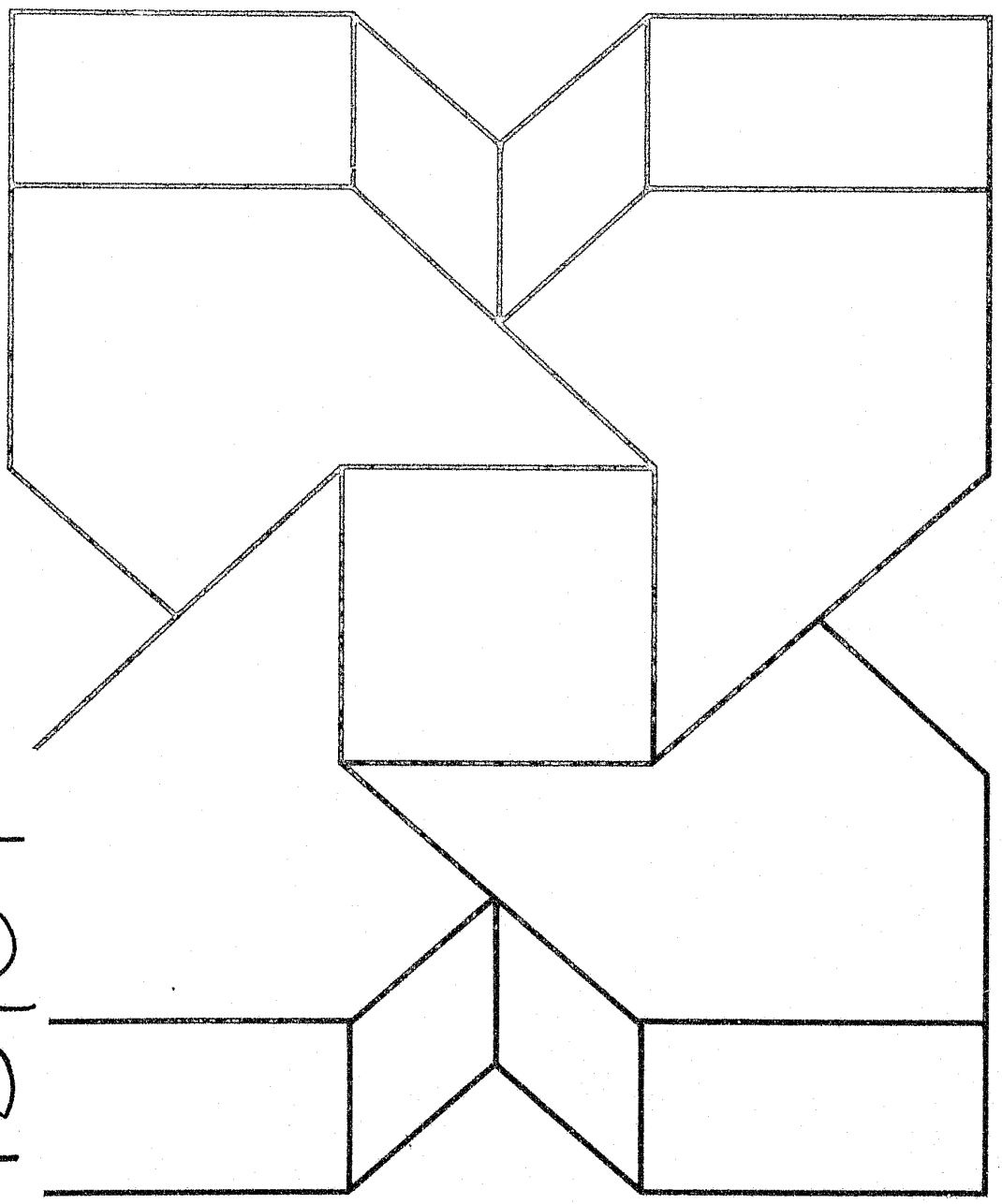
Victimization, Fear of Crime and Altered Behavior:

A Profile of the Crime Problem in William Nickerson Jr. Gardens, Los Angeles, California

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



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by

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SUMMARY

This report presents a profile of the crime problem at Nickerson Gardens, a public housing project in Los Angeles, California. The profile is based upon a survey of 184 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 security plan for Nickerson Gardens. 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.

The experience of crime is extremely wide-spread in Nickerson Gardens. Over half the households surveyed (56.5 percent) reported having been victimized during the preceding year. Of these, nearly 6 in 10 (58.6) had been victimized more than once.

The survey findings reveal rates of incidence of crime in all categories that are substantially higher than those for the nation as a whole or for similar income groups nationally. Residents of Nickerson Gardens experienced nearly seven times the robbery that low-income persons nationally experienced. Residents who had recently moved into the project experienced more crime than longer-term residents. Those who had lived in the project less than one year experienced purse snatching nearly four times as often as those who had lived in the project more than one year.

The survey also revealed very high levels of fear in Nickerson Gardens. While the crime rate is high, residents' fear that they will become crime victims is even higher. Over 80 percent of the respondents felt the chances of being robbed in the project were 50/50 or better. The actual chances of of someone being robbed are a little more than 6 in 100.

Respondents cited as dangerous those areas where groups "hang out," such as near liquor stores on the project's perimeter.

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 do not, for example, move as freely throughout the site as they would like, nor do they visit friends as much as they would prefer. Many residents are so concerned about crime that they have purchased means of self-protection.

Subsequent reports to be prepared on Nickerson Gardens 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' perceptions of problems and their proposals to improve security. The analysis compares Nickerson Gardens 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 Nickerson Gardens, a public housing project in Los Angeles, California, operated by the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles.

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 Nickerson Gardens 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 Nickerson Gardens. 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 Nickerson Gardens (scheduled to take place after the improvements have been implemented) indicates a drop in victimization, fear, and/or alter[illegible] 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 of 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 Nickerson Gardens 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 Washington, D.C.

NICKERSON GARDENS

Nickerson Gardens, in the Watts area of Los Angeles, consists of 1,110 townhouse units arranged in 162 rows. Some of the rows lie parallel to the street, some perpendicular to it. A large number of rows, expecially around the play-field, are set back from the street. Most of the units on this flat, open area are two-stories, but the ends of many rows have one-story. In some cases these are part of a unit, in others a separate unit. A large rectangular play-field occupies the central area of the project with a community building/gym at its eastern end. (See figure 1.)

A major road, Imperial Highway, borders the project on the south. A low chain-link fence to protect children separates the project from the highway. The northern and western boundaries are irregular as the project meets areas of private houses and alleyways. Most of the eastern boundary is formed by Compton Avenue.

Major activity areas, liquor and food stores, and the health clinic lie to the west and south of the project.

GENERAL FINDINGS

Table 1 compares the findings on victimization (weighted for length of residence) with Law Enforcement Assistance Administration (LEAA) findings for the nation as a whole and for Los Angeles. Comparisons are made for both low-income levels and all-income levels.

While purse snatching is more common among low-income persons generally, the rate of purse snatching in the project was

Table 1.--Comparison of crime rate

Rate per 1,000 population 12 and older	LEAA National[a] All incomes	LEAA National[a] Income less than $7,500	LEAA Los Angeles[b] All incomes	LEAA Los Angeles[b] Income less than $7,500	WBA Los Angeles[e] Nickerson Gardens
Robbery	6.9	8.9	16.0	24.0	62.2
Purse snatching	3.2	....	7.0	8.4	53.4
Assault	26.0	31.6	35.0	41.8	44.8
Sexual assault	1.0	1.6	2.0	....	6.8
Rate per 1,000 households					
Burglary	92.7	101.9[c]	148.0	146.8[d]	705.8
Successful burglary	72.0	78.5[c]	39.0	110.6[d]	285.3
Attempted burglary	20.7	23.4[c]	109.0	36.2[d]	420.5
Larceny	109.3	102.4	131.0	110.6	552.5

[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 The Nation's Five Largest 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 from unpublished tables prepared by the LEAA, Washington, D.C.

[e]Weighted rate for all respondents regardless of length of residence.

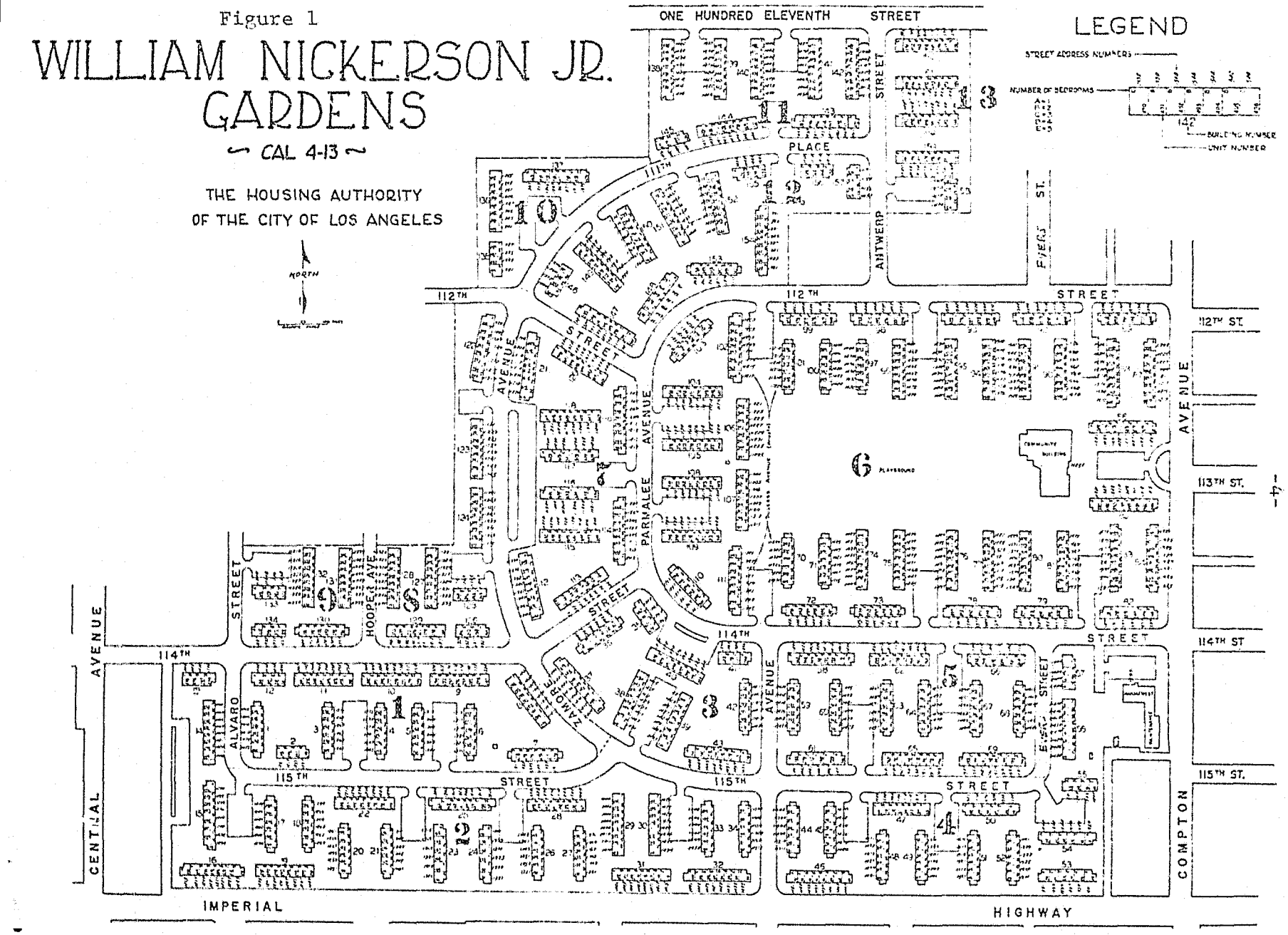
....Data not available.

Figure 1

WILLIAM NICKERSON JR. GARDENS

~ CAL 4-13 ~

THE HOUSING AUTHORITY
OF THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES



more than six times that of the Los Angeles low-income population as a whole,[2] and more than sixteen times the national rate for all incomes. Robbery occurred at a rate more than double that of Los Angeles' low-income population. The high rate in Nickerson Gardens is part of a pattern in which rates for robbery and purse snatching are higher in public housing than elsewhere.

Nickerson Gardens also experienced burglary far more frequently than either Los Angeles as a whole or Los Angeles' low-income population. The Nickerson Gardens rate was well over six times higher than the rate for either low-income households nationally or for households of all incomes sampled by LEAA. Successful burglary occurred more than twice as often in Nickerson Gardens than among Los Angeles' low-income population.[3]

Households in the Los Angeles project experienced larceny at a rate more than four times that of any other comparison group, regardless of income or location.

Taken together, these figures suggest that the residents of Nickerson Gardens are more subject to robbery, purse snatching, burglary, and larceny than residents of Los Angeles overall or even Los Angeles' low-income population.

The assault rate for Nickerson Gardens is about the same as for Los Angeles' low-income population but considerably higher than for Los Angeles or the nation as a whole.

While the crime rate is high in Nickerson Gardens, the residents' fear of these crimes is far higher. More than 80 percent of the Nickerson Gardens respondents felt that there was a 50/50 chance or better of being the victim of burglary in in the year ahead. Seventy-seven percent felt the chances of being robbed in the year ahead were 50/50 or better. The actual chances of robbery were about 6 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 Los Angeles project, the respondents refuse to go out alone at night because they are afraid of becoming a crime victim. Nearly 4 in 10 do not shop at night for fear of crime.

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[2] $t=2.5551 \quad \alpha < .01$

[3] $t=1.7254 \quad \alpha < .05$

More than 7 in 10 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. Nearly one in four 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 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 burglary 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. WBA also identifies in detail the actual location of the criminal incidents.

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 become the victim of various crimes in the year ahead and about their concern for the safety of their children in various areas. 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. Free-response questions revealed other areas of which respondents were fearful.

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 constrained the use of the environment by not visiting friends, going out, or shopping at night. Also identified 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 means of self-protection.

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.

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, such evaluative judgements about the crime problem in Nickerson Gardens, because of the survey related in this report, will be based on hard, factual data, not on hearsay or impression.

THE SAMPLE

A sample of 184 households, proportionally stratified by the number of bedrooms per unit, was selected from the households residing in Nickerson Gardens as of March 1976. An

interview with the head of each sample household was obtained except in 10 cases.[4] Interviews took place during March and April 1976 concerning events that took place during the preceding 12 months (March 1975 to March 1976).

Respondents in Nickerson Gardens ranged in age from 19 to 79. More than 91 percent were female. Most respondents (84.2 percent) had not worked during the previous twelve months. Of those that had jobs, most had full-time jobs.

The sampled households included 238 adults and 468 children. Of the children, 157 were 12 years of age and older. Personal victimization rates relate to those 395 persons over the age of 12.

Forty-three households, containing 74 persons over the age of 12 had resided in the project for less than one full year. Their victimization experience is weighted by the length-of-residence factor in computing the rates found in this report.

Weighting

Crime rates are generally given in terms of one year's experience. Therefore, victimization information for those in residence less than one full year was projected to an annual rate by factoring in a weight based on the length of residence in the project. This produced a projection of the net experience of newcomers to the project generally, not what any one individual would experience in the year.

In computing the overall crime rates for the entire Nickerson Gardens sample, those respondents with less than one year's residence were treated as discrete stratum from those in residence for one year or more. This means, essentially, that their smaller numbers were taken into account when computing the final crime rates.

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,

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[4]In these 10 cases, another resident adult was substituted due to the continued unavailability of the head of the household.

Florida. Concurrent with its application in Los Angeles, the instrument was also applied in projects in Washington, D.C. and Baltimore, Maryland.[5] 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 to work as interviewers and validators. Previous experience found that public housing residents can be reliable, insightful, and disciplined interviewers and validators.

[5]For the findings of these surveys, see WBA's Victimization, Fear of Crime and Altered Behavior: A Profile of the Crime Problem in Capper Dwellings, Washington, D.C., Draft Report, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1976) and Victimization, Fear of Crime and Altered Behavior: A Profile of the Crime Problem in Murphy Homes, Baltimore, Maryland, Draft Report, (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, 1976).

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:

1. Personal victimization--crimes against the individual. These include robbery, purse snatching, sexual assault, and assault.

2. Victimizations against the housing unit--crimes directed against the household. They include burglary (successful and attempted), and vandalism.

3. 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 March 1975 and March 1976 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
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 2, of the 184 households surveyed, 104 households (56.5 percent) experienced one or more criminal incidents during the previous year.

Forty-three households were victimized once during the previous year. Sixty-one households were the victims of repeated incidents of the same type or of one or more incidents of different types during the previous year.

These data are raw figures, unaffected by length of residence. Crime rates, however, are weighted for length of residence. For an explanation of weighting see the section, Methodology: weighting.

Table 2.--Households victimized

Frequency of victimization	Number of households victimized	Percentage of sample households (N=184)
Units victimized once	43	23.4
Units victimized more than once	61	33.1
Total units victimized	104	56.5

Table 3 presents a summary of victimization by type of crime. Burglary was, by far, the most common crime, affecting 35.9 percent of the households and accounting for over 30 percent of the total incidents. Larcenies were also frequent, affecting 19.6 percent of the households sampled and accounting for 23.2 percent of the total incidents. No mailbox break-ins took place since all units have mail slots. In table 3 the column "Number of households victimized" does not sum to the total units victimized shown in table 2 because many units were the victims of diverse crimes and therefore appear more than once.

Table 3.--Summary of victimization

Crime	Number households victimized	Percentage of sample households (N=184)	Total number of incidents	Percentage of total incidents
Robbery	8	4.3	20	5.2
Purse snatching	13	7.1	17	4.4
Assault	10	5.4	17	4.4
Sexual assault	2	1.1	2	0.5
Burglary	66	35.9	116	30.3
Successful burglary	33	17.9	49	12.8
Attempted burglary	42	22.8	67	17.5
Larceny	36	19.6	89	23.2
Vandalism	13	7.1	39	10.2
Mailbox break-in	0	0.0	0	0.0
Deliberate car damage	9	4.9	19	5.0

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 14.5 percent of the total incidents reported to WBA's interviews. Except for the number of occurrences, all detailed data that follow refers to the last-reported incident only.

Robbery

Of all personal victimizations, robbery was the most common, constituting 35.7 percent of the 56 crimes against individuals. (See table 4.)

Eight households experienced a total of 20 robberies during the preceding year (five households experienced more than one robbery). Note that only the last robbery in each of the households is described below. Each of the most recent cases involved only a single victim. Three victims were male and five were female. Their ages ranged from 9 to 59. Six victims received no injury while two were treated for injuries and released.

Losses ranged from nothing to $40. Five of the eight robberies took place in the project, with two near it and one away from the project. Thursday and Friday showed concentrations of robberies. Most of the robberies took place in the afternoon or early evening. The victims estimated that all but one of the robbers was under 21 years of age. One was thought to be under 12. Two of the eight robbers were female.

Three robberies were reported to the police. In each case the police responded, but took an average of 47 minutes to arrive, according to the victims.

Purse snatching

In addition to the foregoing robberies, 13 households experienced 17 purse snatchings. Ten of the most recent incidents took place within the project and two occurred nearby. The 17 incidents, standardized to a rate per 1,000 persons 12 years of age and older, weighted for length of residence, is 62.2 persons.

Table 4.--Robbery

Households victimized once	3
Households victimized more than once	5
Total households victimized	8
Total incidents	20
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older (weighted)	62.2

	Number	Percent
Victims (N=8)		
Incidents		
One victim	8	100
Sex		
Male	3	38
Female	5	62
Age		
Mean 24		
Range 9-59		
Injuries		
None	6	75
Treated and released	2	25
Losses		
Mean $16		
Range $0-40		
Time and place of robbery		
Hours		
1-6 a.m.	1	12
7-noon	2	25
1-6 p.m.	4	50
7-midnight	1	12
Day		
Tuesday	1	12
Wednesday	1	12
Thursday	3	38
Friday	2	25
Saturday	1	12

Table 4.--Robbery (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Time and place of robbery (contd.)		
Month		
January-March	5	62
April-June	1	12
July-September	1	12
October-December	1	12
Location		
In the project	5	62
Near the project	2	25
Elsewhere	1	12
Robbers		
Age		
Under 12	1	12
12-14	1	12
15-17	4	50
18-20	1	12
21+	1	12
Sex		
Male	6	75
Female	2	25
Police		
Notified		
Yes	3	38
No	5	62
Came if notified		
Yes	3	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 47 minutes		
Range 20-60 minutes		

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

Assault

Seventeen assaults took place against the members of ten households. There was one victim in each of the ten most recent incidents. Three of the victims were male and seven were female. Victims were generally young, averaging 22 years of age, but ranged up to 58 years of age. Eight received injuries, five requiring professional care. One of these was hospitalized. Only one of the assaults took place between midnight and six in the morning, the rest were spread out through the day. July and December had the most incidents, two and three respectively. Most of the assaults took place on Fridays and Saturdays. One assault occurred about six blocks from the project and the remainder occurred in the project.

The victims reported that seven of the assailants were male and three were female. All but one were said to be under 21 years of age, most between 15 and 17. Half of the assailants used weapons.

Of the 10 most recent incidents, 6 were reported to police. Police responded in as little as 5 minutes or as much as 4 hours, averaging 78 minutes. The median time was 1 hour. Table 5 gives the details for the assaults.

Sexual Assault

As table 6 shows, two incidents of sexual assault were reported, involving two households. The victims were a 19- and a 24-year old female. The two assaults occurred in the late evening, both on Friday night. Both assaults occurred in the project. Each victim reported the assailant to be 21 or older. One victim was hospitalized.

Only one of the two incidents described was reported to the police. The victim estimated the response time at five minutes.

Table 5.--Assault

Households victimized once	9
Households victimized more than once	1
Total households victimized	10
Total incidents	17
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older (weighted)	44.8

	Number	Percent
Victims (N=10)		
Incidents		
One victim	10	100
Multiple victims	0	
Sex		
Male	3	30
Female	7	70
Age		
Mean 22		
Range 9-58		
Injuries		
None	2	20
Minor	3	30
Treated and released	4	40
Hospitalized	1	10
Time and place of assault		
Hours		
1 a.m.-6 a.m.	1	10
7 a.m.-noon	4	40
1 p.m.-6 p.m.	2	20
7 p.m.-midnight	3	30
Day		
Wednesday	3	30
Thursday	1	10
Friday	3	30
Saturday	3	30
Month		
January-March	2	20
April-June	2	20
July-September	2	20
October-December	4	40

Table 5.--Assault (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Time and place of assault (contd.)		
Location		
In the project	9	90
Near the project	1	10
Assailants [a]		
Age		
12-14	1	10
15-17	5	50
18-20	2	20
21+	1	10
Sex		
Male	7	70
Female	3	30
Weapon used		
Yes	5	50
No	5	50
Police		
Notified		
Yes	6	60
No	4	40
Came if notified		
Yes	5	50
No	1	10
Time to arrive		
Mean 78 minutes		
Range 5 minutes to 4 hours		

[a]One respondent did not know.

Table 6.--Sexual Assault

Households victimized once	2
Households victimized more than once	0
Total households victimized	2
Total incidents	2
Rate per 1,000 population, 12 and older (weighted)	6.8

	Number
Victims (N=2)	
Incidents	
One victim	2
Sex	
Female	2
Age	
Mean 21.5	1
Range 19 and 24	1
Injuries	
None	1
Hospitalized	1
Time and place of sexual assault	
Hour	
10 p.m.	1
11 p.m.	1
Day	
Friday	2
Month	
April	1
December	1
Location	
In the project	2
Assailant	
Age	
21+	2
Police	
Notified	
Yes	1
No	1
Came if notified	
Yes	1
Time to arrive: 5 minutes	

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.

Burglary: successful and attempted

These were the most frequent crimes occurring within the scope of this study, accounting for 30.3 percent of the total number of incidents. Sixty-six households experienced successful and/or attempted burglaries. Thirty-three households reported 49 successful burglaries, and 42 households reported 67 attempted burglaries. Successful burglaries were 42.2 percent of the total 116 incidents.

As table 7 shows, of the 33 successfully burglarized households, 20 were burglarized once and 13 more than once. The following data refer to the 33 most recent successful burglaries.

Twelve of the incidents occurred during the day and 19 at night. Some respondents could not remember the time nor the day of the burglary. Friday and Saturday had the largest concentrations of burglaries. No clear monthly patterns emerged.

Losses ranged from none to $800, averaging $266.

Of the 33 households, 14 were entered through the back windows, 6 through the front windows, 1 through a side window, 8 through back doors, and 4 through front doors.

Twenty-seven households sustained damage. Damage to 18 households was completely repaired by the management. In five other households, management made some repairs, and no repairs were made in the remaining four incidents. Most repairs were completed in one to two days.

The police were informed in 18 of the 33 cases and the police investigated 17 cases. Their time to arrive, when called, ranged from ten minutes to three hours, averaging nearly an hour.

Table 7.--Successful burglary

Households victimized once	20
Households victimized more than once	13
Total households victimized	33
Total incidents	49
Rate per 1,000 households (weighted)	285.3

	Number	Percent
Time of burglary[a]		
Day	12	39
Night	19	61
Day		
Sunday	1	3
Monday	3	10
Tuesday	5	17
Wednesday	3	10
Thursday	3	10
Friday	8	26
Saturday	7	24
Month		
January	2	6
February	3	9
March	4	12
April	2	6
May	3	9
June	1	4
July	4	12
August	4	12
September	3	9
October	3	9
November	2	6
December	2	6
Burglary losses		
Mean	$266	
Range	$0-800	

Table 7.--Successful burglary (contd.)

	Number	Percent
Method of entry		
Back window	14	42
Front window	6	18
Side window	1	3
Back door	8	24
Front door	4	12
Damage		
Items damaged[b]		
None	6	13
Doors	3	7
Windows	19	42
Locks	5	11
Screens	7	15
Household property	1	2
Doorframe	2	4
Other	2	4
Damage repaired by management		
None	4	20
Some	5	20
All	18	30
No damage	6	30
Time for repairs, if made		
11-14 days	2	9
6-10 days	1	4
3-5 days	7	30
1-2 days	13	57
Police		
Notified		
Yes	18	70
No	15	30
Came if notified		
Yes	17	94
No	1	6
Time to arrive		
Mean 57 minutes		
Range 10 minutes to 3 hours		

[a]Some could not recall or did not know details.

[b]Some had multiple damage.

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

Vandalism

Thirteen households suffered a total of 39 incidents of vandalism. Seven of the victimized households were vandalized more than once. The majority of incidents (eight) occurred at night and most on Fridays. Losses ranged from $12 to $30, with a mean loss of $19.00. Most damage was done to windows. The police were notified in seven incidents and responded in six cases. The response times reported by the respondents ranged from 15 to 60 minutes, with a mean of 42 minutes. In one case, not counted in the mean time, the police were on the scene. Table 8 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, deliberate car damage, and mailbox break-ins. Except for the number of occurrences, all detailed data that follow refer to the most recent incident only.

Larceny

Thirty-six households suffered 89 larcenies during the previous year. As shown in table 9, 15 households experienced more than 1 larceny. The small, territorial yards in these townhouses may lead people to leave property outside their homes temporarily.

Some losses were high, ranging up to $200 in value, but the average was $33. Only three larcenies were reported to the police. The police were at the scene for one incident and they did come in the other case. The time to respond was 5 and 60 minutes.

Deliberate car damage

Forty-nine households (26.6 percent) reported owning cars. Parked cars belonging to 9 separate households were reported as being deliberately damaged in 19 incidents during the previous year. As shown in table 10, the damage was generally done at night (78 percent) and scattered throughout the week. Most of the incidents took place in the early part

Table 8.--Vandalism

Households victimized once	6
Households victimized more than once	7
Total households victimized	13
Total incidents	39
Rate per 1,000 households (weighted)	217.2

	Number	Percent
Time of vandalism[a]		
Day	4	44
Night	8	56
Day[a]		
Wednesday	3	25
Thursday	1	8
Friday	7	58
Saturday	1	8
Month		
January	2	15
February	2	15
March	2	15
April	1	8
June	2	15
September	1	8
October	2	15
December	1	8
Items damaged[b]		
Doors	2	12
Windows	10	59
Walls	3	18
Paint	2	12
Losses		
Mean $19		
Range $12-30		
Police		
Notified		
Yes	7	54
No	6	46
Came if notified[c]		
Yes	6	100
Time to arrive[c]		
Mean 42 minutes		
Range 15-60 minutes		

[a]One could not remember.

[b]Some had multiple damage.

[c]Police were there in one case.

Table 9.--Larceny

Households victimized once	21
Households victimized more than once	15
Total households victimized	36
Total incidents	89
Rate per 1,000 households (weighted)	552.5

	Number	Percent
Time of larceny		
Day	25	31
Night	11	69
Day		
Sunday	2	6
Monday	5	14
Tuesday	3	8
Wednesday	17	47
Thursday	1	3
Friday	4	11
Saturday	4	11
Month		
January	4	11
February	7	19
March	7	19
April	3	8
July	1	3
September	2	6
October	3	8
November	2	6
December	7	19
Losses		
Mean $33		
Range $1.19-200		
Police		
Notified		
Yes	3	30
No	33	70
Came if notified[a]		
Yes	2	100
Time to arrive		
Mean 32 minutes		
Range 5 and 60 minutes		

[a]In one case the police were there.

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

Table 10.--Deliberate car damage

Households victimized once	5
Households victimized more than once	4
Total households victimized	9
Total incidents	19
Rate per 1,000 households (weighted)	130.6
Rate per 1,000 car owners (weighted)	489.9

	Number	Percent
Time		
Night	7	78
Day	2	22
Day		
Monday	2	22
Wednesday	1	11
Thursday	2	22
Friday	2	22
Saturday	1	11
No answer	1	11
Month		
January	1	11
February	2	22
March	2	22
April	1	22
June	1	22
October	2	22
Losses: Mean $52		
Range $14-150		
Police		
Notified		
No	9	100

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

of the year. The lowest loss was $14 and the highest was $150. One respondent did not know what the value of the loss was. The police were not notified in any of the nine most recent cases. The respondents explained that there was no proof, that nothing could be done about it, or that it was unimportant. One said he didn't want to get involved.

Mailbox break-in

Nickerson Gardens does not have mailboxes--the residents have mail slots in their front doors. Therefore, this category did not apply to Nickerson Gardens.

LOCATIONAL ANALYSIS OF VICTIMIZATION

One of the characteristics of the survey instrument used in this study is that it is environmentally specific--it indicates the specific location of the criminal act.

This kind of data is potentially rich to the planner because of the possibility that a relationship can be established between the physical design features of a site, e.g. on-street-off-street, end units-interior units, 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.

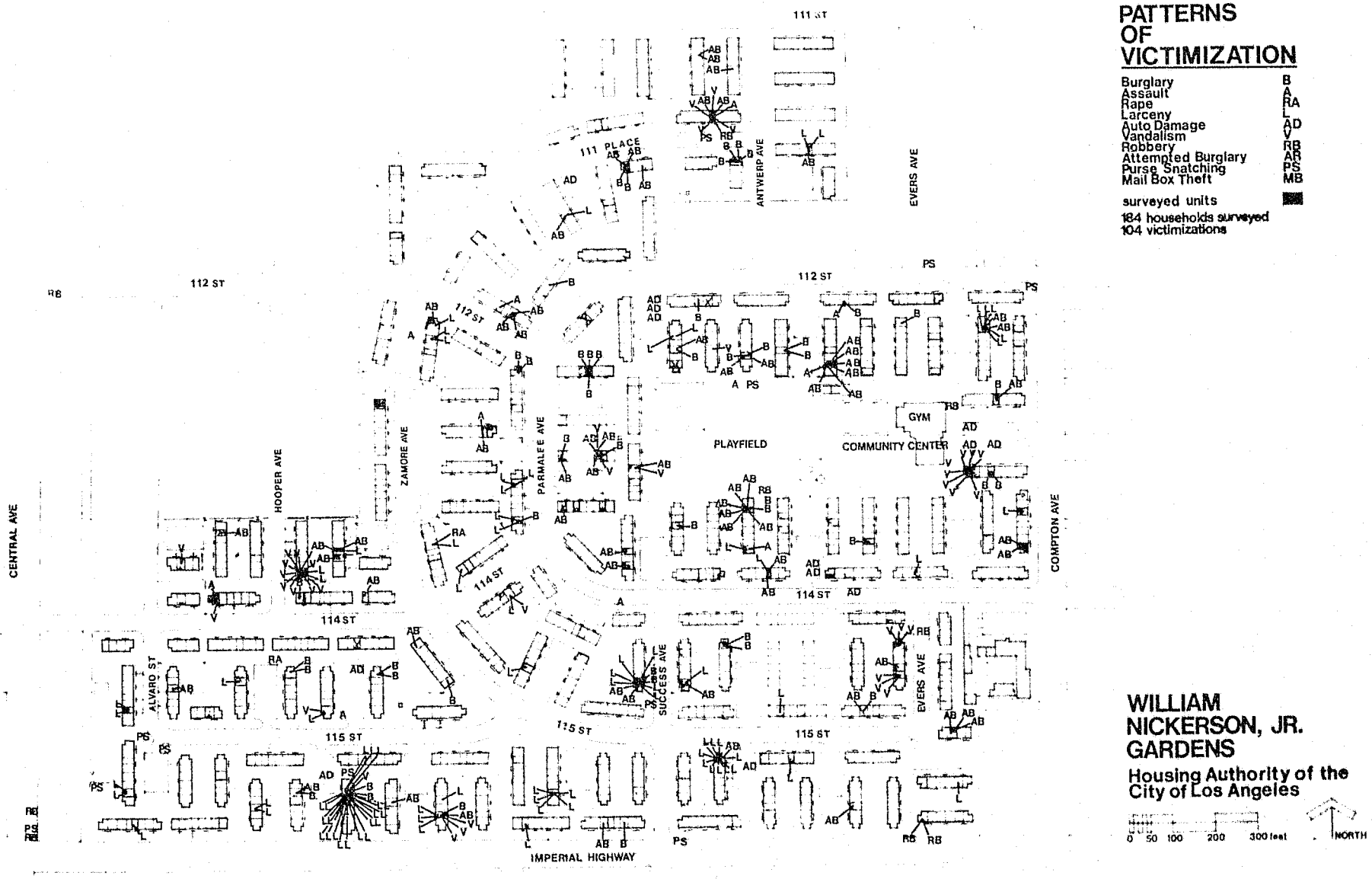
To determine if there was a relationship between the physical and design characteristics of Nickerson Gardens and the incidence of crime, WBA analyzed the survey data extensively.

As shown in Figure 2, the location of each reported victimization was plotted on a map of the site. Every reported incident of burglary (attempted or successful), larceny, vandalism, and mailbox theft is shown on this map. The location of reported incidents of robbery, assault, rape, purse snatching and auto damage are shown for the last reported incident only. Patterns were studied by unit type, row position and the relationship among rows. The principal findings of this locational analysis are presented below.

Summary findings

1. More units in rows perpendicular to the street appeared to experience burglary than units parallel to the street. For example, of the units surveyed along Imperial Highway, one-third (33.3 percent) were burglarized, while nearly two-thirds (62.5 percent) of those in rows perpendicular to the street were burglarized.

Figure 2.--Patterns of Victimization
William Nickerson, Jr. Gardens



2. Units in rows surrounding the play-field, perpendicular to the street, and partially screened from the sidewalk by other buildings, appeared to experience more burglaries than other units in the project. This may be due to the reduced visibility of these areas to people passing by on the sidewalk.

3. Robbery and purse snatching appeared to concentrate where groups hang out. The gym and the area on Central Avenue by Imperial Highway, where groups hang out, both showed concentrations of robbery and purse snatching. The effect of these groups may be to provide camouflage to potential robbers.

4. Robbery and purse snatching also appeared to concentrate in areas where escape would be easier. None of these crimes occurred along 114th Street but many occurred along 112th Street which parallels it. The fence and traffic along Imperial Highway would impede escape from 114th Street, while the area of private houses and alleys along and close to 112th Street may provide easy escape without any difficult barriers to cross.

Other findings based upon the locational analysis, in addition to those presented above, will appear in subsequent reports. It is anticipated that the locational analysis will make an important contribution to the comprehensive security plan being prepared for Nickerson Gardens.

LENGTH OF RESIDENCE AND VICTIMIZATION

While planning the sample for Nickerson Gardens, it was realized that the project had a very high rate of turnover. In light of the potential danger of sampling bias, it was decided to draw the principle sample from those residing in the project six months or more. To reach very short-term residents, an additional sub-sample of those who had lived in the project less than six months was also drawn. Thus, the strategy was designed to include short-term residents and their victimization experience.

For analytic purposes, the experience of those who had lived in the project for less than one year was compared to that of those who had lived in the project for a year or more.

Those residing in the project for less than a year were asked about their experience since moving into the project. Those who had lived there a year or more were asked about their experience of crime during the previous year. To make the data for the two groups comparable, a factor weighting for length of residence was used to project annual crime frequencies for residents who had lived in the project less than one year.

These frequencies were then standardized to rates per 1,000 households or population 12 years of age or older. Table 11 compares the resulting rates for those who had resided less than one year with those who had resided in Nickerson Gardens more than one year.

Table 11.--Comparative incidence of crime by length of residence

Adjusted for months of residence and standardized to rate per 1,000 persons or households

Rate for 1,000 persons 12 and over	Length of residence		Weighted rate for total sample
	0-11 months	12 or more months	
Robbery	115.8	49.8	62.2
Purse snatching	136.1	34.3	53.4
Assault	23.0	49.8	44.8
Sexual Assault	....[a]	....[a]	5.0
Rate per 1,000 households			
Burglary	1,020.2	609.9	705.8
Successful burglary	290.6	283.7	285.3
Attempted burglary	729.5	326.2	420.4
Larceny	643.5	524.8	552.5
Vandalism	138.8	241.1	217.2

[a]Too few cases for reasonable comparison.

Robbery, purse snatching, burglary and larceny showed higher standard incidence among the short-term residents. This suggests that, for some reason, this population is more vulnerable to predation than those residents who have lived in the project one year or more.

It may be that their unfamiliarity with the environment and other residents contributes to the higher projected rates of robbery and purse snatching. Newer residents may not yet understand how to pattern their lives so as to reduce their vulnerability to crime. They may not be able to distinguish an intruder and possible robber from an unfamiliar neighbor. Thus they will be more vulnerable. A corresponding lack of recognition of them by other residents may account for the higher rates of burglary and larceny. Neighbors may not be able to distinguish a burglar or thief from a new neighbor. Thus social defense mechanisms may function poorly to protect the new resident's dwelling or property.

At the same time, assault and vandalism principally affected longer-term residents of the project. This may be due to the fact that longer-term residents have had an opportunity to get into disputes with their neighbors. To some extent, reported assaults and acts of vandalism may reflect this type of conflict.

Summary

These facts suggest that more rapid assimilation of newcomers to the project may reduce the incidence of robbery, purse snatching, burglary and larceny. However, such assimilation may result in increased assaults and vandalism, unless these can be controlled by some other means.

POLICE NOTIFICATION

Of a total of 111 crimes for which detailed data were collected, 38 incidents (34 percent) were reported to the police. Assault and successful burglary were the crimes most frequently reported. Deliberate car damage and larcenies were the least frequently reported. Ten of the 20 crimes against persons were reported to police, while only 28 (31 percent) of the 91 crimes involving property were reported. Table 12 breaks down reporting frequency for all categories.

Table 12.--Police notification

By type of crime; last incidents only

Crime	Police not told	Police told	Total (last incidents)	Percentage incidents reported to police
Robbery	5	3	8	37.5
Assault	4	6	10	60.0
Sexual assault	1	1	2	50.0
Successful burglary	15	18	33	54.5
Larceny	33	3	36	8.3
Vandalism	6	7	13	53.8
Deliberate car damage	9	0	9	0.0
Total	73	38	111	34.2

Table 13 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 in the face of crime.

Another often-stated reason was that the incident was not important enough. This accounted for nearly one quarter of the rationales given for not reporting property crimes, and may relate to the relatively small losses incurred in many cases.

Table 13.--Reasons given for not informing police of crime[a]

Reason	Number	Percent
Nothing could be done; lack of proof	31	38.3
Not important enough	18	22.2
Police would not want to be bothered	3	3.7
Did not want to take the time; inconvenient	7	8.6
Private or personal	3	3.7
Did not want to get involved	11	13.6
Fear of reprisal	2	2.5
Reported to someone else	4	4.9
Other	2	2.5
Total	81	100.0

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

FEAR OF CRIME

Four different sets of questions were used to gauge 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.

In addition, respondents identified those areas in and around the project which they felt were particularly threatening.

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 14 indicates that burglary and robbery are perceived as the most likely crimes. More than 80 percent estimated that the chances of having their homes broken into while they were away were 50/50 or better and more than 77 percent felt that the chances of being robbed in the project were 50/50 or better.

FEAR FOR CHILDREN

Another indicant of fear was the worry respondents felt for the school-age children in their households. Respondents were asked how worried they were (not worried, worried, very worried) about the 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. (See table 15.)

Table 14.--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	26.1	54.3	10.9	8.7
Having your home broken into while you are at home	9.2	37.0	31.0	22.8
Being robbed in the project	25.1	52.5	10.4	12.0
Being beaten up in the project	18.3	47.2	18.3	16.1
Being sexually assaulted or molested[a]	15.0	44.3	20.4	20.4
Having your car deliberately damaged[b]	28.6	42.9	12.2	16.3
Having your home vandalized	16.8	57.1	12.5	13.6

[a]Percentage of women only. (N=167)

[b]Households without cars were not asked this question. (N=49)

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

Table 15.--Fear for children

How worried are you about your children	Not worried	Worried	Very worried
	Percent		
Being beaten			
In the project	29.2	27.7	43.1
Going to and from school	22.8	41.9	35.3
At school	33.1	36.0	30.9
Being robbed			
In the project	27.7	33.6	38.7
Going to and from school	32.4	33.8	33.8
At school	44.1	28.7	27.2
Being forced to pay money for protection			
In the project	44.5	27.0	28.5
Going to and from school	44.1	27.9	27.9
At school	44.9	28.7	26.5

Mean percent very worried, for each area	
In the project	36.8
Going to and from school	32.3
At school	28.2

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

Respondents felt most worried about the children being beaten up in the project.[6] Concern about children being robbed in the project was also high. No strong differential pattern emerged concerning extortion, but note that over a quarter were worried about this threat regardless of location.

For each threat, residents worried least about their children at school, as confirmed by the summary figures at the bottom of table 15. A significantly higher percentage are very worried about their children in the project rather than when they are in school.[7]

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, at night and alone, or with other people.

As table 16 indicates, the respondents find a number of everyday social settings highly threatening, 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 threatening than those situations in which they see themselves as isolated or not easily visible.

The mean dangerousness rating (last column of table 16) shows that no nighttime activity was considered safer than any daytime activity. Being any distance away from one's home at night is the most threatening circumstance. Being stationary and away from home, as in waiting for a bus, seems to generate fear. The lowest mean dangerousness scores were assigned to situations close to one's home, in open view, or in daylight.

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[6] $t=2.1077$; $\alpha < .025$ (one-tail)

[7] $t=1.5205$; $\alpha < .10$ (one-tail)

Table 16.--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	3.3	19.6	15.8	39.1	22.3	3.6
Waiting for a bus alone	0.0	2.2	10.9	14.1	45.7	27.2	3.8
On your way to shopping	0.5	8.2	20.9	19.2	31.9	19.2	3.3
Walking along the street	0.0	4.3	13.6	19.0	35.9	27.2	3.7
Walking across the project	0.0	5.6	12.8	15.6	34.4	31.7	3.7
At your back door	1.6	11.4	34.8	16.8	21.7	13.6	2.9
At your front door	1.1	18.8	37.6	14.4	20.4	7.7	2.6
Walking from a bus stop to your house	0.5	7.6	13.0	15.8	34.2	28.8	3.6
Walking from a car to your house	1.1	23.5	41.0	15.3	14.8	4.4	2.3
Alone in your home	1.6	23.0	39.9	10.9	12.0	12.6	2.5
During the day							
Waiting for a bus	2.2	24.0	49.7	9.8	7.1	7.1	2.2
On your way to shopping	1.1	34.2	45.7	7.6	9.2	2.2	2.0
Walking along the street	1.6	32.8	45.9	7.7	8.7	3.3	2.0

Table 16.--Dangerousness ladder (continued)

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 (continued)							
Walking across the project	3.3	36.4	44.6	8.2	6.5	1.1	1.8
At your back door	3.3	42.1	40.4	6.6	5.5	2.2	1.7
At your front door	4.3	45.7	37.5	6.5	3.3	2.7	1.7
Walking from a bus stop to your house	2.7	37.0	47.3	4.9	5.4	2.7	1.8
Walking from a car to your house	6.6	43.2	42.1	4.9	3.3	0.0	1.5
Alone in your home	8.2	47.0	33.3	6.0	4.9	0.5	1.5
Day or night not specified							
Talking with a friend in front of your house	2.2	36.6	41.0	11.5	8.7	0.0	1.9

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

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 (46 percent of all the respondents) mentioned a handgun as appropriate protection. Five suggested a shotgun.

Table 17.--What respondents felt people should carry to protect themselves

Type of protection	Number[a]	Percentage of respondents (N=184)
Handgun	85	46.2
Shotgun/rifle	5	2.7
Knife	53	28.8
Cane/club	16	8.7
Tear gas/mace	14	7.6
Other	5	2.7
Total responding positively to carrying some type of protection	140	76.1

[a]Some named more than one item.

Of all the respondents, 140 (76.1 percent) felt that people should carry something lethal to protect themselves. A desire for such deadly counterthreat seems a stong indicator of the respondents' feelings of being threatened.

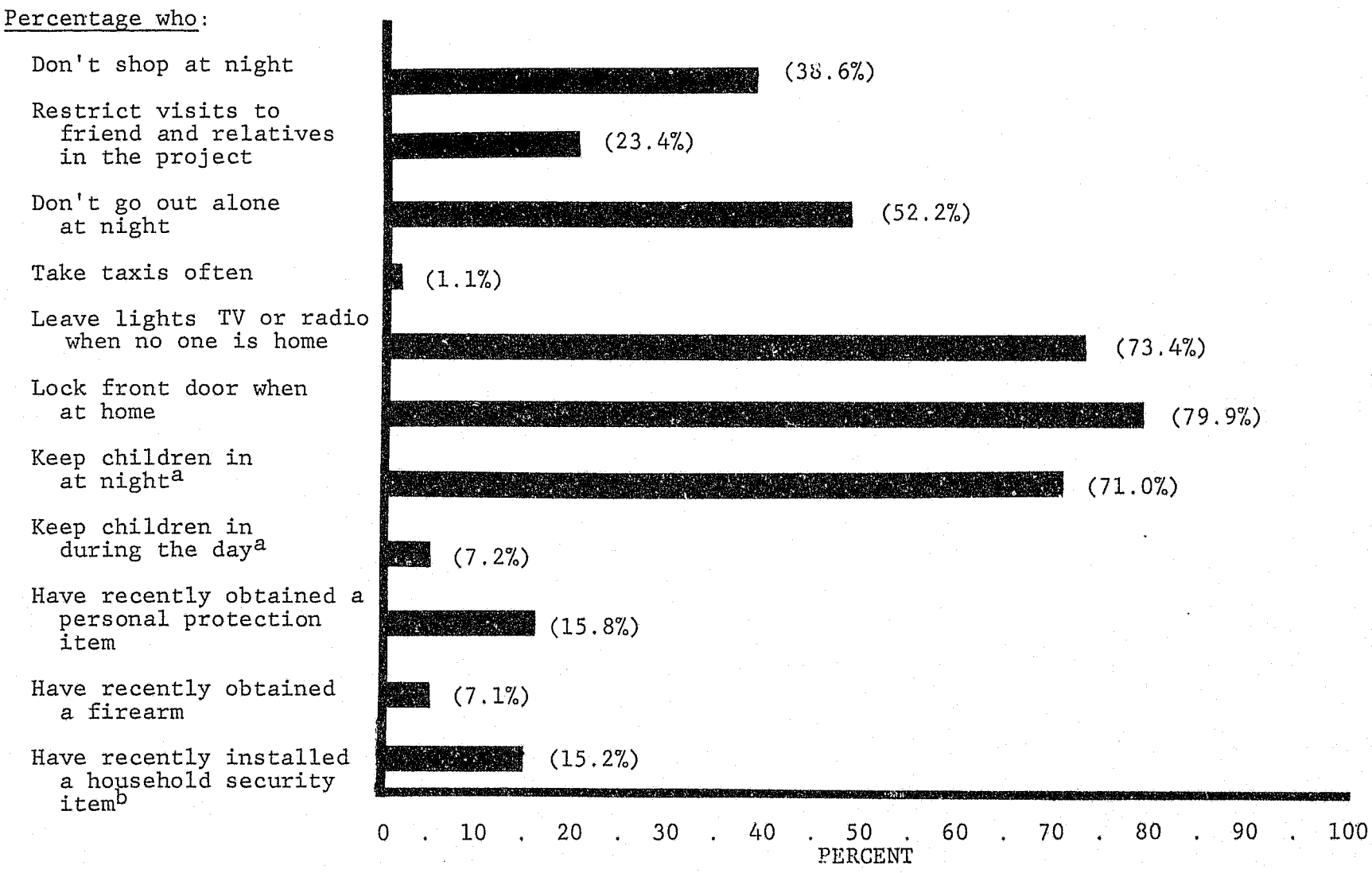
ALTERED BEHAVIOR

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.

Eighty percent of the respondents kept their doors locked while they were at home because of their fear of crime. Over 73 percent left lights on or a radio or TV playing to deceive potential thieves. More than half the respondents would not go out alone at night because they were afraid they would become victims of crime. Table 18 shows that 7 in 10 respondents were afraid of criminal activity.

Concerns about crime caused many respondents to install new security items especially locks in their homes. Many have recently obtained some personal protective device, such as a gun, knife, club, or tear gas, to improve their protection. As table 19 shows, knives were the favored weapon, with pistols and rifles ranked next. This contrasts with the respondents' evident belief, shown in table 17, that handguns are the best protection. Cost and licensing problems may account for this.

Table 18.--Behavior alterations due to fear of crime



[a]Base = 138 households.

[b]Most of these were new door locks.

Table 19.--Personal protection

Respondents who have "recently" obtained something for self-protection

Type of Protection	Number[a]	Percentage of respondents (N=184)
Handgun	9	4.9
Shotgun/rifle	4	2.2
Knife	17	9.2
Cane/club	2	1.1
Tear gas/mace	0	0.0
Total who "recently" obtained something	29	15.8

[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 20, drugs was perceived to be the most serious problem in the project, with over 60 percent of the respondents giving it a "very serious" ranking. The problem of next greatest concern was gangs. More than 41 percent ranked this a very serious problem. More than one quarter felt that fighting among "kids" posed a very serious problem.

Feelings about management activity were relatively positive, with 40.4 percent of the total respondents indicating poor management was not a problem.

Table 20.--Problems in the project

Respondents assigning given seriousness to potential problems in the project (N=184)

Potential problem	No problem	Not serious	Serious	Fairly serious	Very serious
			Percent		
Drugs	1.1	1.6	28.3	8.2	60.9
Gangs	2.7	9.2	34.2	12.0	41.8
Kids fighting	8.7	12.5	33.7	17.9	27.2
Poor management	40.4	18.6	13.7	16.9	10.4
Tenant selection policies	38.6	14.1	16.3	13.0	17.9

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

TENANTS' PROPOSALS

Table 21 shows the tenants' security proposals mentioned during the interviews.

Over 40 percent mentioned better police protection. People working together more, improved recreational facilities for young people and better lighting also ranked high.

Suggestions listed as "other" fell into four major groupings: dealing with teenagers, tenant policies, housing patrol, and the physical structure of the units.

Ten respondents indicated a need for parents to deal more firmly with their children, especially teenagers. Also mentioned were teenagers gambling and drinking on the corners (one respondent), the need to eliminate teenage gangs (one respondent), and the need to find jobs for teenagers, to give them something useful to do (two respondents).

Five respondents mentioned better tenant screening as a means of improving the project. Six others mentioned moving troublemakers and their families out of the project. Two suggested better tenant-management relations.

Many respondents mentioned improved policing of the project. Four mentioned improving the housing patrol generally. Four others suggested more foot patrols and one mentioned a need for 24-hour patrols. One suggested removing the housing patrol. Four mentioned a need to rid the project of "dope."

Suggestions to improve unit security included: bars (one respondent), steel screens (one respondent), alarms (two respondents), peepholes (one respondent), and removing the remaining walls behind the houses (one respondent).

Table 21.--Tenants' security proposals

Security proposals	Percentage of respondents (N=184)
Better lighting	24.5
Improved recreational facilities for young people	24.5
Better police protection	41.3
People pulling together more	28.8
Better locks, doors, etc.	20.7
Environmental improvements (e.g., pathways, walls, parking)	4.3
Tenant patrol	13.6
Guards	18.5
Other suggestions[a]	26.6

[a]These included many suggestions concerning security guards.

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

COMPARISON WITH OTHER PUBLIC HOUSING PROJECTS

Table 22 compares the incidence of crime among households residing for one year or more in Nickerson Gardens with that which WBA found in four other public housing projects. Data referring to the short-term residents sub-sample are excluded to provide comparability to the other projects. Thus, these figures differ from those found in table 1.

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

Robbery in the Los Angeles project occurred at a rate similar to most of the other public housing projects surveyed, except Murphy Homes. Assault in the Los Angeles project was more common than in the other projects.

The Nickerson Gardens rate of burglary was the highest among the public housing projects surveyed for successful burglary and was also the highest for attempted burglary. This apparently indicates that successful burglary is less difficult in the Baltimore and Los Angeles projects than in the Washington project.

Theft from mailboxes seems to vary directly with the accessibility of the mailboxes to intruders. Nickerson Gardens had no mailboxes and thus no break-ins.

The vandalism rate in Nickerson Gardens was far lower than that 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 in the Washington, Baltimore, and Los Angeles surveys.

Table 22.--Crime rates compared
Nickerson Gardens and other public housing projects[a]

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					
Burglary	.....	.....	500.0	593.1	609.9
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 not available.

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