighborhood, whom would you ask to help you?

_____ _____

_____ _____

12. How many people in this neighborhood could you ask for a small favor (e.g., a ride to the store if they are headed there anyhow)?

_____

13. How do you find out about news events in your neighborhood? Check all that apply.

School ____ Television ____ Metropolitan newspaper ____

Neighborhood newspaper ____ Radio ____ Neighbors' chat ____

Family/Friends ____ Self (own observations) ____ Other ____

Neighborhood Check-up Survey

1. In general, has this neighborhood become a better or worse place to live in the past year, or is it about the same?

   BETTER _____ WORSE _____ SAME _____

   DON'T KNOW _____ REFUSED _____

2. In general, do you think this area will be better, worse or about the same a year from now as a place to live?

   BETTER _____ WORSE _____ SAME _____

   DON'T KNOW _____ REFUSED _____

3. Here are some statements. Please tell me whether each one is in your view mostly true or mostly false about you and your neighbors.

	Mostly True	**Mostly False**	**Don't Know**	**Refused**
If I were sick, I could count on a neighbor to run an errand for me.	_____	_____	_____	_____
If I have to be away from home for a day or two, I know a neighbor will keep an eye on my place.	_____	_____	_____	_____
There is very little my neighbors and I can do to change things around here.	_____	_____	_____	_____
Crime in my neighborhood is *more* of a problem than in other nearby areas.	_____	_____	_____	_____
If I had to borrow $25 in a real emergency, I could turn to someone (not family) in this neighborhood.	_____	_____	_____	_____
My neighbors and I don't talk about community problems and how to solve them.	_____	_____	_____	_____

4. Have you heard of community group meetings to discuss local problems?

   NOT AT ALL _____ VAGUELY RECALL SOME _____ YES _____

5. (If Vaguely or Yes) Did you ever attend such a meeting?

   YES _____ NO _____

6. Can you tell me, for each of the following, whether it is a big problem, something of a problem, or little or no problem in your neighborhood, *compared with a year ago?*

	Adequate	Big	Some	Little	Don't Know	Refused
Shopping	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Crime	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Schools	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Noise	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Trash	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Traffic	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Kinds of Residents	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Abandoned/Rundown Bldgs	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Vandalism/Graffiti	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Unsupervised Kids	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Any new problem(s)?

_____

_____

_____

Crime Victims

In the past year, have *you* personally been the victim of an attempted crime or a crime in this neighborhood—that is, has something been robbed from you or stolen from outside your house; have you been threatened or assaulted by someone, been beaten up, been sexually attacked or raped?

YES ____ NO ____ UNSURE ____ REFUSED ____

If yes, did you report this incident or attempt to the local police?

YES ____ NO ____ REFUSED ____

In the past year, has someone broken into your house (with or without stealing), stolen something from your yard or outbuildings/shed/garage, damaged or vandalized your property, stolen or tried to steal your car or something from your car while it was in this neighborhood?

YES ____ NO ____ UNSURE ____ REFUSED ____

If yes, did you report this incident or attempt to the local police?

YES ____ NO ____ REFUSED ____

Fear of Crime

1. How safe do you feel being outside in your neighborhood at night? Would you feel . . .

   Very safe ..... _____

   Somewhat safe ..... _____

   Somewhat unsafe ..... _____

   Very unsafe ..... _____

   Don't go out at night ..... _____

   Don't know ..... _____

   Refused ..... _____

2. In the last year, do you feel that crime in your neighborhood has increased, decreased, or stayed about the same?

   Increased ..... _____

   Decreased ..... _____

   About the same ..... _____

   Don't know ..... _____

   Refused ..... _____

3. How worried are you now about what might happen in your neighborhood?

	Very Worried	Somewhat Worried	Not Worried	No Answer	Don't Know
Someone will try to rob you or steal something from you in this neighborhood?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Someone will try to attack you or beat you up while you are outside in this neighborhood?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Someone will try to break into your home?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Someone will damage or vandalize your house or other property?	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
Someone will try to attack you sexually while you are outside in your neighborhood?		_____	_____	_____	_____

From Memphis Area Neighborhood Watch

Choose the response(s) that most closely represents your feelings about the question:

1. I live in one of the most friendly neighborhoods/apartment buildings in Memphis.

   _____ yes _____ no

2. I know the people who live on each side of me.

   _____ yes _____ no

3. I know the people who live directly across the street/hall from me.

   _____ yes _____ no

4. I know the people who live directly in back of me.

   _____ yes _____ no _____ no one lives in back of me

5. I know everyone who lives on my block/building.

   _____ yes _____ no

6. Would you be afraid to walk alone within one block of your home at night? (Check all that apply.)

   _____ yes, in winter _____ yes, in summer _____ yes, all of the time

   _____ no, in winter _____ no, in summer _____ never

7. Is there any area within one mile of your home where you would be afraid to walk at night?

   _____ yes _____ no

   Take this space to explain your answers to Questions 6 & 7 if you wish.

8. Have you ever reported a crime or suspicious activity to the police or sheriff's department?

   _____ yes _____ no

9. Have you or someone living with you ever been a victim of one of the following crimes while living at your current address?

_____ Rape _____ Burglary

_____ Robbery _____ Theft

_____ Assault _____ Auto Theft

_____ Assault with a Weapon _____ Vandalism

_____ Was not a victim of any of the above.

10. If you were a victim of any crime at your current address, did you report it to the police or sheriff's department?

_____ yes _____ no

The police emergency number is _____; Sheriff's emergency number is _____.

11. Which of the following responses best describes your neighborhood?

_____ Very safe from crime _____ Fairly safe from crime
_____ Unsafe

12. Do you think that you may be a victim of some kind of crime within the next 12 months?

_____ Probably _____ Unlikely

_____ Yes _____ Definitely not

13. Have you done any of the following to make you and your family safer?

_____ Installed dead bolt locks

_____ Installed burglar alarms

_____ Installed security doors

_____ Installed window bolts

_____ Installed window guards

_____ Installed a home intercom

_____ Installed extra security lights outside

_____ Installed wide-angle door viewers (peep-holes)

_____ Engraved or marked your possessions

_____ Completed an inventory of your possessions

_____ Joined a neighborhood watch group

_____ Participated in citizen patrol

_____ Have not done anything

If You Checked "Joined a Neighborhood Watch Group," on Question 13, Please Answer the Following Questions about the Group.

1. About how long has your neighborhood watch group been organized? (This question pertains to a neighborhood watch group you joined in Shelby County.)

   _____ 6 months or less _____ 2-3 years

   _____ 6 months-1 year _____ Longer than 3 years

   _____ 1-2 years

2. Who trained your neighborhood watch group here?

   _____ Memphis PD _____ Shelby Co. Sheriff's Dept.
   _____ No training

3. If you have been organized for more than 1 year, has your group had additional training sessions? _____ Yes _____ No

   If you checked "yes," who provided additional training?

4. Check the following which best describe your neighborhood watch patrol.

   _____ Walking patrol

   _____ Car patrol

   _____ Unscheduled patrols; takes place when someone takes a daily walk, etc.

   _____ Scheduled patrol; well organized

   _____ No patrol at any time

5. How often does your neighborhood watch group meet?

   _____ Monthly _____ Quarterly _____ Twice yearly

   _____ As needed, but less than twice yearly

   _____ As needed, but more than twice yearly

6. Check the following which are true about your watch group (Check all that apply).

   _____ Contact person/coordinator is group leader.

   _____ Officers are elected.

   _____ Minutes are taken at meetings.

   _____ The group has by-laws.

   _____ The group is chartered.

   _____ There is a newsletter

   _____ Dues are collected, or fund-raisers are held to provide financial support.

7. Does your group have other activities in addition to neighborhood watch efforts?

   _____ Yes _____ No

   If you answered "Yes," please list some of the other activities.

8. Which of the following responses best describes your neighborhood watch group? (Check as many as apply.)

   _____ Meets regularly

   _____ Well-organized

   _____ Has a variety of programs

   _____ Watches, but doesn't meet often

   _____ Helped me to get to know my neighbors better

   _____ Inactive

   _____ Brought the neighborhood together

   _____ Has solved other neighborhood problems

   _____ Hasn't made much difference in my neighborhood

9. When was the last time your neighborhood watch group met?

Check the Appropriate Spaces which Describe You.

Sex	**Education**	**Marital Status**	**Number of Persons Living in Home**
___ Female	___ Less than 12th grade	___ Single	___ 1
___ Male	___ High school graduate	___ Married	___ 2-3
	___ Some college	___ Divorced	___ 4-5
	___ Advanced degree	___ Other	___ 6 or more
Residence	**Length of Residence**	**Income (Family)**	**Race**
___ Own	___ 1-6 months	___ Less than $4,999	___ Asian
___ Rent	___ 6-12 months	___ $5,000-9,999	___ Black
___ TYPE	___ 1-5 years	___ $10,000-14,999	___ Eurasian
___ House	___ 5-10 years	___ $15,000-19,999	___ Hispanic
___ Condominium	___ 10-15 years	___ $20,000-34,999	___ Amer. Indian
___ Apartment	___ 15-20 years	___ $35,000-49,999	___ White
___ Mobile home	___ 20 years or more	___ $50,000 and above	___ Other

ZIP CODE _____

FROM: Minneapolis Community Crime Prevention Safe Program Evaluation Assessment

FROM MINNEAPOLIS COMMUNITY CRIME PREVENTION

Key Stakeholder Questionnaire

Introduction

The purpose of this questionnaire is to provide an opportunity for people interested in Community Crime Prevention, and particularly the Minneapolis SAFE program, to provide their opinions of how SAFE should be evaluated. We feel that it is important to survey people such as yourself so that the evaluation addresses the issues important to you. The evaluation of SAFE should be able to describe the value of SAFE in terms that are important to the key constituencies of the program.

To begin with, let's review the goals of the SAFE program. They are:

- To reduce the number of problems/undesirable conditions residents perceive in their neighborhood.
- To increase community cohesion.
- To reduce the opportunity for crime.
- To reduce the fear of crime.

In addition, SAFE also plays a part in addressing two broader goals of the City Council and the Mayor. These are:

- To increase the percentage of middle income families willing to live in the City.
- To improve the perceived quality of life in the city.

SAFE, which stands for Safety for Everyone, depends on teams of community crime prevention specialists and police officers to work with residents to implement crime prevention programs and to identify neighborhood problems and then resolve them. The City has been divided into 12 SAFE districts with one CCP specialist and one police officer assigned to each district.

1. Do you think that any of the specific SAFE goals or broader goals mentioned above should be given a higher priority in assessing the program than the others?

2. Imagine that you are asked in two years if the SAFE program should be refunded. What would you want to know in order to make that decision?

3. Referring to your answer in Question 2, what methods or sources would you suggest for getting that information?

4. One final question, what final advice would you give us in designing an evaluation for the SAFE program?

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Beyond Criminal Justice

Analysis of information should become part of a community assessment such as those undertaken by the Jacksonville Sheriff's Office and the Knoxville Police Department, among others. A portrait of each subsection of the city was drawn with as much detail as it was possible to glean from city, county, and state records. The range of data available about each area can be seen readily on the overview sheet for small area studies developed by the Knoxville department.

Basic crime analysis is still necessary. Imaginative use of data on crimes reported to police should be encouraged, though. A researcher working with Minneapolis police, for instance, examined the long-term record of calls for service in that city and found that fewer than 10% of the addresses produced more than three-quarters of the calls for service. The top 250 residential and 250 commercial addresses (less than 1% of the total) produced 6% of all calls for police service.

At one university, analysis showed a high number of larcenies from office areas. To augment crime analysis, the crime prevention officer dressed casually and, with a knapsack and no excuse, simply wandered through several major administration buildings. Finding that no one challenged her was an important piece of information which highlighted the need for a major awareness campaign.

Such analysis highlights problems, more precisely defines them, and affirms or refutes intuitively or statistically suggested conclusions. It also can suggest places where other agencies might assist in long-term corrective action. For example, in Baltimore County, MD, citizen complaints were about vandalism and break-ins. A closer study of the area's needs showed positive recreation opportunity for young people was an underlying need—and the police brought in recreation department officials to meet the need.

Reported Crime is Not All

Traditional crime analysis offers some excellent information about the patterns of reported crime in a community. But victimization surveys show that only about half (or less) of all crime is reported. For some groups, such as teens, the reporting rate is far lower. Analysis of reported crimes does not take into account citizens' perceptions and fears of crime.

More important, signs of community dysfunction which are symptomatic of crime or potential for crime arise in other areas of civic life—sanitation, schools, recreation, highway and street maintenance, social services, to name a few.

Building a more complete picture of the community gives a better idea of the kinds of conditions which may be contributing to crime—either in the short or long term. Gathering these facts unquestionably enhances your knowledge of the problems, and your ability to identify the best strategies for solving them.

Pennsylvania Crime Watch has developed an excellent checklist for seeking information on facets of the community that can help develop a better community crime prevention effort. It is reproduced here to help you generate your own list of community or neighborhood research targets.

FROM: Knoxville Police Department Crime Prevention Unit

Checklist for Community Research

SAS NAME _____

ATTACHED	SHEET NAME	COMMENTS
	Map	
	General Information	
	Descriptive Information	
	Historical Information	
	Census Data	
	Total Population	
	Population by Age	
	Population by Sex	
	Population by Race	
	School Data	
	School Incident Data	
	City Agency Data	
	MPC Data	
	Crime Data	
	KPD Workload Data	
	Probation and Suspect Data	
	Law Enforcement Intelligence	
	SHOCAP Profile	
	Community Survey Data	
	Victimization Survey Data	
	School Survey Data	
	Crime Prevention Unit Data	

FROM Pennsylvania Crime Watch
Community Crime Prevention Program Guidebook

Checklist for Community Research

SOURCE	INFORMATION
I. City Government	Citywide plans and proposals for the community
City Council member (council-manic system) or council member most familiar with community (at-large system)	Assessment of community problems and issues History of community politics List of community organizations and leaders
Operating Agencies Human Services Police and Fire Manpower Public Assistance (case-workers) Board of Education Parks and Recreation Engineering Public Works, Streets and Sewers Community Development Economic Development	Plans and proposals for the community Existing projects and budgets Service delivery—record of need for improvement Distribution of and targets for development funds History of relations with community groups Major community problems
Planning Department City plans and reports Census data and R.D. Polk reports updating census information Other planners, departmental staff	Basic community data, e.g., size, racial-ethnic makeup, class composition, population trends, economic status Community maps and graphics showing current as well as past layout of area Undocumented information, such as community politics, relationship with adjacent areas, contacts and resource persons Assessment of community problems and issues
Municipal Reference Library Clipping files Documents and reports	Historical portrait of community Current issues and community concerns Current census data (if not available from planning dept.)

SOURCE	INFORMATION
II. Media and Public Interest Groups	Historical background of community Current community issues and concerns
Newspaper, radio and television, libraries, and neighborhood reporters Citizens' Housing and Planning Council, Urban League, and similar citywide organizations Citywide networks or coalitions organized around a specific issue, such as housing or community development	Community politics, organizations, and leaders
III. The Community *Organizations*	Membership and base of support in the community Relations with council member and city line agencies History of organization, including major accomplishments, alliances with other organizations, controversies and conflicts Current activities, projects, areas of concern Assessment of community issues and problems Kind of assistance the organization can provide: publicity, organizing, research Additional contacts
Merchants: Business and Industrial Leaders (Note: Although not all persons operating businesses in the area will be residents, it is important to learn the perspectives of nonresident businesspersons, too.)	Perception of the area and assessment of community problems and issues Interest in a community plan; ways they will be willing to help Degree of cooperation or suspicion between businesses and community residents; history of major problems and suggestions for resolving them Additional contacts

Local Office of City/Governmental Agencies	Assessment of delivery of services in the area: problems, decrease or increase in services, plans for improvement Representative cases that typify agency's involvement in the community Undocumented information, such as personal experiences, that will shed light on community problems and politics

SOURCE	INFORMATION
	Issues that can be dealt with by the planning process Additional contacts
Newspaper Editor and Reporters	Willingness to publicize planning effort Assessment of community problems and issues Additional contacts
Institutions: Schools, Hospitals Churches, Temples, Community Service Centers	Institution's role in the community; kind of services and activities it provides Assessment of community problems and issues Kinds of community problems and issues Kinds of assistance the institution can provide to planning process: meeting space, publicity, volunteer staff Additional contacts

Keep Track of Your Process

Crime prevention involves process as well as outcome. Educating people and galvanizing them to act takes time and resources, and there is a result—more informed citizens. Marshaling resources and attacking a problem that's taken time to develop also take time. Your plan needs to acknowledge the importance of processes and ensure that counting and planning for those as well as the substantive goal is part of the scheme.

Process measures—counting what's been done, how many people have been visited, how many courses taught, how many volunteer hours donated—offer many of the milestones and checkpoints which suggest whether you are heading toward your goal.

Lest anyone suggest process measures aren't really relevant to planning—McDonald's (yes, the "golden arches" McDonald's) evaluates *only* process goals. It has 12 process measures, ranging from sparkling clean eating areas to fresh deep-fry fat daily to hot food to fast service. This superstar business knows that if processes are measured rigorously, the *outcome* (customer satisfaction and return business) is guaranteed.

Here are some examples of process measures, linked with typical goals:

- number of informational meetings held, with number and demographics of residents attending each meeting, and number of resulting block watches (***goal:*** *establish Neighborhood Watch throughout the city*);
- number of escorts provided under senior escort program together with dates, times, and destinations of the escort trips (***goal:*** *increase safety and security of older residents of the neighborhood*);
- number of teens placed in summer jobs with neighborhood merchants, number of new merchants involved in program, number of new and repeat teens involved (***goal:*** *provide more young people with positive summer job opportunities*);
- number of clean-up projects completed—graffiti painted out, vacant lots cleared, abandoned buildings boarded up (***goal:*** *upgrade appearance of neighborhood to attract more pedestrian traffic*);
- number of teen volunteers who set up teaching program for younger children, number of children taught (***goal:*** *enlist teens as resources in community prevention efforts*);
- number of businesses signed up for business watch, number of their employees trained (***goal:*** *reduce crimes against small businesses in the downtown area*);
- number of after-school programs started for elementary and secondary students, numbers and ages of students participating (***goals:*** *enhance well-being of "latchkey" children and provide constructive and fun alternatives to drugs and delinquency*).

The More Information, the Better

To recap briefly, three very different kinds of measurement play important roles in building and sustaining a sound action plan:

- information on citizens' perceptions of and fear of crime in the community, and their attitudes toward the quality of life in the neighborhood or community;
- data (surveys, call logs, plans, reports, maps, etc.) from other government or non-government service agencies which help more accurately describe the community and the problem;
- information on the processes you plan to execute —how you will set up checkpoints and measure progress toward an ultimate goal.

This book introduces planning concepts and processes. It cannot cover in detail the many techniques and tools that prove invaluable in developing a community crime prevention plan.

Desirable skills range from public speaking to accurate note-taking, from political analysis to multivariate analysis. Certain basic tips, however, are bound to help a practitioner who is still building personal experience with community plans. Some key skills or disciplines—crime prevention through environmental design, crime analysis, interagency relationships, and group facilitation and management—are of enormous help. These—and their benefits in crime prevention planning—are outlined briefly below.

On Having a Foot in Two Camps

As a practitioner of community crime prevention, you will spend much of your time working with voluntary groups which operate on democratic and consensus principles. If you work for a law enforcement agency, you are dealing with an organization which has strong hierarchical tendencies in even the most modern departments.

The "politics" of working with these groups are different. Hierarchies tend to reward adherence to rules and procedures. Voluntary associations tend to reward those who build consensus regardless of rules and procedures. Most leaders of voluntary groups hold their position by agreement of the group; most law enforcement chief executives are appointed over the group. There is no inherent *wrong* or *right* in either type of group. Each is well-suited to the job with which it is charged.

What *would* be wrong is to ignore the differences. Try to work with the strengths of each kind of group. Hierarchies, for example, reward conformance to rule. Thus, if you meet your stated objectives and goals, you win. But your objectives and goals are most likely to be met when you have reached them through consensus with the community to which they apply. There's a way for everyone to win.

Because they are government agencies, many police and sheriffs' departments operate from budget-drive planning models. This does not require that you surrender to a timetable, if your community group is working on a different "year" or even an 18-month or two-year calendar. You

do need to link the two. Perhaps your community group includes a bookkeeper or accountant who can take on this task. Links can be easy. Objectives for the year might include finishing one community objective and starting two more—all of which were planned 10 months ago by the community.

One danger is to let budget categories drive crime prevention plans instead of using the budget as a starting point to identify other resources which have to be obtained. If crime prevention is to flourish, it needs to acquire substantial support and resources from the community, not just public lip service.

Engaging private support through donations of such things as facilities, printing, refreshments, personnel, or services becomes vital. The Forsythe County, NC, Sheriff's Crime Prevention Staff have developed a knack for enlisting local business owners in their crime prevention programs, with ads in a yearly magazine, contributed services, and support for community activities. A small public investment can be multiplied manifold with the right approach.

Crime prevention has a major edge in some agencies. It offers dozens of opportunities for a favorable public image of the agency acting instead of responding. Thus, the public relations or community relations staff often become willing allies of your efforts.

Crime Analysis

Crime analysis ideally would involve coding into a computer every known fact about every incident reported to police—then running checks to determine every possible pattern the data suggest. No one in the real world has the time or resources to do this.

Still, crime analysis is an excellent tool not only for crime prevention but for police management and planning in general. In Winston-Salem, NC, the management information office of the Police Department works closely with the crime prevention office, providing reports on a variety of crime patterns in a variety of neighborhoods.

Traditionally crime analysis includes offense reports, reporting patterns, census demographic data, city directory information, reports from the city planning department, citizen interviews, and direct observation. Data are examined to determine trends, patterns, tendencies, and anomalies. Analyses might be performed by a separate unit within the police department, or as part of information management, or as part of the crime prevention unit's duties.

Analysts who see you taking action on their "discoveries" of patterns can also become allies of crime prevention. And analysis lends itself to working with neighborhoods. In fact, noted crime prevention scholar C. Ray Jeffrey has suggested that crime analysis should be applied to very small areas, not to cities as a whole, because detailed analysis will highlight patterns that get submerged on a wider scale. There's another reason for crime prevention specialists to align themselves with analysts!

Interagency Cooperation

Throughout this book, we have described situations in which a crime prevention practitioner

can help and be helped by other government agencies and other organizations.

These agencies may well have other agendas and priorities. Crime prevention may be just a relatively minor part of their responsibility. Still, they have much to offer.

The link-up comes when another agency discovers that it shares with yours a legitimate program goal, and that there is a common interest in a particular problem or situation.

The Housing Authority may be spending a relatively large hunk of its budget cleaning graffiti and vandalism in a particular project; residents of the area nearby may have similar complaints about defacement of their neighborhood. Voila! A common bond, a mutual interest in stopping vandalism.

Or a parks staff may be concerned because public use of a well-designed (and expensive) facility has fallen off sharply. Perhaps they will perk up and take note when they find that the citizens' association knows people are staying away not because of rampant felony crime (such as robbery and assault) but because of incivilities (inappropriate remarks, taunting, heckling, etc.) in the park.

The common bond could simply be constructive sharing of data. Knoxville police have brought together 21 city agencies which had never exchanged information before. As a result, several problems have been resolved simply by joint agency action. Agencies now present their own cases with much greater certainty that they share a common context with other city divisions.

What agencies are likely candidates for cooperation? Juvenile justice, youth bureaus, mental health, community health, sanitation, public works, parole and probation, traffic, transportation, code enforcement, public housing, social services, the council on aging, schools, libraries, recreation and parks, community mediation, fire and rescue, prosecutor's office, substance abuse prevention and treatment agencies—to name just a few.

Working with Citizen Groups

Dealing with citizen groups in a constructive partnership, which community crime prevention planning requires, puts special burdens on the crime prevention practitioner, who is called on to be technical resource, moderator, cheerleader, facilitator, and sometimes just plain leader.

A great deal has been written about effective leadership of groups, in management theory and in psychology. To become truly skilled at bringing out the best in a group absolutely takes practice, and usually requires some training from organizational development professionals, either in a professional development or university curriculum.

Each group has its own style rhythm, and dynamics. Never assume that one group is like another because the two share some traits. Even if they shared a great many, crucial differences would remain. A group can change character dramatically just because one person enters or leaves it, for instance.

Although the crime prevention practitioner may actually be the initial convenor of a planning group, the idea usually is that the

group assumes the workload, with the practitioner simply helping.

Help Make Discussions Effective

As you watch the group begin to discuss an issue, one of the best services you can provide is to help ensure that the group operates effectively. Though facilitating groups is far from simple, some commonsense observations will help you spot glitches and obstacles to effective discussion. Keep an eye (and an ear) out for

- Who talks? Who's quiet? Do they switch roles at different points in the discussion?
- Who is influential (listened to with respect) in the group? (Influence is not the same as talking a lot).
- Is there a struggle for leadership? If so, among whom?
- Do some group members take it upon themselves to act (self-authorizing decisions)?
- Does the group shift from topic to topic without coming to a decision? (A decision to postpone action is valid, as long as it is so stated).
- Is there evidence of "pushing through"—a forcing to decisions before the group is ready or in the face of substantial, albeit minority opposition?
- Are people being adequately recognized for their contributions to the discussion?
- How does the group accept, reject ideas? How much discussion goes on? (Not surprisingly, the longer the session goes, the less the discussion).

If groups are overly polite to one another, if only positive feelings are being aired, or if the talk moves away from core issues to peripherals, it is entirely appropriate for the facilitator (you or someone else) to gently prod members of the group to get back to the task at hand and to be civil but forthright about their views.

Don't disrupt the discussion to point out flaws or concerns. Do approach the members you feel can be most helpful in quietly redirecting the group and mention in a positive way your concerns.

To help your group reach agreement on goals and priorities, some tips from professionals may help:

- provide participants with worksheets to write down their own goals, strategies, priorities;
- break up into small groups (preferably 6-12) so that all participants will be able to discuss all goals; then get the group to report back its agreement points;
- list ideas which occurred to you in the needs assessment phase;
- clarify similarities and differences in goals the work groups set;
- list and announce the final goals. Check for consensus.

Problem Solving Techniques

Depending on the group and the issue, a variety of approaches can help to clarify and address a problem or issue, and to point toward a desirable solution. The list below catalogs some of these techniques. You may have used some in working with a group, or been part of a group which used them. For more specifics on the implementation of these approaches, check with your local public or college library

for basic material on decision theory, management, group dynamics, or group management.

Techniques to Define and Clarify The Problem

- **Brainstorming**—Have group generate ideas quickly, recording them on a flipchart. Get as many ideas as possible. Evaluate none of them until all ideas are out and recorded.
- **Nominal Group Technique**—Each person writes down ideas before sharing them with group, allowing everyone time to think about the topic and offer an idea.
- **Graphic Illustration**—Each member, either individually or in a team, illustrates the problem as he/she sees it, either through some type of illustration (e.g. drawing, cutout)
- **Card Exchange**—Group members describe the problem as they see it on cards, and put them either in a large envelope or box so that each idea can be considered anonymously.
- **Key Word Analysis**—Ask each group member to give his/her definition of key words in the problem statement. The group works toward a common understanding of key terms.
- **Round Robin**—Going around the group, systematically asking each person for his/her input in turn.
- **Role Reversal**—Members adopt each others' roles (this improves understanding of each others' positions).

Ways to Break the Problem into Small Pieces and Generate Solutions.

- **Positive/Negative Forces (Force Field Analysis)**—Group members work together to identify various forces working to make the problem worse and better.
- **Negative Brainstorming**—The group generates ideas about all the things that can possibly go wrong in this situation. They can then consider strategies to overcome these difficulties.
- **Major Questions**—Ask group to answer the who, what, where, why, when, and how of each issue.

Choosing the Best Solution or Setting Priorities

- **Applying Criteria**—The group identifies their criteria for an acceptable solution by completing the statement "An ideal solution to this problem would have these characteristics. ..." Then compare each solution to the list of criteria to choose the best one.
- **Straw Votes**—Non-binding votes to "take the temperature" of a group. Each member votes informally by a show of his/her hand for or against each alternative. Usually lets you dismiss some solutions to concentrate on others.
- **Rank Order**—Ask members to rank order the alternatives. Omit the least popular.
- **Weighted Voting**—Each participant gets 10 votes to distribute as he/she sees fit among alternatives. Eliminate obviously unpopular alternatives.
- **Cost-Benefit Analysis**—This is a way to weigh the negative and positive results of and the cost of implementing a solution.
- **Negative Voting**—Ask if any member cannot live with a specific decision.

- List the pros and cons or advantages and disadvantages of a particular solution to assess its impacts in each direction; helps determine how a solution would affect the situation and the organization.

Decision-Making Options

In working with groups, many choices may be identified. Each will have its advocates. Sometimes the difficulty is not just which choice to make, but how the group should choose.

The decision-making method should be clear, if not at the outset, then as early in the process as possible. The method used will depend on who has the authority and responsibility for action, how cohesive the group is, how it has made similar decisions in the past, and the level of consequences that the decision holds for the whole group, among other key factors.

Some Common Types of Decision-Making Options Include

- **Majority rule**—decision is made through some form of voting;
- **Unanimity**-decision is made by overt unanimous consent, usually with minimal discussion;
- **Polling**—more explicit form of majority rule in which time is taken to identify the position of each member individually.
- **Self-authorization**—decision made by an individual who assumes responsibility for action;
- **Handclasp**—decision made by two or more members who join forces and decide the issue ahead of time;
- **Consensus**—decision made after allowing all aspects of the issue, positive and negative, to be discussed. This is not unanimity, but constitutes general agreement among all group members.

You have only had a starter course in planning. Much of the curriculum is practical and hands-on. Like many skills, the more you do, the better you will become. And the benefits of planning that we've pointed out throughout are cumulative. The more you apply good planning techniques, the more benefits available.

This is a case study—Ashton—that you can use to try out ideas from this book. It may be helpful to work with Ashton's planning needs before tackling your own community's—or to use Ashton to work with a community group as a "trial run" in planning.

The community represents an absolute original. It is not any place anyone has ever been. But Ashton's situation and problems do suggest many of the conditions found in one degree or another in communities around the country.

ASHTON—An Introduction

Ashton is an incorporated city on the edge of a much larger urban core. It has a mix of business and industry and a mix of socio-economic and ethnic groups among its residents. With a population of 30,000 people, it is the largest population center in the county. A city of 600,000 is in adjoining Woodward County.

Ashton's population includes 55% white, 25% black, 15% Asian, and 5% other ethnic groups. The average income is $23,000 per year and the unemployment rate is 9%.

The northern part of the town is predominantly single family homes, with several new subdivisions and a rapidly increasing population as people continue to relocate from the adjacent city. There are four tenant and homeowners associations in this area, with the Jones Court Tenant Association being the most active in community improvement.

The rest of residential Ashton is characterized by older neighborhoods, with residents who have lived there for many years and low income families who have moved from the city. There is one public housing project, with approximately 4,000 residents.

The degree to which these older neighborhoods are organized varies a great deal. There are community organizations like the Greater Rosemont Coalition and the Edmond Village Committee that monitor the activities of the town government, advocate for the needs of a particular neighborhood, or provide direct services to residents.

The Park Heights Community Development Center is a community-based organization that has provided social and educational services to low-income families for five years, and because of crime and drug problems has recently tried to revitalize the Tenants' Council of the Public Housing Project. Some area churches have been active in serving the community and a recently formed

coalition of ministers is dedicating itself to youth in Ashton.

There is a wide variety of small, privately-owned businesses in the downtown area. They are prospering with the growth of the town. A growing number of businesses and companies are relocating from the city and moving into newly renovated office space. Some of the older businesses are represented in the Downtown Business Association, but the Association hasn't been expanding in membership.

Several major food and department stores are also downtown and three large hotels have just been completed to attract conferences and visitors to the nearby city.

The State University, located in the eastern part of town, is a major employer and contributes significantly to Ashton's economy. It serves 25,000 students from throughout the state. Approximately a quarter of the students live on campus and a large number live around the campus. The campus police have begun a review of their security procedures, in response to recent problems on the campus.

Elected officials in Ashton include the Mayor and Town Council (5 members). The Mayor and Council enjoy a strong working relationship with the County Executives of Tate, their own county, and of adjoining Woodward County.

The public school system in Ashton is governed by an elected school board of seven members. There are 3 high schools, 7 middle schools and 29 elementary schools. The schools receive a great deal of support from the community (82% of youth in Ashton attend the public schools and PTAs are viable, active organizations at many elementary and middle schools).

At Central High School, seniors have organized a tutoring program for middle school youth and at the Beech High School, the Student Council has made plans to start an anti-drug campaign.

The budget of Ashton supports the following agencies and services:

- Police Department
- Ashton Planning Agency
- Public Housing/Welfare Department
- Commission on Aging—A direct service and advocacy organization
- Recreation Department
- Health Clinic (including mental Health services and alcohol/drug abuse programs)
- Fire and Rescue Department
- Ashton Development Corporation (private organization in partnership with Ashton on specific projects)
- Codes Enforcement agency

The Ashton Police Department has 51 officers, including a full-time Crime Prevention Officer. Over the last year, Ashton has been experiencing an increase in all types of crime as well as an increase in population.

Crime prevention activities in the past few years have focused on organizing Neighborhood Watch groups. A few of those groups, including the Seventh Street Project and the Covington Watch Group, are still active. However, most have become minimally active or stopped functioning altogether.

Within the last year crime has

significantly increased and crime prevention has become a more prominent concern for the Police Department. Ashton had just one Crime Prevention Officer, but a budget adjustment provided for a second, who was recently hired for the position.

The Crime Prevention Officers have been trying to develop a plan for the upcoming year and are looking for ways to stretch their resources and increase their impact. They formulated a proposal for the Ashton Crime Prevention Initiative which calls for community involvement in the development of the one-year plan. Their proposal has been approved by the Chief, and the officers established a Planning Group to carry out the planning process.

The Ashton Planning Group—Activities to Date

The Planning Group for the Ashton Crime Prevention Initiative was established ten months ago. The Ashton Police Department, through its Crime Prevention Officers, initiated the planning process, recruited group members, and has been facilitating its activities. In the first month, the group focused on clarifying its purpose and agreeing on their collective vision of Ashton.

The purpose of the Planning Group is to develop a one-year Crime Prevention Plan which will begin to address crime problems in Ashton and serve as a foundation for ongoing crime prevention activities. This plan will be based on a thorough assessment of the community and represents the beginning of a long-term effort to reduce crime and improve the quality of life in Ashton.

The Planning Group expresses its vision of Ashton as a community where: residents are not victimized or frightened by crime and demonstrate concern and support for one another; children and teens attend drug-free/crime free schools, receive the support they need to complete their education, are provided with opportunities to contribute to the community, and have reasonable access to jobs.

Group members view this initiative as the opportunity to demonstrate leadership and bring about positive change in Ashton.

In the last five months, the Planning Group has been collecting information to more fully understand Ashton. The following questions guided this effort:

1. What is the extent and nature of crime (both officially brought to police and unreported) in Ashton? What are the characteristics of victims and offenders?

2. How do residents perceive crime in Ashton? Are they concerned about it? What is their level of fear, and what are they fearful of?

3. How is crime affecting the youth of Ashton?

4. What are the physical, economic, social, or other conditions in Ashton that have implications for crime prevention?

5. What potential resources exist?

To organize and simplify the task, Planning Group members divided into three committees:

- **Crime Analysis Committee** (assisted by the local and county Police Departments)

- **Community Perceptions Committee** (assisted by three Sociology graduate students from the University)
- **Community Profile and Resources Committee** (assisted by the Planning Commission).

The committees have performed initial analyses on the information they collected and have prepared reports for the entire Planning Group. A general meeting of the Group has now been called to review these reports and identify the problems that are indicated by the information.

Report From Crime Analysis Committee

The following crimes were reported in Ashton last year:

Homicide	11
Rape	30
Robbery	157
Assault	560
Burglary	1,356
Larceny	1,998
Auto Theft	62
Arson	17
Weapons	42
Narcotics - Possession	360
Narcotics - Sales	72
Offenses Against Family and Children	132
Total	4,797

These figures represent significant percentage increases over the previous year: 27% in property crimes, 42% in drug related crimes, 12% in violent crimes.

A look at reported crimes in the first six months of this year indicates that these trends are continuing.

Further analysis of reported crimes last year revealed:

- Forty-nine percent of property crimes and 58% of violent crimes occurred in the southernmost neighborhoods of West Park, Brentwood, and Tenley; 26% of property crimes occurred in the new housing developments.
- Fifty-six percent of the reported rapes occurred on the University Campus. Most of these rapes occurred between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. and the victim was most often a student.
- Youth under 18 were victims of 38% of all crimes, 43% of all assaults. These assaults occurred most frequently on or near school grounds or on parking lots of area shopping centers and involved other youth.
- Elderly residents were victims in 13% of violent crimes and 20% of robberies, burglaries, and thefts.
- Businesses in the downtown area were targets of burglary and robbery in 35% of all reported cases. There was a decrease in these crimes in the second half of last year, but the statistics for this year indicate a recent increase.

Analysis of arrest information for last year yielded the following:

- Sixty-eight percent of all arrests for drug related offenses were of youth between 12 and 21. Forty-two percent of weapons arrests were of youth.
- Youth under 18 were arrested in 48% burglaries and thefts, and 37% of robberies.
- Twenty-nine percent of the youth arrested had been arrested previously.
- The largest percentage of individuals victimized by crime and arrested for crimes live in the neighborhoods of West Park, Brentwood, and Beech.

Report From Community Perceptions Committee

To gather information, this subcommittee used three techniques:

1. A community survey was conducted by mailing questionnaires and conducting telephone interviews with a sample of community residents. Assistance was obtained from the University Department of Sociology to select a sample that would reflect the diverse neighborhoods of Ashton, and to collect and analyze the information. Residents returned 486 completed questionnaires; 125 individuals participated in telephone interviews.

2. A youth survey was conducted in each of the three Ashton high schools (grades 10-12) with a 10% sample selected in each. A total of 620 youth participated in the survey.

3. Personal interviews were conducted with 20 community leaders from various sections of Ashton. (The entire Planning Committee had determined who would be interviewed).

The most significant findings from these procedures were:

Community Survey

- Forty-two percent of the residents surveyed said that they had been the victim of a crime they did not report. Four out of five of these lived in Brentwood or West Park. The reasons cited for not reporting included: police couldn't do anything; police wouldn't do anything; crime wasn't important enough. Sexual assaults and thefts were most frequent crimes not reported.
- Sixty percent of all residents expressed some or a lot of concern about crime and said that they felt some worry for themselves and their family. The figures were not significantly different across neighborhoods. However, the residents in northern Ashton were more likely to take action to prevent crime (watch each other's homes, make homes more secure, get to know neighbors), while residents in the southern neighborhoods said there was little they could do to prevent crime.
- Residents attributed crime to a variety of factors: drugs (68%), not enough supervision for youth (53%), lack of recreational facilities (44%), unemployment (29%), and poor police performance (22%).

Youth Survey

- 34% of youth said that they had been a victim of a crime that they did not report. These crimes were mostly assaults (47%), including assaults with weapons, and thefts (53%).
- 43% of the youth said that they had used drugs in the last six months. 62% said they had used alcohol.
- 15% of the youth said they had been involved in other illegal activities in the last six months. These activities included vandalism, assaults, theft, robbery or breaking and entering. These youth also agreed with the statement that "violence or force is an acceptable way to get what you want."
- Youth attending Beech High School experienced a higher rate of victimization and reported more involvement in ille-

gal activities than youth in the other 2 high schools.

- 63% of the youth made unrealistically low estimate of the rate of victimization among youth.
- 87% of all youth surveyed stated they would like to improve the schools.

Interviews

- Community leaders were asked about the impact of crime on the lives of residents. Those in neighborhoods with higher crime rates (West Park, Brentwood, Tenley and Beech) indicated that residents were fearful but felt powerless to improve the neighborhood. They characterized these residents as isolated from one another, and overwhelmed by pressures in their own lives. However, they also said that a number of community activists have recently renewed efforts to get parents in this area involved in projects to keep youth in school.

  In contrast, leaders within the northern neighborhoods of Ashton characterized residents as very concerned about crime but more likely to organize to protect their interests and improve their neighborhoods.

  Leaders in the Lincoln area—the oldest and most stable community in Ashton, indicate that residents are only somewhat concerned about crime because they feel they already take measures to prevent it (neighborhood watch).

Report From Community Profile and Resources Committee

This committee collected information from various agencies and institutions to develop a broad overview of Ashton. Particular attention was paid to school information, since the Planning Group was specifically interested in how youth are affected by crime.

The major findings of this committee are:

- There are eight neighborhoods within Ashton, generally recognized by community agencies and service providers.
- Most neighborhoods are ethnically diverse, with the exception of Brentwood and West Park, which are 60% minority.
- The average income for Ashton is $23,000. In the northern part of Ashton, where there are many two-income households, the average income is $39,000. Seventeen percent of Ashton residents are at or below the poverty line, and 9% are unemployed.
- When compared to the county of Woodward, Ashton has a larger proportion of single-parent households (23%).
- Ashton also has a larger proportion of youth under 18 (28%) and elderly (18%) in the population.
- Thirty-four percent of the residents moved into Ashton in the last two years. Thirty-eight percent of residents living in Ashton also are employed there.
- The zoning pattern in Ashton shows: 44% residential, 16% institutional (state university and other), 8% park/recreational, and 13% commercial.

- The commercial and business aspect of Ashton includes light manufacturing, retail businesses, branch offices of regional/national corporations and service industries. There is one large shopping mall in the center of Ashton; two small ones are near the university.
- School data reflect a high rate of youth victimization in and around the schools—a total of 2,463 incidents were recorded last year (801 were reported to police). The highest percentage of incidents occurred at Beech High School.
- There was a total of 610 suspensions from school last year, 41% of which occurred at Beech High School. Forty-five percent of these were for fighting among students or physical attacks on teachers; 28% were for alcohol or drug use/sales; 13% were for cutting classes.

Community Resource

During the course of information collection, this committee found several officials in public service agencies to be curious and supportive of our efforts. Others were curious but skeptical about the effort, while only the newest member of the school board was openly resistant to the idea.

In the past, the Police Department has organized a number of neighborhood watch groups, but only the Seventh Street Project and the Covington Watch Group still meet regularly.

The Park Heights Community Development Center enjoys a great deal of support from the Brentwood, East Park, Tenley, and Beech neighborhoods for their work with children. Their most recent project was a summer employment program, supplemented by workshops to inform youth of the risks of drug/alcohol abuse and violent behavior.

Communitywide structures that are potential supporters include the Ashton Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Ashton Civic Alliance, and the Council of Churches. The University is also a tremendous resource to the community (educational opportunities, cultural and sports events) that should be considered.

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