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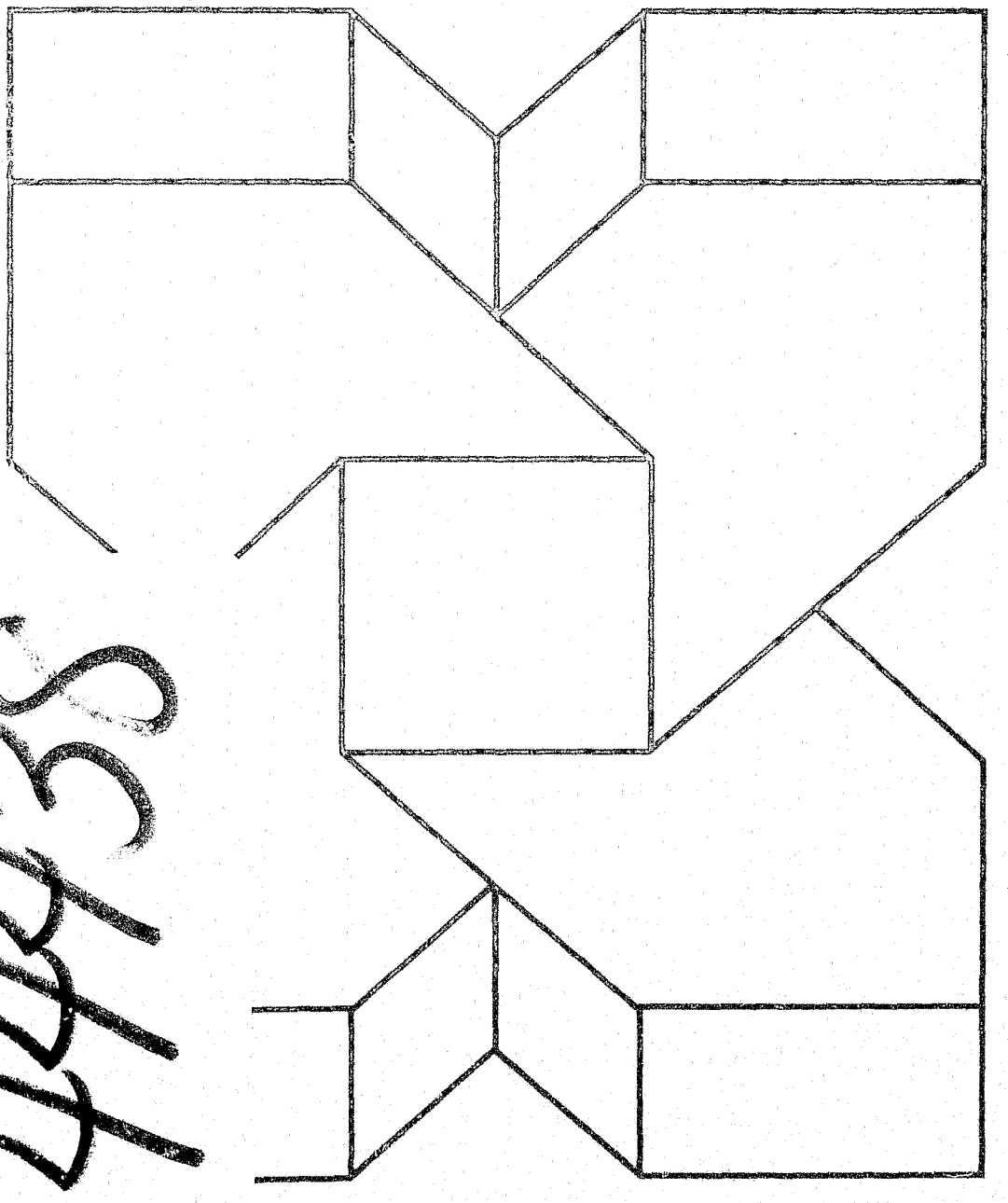
Victimization, Fear of Crime and Altered Behavior:

A Profile of the Crime Problem in Capper Dwellings, Washington D.C.

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development
Office of Policy Development and Research



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VICTIMIZATION, FEAR OF CRIME AND ALTERED BEHAVIOR: A PROFILE OF THE CRIME PROBLEM IN CAPPER DWELLINGS WASHINGTON, D.C.

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VICTIMIZATION, FEAR OF CRIME AND ALTERED BEHAVIOR: A PROFILE OF THE CRIME PROBLEM IN CAPPER DWELLINGS WASHINGTON, D.C.

by

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SUMMARY

This report presents a profile of the crime problem at Capper Dwellings, a public housing project in Washington, D.C. The profile is based upon a survey of 168 households concerning their members' criminal victimization experience during the last year. The survey also questioned residents concerning their fear of crime and the extent to which they were altering their behavior as a result of their concern about crime.

William Brill Associates, Inc. (WBA) conducted the survey under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) as a first step in developing a comprehensive plan for Capper Dwellings. The results of the survey provide baseline indicators against which to measure the success of the plan. The findings also assist in the preparation of the plan because they indicate such important planning information as where the crime is taking place and what areas on the site are viewed with the greatest fear on the part of residents. This information in concert with other data presently being gathered by WBA forms the vulnerability analysis--a research and planning methodology that identifies the vulnerability of housing environments to crime.

Repeated victimization was very high in Capper Dwellings. Of the 50 households (29.7 percent of the sample) that experienced a crime during the preceding year, 75 percent had been victimized more than once.

The survey findings reveal a victimization rate substantially higher in most categories than the nation as a whole and higher, on a national basis, than that of similar income groups. Robbery, for instance, took place more than five times as often in Capper Dwellings than among low-income persons nationally. Findings also reveal that victimization in the Washington projects is higher in most categories than that of similar income groups elsewhere in Washington and higher than that of Washington as a whole. Residents of Capper Dwellings experienced twice the robberies that other low-income Washingtonians did and nearly twice the successful burglaries.

The findings also show an extraordinarily high fear rate--one that is even out of proportion to the threat as determined by the actual victimization experience of the residents. Seventy-four percent of the respondents felt their chances of being robbed during the coming year were 50/50 or better. The actual incidence was less than 5 in 100.

The survey also showed that residents constrained their use of the environment and their participation in social activities because of their concern about crime. They did not,

for example, move as freely throughout the site as they would prefer. Many residents were so concerned about crime that they had purchased means of self-protection.

Subsequent reports to be prepared on Capper Dwellings will present related analyses of the crime problem as well as the components of a comprehensive security plan for the project. The plan will represent a demonstration of the planning and research concepts developed by WBA under HUD funding. For the most part, these concepts hold that any successful security plan must be based upon a thorough understanding of the problem, utilizing such data as contained in this report and must contain a reinforcing mix of social as well as physical improvements.

The following report reviews the purpose and general findings of the survey, describes the method employed, and presents detailed information on victimization and its location, as well as data on resident fear of crime and altered behavior. It also details tenants' proposals to improve security. The analysis compares Capper Dwellings with other public housing projects surveyed by WBA.

INTRODUCTION

OVERVIEW

This report presents the findings of a household survey administered to a sample of residents of Capper Dwellings, a public housing project in Washington, D.C., operated by the Property Management Administration of the D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development.

The survey was administered by William Brill Associates, Inc. (WBA), under contract with the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). The survey measured residents' criminal victimization experience, their fear of crime, and their behavior alterations because of their concern about crime.

The findings of the survey are meant to provide a profile of the crime problem in Capper Dwellings that can be used as a basis for planning and evaluating improvements designed to increase security.

The findings are a part of a larger effort being undertaken by WBA. Under a contract with HUD, the firm is preparing comprehensive security plans for housing projects in three cities. These plans will provide a full field test of approaches to security planning developed under earlier HUD contracts.[1]

The survey is designed to meet the need for a clear understanding of the crime problem. Findings generated by the survey, such as where victimizations occur and which areas of the site the residents regard fearfully, are now being used by WBA in the planning of a comprehensive security program for Capper Dwellings. This plan, nearing completion, will include recommendations concerning site improvements and improvements in police and related social services.

The survey findings will also provide a basis for evaluating the success of the reconstruction plan. If, for example, a resurvey of Capper Dwellings (scheduled to tak. place after the improvements have been implemented) indicates a drop in victimization, fear, and/or altered behavior--the factors covered by the survey--then the plan can reliably be judged successful.

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[1]The WBA approach, which stresses a mix of social and physical improvements is discussed in some detail in the Housing Management Technical Memorandum no. 1, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, September 1975).

The remainder of this report consists of six sections. The first describes the methodology followed in conducting the study. The next three present data on victimization and its location, data on resident fear of crime, and data on the extent to which residents are altering their behavior because of their fear of crime. The fifth section covers related issues such as the problems tenants perceive as existing in the projects and their proposals on how to make Capper Dwellings more secure. The final section compares the data from this survey with findings from WBA's research in housing developments in Dade County, Florida; Boston, Massachusetts; Baltimore, Maryland; and Los Angeles, California.

CAPPER DWELLINGS

Capper Dwellings is a large public housing project in Southeast Washington. Although under a single management, it is composed of three geographically distinct projects: Ellen Wilson, Carrollsburg, and Arthur Capper. Figure 1 shows the location of the three projects.

Wilson, a small project composed of mixed two-story townhouses and two- and three-story walk-up apartment buildings is separated from the other two projects by an elevated freeway. Carrollsburg, composed principally of three-story walk-ups with some rows of townhouses, is flanked east, west, and north by Arthur Capper. The eastern portion of Arthur Capper consists of four six-story elevator buildings and a nine-story double building that is vacant in preparation for conversion to housing for the elderly. The western portion of Capper is composed of two-story townhouses, one block of which is north of Carrollsburg.

GENERAL FINDINGS

Table 1 compares the findings on victimization with Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) findings for the nation as a whole and for Washington, D.C. Comparisons are made for both low-income levels and all-income levels.

While robbery is more common among low-income persons generally, the robbery rate in the three Washington projects was more than double that of the Washington low-income population as a whole, more than five times the national rate for low-income persons and more than six and a half times the national rate for all incomes. The high rate in Capper Dwellings is part of a pattern in which robbery rates are higher in public housing than elsewhere.

The three projects also experienced burglary far more frequently than either Washington as a whole or low-income Washingtonians, although the Washington projects showed the

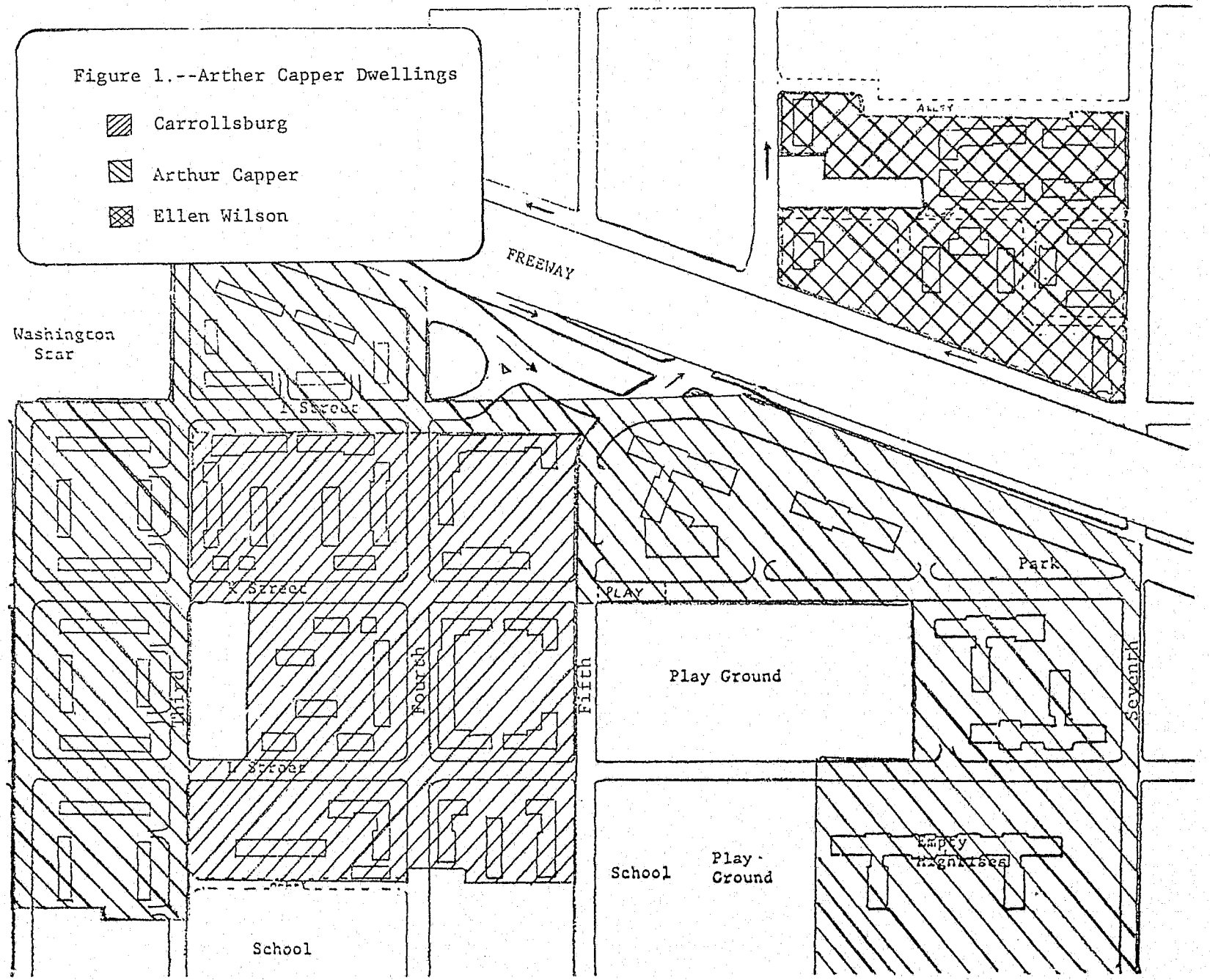
Figure 1.--Arther Capper Dwellings
Carrollsburg
Arthur Capper
Ellen Wilson
FREEWAY
ALLEY
Washington Star
I Street
K Street
L Street
Third
Fourth
Fifth
Seventh
Park
PLAY
Play Ground
School
School
Play-Ground
Empty Highrises

Table 1.--Comparison of crime rate

Rate per 1,000 population 12 and older	LEAA				WBA
	National[a]		Washington[b]		
	All incomes	Income less than $7,500	All incomes	Income less than $7,500	Capper Dwellings
Robbery	6.9	8.9	17.0	21.3	48.0
Purse snatching	3.2	...	12.0	16.7	10.6
Assault	26.0	31.6	13.0	17.7	16.0
Sexual assault	1.0	1.6	1.0	2.7	8.0
Rate per 1,000 households					
Burglary	92.7	101.9[c]	74.9	78.7[d]	500.0
Successful burglary	72.0	78.5[c]	51.7	51.7[d]	95.2
Attempted burglary	20.7	23.4[c]	23.2	27.0[d]	404.8
Larceny	109.3	102.4	51.0	37.9	101.2

[a]Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Criminal Victimization In the United States: 1973 Advance Report, vol. 1, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975).

[b]Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Criminal Victimization Surveys In 13 American Cities, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1975).

[c]Data obtained in advance of publication. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Criminal Victimization in the United States: 1973, (Washington, D.C: Government Printing Office, July 1976).

[d]Data obtained in advance of publication. Law Enforcement Assistance Administration, Criminal Victimization Surveys In Washington, D.C.--Survey Data Tables and Selected Analytical Findings, (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, July 1976).

.... Not available.

lowest rate of successful burglary of all the public housing projects surveyed. The Capper Dwellings rate was also higher than the rate for low-income households nationally or for households of all incomes sampled by LEAA.

The rate of attempted burglary in the three projects was extremely high compared to either the Washington or the national figures. It was almost 20 times the national rate and was the highest of all the public housing projects surveyed. The high attempted burglary rate coupled with the relatively low successful burglary rate experienced by Capper Dwellings in comparison with other public housing projects surveyed, may indicate that units in Capper Dwellings are more resistant to forcible entry even though they are attacked at a higher rate than other projects.

Households in the three projects experienced larceny at a rate considerably higher than for Washington as a whole and much higher than for other low-income households in the city. These rates are comparable to national rates, perhaps as a result of the separation of mailbox break-ins from larcenies in the data. Such incidents would generally be included as household larcenies by LEAA. Such inclusion would make the Washington larceny rate more than triple the national low-income rate.

Taken together, these figures suggest that the residents of these three projects are more subject to robbery, burglary (successful or attempted, and larceny than Washingtonians overall or even low-income Washingtonians.

The assault rate was the only category in which the Washington project had a lower rate than that for low-income persons nationally. The rate was also somewhat lower than that in the public housing projects surveyed in other cities. The Capper Dwellings rate is about the same as for the Washington low-income population and considerably lower than for the nation as a whole.

While the crime rate is high in Capper Dwellings, the residents' fear of these crimes is far higher. More than 83 percent of the Washington respondents felt that there was a 50/50 chance or better of being the victim of a burglary in the year ahead. Seventy-four percent felt the chances of being robbed in the year ahead were 50/50 or better. The actual chances of robbery are 5 in 100, far less.

Fears such as these lead residents to attempt to reduce their risk of victimization. Such attempts are likely to take the form of physical and/or social withdrawal. In the Washington projects, more than half the respondents refuse to shop at night or to go out alone at night because they are afraid of becoming a crime victim.

Almost three-fourths of those with children, moreover, try to keep them in at night lest something happen to them. Such behaviors constitute withdrawal from the physical environment, leaving the public spaces to be occupied by others without legitimate claim to the space and who may engage in illicit activities. More than one in five respondents restrict visits to friends and relatives in the project because they are afraid of crime. This constitutes a form of social withdrawal. Such withdrawal and related fears of the other residents reduce mutual recognition among residents, weaken the mechanisms of social control, and reduce the chances of mutual support in time of trouble.

Reduced social cohesion and surrendering the environment leave the way open to intruders, illicit activities, and victimization, and reduce the legitimate residents' ability to protect and support one another. Thus, a cycle develops in which fear of crime contributes to both social and physical withdrawal, which leaves the way open to further victimization and increased fear.

METHODOLOGY

DIMENSIONS OF THE SURVEY

Residents were surveyed along three dimensions: victimization, fear of crime, and altered behavior.

Victimization

This dimension measured three kinds of victimization:

1. Personal victimization--robbery, purse snatching, assault, and sexual assault suffered by residents.

2. Victimization against the housing unit--burglary (attempted or successful), and vandalism suffered by residents.

3. Victimization involving personal property loss--larceny, deliberate car damage, and mailbox break-ins suffered by residents.

In contrast to police data, this dimension measured what the sampled residents actually experienced as victims of criminal acts, not simply those incidents that were reported to the police.

Fear of crime

This dimension measured the degree respondents feared for themselves and their children and regarded their environment as dangerous and threatening. Respondents were asked to assess the probability that they might be the victims of various crimes in the year ahead and about their concern for the safety of their children in various areas and situations, such as being in the project or on the way to school. They were also asked to rate the dangerousness of a variety of areas and activities. A projective question was asked about whether they thought "people" should get something to protect themselves and, if so, what they should get.

Altered behavior

This dimension concerned the extent to which people were altering their behavior in an effort to improve their security. Indicators of altered behavior included the extent to which respondents were constraining the use of their environment by not visiting friends, going out, or shopping at night. Also identi-

fied were other measures respondents took to limit their vulnerability to attack, such as how often they used taxis, or if they had installed extra locks at their own expense, or acquired weapons.

RELATED ISSUES

The survey also explored a number of additional items related to the crime problem, such as whether the police came when notified of a crime, the problems the residents thought most serious throughout the project, and the improvements the residents thought would make their complex a safer place to live.

RATIONALE FOR SURVEY DIMENSIONS

Victimization, fear, and altered behavior were selected because these dimensions effectively comprise an operational definition of the crime problem. They are both relevant and precise. Victimization measures what has happened to people. Fear measures one of the most powerful and most anxiety-producing reactions to the problem. Altered behavior measures how people are changing their behavior because of the problem--making changes that usually involve constraining their use of the environment and limiting their social relationships.

These dimensions thus comprise appropriate baseline indicators against which to measure change over time. If, for example, a resurvey of the population indicates a drop in victimization, fear, or altered behavior, then the new security program can fairly be judged to be a success. In any case, evaluative judgements on the crime problem, because of the survey related in this report, will be based on hard, factual data, not on hearsay or impression.

THE SAMPLE

Table 2 shows the selected sample of 168 households, 22 percent of the households who had lived in the project one year or more, stratified by the number of bedrooms per unit. An interview with the head of each sample household was obtained in all but 13 cases.[2] Interviews took place during November and December 1975 and concerned events that took place during the previous 12 months (November 1974 to November 1975).

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[2]In these 13 cases, another resident adult was substituted due to the continued unavailability of the head of the household.

Respondents ranged in age from 19 to 75. More than 90 percent of the respondents were female. Most respondents (78.4 percent) had not worked during the previous 12 months. Of those that had jobs, most had full-time jobs.

The sampled households included 266 adults and 280 children. Of the children, 109 were 12 years of age or older. Personal victimization rates relate to those 375 persons over the age of 12, a population base similar to that used by LEAA.

Table 2.--Households sampled

Size of unit	Arthur Capper	Ellen Wilson	Carrollsburg	Total
1 Bedroom	8	13	21	42
2 Bedroom	45	8	41	94
3 Bedroom	16	6	5	27
4 Bedroom	5	0	0	5
Total units sampled	74	27	67	168
Total units in project	336	123	303	762

THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT AND ITS ADMINISTRATION

The survey instrument, developed and used to construct the profile presented in this report was previously applied in Dade County, Florida; Boston, Massachusetts; and West Palm Beach, Florida. Concurrent with its application in Washington, the instrument was also applied in projects in Los Angeles and Baltimore. The instrument was modified to make it sensitive to the specific design and layout characteristics of each of the housing projects.

In administering the survey instrument public housing residents were recruited and trained as interviewers and validators. Previous experience found that public housing residents can be reliable, insightful, and disciplined interviewers and validators.

VICTIMIZATIONS

The categories of victimization used here are a refinement of the system used by the Uniform Crime Reporting System of the FBI. Personal crimes are those against the individual. Property crimes are divided into crimes against the housing unit itself and crimes involving personal property loss but not involving the housing unit directly. The categories used in this survey are defined as follows:

- Personal victimization--crimes against the individual. These include robbery, purse snatching, sexual assault, and assault.
- Victimization against the housing unit--crimes directed against the household. They include burglary (attempted or successful) and vandalism.
- Victimizations involving personal property loss--crimes that occur outside the household unit but normally on project property. These include larceny, deliberate car damage, and mailbox break-in.

DEFINITIONS OF CRIMES

The following definitions describe the crimes covered in the survey:

Assault--an unlawful physical attack by one person upon another

Burglary--unlawful or forcible entry of the home usually, but not necessarily, attended by theft; may be successful or merely attempted

Deliberate car damage--apparent willful damage done to an automobile by someone other than the owner

Larceny--the theft or attempted theft of property or cash from the immediate vicinity of a unit, involving neither forcible nor unlawful entry

Mailbox break-in--the theft or attempted theft of the contents of a locked mailbox

Purse snatching--the theft of purse, wallet, or cash directly from the person of the victim but without force or threat of force (corresponding to personal larceny with contact)

Robbery--the theft or attempted theft of property or cash directly from an individual by force or threat, with or without a weapon

Sexual assault--carnal knowledge through the use of force or the threat of force, including attempts

Vandalism--apparently deliberate damage done to the unit by someone not living in it.

SCOPE OF INQUIRY

For each of the crime categories, respondents were asked whether they or any member of their household had been a victim of that particular crime between November 1974 and November 1975 and, if so, the number of occurrences.

A series of specific questions was then asked about the last victimization, including:

1. The time of the incident
2. The location of the incident
3. The value of property stolen or damaged
4. The number of victims and the extent of their injuries
5. Whether the police came to the project to investigate.

VICTIMIZATION SUMMARY

As shown in table 3, of the 168 households surveyed, 50 households (29.7) percent) experienced one or more criminal incidents during the previous year.

Table 3.--Households victimized

Frequency of victimization	Number of households victimized	Percentage of sample households (N=168)
Units victimized once	13	7.7
Units victimized more than once	37	22.0
Total units victimized	50	29.7

Thirteen households were victimized once during the previous year. Thirty-seven households were the victims of repeated incidents of the same type or of one or more incidents of different types during the previous year.

Table 4 presents a summary of victimization by type of crime for the three projects combined. Attempted burglary was, by far, the most common crime, affecting 21 percent of the households and accounting for nearly 35 percent of the total incidents. Mailbox break-ins, a form of household larceny, were also very frequent, affecting nearly 18 percent of the households sampled and accounting for 19 percent of the total incidents. In table 4 the column "Number of households victimized" does not sum to the total units victimized shown in table 3 because many units were the victims of diverse crimes and therefore appear more than once.

Table 4.--Summary of victimization

Crime	Number households victimized	Percentage of sample households (N=168)	Total number of incidents	Percentage of total incidents
Robbery	12	7.1	18	9.2
Purse snatching[a]	4	2.4	4	2.0
Assault	4	2.4	6	3.1
Sexual assault	3	1.8	3	1.5
Successful burglary	10	6.0	16	8.1
Attempted burglary	36	21.4	68	34.7
Larceny	10	6.0	17	8.7
Vandalism	9	5.4	20	10.2
Mailbox break-in	30	17.9	38	19.4
Deliberate car damage	3	1.8	6	3.1

[a]No data were collected on separate incidents.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

PERSONAL VICTIMIZATIONS

Victimizations in this category are crimes against the person, including robbery, purse snatching, assault, and sexual assault. This type of crime accounted for 15.8 percent of the total incidents reported to the interviewers. Except for the number of occurrences, all detailed data that follow refer to the last-reported incident only.

Robbery

Of all personal victimizations, robbery was the most frequent, as table 4 shows, constituting 58 percent of the 31 crimes against individuals.

Twelve households experienced a total of 18 robberies during the preceding year (three households experienced more than one robbery). Note that only the last robbery in each of the 12 households is described below.

There were 14 victims in the 12 most recent cases (two were double robberies). Nine victims were male and five were female. Their ages ranged from 15 to 73. Twelve victims received no injury while two were treated for injuries and released.

Losses ranged from nothing to $105. Ten of the 12 robberies took place in the project, with two near it. The highest concentrations of robberies were on Wednesdays and Fridays. All but one robbery took place in the afternoon or evening. No robberies occurred between the hours of 11 p.m. and 11 a.m.

Ten of the 12 robbers were estimated by the victims to be younger than 21 years of age. Two of the 10 robbers were female.

Nine robberies were reported to the police. In each case the police responded, taking an average of 14 minutes to arrive, according to the victims. One victim went to the police station the next day to report the robbery (this incident is not counted in the arrival time).

Purse snatching

In addition to the foregoing robberies, four households experienced purse snatchings. Half of the most recent incidents took place within the project and the others occurred nearby. The rate, standardized per thousand persons 12 years of age and older, was 10.6. This, however, is a minimum since respondents were asked only if an incident had occurred, not how often the crime took place.

Table 5.--Robbery

Households victimized once	9
Households victimized more than once	3
Total households victimized	12
Total incidents	18
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older	48

	Number	Percent
Victims (N=14)		
Incidents		
One victim	10	83
Multiple victims	2	17
Sex		
Male	9	64
Female	5	36
Age		
Mean 37		
Range 15-73		
Injuries		
None	11	79
Treated and released	2	14
No answer	1	7
Losses		
Mean $32		
Range $0-105		
Time and place of robbery		
Hours		
1-6 a.m.	0	0
7-noon	1	8
1-6 p.m.	6	50
7-midnight	5	42
Day		
Monday	1	8
Tuesday	1	8
Wednesday	4	34
Friday	4	34
Saturday	1	8
No answer	1	8

Table 5.--Robbery (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Time and place of robbery (contd.)		
Month		
January-March	2	17
April-June	2	17
July-September	4	33
October-December	3	25
No answer	1	8
Location		
In the project	10	83
Near the project	2	17
Robbers		
Age		
15-17	3	25
18-30	6	50
21+	1	8
Unsure	2	17
Sex		
Male	10	83
Female	2	17
Police		
Notified		
Yes[a]	9	75
No	3	25
Came if notified		
Yes	8	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 14 minutes		
Range 4-45 minutes		

[a]One victim went to the precinct the next day and is not included in the remaining figures.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Assault

Six assaults took place against the members of four households. The four most recent incidents included a total of six victims. Half the victims were male and half were female. Victims were generally young, averaging 23 years of age, but ranged up to 41 years of age. Although most victims received little or no injury, one victim was killed.

All four assaults occurred in the late afternoon and early evening. Two occurred in the summer (June and July) and two in the late fall (November and December). Two assaults took place on Thursdays and two on Saturdays.

The victims reported that three of the four assailants were male; one assailant was between 18 and 20 and the other three were older than 21. All used weapons.

Of the four most recent incidents, three were reported to police. Police responded in less than 10 minutes, averaging five minutes.

One "assault" involved a conflict with a police officer. Not wishing to prejudge the incident, the information is included in table 6.

Sexual assault

Three incidents were reported. One victim refused to discuss any details. The remaining victims were 18-year-old females. The two assaults occurred at night, one on Sunday and the other on Wednesday. Only one of the two incidents described was reported to the police. The victim estimated the response time at 15 minutes.

One victim reported the assailant to be 21 or older, while the other victim was uncertain of the age of the assailant. Table 7 gives more information.

VICTIMIZATIONS AGAINST THE HOUSING UNIT

The second category of victimizations included in the survey consisted of crimes committed against the household. These were vandalism and burglary. Except for the number of occurrences, all data that follow refer to the most recent incident only.

Table 6.--Assault

Households victimized once	2
Households victimized more than once	2
Total households victimized	4
Total incidents	6
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older	16

	Number
Victims (N=6)	
Incidents	
One victim	2
Multiple victims	2
Sex	
Male	3
Female	3
Age	
Mean 23	
Range 16-41	
Injuries	
None	1
Minor	3
Treated and released	1
Killed	1
Time and place of assault	
Hours	
4 p.m.	1
5 p.m.	1
7 p.m.	1
8 p.m.	1
Day	
Thursday	2
Saturday	2
Month	
June	1
July	1
November	1
December	1

Table 6.--Assault (contd.)

	Number
Time and place of assault (contd.)	
Location	
In the project	3
Near the project	1
Assailants[a]	
Age	
18-20	1
21+	3
Sex	
Male	3
Female	1
Weapon used	
Yes	4
No	0
Police	
Notified	
Yes	3
No	1
Came if notified	
Yes	3
No	0
Time to arrive	
Mean 5 minutes	
Range 0-10 minutes	

[a]One alleged "assailant" was a uniformed police officer, male and over 21.

Table 7.--Sexual assault

Households victimized once	3
Households victimized more than once	0
Total households victimized[a]	3
Total incidents	3
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older	8

	Number
Victims (N=2)[a]	
Incidents	
One victim	2
Sex	
Female	2
Age	
Mean 18	
Range 18	
Injuries	
None	1
Treated and released	1
Time and place of sexual assault	
Hour	
9 p.m.	1
1 a.m.	1
Day	
Sunday	1
Wednesday	1
Month	
February	1
May	1
Location	
In the project	1
Near the project	1
Assailant	
Age	
21 +	1
Unknown	1
Police	
Notified	
Yes	1
No	1
Came if notified	
Yes	1
Time to arrive: 15 minutes	

[a]One victim refused to give any further information.

Burglary: successful and attempted

These were the most frequent crimes occurring within the scope and time frame of this study, accounting for 43 percent of the total number of incidents. Ten households experienced 16 successful burglaries, and 36 households had 68 attempted burglaries.

As table 8 shows, of the 10 victimized households, 4 were successfully burglarized once and 6 more than once. The following data refer to the 10 most recent successful burglaries.

Six of the incidents occurred during the day and four at night. No clear pattern of day or month emerged.

Losses ranged from none to $350, averaging $138.

Of the 10 households, 4 were entered through the front door, 2 through front windows, and 4 through back windows. Three of the four entries through doors resulted in damage. One entry through a door took such little force as to indicate the door may have been unlocked. One of the window entries required cutting a screen.

Seven households sustained damage. Damage to three households was completely repaired by the management. In two other households, management made some repairs, and no repairs were made in the remaining two.

Repairs to two households took more than 3 weeks; one repair was completed in 6 to 10 days; two were repaired in 1 to 2 days.

The police were informed in 7 of the 10 cases and investigated in each case. Their time to arrive, when called, ranged from 5 to 60 minutes, averaging 27 minutes.

Vandalism

Nine households suffered a total of 20 incidents of vandalism. Seven of the nine victimized households were vandalized more than once. The majority of incidents (eight) occurred between June and September. Five households reported losses, ranging from nothing to $123, with a mean loss of $46.20. The police were notified in six incidents and responded in each case. The response times reported by victims ranged from 5 to 90 minutes, with a mean of 20 minutes. Table 9 gives further details.

VICTIMIZATIONS INVOLVING PERSONAL PROPERTY LOSS

The third category of crimes surveyed was crimes involving the loss of personal property. These crimes included larceny,

Table 8.--Successful burglary

Households victimized once	4
Households victimized more than once	6
Total households victimized	10
Total incidents	16
Rate per 1,000 households	95.2

	Number	Percent
Time of burglary		
Day	6	60
Night	4	40
Day		
Sunday	1	10
Monday	1	10
Tuesday	1	10
Wednesday	2	20
Thursday	2	20
Friday	2	20
No answer	1	10
Month		
January	1	10
April	1	10
May	1	10
June	2	20
July	1	10
August	1	10
September	1	10
October	1	10
November	1	10
Burglary losses		
Mean $138		
Range $0-350		
Method of entry		
Front door	4	40
Front window	2	20
Back window	4	40

Table 8.--Successful burglary (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Damage		
Items damaged[a]		
None	3	
Doors	3	
Windows	3	
Screens	1	
Paint	1	
Damage repaired by management		
None	2	20
Some	2	20
All	3	30
No damage	3	30
Time for repairs		
2 weeks +	2	40
6-10 days	1	20
1-2 days	2	40
Police		
Notified		
Yes	7	70
No	3	30
Came if notified		
Yes	7	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 27 minutes		
Range 5-60 minutes		

[a]Some had mutiple damage.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 9.--Vandalism

Households victimized once	2
Households victimized more than once	7
Total households victimized	9
Total incidents	20
Rate per 1,000 households	119

	Number	Percent
Time of vandalism		
Day	4	44
Night	5	56
Day[a]		
Monday	1	12
Tuesday	2	25
Wednesday	1	12
Friday	3	38
Saturday	1	12
Month		
June	3	33
July	1	11
August	1	11
September	2	22
December	2	22
Items damaged		
Doors	5	31
Windows	7	44
Screens	2	12
Paint	1	6
Other	1	6
Losses		
Mean $46.20		
Range $0-123		
Police		
Notified		
Yes	6	67
No	3	33
Came if notified		
Yes	6	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 20 minutes		
Range 5-90 minutes		

[a]One could not remember.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

deliberate car damage, and mailbox break-ins. Except for the number of occurrences, all detailed data that follow refer to the last-reported incident only.

Larceny

Table 10 details the 17 larcenies suffered by 10 households during the year. Three households experienced more than one larceny. Eleven of the larcenies took place in the townhouses. The small, territorial yards in these units may lead people to leave property outside temporarily, during which time it can be stolen.

Some losses were quite high, ranging up to $420 in value and averaging $151. Only 30 percent of the larcenies were reported to the police. The time for police to respond ranged from 6 to 30 minutes, with a mean of 18 minutes.

Deliberate car damage

Only 17 households reported owning cars. Parked cars belonging to three separate households were reported as being deliberately damaged in six incidents during the year covered by the survey. The damage was generally done at night (67 percent) and in the early part of the week. One incident resulted in no dollar loss and another in damage totaling $25. The third respondent did not know but estimated the damage at more than $100. The police were notified in two of the three most recent cases: in one case, the victim went to the police station to report the crime; in the other, the police responded in 8 minutes

Mailbox break-ins

Thirty households experienced 38 mailbox break-ins, according to table 12. Seven were victimized more than once.

The greatest single number of incidents (six) occurred in November. Most incidents took place on Wednesdays, none on Sundays when there are no mail deliveries. Seven incidents were reported to postal authorities and six to police. Although seven incidents were reported, only two were known to have been investigated by the Post Office. Mailbox damage was repaired by the management in 18 cases.

POLICE NOTIFICATION

Of a total of 80 crimes for which detailed data were collected, 37 incidents (46 percent) were reported to the police. Robbery, assault, and burglary were the crimes most frequently

Table 10.--Larceny

Households victimized once	7
Households victimized more than once	3
Total households victimized	10
Total incidents	17
Rate per 1,000 households	101.2

	Number	Percent
Time of larceny		
Day	5	50
Night	5	50
Day		
Monday	1	10
Tuesday	2	20
Wednesday	4	40
Thursday	1	10
Friday	1	10
Saturday	1	10
Month[a]		
January	1	11
June	2	22
July	2	22
September	1	11
November	3	33
Losses		
Mean $151		
Range $10-420		
Police		
Notified		
Yes	3	30
No	7	70
Came if notified		
Yes	3	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 18 minutes		
Range 6-30 minutes		

[a]One could not specify month.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 11.--Deliberate car damage

Households victimized once	1
Households victimized more than once	2
Total households victimized	3
Total incidents	6
Rate per 1,000 households	35.7
Rate per 1,000 car owners	352.9

	Number
Time	
Day	1
Night	2
Day	
Sunday	2
Wednesday	1
Month	
September	2
November	1

Losses: $0, $25 and $100+(guess)

Police	
Notified	
Yes	2
No	1
Time to arrive:[a]	8 minutes

[a]One went to get the police.

Table 12.--Mailbox break-ins

Households victimized once	23
Households victimized more than once	7
Total households victimized	30
Total incidents	38
Rate per 1,000 households	226.2

	Number	Percent
Time of mailbox break-ins[a]		
Day		
Monday	3	10
Tuesday	3	10
Wednesday	7	23
Thursday	1	3
Friday	4	13
Saturday	3	10
Month		
January	2	7
February	1	3
March	3	10
April	2	7
June	3	10
July	3	10
August	2	7
September	2	7
October	1	3
November	6	20
December	4	13
Repairs completed		
All	17	57
Some	1	3
None	12	40
Still using box		
Yes	23	77
No	7	23

Table 12.--Mailbox break-ins (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Police		
Notified		
Yes	6	20
No	24	80
Came if notified		
Yes	6	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 48 minutes		
Range 5-120 minutes		
Post Office		
Notified		
Yes	7	
No	23	
Investigation		
Yes	2	29
No	5	71

[a]Many could not remember details.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

reported. Mailbox break-ins and larcenies were the least frequently reported. Thirteen of the 18 crimes against persons (72 percent) were reported to police, while only 39 percent of the 60 crimes involving property loss was reported.

Table 13 breaks down reporting frequency for all categories and table 14 presents the reasons given for not reporting crimes to police.

The most common reason for not reporting a crime was the feeling that nothing could be done, that there was no evidence to use. This may indicate a feeling of helplessness, perhaps related to the high fear levels.

Another often-stated reason was that the incident was reported to someone else, perhaps the management office. This may reflect a feeling that police action would not be effective, further indicating feelings of helplessness. Four of the six "other" responses were related to failure to report mailbox break-ins. Two said they fixed the box themselves, implying that getting the boxes repaired would be the only reason to report the crime. One thought the office would report it. One robbery victim was afraid the police would not respond.

Table 13.--Police notification

By type of crime; last incidents only

Crime	Police not told	Police told	Total (last incidents)	Percentage of incidents reported to police
Robbery	3	9	12	75
Assault	1	3	4	75
Sexual assault	1	1	2	50
Burglary	3	7	10	70
Larceny	7	3	10	30
Mailbox break-in	24	6	30	20
Vandalism	3	6	9	66
Deliberate car damage	1	2	3	66
Total	43	37	80	46

Table 14.--Reasons given for not informing police of crime[a]

Reason	Number	Percent
Nothing could be done; lack of proof	20	35.1
Not important enough	6	10.5
Police would not want to be bothered	4	7.0
Did not want to take the time; inconvenient	1	1.8
Private or personal	1	1.8
Did not want to get involved	1	1.8
Fear of reprisal	1	1.8
Reported to someone else	17	29.7
Other	6	10.5
Total	57	100.0

[a]Some gave more than one reason, so number of reasons is greater than number of crimes not reported to police.

LOCATIONAL ANALYSIS OF VICTIMIZATION

The survey instrument is environmentally specific--it indicates the specific location of the criminal act. Such data is potentially rich to the planner because of the possibility that a relationship can be established between the physical design features of the site, e.g. highrise-low-rise, end unit-interior unit, etc., and the probability of victimization. Should such a relationship be found to exist, resources can be targeted toward those units that have the highest probability of being victimized and toward those areas on the site that have the highest probability of being the scene of a criminal act.

To determine if there was a relationship between the physical and design characteristics of Arthur Capper Dwellings and the incidence of crime, the survey data was extensively analyzed. As shown in Figures 2, 3, and 4, the location of each reported victimization was plotted on maps of the various sections of Arthur Capper. Every reported incident of burglary (attempted and successful), larceny, vandalism, and mailbox theft is shown on these maps. The location of reported incidents of robbery, assault, rape, purse snatching and auto damage are shown for the last reported incident only. Figure 2 shows the victimizations

Figure 2.--Patterns of Victimization
Arthur Capper Dwellings (Highrises)

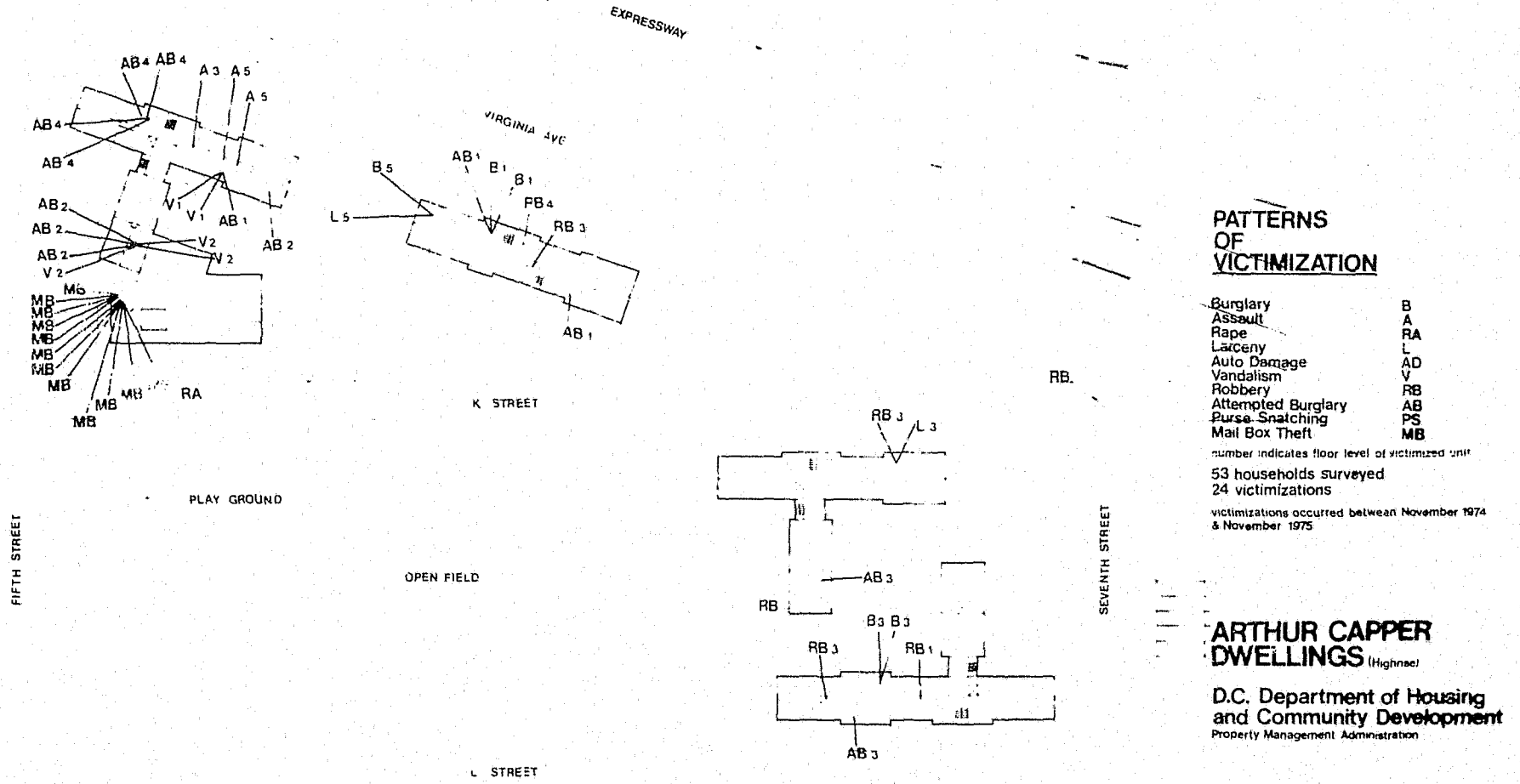


Figure 3.--Patterns of Victimization
Carrollsburg Dwellings and
Arthur Capper Dwellings
(Lowrises)

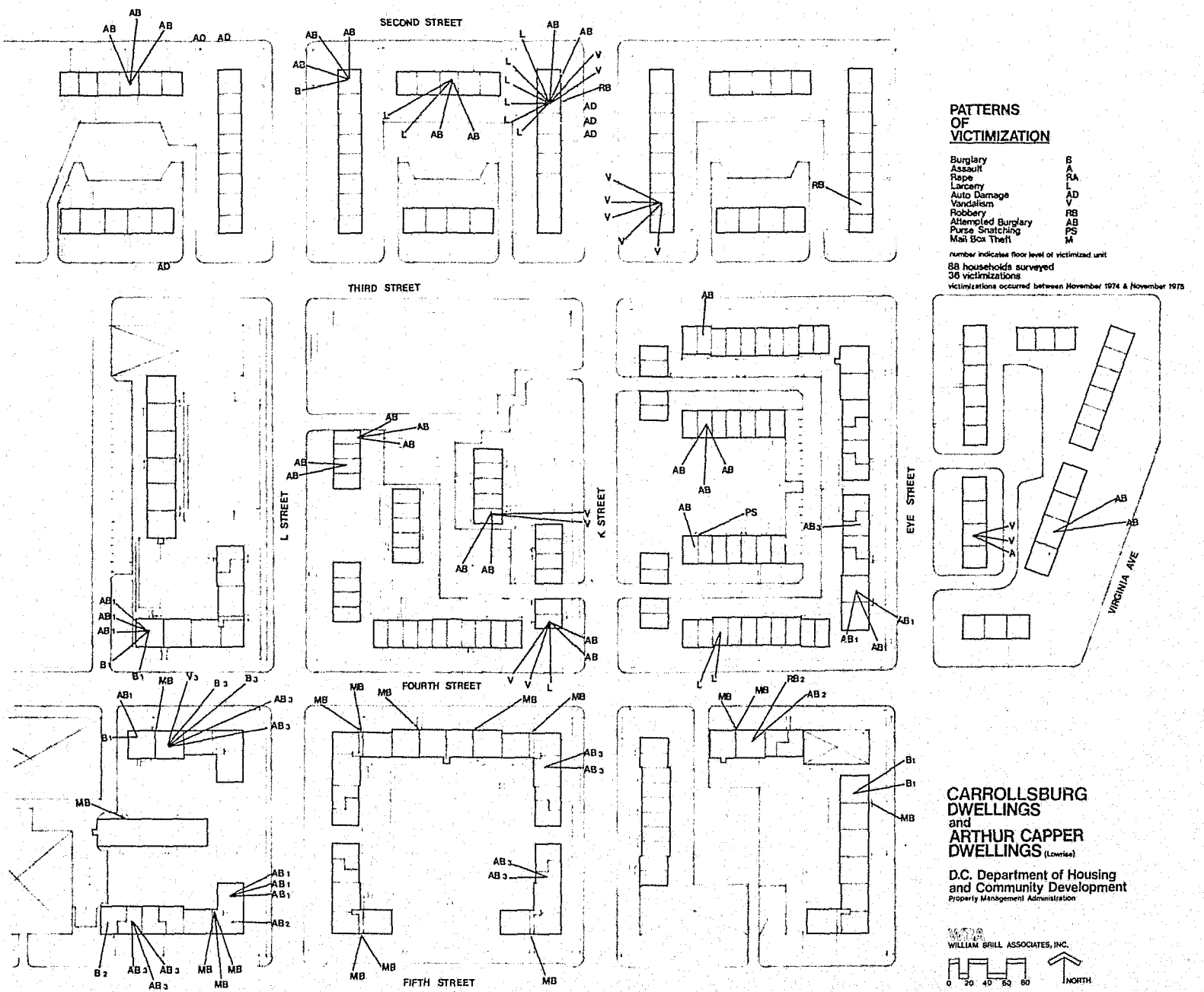
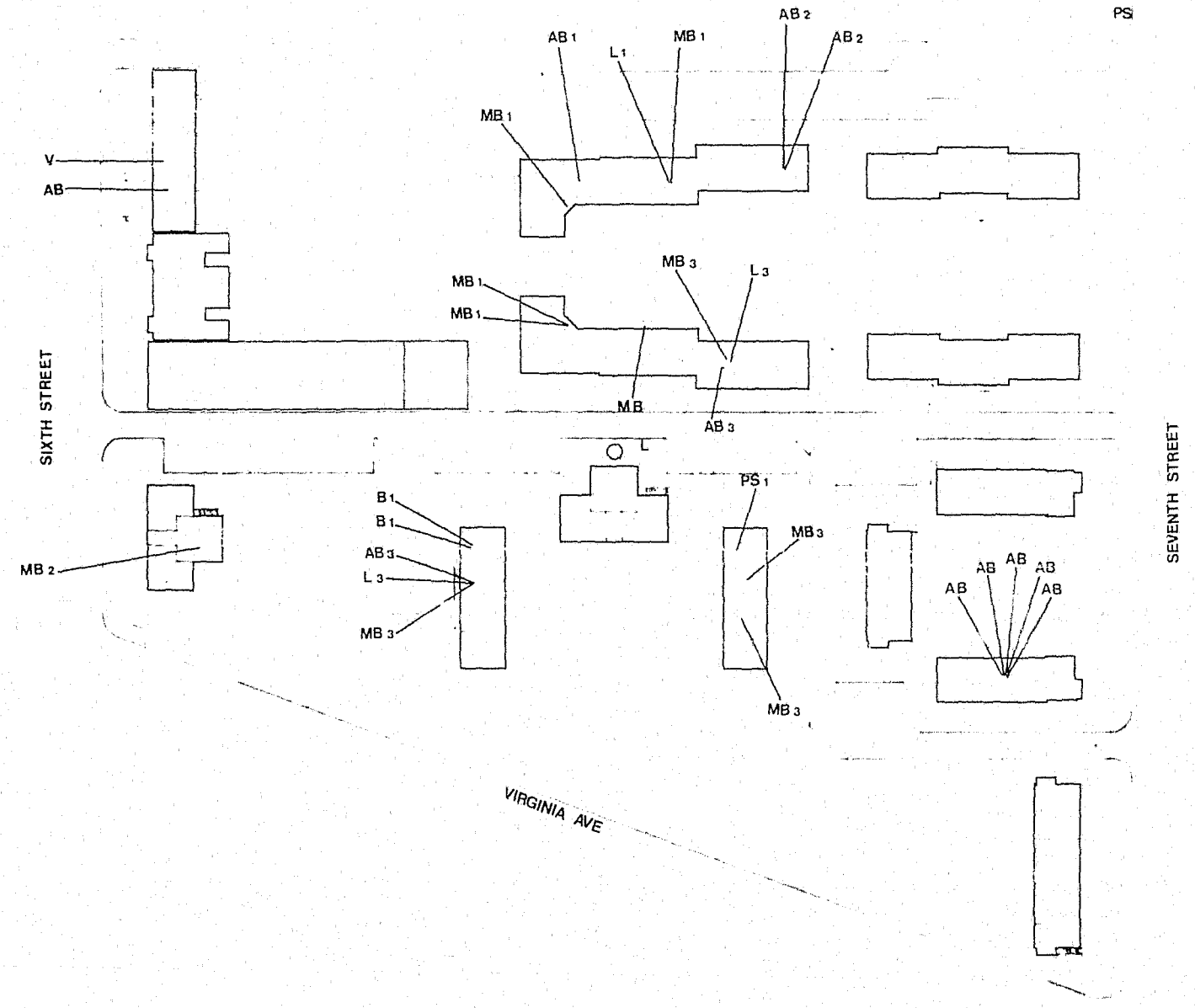


Figure 4.--Patterns of Victimization
Ellen Wilson Dwellings



PATTERNS OF VICTIMIZATION

Burglary	B
Assault	A
Rape	RA
Larceny	L
Auto Damage	AD
Vandalism	V
Robbery	RB
Attempted Burglary	AB
Purse Snatching	PS
Mail Box Theft	MB

number indicates floor level of victimized unit

27 households surveyed
17 victimizations

victimization occurred between November 1974 & November 1975

ELLEN WILSON DWELLINGS

D.C. Department of Housing and Community Development
Property Management Administration

WILLIAM BRILL ASSOCIATES, INC.

0 20 40 60 80 ft NORTH

reported by respondents in the Arthur Capper highrises; figure 3 shows the victimizations reported in Carrollsburg and the Arthur Capper lowrises; and figure 4 shows the reported victimizations in Ellen Wilson.

Building design

Forty-five interviews were conducted in townhouse units, 70 in walk-up buildings and 53 in highrises. This segment discusses differences in victimization among these three types of buildings. Figure 5 shows the distribution of these building types in Capper Dwellings.

Townhouses

The townhouse units are all two-story units with front and rear windows and doors. The townhouses of Arthur Capper form hollow squares[3] around interior courts. The courts contain small yards, clothes lines, parking lots, and garbage bins. The arrangement of the townhouses in Wilson and Carrollsburg is varied.

As table 15 shows, vandalism occurs at a much higher rate in the townhouses than in the other building types. This, however, may be an artifact of the respondent's perception of his space. The townhouse has a large surface area which can only be viewed as part of the unit. If an obscenity is painted on the wall, it is painted on the resident's wall. In a walk-up or highrise, it is painted in the hallway.

Likewise, townhouses have yards which are inherent to the individual unit. If a rosebush in this non-public space is ripped up, it is the resident's rosebush that is destroyed. If this were to happen in the yard around a walk-up unit or by a highrise building, it would be the management's problem, not affecting the individual resident directly. Thus, the higher reported rates of vandalism in the townhouses may result from the townhouse dweller's different perception of what is his "own" rather than from an actual difference in intentional injury to property.

Table 15.--Vandalism by building type

	Townhouse		Walk-up		Highrise		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Number of incidents	14	70.0	1	5.0	5	25.0	20	100.0
Distribution of interviews	45	26.8	70	41.7	53	31.5	168	100.0

Note.--$Chi^2=20.6553$; $\alpha < .001$

[3]One block is triangular.

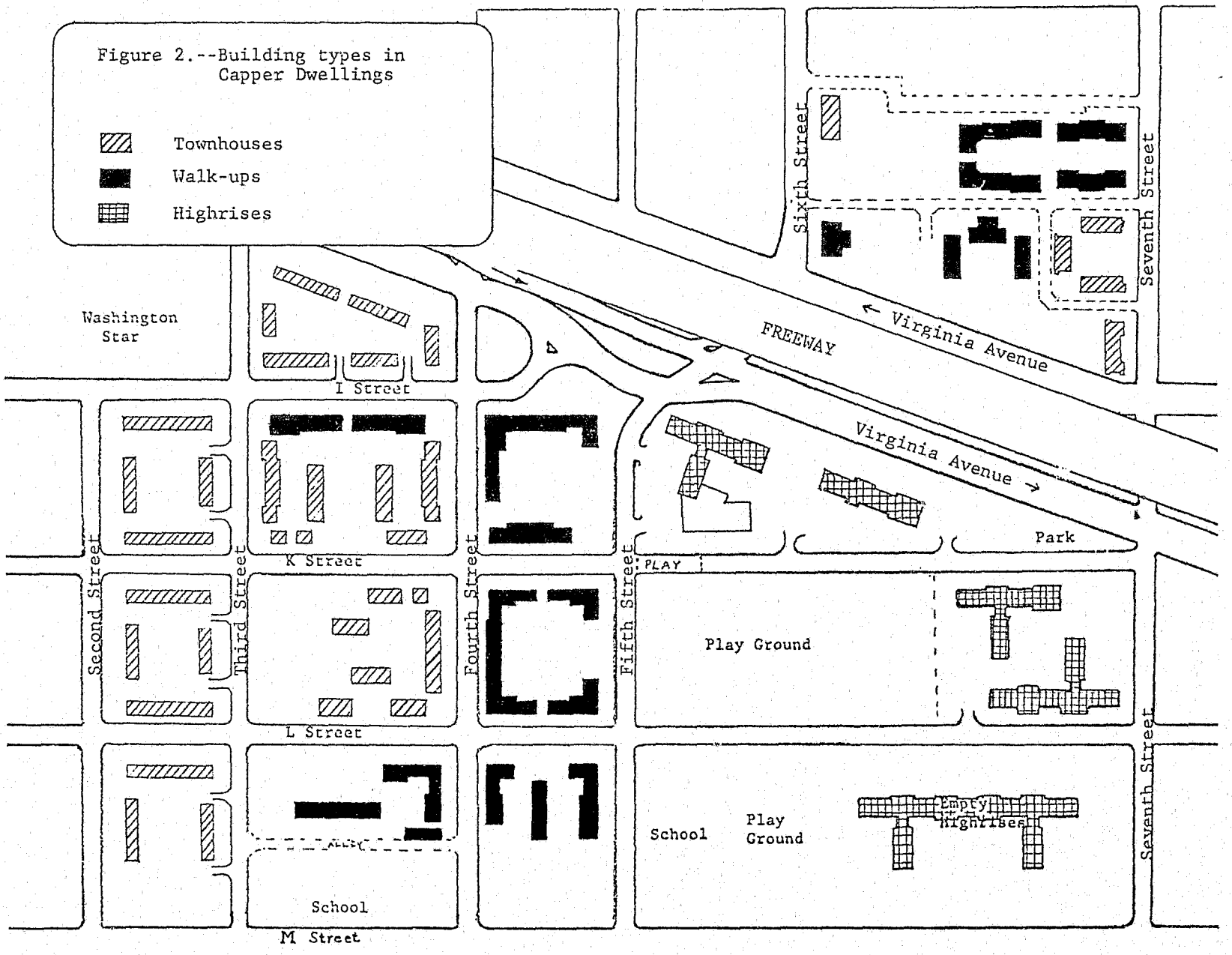


Figure 2.--Building types in Capper Dwellings

The townhouses experienced significantly more total burglary attempts than would be expected by chance. (See table 16.) Apparently, these units appear vulnerable to attack, perhaps because of their greater window and door area compared to that of walk-ups and highrises. These attempts, however, were far less successful in the townhouses than in the other types of buildings. The success rate for burglary against townhouses (3.0 percent) was far lower than for either highrises (27.0 percent) or for walk-ups (27.8 percent)[4]

According to the property manager, there is no difference in hardware that might make the townhouses less vulnerable.

Apparently, residents of the townhouse define the area immediately surrounding their unit as "theirs" as was discussed in reference to vandalism above. This creates a "zone of transition" between the private space inside the residents' home and the more public spaces of the street. Here residents may linger and observe the activities of others, improving casual surveillance of the areas surrounding the townhouses. In addition, the semi-public nature of this space means that an occupant of the space must be recognized as legitimate or else attract the attention of other residents. This greater susceptibility to challenge may make burglars more shy and more likely to terminate a break-in attempt for fear of discovery.

This suggests that privatization of units in the walk-up and highrise buildings may reduce the rate of successful burglaries.

Table 16.--Burglary attempts[a] by building type

	Townhouse		Walk-up		Highrise		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Number of burglary attempts[a]	29	34.5	37	44.1	18	21.4	84	100.0
Distribution of interviews	45	26.8	70	71.7	53	31.5	168	100.0

[a]This is the sum of successful and attempted burglaries.

Note.--$Chi^2=20.6553$; $\alpha<.001$

[4]A one-tailed difference-of-proportions test of townhouses vs. all others yielded an alpha of less than .0005.

The townhouses in the three projects report more frequent larcenies than the other building types. The semi-public nature of the yards attached to these units may lead residents to temporarily leave items, e.g., a bicycle or lawnchair, in these yards, creating an opportunity for quick thievery. The highrises and walk-ups, with less semi-public or semi-private space, do not present such opportunities.

Table 17.--Larceny by building type

	Townhouse		Walk-up		Highrise		Total	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Number of larcenies	11	64.7	4	23.5	2	11.8	17	100.0
Distribution of interviews	45	26.8	70	41.7	53	31.5	168	100.0

Note.--$Chi^2=12.5481; \alpha < .01$

The townhouses experienced no mailbox break-ins for the simple reason that they do not have mailboxes, only mail slots through the door.

No crimes against persons were recorded as taking place inside the townhouse units.

Walk-ups

The walk-up apartment buildings generally consist of three floors connected by flights of narrow, dark stairs. The first floor entries are generally undistinguished openings in the brick wall. A full-sized window admits light to the second floor halls and also exposes much of the hallway to view from the street. The third floor has a window but the angle from the sidewalk prohibits casual observation of activities in the hallway. No door opens to the roof, a scuttle providing the only access. The mailboxes for these units are located in a cluster on the first floor. In some buildings they are built into a brick extension of the exterior wall of the building, while in others they are built flush to the wall of the narrow entry way and are difficult to see from outside.

As table 16 shows, units in walk-up buildings experienced 44.1 percent of the total burglary attempts recorded in Capper Dwellings. The two-story walk-ups in Ellen Wilson had no recorded crimes.

As table 18 shows, burglary attempts in walk-up buildings were concentrated on the first and third floors. First floor apartments had a majority of the 37 burglary attempts (51.4 percent). Eight of these first floor attempts (42 percent) were successful. Only three burglary attempts (8.1 percent) of the total were directed against second floor units and none was successful. Fifteen of the walk-up burglary attempts (40.5 percent) were against third-story units. Fewer of these were successful than on the first floor but the difference was not statistically significant.

The accessible windows of the first floor units may make them attractive targets and greater ease of escape may compensate the burglar for the higher risk of discovery from those frequenting the building.

The second-story provides a poor target, having neither accessible windows nor easy escape, and the chances of detection are relatively high, since the window in the hallway makes activity in the hall partially visible from the street. In addition, those travelling to the third floor might discover the burglar at work.

Activity in the third floor hall cannot be seen from the street, despite the window in the hall. The chance of detection is less. A secondary escape may be provided by loosening the scuttle blocking access to the roof.

Table 18.--Burglary in walk-up buildings

Floor Number	Successful Burglaries		Attempted burglaries		Total burglary attempts	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Third Floor	2	20.0	13	48.2	15	40.5
Second Floor	0	0.0	3	11.1	3	8.1
First Floor	8	80.0	11	40.7	19	51.4
Total burglary attempts for all floors	10	100.0	27	100.0	37	100.0

Note.--$Chi^2=4.73; \alpha < .10$

The three-story walk-up units experienced a far higher rate of mailbox break-ins than the highrise units. Their mailboxes are highly exposed to attack.

One purse snatching took place at the door of the respondent's apartment, but no other crimes against persons were recorded within the walk-ups.

Highrises

Four six-story elevator buildings lie on the path between the rest of Capper Dwellings south of the freeway and the shopping areas of 7th and 8th streets, mostly north of the freeway. One building contains the management office, where the mailboxes for the highrise residents are located.

Each building has two or three entrances on opposites sides of the structure. Solid brick surrounds the opaque entry doors. No one approaching these doors has any idea of what lies beyond them.

Behind these buildings is a large open playground and to the south stands the empty shell of the nine-story double building being converted to housing for the elderly.

The highrise buildings show a lower frequency of burglary attempts than do the other buildings. This may be due to the higher proportion of inaccessible windows in these buildings, compared to the other building types. The success rate of these attempts (27.8 percent) was virtually the same as that in the walk-up apartments. No floor-by-floor pattern of burglaries, either attempted or successful, appeared. All the vandalism took place on the first and second floors.

Crimes against the person took place more frequently in highrises than in either the walk-up buildings or the townhouses. Six robberies and two assaults, one fatal, took place inside these structures (lobbies, stairs, hall, elevators) may account for this. All these spaces are partially or totally screened from public view and there is no way to screen intruders out of these spaces.

Geographical patterns

The location of each crime was plotted on maps of the site in an effort to identify any geographic distribution that might be present.

The possible effect of the separation of the Ellen Wilson section from the rest was examined but no significant differences emerged. Apparently, the freeway separating the sections has no effect on the distribution of crime.

In order to examine the location of personal victimization more accurately, the blocks of the three projects were classified according to the type of buildings in the block. It was found that two-thirds of the most recent crimes against persons, principally robberies and purse snatchings, took place in or around the highrise buildings while only 32 percent of the interviews were conducted there. A number of locational factors may, in part, account for this. The highrise buildings lie between the rest of Arthur Capper-Carrollsburg and the shopping area north of the freeway on 7th and 8th streets. These buildings are, in addition, adjacent to the bus stops along Virginia Avenue.

People with money or laden with packages are very likely to be found in this area, providing good targets. Further, the highrise buildings may provide an easy escape for a robber. Opportunities to "disappear" are limited in other areas of the project.

Finally, each crime for which a location could be fixed was plotted block by block and the resulting distribution examined. It was found that in Ellen Wilson, the majority of crime, principally burglary and attempted burglary, took place in two clusters of three-story walk-up buildings. These buildings are set back and separated from the street and, in each case, surround three sides of a court. One group faces south toward Virginia Avenue across a barren expanse of dirt upon which is occasionally parked a car. The other group faces toward 7th Street but is separated from it by two short rows of walk-ups perpendicular to the street. Between these rows is a glass-sprinkled yard. Along the sidewalk small groups, mostly men, cluster to talk and watch the traffic. No one appears to frequent the court between the set-back walk-ups and apparently, few pay any attention to what goes on there.

South of the freeway, three blocks showed unusally high rates of burglary attempts. These are the two bounded by K and L streets between 2nd and 4th streets and the one bounded by L and M between 4th and 5th streets.

A distinctive characteristic shared by these blocks is the relatively heavy traffic to and from schools. The local junior high school lies to the west of the project on I Street. I Street does not go through to the junior high school, and K Street has become a common route to school. The block by M Street, bordered east and west by schools, also lies on a heavily travelled project-to-school route. While this suggests that some of the students are the source of these crimes, it may be that the high traffic flow masks the presence of others engaged in burglary.

Summary findings

WBA identified the following locational factors related to crime at Capper Dwellings:

1. Townhouses reported more vandalism than other building types. This may result from territorial feelings by townhouse dwellers.

2. Townhouses suffered more larcenies than other building types, perhaps because of their attached yards.

3. Townhouses showed a very low proportion of successful burglary compared to the total burglary attempts.

4. Townhouses experienced more burglary attempts than would be expected by chance.

5. Walk-up apartments experienced far more mailbox break-ins than would be expected by chance. They have exposed mailboxes.

6. Burglary attempts in walk-up buildings concentrated on the first and third floor units. Attempts on the first floors were more successful than those of the third.

7. Highrises experienced significantly fewer burglary attempts than the other building types.

8. Crimes against the person, especially robbery and purse snatching occurred more frequently in and around the highrise buildings.

9. Areas subject to casual pedestrian surveillance seemed to incur less crime than other areas.

10. More robberies and purse snatchings seemed to occur in areas where criminals could escape through and into public space with a visual obstruction between the victim and the thief.

FEAR OF CRIME

Four different sets of questions were used to guage the type and extent of residents' fear of crime. Respondents were asked:

1. What they thought the probability was (greater than 50/50, 50/50, less than 50/50, or almost no chance at all) of their being the victim of any of eight specific crimes during the coming year

2. How much they were worried (very worried, worried, or not worried) about their children being beaten up, robbed, or extorted at school, in the project, or on the way to and from school

3. How they would rate the dangerousness of 16 specific situations on a 6-point scale ("0" signifying very safe and "5" signifying very dangerous)

4. Whether they felt people should carry something to protect themselves and, if so, what they should carry.

PROBABILITY OF FUTURE VICTIMIZATION

Respondents were asked what they thought their chances were of being a victim of eight specific crimes within the next year. Table 19 indicates that crimes involving personal property loss rank as the most likely. More than 83 percent estimated that the chances of having their homes broken into while they were away were 50/50 or better and more than 74 percent felt that the chances of being robbed in the project were 50/50 or better. Vandalism and deliberate car damage were felt to be of higher probability than assault or sexual assault.

FEAR FOR CHILDREN

Another indicant of fear was the worry respondents felt for the children in their household. Respondents were asked how worried they were (not worried, worried, very worried) about their children being assaulted, beaten up, or subject to extortion in three locales: (1) in the project; (2) at school; and (3) going to and from school.

No strong patterns of worry related to particular threats or places emerged in the three projects, except that slightly

Table 19.-- Victimization probability

How respondents rated probability of future victimization

Type of victimization	Greater than 50/50	50/50	Less than 50/50	Almost No chance
	Percent			
Having your home broken into while you are away	20.8	62.5	11.3	5.4
Having your home broken into while you are at home	7.7	31.5	33.9	26.8
Being robbed in the project	19.8	54.5	13.8	12.0
Being beaten up in the project	13.2	47.3	25.1	14.4
Being sexually assaulted or molested[a]	16.6	23.8	44.4	15.2
Having your car deliberately damaged[b]	17.6	52.9	11.8	17.6
Having your home vandalized	15.5	53.6	18.5	12.5
Having your mailbox broken into	22.8	39.6	17.4	20.1

[a]Percentage of women only.

[b]Households without cars were not asked this question (N=17).

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

more parents are less worried about extortion than about robbery or assault. This must not obscure, however, as table 20 shows, that one-fourth of these respondents are very worried about their children's safety, no matter where they are.

DANGEROUSNESS

The measure of dangerousness was found by asking respondents to rate 20 settings and locations on a 6-point scale, ranging from very safe to very dangerous. These locations and social settings included everyday events and everyday places, such as waiting for a bus, talking to a neighbor, or walking across the project. Many of the questions asked how the residents felt about doing these things during the day or at night and alone or with other people.

As table 21 indicates, the respondents find a number of everyday social settings highly dangerous, especially at night. In general, the residents seemed to find situations in which they were visible or protected (in daylight, with another person, within the walls of their own home) much less dangerous than those situations in which they saw themselves as isolated or not easily visible.

The mean dangerousness rating (last column of table 21) shows that no nighttime activity was considered safer than any daytime activity. Being on the streets away from one's home at night is the most dangerous circumstance. The lowest mean dangerousness scores were assigned to situations close to one's home, in open view, or in daylight.

PERSONAL PROTECTION

To measure anxiety further, respondents were asked the projective screening question, "Do you think people should carry something to protect themselves?" Those who said yes were asked what they thought people should carry.

The overwhelming majority (76 percent) felt that people should carry some sort of personal protection. More than half of these (42 percent of all the respondents) mentioned a handgun as appropriate protection. One person suggested a shotgun.

The suggestions listed as "other" included: a dog (suggested by five respondents), hat pin or file, portable alarm, black pepper, or ice pick (one respondent for each suggestion). In addition, two refused to specify but indicated something that would kill. Five said "anything."

Of the respondents, 103 (61.3 percent) felt that people

Table 20.--Fear for children

How worried are you about your children	Not worried	Worried	Very worried
	Percent		
Being beaten			
In the project	33.0	39.8	27.2
Going to and from school	41.7	34.0	24.3
At school	38.8	34.0	27.2
Being robbed			
In the project	40.8	35.9	23.3
Going to and from school	38.8	34.0	27.2
At school	40.8	36.9	22.3
Being forced to pay money for protection			
In the project	47.6	27.2	25.2
Going to and from school	46.6	28.2	25.2
At school	45.6	31.1	23.3

Mean percent very worried, for each area	
In the project	25.2
Going to and from school	25.6
At school	24.7

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Table 21.--Dangerousness ladder

Activity	Very safe (0 rating)	Safe (1 rating)	Fairly safe (2 rating)	Fairly dangerous (3 rating)	Dangerous (4 rating)	Very dangerous (5 rating)	Mean rating
At night							
Riding a bus alone	0.0	8.7	15.5	18.6	37.9	19.3	3.4
Waiting for a bus alone	1.2	4.3	22.6	17.1	29.9	25.0	3.5
On your way to shopping	0.0	6.8	18.0	16.8	36.6	21.7	3.5
Walking along the street	0.0	4.8	11.4	15.7	41.0	27.1	3.7
Walking across the project	0.6	7.8	17.5	21.7	31.3	21.1	3.4
Near home and hidden from view[a]	0.6	11.0	19.4	14.8	27.7	26.5	3.4
Near home and in view[a]	0.6	14.4	34.1	15.0	20.4	15.6	2.9
Walking from a bus stop to your house	0.0	5.5	9.8	22.0	36.6	26.2	3.7
Walking from a car to your house	1.2	21.3	39.6	17.1	12.2	8.5	2.4
Alone in your home	3.0	28.7	41.3	10.8	7.8	8.4	2.2
During the day							
Waiting for a bus alone	1.2	23.0	56.4	6.7	9.1	3.6	2.1
On your way to shopping	4.8	31.9	47.0	7.2	6.6	2.4	1.9
Walking along the street	3.1	23.3	52.1	10.4	6.1	4.9	2.1

Table 21.--Dangerousness ladder (contd.)

Activity	Very safe (0 rating)	Safe (1 rating)	Fairly safe (2 rating)	Fairly dangerous (3 rating)	Dangerous (4 rating)	Very dangerous (5 rating)	Mean rating
During the day (contd.)							
Walking across the project	4.8	38.9	52.1	2.4	1.8	0.0	1.6
Near home and hidden from view[a]	4.4	30.0	51.9	4.4	6.3	3.1	1.9
Near home and in view[a]	1.8	38.6	52.4	4.2	2.4	0.6	1.7
Walking from a bus stop to your house	4.8	36.7	51.2	3.0	3.0	1.2	1.7
Walking from a car to your house	5.5	48.2	40.2	2.4	1.8	1.8	1.5
Alone in your home	4.8	48.2	42.8	3.0	0.6	0.6	1.5
Day or night not specified							
Talking with a friend in front of your house	3.0	32.9	52.7	5.4	3.6	2.4	1.8

[a]Phrased differently for different building types.

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

should carry something lethal to protect themselves. A desire for such a counterthreat may be a strong indicator of the respondents' feelings of being threatened.

Table 22.--What respondents felt people should carry to protect themselves

Type of protection	Number[a]	Percentage of respondents (N=168)
Handgun	71	42.3
Shotgun/rifle	1	0.6
Knife	30	17.9
Cane/club	16	9.5
Tear gas/mace	28	16.7
Other	17	11.3
Total responding positively to carrying some type of protection	127	76.0

[a]Some respondents gave more than one response.

ALTERED BEHAVIOR

The third dimension of the crime situation surveyed in these projects was the extent to which residents were altering or changing their behavior because of their perception of the crime problem.

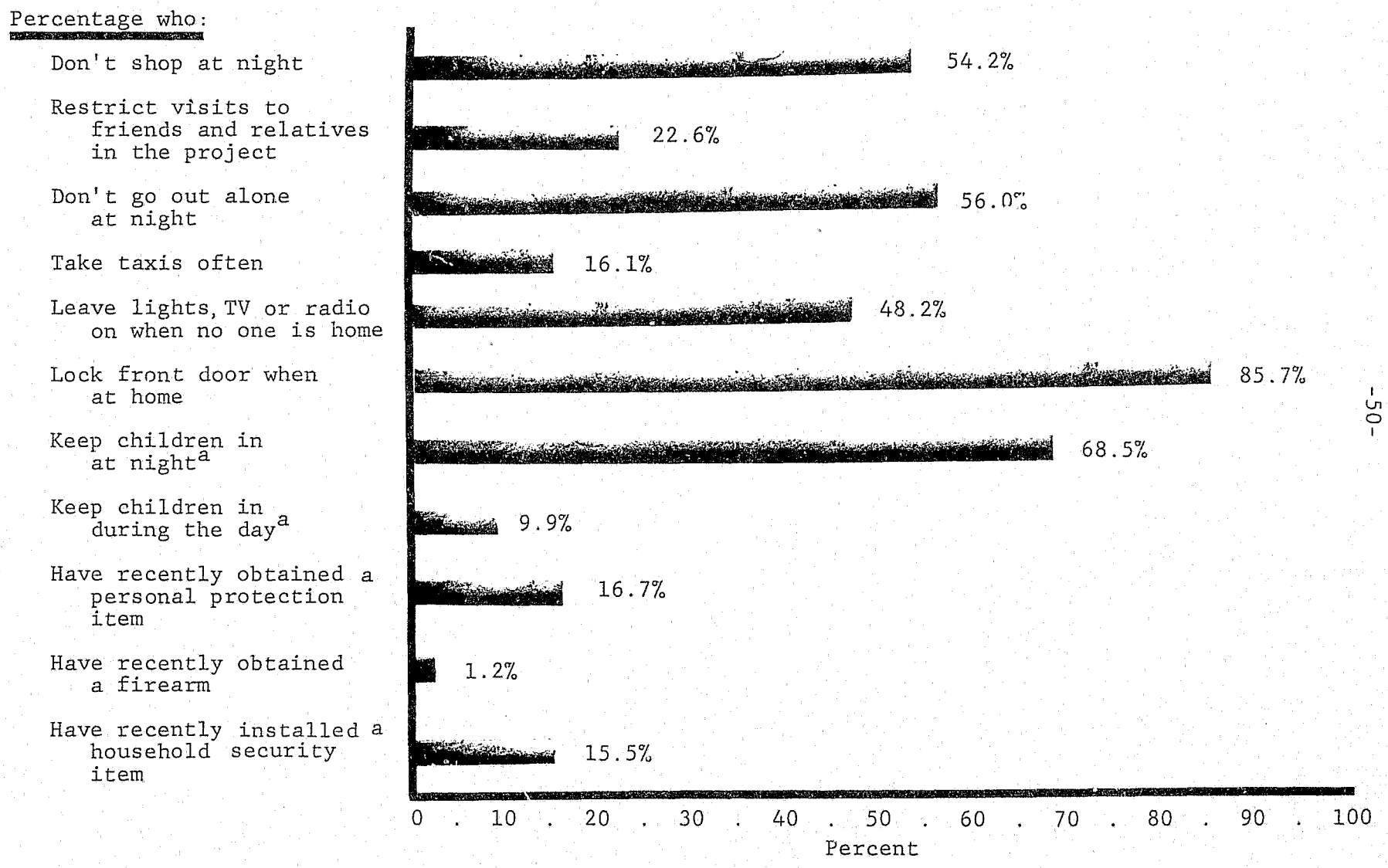
More than 80 percent of the respondents kept their doors locked while they were home for fear of crime. More than half the respondents would not go out alone nor go shopping at night because they were afraid they would become victims of crime.

Table 23 shows that over two-thirds of the respondents kept their children inside during the evening because they were afraid of criminal activity. Nearly 10 percent even tried to keep their children in during the day.

Concerns about crime caused many respondents to install new security items such as locks, bolts, or window grills in their homes. Even more have recently obtained some personal protective device, such as a gun, knife, club, or tear gas, to improve their security. As table 24 shows, knives were the favored weapon, with clubs and tear gas ranking next. This contrasts with the respondents' evident belief, shown in table 22, that people should have handguns for protection.

Most of those responding "other" refused to state what they had obtained, possibly indicating the possession of unregistered firearms.

Table 23.--Behavior alterations due to fear of crime



[a]Base=103 households.

Table 24.--Personal protection

Respondents who have "recently" obtained something for self-protection (N=168)

Type of Protection	Number [a]	Percentage of respondents (N=168)
Handgun	2	1.2
Shotgun/rifle	0	0.0
Knife	11	6.5
Cane/club	7	4.2
Tear gas/mace	5	3.0
Other	8	4.8
Total who "recently" obtained something	28	16.7

[a]Some respondents had obtained more than one type of protection.

RELATED ISSUES

Other matters were also explored in an effort to identify respondents' perceptions of the problems in the project and improvements they felt would make them feel more secure.

PERCEPTIONS OF SERIOUS PROBLEMS

A further measure used to determine how residents felt about their environment was a series of questions that asked respondents to rate, on a five-point scale, how serious they thought five problems were in the project. As indicated in table 25, drugs was perceived to be one of the most serious problems in the combined projects, with 39.9 percent of the respondents giving it a "very serious" ranking. This seemed most pronounced in the townhouses, where 43.2 percent considered drugs to be a very serious problem. The problem of next greatest concern was gangs. More than 25 percent ranked this a very serious problem, while 28.8 percent of the respondents in the highrises felt this was very serious.

Table 25.--Problems in the project

Respondents assigning given seriousness to potential problems in the project (N=168)

Potential problem	No problem	Not serious	Serious	Fairly serious	Very serious
	Percent				
Drugs	15.3	7.4	28.2	9.2	39.9
Gangs	22.2	10.8	27.5	14.4	25.1
Kids fighting	18.6	24.6	23.4	16.8	16.8
Poor management	34.7	12.0	16.2	19.8	17.4
Tenant selection policies	55.8	11.0	17.2	8.0	8.0

Note.--Totals may not add to 100 percent due to rounding.

Feelings about management activity were relatively positive, with 34.7 percent of the total respondents indicating poor management was not a problem. In each project, more than half the respondents felt tenant selection policies were no problem.

TENANT PROPOSALS

Table 26 shows the tenants' security proposals mentioned during the interviews.

Improved locks, doors, and so forth were mentioned by 44.6 percent of the respondents. Next in importance were other suggestions (mostly dealing with security guards) and better lighting. Thirty percent thought better police protection would solve their problems. These facts seem to indicate a reliance on institutions to aid them. Few respondents mentioned measures involving the people themselves in the reduction of the crime problem.

Table 26.--Tenants' security proposals

Security proposals	Percentage of respondents (N=168)
Better lighting	36.3
Improved recreational facilities for young people	11.3
Better police protection	30.4
People pulling together more	19.0
Better locks, doors, etc.	44.6
Environmental improvements (e.g., pathways, walls, parking)	7.1
Tenant patrol	14.9
Other suggestions[a]	38.1

[a]These included more and better security guards.

Note.--Totals exceed 100 percent because some tenants had more than one proposal.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS

Table 27 compares the WBA data from the three Washington projects with that from four other public housing projects.

Examination of the number of criminal acts, standardized to rates per 1,000 persons 12 years of age and older or per 1,000 households, reveals the victimization patterns in Capper Dwellings to be roughly similar to other public housing environments.

Robbery in the Washington projects occurred at a rate similar to most of the other public housing project surveyed. As discussed in the section on locational analysis, the existence of easy escape routes seems to increase the incidence of robbery in an area. Most public housing has an abundance of escape routes and hiding places.

The purse snatching figures from WBA are minimal since respondents were asked only if an incident had taken place, not how frequently. Washington had the lowest rate of all the projects surveyed.

Assault in the Washington projects was somewhat less common than in the other projects. The lower purse snatching and assault rates coincide with an overall tendency for the Washington low-income population to have lower crime rates than comparable populations in the other cities surveyed.

Meaningful comparisons of the Washington rate for sexual assault are difficult to make because of the rather small number of incidents.

The Capper Dwellings rate was the lowest among the public housing projects surveyed for successful burglary and was the highest for attempted burglary. This apparently indicates that successful burglary is more difficult in the Washington projects than in the Baltimore or Los Angeles projects.

Theft from mailboxes seems to vary directly with the accessibility of the mailboxes to intruders. The walk-up apartments in the Carrollsburg project have exposed mailboxes and were the principal source of the high rate in the Washington projects compared to Dade County, Baltimore and Los Angeles. This rate, however, does not approach the high rate of break-ins for Boston.

The vandalism rate in the Washington projects was far lower than those found in the Boston and Dade County public housing projects. Some of the Boston and Dade County rates may include damage resulting from attempted burglaries, accounted for separately

Table 27.--Crime rates compared

The three D.C. projects and other public housing projects

Incidents per 1,000 population 12 and older	Boston	Dade	D.C.	Baltimore	Los Angeles[a]
	Four projects	Scott/ Carver Homes	Capper Dwellings	Murphy Homes	Nickerson Gardens
Robbery	55.7	47.0	48.0	114.1	49.8
Purse snatching	....	....	10.6[b]	36.0[b]	28.0[b]
Assault	23.1	35.4	16.0	33.0	49.8
Sexual assault	5.1	5.2	8.0	18.0	3.1
Incidents per 1,000 households					
Successful burglary	196.1	308.7	95.2	255.2	283.7
Attempted burglary	.....	.....	404.8	337.9	326.2
Larceny	159.2	278.1[b]	101.2	6.9	524.8
Mailbox break-in	12183.3	161.1	226.2	20.7	0.0
Vandalism	1673.6	1241.6	119.0	103.4	241.1
Deliberate car damage[c]	.....	50.3[b] 100.0	35.7 352.9	20.7 428.6	127.7 450.0

[a]Figures relate only to households resident one year or more, to provide comparability to other projects.

[b]Data relates only to households victimized, not frequency of victimization.

[c]Upper figure: base = all sampled households; lower figure: base = households owning a car.

....Data unavailable.

in the Washington survey. One factor affecting the vandalism rate may be the proportion of townhouse-type units in the project. Damage to the exterior of such buildings is done to a particular household, whereas damage to the exterior of walk-ups or high-rises is not done to a particular household.

The significance of deliberate car damage is difficult to assess because of the low rate of car ownership (only 10.1 percent of households had cars in the Washington projects) and the low number of incidents. Among car owners, three (17 percent) had their vehicles damaged in the preceding year, in a total of six incidents. Some of this may result from careless play or malicious mischief; some may be due to attempts to rifle the contents of the car or steal auto parts or accessories.

The population of these projects seems less subject to purse snatching and assault than the other public housing projects surveyed. Their households suffered fewer successful burglaries than the other projects, and fewer larcenies than all but the Baltimore projects.

While the crime rates in public housing overall are terribly high, it appears that Capper Dwellings is certainly not the worst by any means.

It is proposed to reduce these rates through a coordinated program of improved architectural design and social defense and thereby reduce fear of crime and the degree residents feel forced to alter their behavior to cope with their anxiety about crime. These plans will be detailed in subsequent reports.

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