

CITIZEN PARTICIPATION IN URBAN SERVICES: THE ADMINISTRATION OF A COMMUNITY-BASED CRIME PREVENTION PROGRAM

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Soon after Richard M. Nixon became President in 1968 he undertook to terminate or reorganize many of the programs started by the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Much of that has now been accomplished. The Office of Economic Opportunity, located in the Executive Office of the President to coordinate the War on Poverty, no longer exists. Many programs have been assigned to departments and bureaus in existing agencies of the Federal bureaucracy. Innovation in programs and administrative arrangements to combat poverty are no longer emphasized as was once the case. However, one aspect of the war on poverty has had an impact on community politics and governmental organization long after specific programs and agencies have been dismantled, terminated, or lost in the federal bureaucracy. That idea goes by a number of names, the most common of which are "community action," "citizen participation," and "decentralization."

The legal basis for involving client groups in the decision-making of local poverty programs is found in Title II, Section 202(b) of the Economic Opportunity Act of 1964. Specifically, the phrase "maximum feasible participation" is used to define a community action project ". . . developed, conducted, and administered with the maximum feasible participation of residents of the areas and members of the groups served."¹ By February 1965, the Office of Economic Opportunity published its Community Action Program Guide, containing instructions for developing, conducting, and administering a community action program. It stated that "the purpose of federal assistance to community action programs is to help urban and rural communities to mobilize their resources to combat poverty. Because community needs and resources differ widely, considerable latitude is allowed in the development and conduct of a community action program."²

Both the language of Title II, Section 202(b) and the OEO guide failed to operationalize maximum feasible participation. It became clear in the implementation of poverty programs that federal and local officials held very different conceptions of what was maximum, feasible, and participatory. Provision had not been made for identifying the poor or their representatives or for defining the role they would have in the development,

conduct, and administration of a community action project. (Kramer, 1969; Moynihan, 1969; Donovan, 1973) An idea that seemed at the time to be a reasonable and logical extension of basic concepts and processes of American democracy gave rise to intense and protracted conflict within central cities. Bitter disputes arose not only between the poor and local officials, but also between and among the poor themselves. In at least one instance, a dispute between public school teachers and a community school board resulted in the shutdown of the city's public schools on three separate occasions during the period of September to November, 1968. (Gittel and Berube, 1969).

THE VARIETY OF ARRANGEMENTS IN COMMUNITY ACTION AND CITIZEN PARTICIPATION

One thing that can be gleaned from even a cursory review of efforts to translate "maximum feasible participation" from principle to practice is that community action and citizen participation come in an unlimited number of shapes, sizes, and roles. However, citizen participation structures usually involve one or more of three dimensions.

The first dimension of participatory structures involves the nature of the responsibility and authority they exercise. Many citizen groups acquire and exercise authority to make binding decisions; in others, the function only in an advisory capacity. Altschuler (1970) refers to the former as political decentralization and the latter as administrative decentralization. The difference between the two is that political decentralization involves a transfer of responsibility and authority from existing, usually centralized governmental institutions to locally-based client-oriented institutions.

The second dimension along which participatory arrangements are organized concerns the territorial base of citizen groups. In a great many instances, the target of citizen participation is a particular neighborhood. In this case the term neighborhood is used to refer to a small, geographic area of a larger community. For the purposes of community action

and citizen participation, a neighborhood is both a physical and social entity (Keller, 1968). In many cases, neighborhoods bear identifying names like Harlem, the Lower East Side, Hough, Watts, Hyde Park-Kenwood, or Roxbury. Some arrangements for citizen participation use the entire city as the territorial base around which they are organized. Citywide structures are preferred when social and physical concerns are comprehensive and interdependent, or when centralized public officials want opinions and viewpoints from a cross-section of the city's population.

The third dimension of citizen participation involves the scope of responsibility. Quite a few citizens groups, especially those growing out of Model Cities programs, are comprehensive in the range of activities and programs undertaken. Less well-supported and financed efforts, however, tend to be organized and operated for specific and limited purposes. Block clubs and neighborhood associations come immediately to mind as examples of single-purpose or functionally-specific participatory arrangements.

A study of neighborhood decentralization identifies nine distinct arrangements used to organize community action and citizen participation programs. It is important to remember that the use of one arrangement does not preclude the use of another. On the contrary, in many cities it is quite common to find a number of citizen participation arrangements operating alongside one another. Decentralization and citizen participation arrangements that have been used most frequently include (1) self-help organizations such as block clubs, tenants' councils, neighborhood associations, and *ad hoc* protest groups; (2) community advisory boards, including the many created during the War on Poverty and others used in local school districts, urban renewal programs, police-community relations programs, citywide and neighborhood planning programs, etc.; (3) neighborhood field offices and little city halls, used to bridge the geographic and psychological gap between city hall and neighborhood residents throughout the city; (4) neighborhood ombudsmen and citizen complaint centers; (5) multiservice centers delivering a wide range of city services from neighborhood locations; (6) Model Cities programs; (7) community corporations; (8) neighborhood health centers; and (9) community school boards, especially those in New York and Detroit (Yates, 1973).

This list of citizen participation structures and decentralization strategies contains an important message: there is no single arrangement that serves as a model for structuring the participation of citizen-consumers into the decision-making of public institutions. While most participatory arrangements owe a considerable historical debt to community action programs and Model Cities, it is clear that cities have gone off on their own in deciding how to organize and integrate citizens into existing and newly-adopted decision-making arrangements. It is equally clear that in almost any American city a number of different structures

of citizen participation operate simultaneously. Some have been established and supported by public officials; others are self-started by groups of citizens dissatisfied with the way in which their views were being received by elected and appointed officials; still others are created to supplement the performance of public agencies in providing basic services and facilities.

This paper is about a neighborhood-based citizens' organization established to develop and implement a community-based crime prevention program. In one respect it can be said that the organization was established to bridge the gap between neighborhood residents and various public officials, but its main purpose was to work in the area of crime prevention and reduce the role of victimization in the target area. This paper is not an attempt to develop or test a model of citizen participation or decentralization strategies. Rather, it is an account of how a group of residents established and operated a community-based voluntary organization. The paper will focus on the internal structure of the organization as well as the client-based programming and activities. A limited body of data will be used to assess the effectiveness of the organization.

NEIGHBORHOOD AS THE BASIS OF ORGANIZATION

A number of decentralization strategies use the local neighborhood as the territorial base of organization. Many problems arise in such efforts, not the least of which are those relating to the diverse loyalties and identification residents attach to them (Gans, 1962; Hannerz, 1968; Suttles, 1968). Another potentially serious problem concerns the different meanings and conceptions involved in the use of the term by different people. Yet a third problem is more practical: how large an area should a neighborhood-based organization take in? What geographical area offers the best prospect for providing the requisite human resources (manpower, skill, commitment, etc.) while not over-extending the capacity of the organization to generate and sustain effective programs and activities. A geographical area that is too small may so restrict the availability of resources that the organization is unable to implement any useful and effective programs. On the other hand, a geographical area whose boundaries are too extensive may take in residents of highly dissimilar lifestyles, values, and concerns, creating obvious problems for organizational consensus and program effectiveness (Warren and Warren, 1977).

The potential seriousness of the territorial problem in creating a neighborhood-based citizens' organization in Flint, Michigan was mitigated by the presence of an extensive network of community schools. In the school district of the city of Flint public schools are identified as "community schools." Whatever the phrase "community school"

means in practice, it implies an identification and loyalty of neighborhood residents to a neighborhood-based institution. An extensive network of community-school advisory councils is maintained to engender the loyalty of neighborhood residents and to serve as a vehicle for channeling citizen participation into governance of the public school system. When the decision was made to establish and operate a neighborhood-based organization to supplement the activities of public agencies in crime prevention, the territorial boundaries of the target area were drawn to coincide with those of the community elementary school serving the target neighborhood.

GOVERNANCE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE CITIZENS' ORGANIZATION

The Citizens' Committee on Crime Prevention, hereafter referred to as the "Citizens' Organization," was established under a grant from the Michigan Office of Criminal Justice Programs to the office of the Genesee County Prosecuting Attorney. The purpose of the Citizens' Organization was to plan and implement programs and activities designed to improve and develop the neighborhood area by reducing the incidence of crime. It was felt that the most effective strategy for reducing crime in the neighborhood included an educational and service program to encourage residents to (1) report incidents of criminal victimization and call for police assistance with greater frequency, and (2) participate in crime prevention programs and activities organized at both individual and neighborhood levels. The initial idea for the community-based crime prevention program came from a long time resident of the area who had become active in a variety of community organizations, some of which operated citywide; others focused on problems in specific neighborhoods. This individual was assisted in the drafting of the grant proposal by a specialist in urban affairs-criminal justice at the branch campus of a major public university in Flint.

Soon after it was chartered by state and local agencies, the Citizens' Organization drafted a constitution and by-laws designed to facilitate governance and administration. Initially, the neighborhood area was divided into four districts of approximately equal population. Provision was made in the constitution and by-laws for redistricting and the inclusion of new areas, and after just two months of operation two districts were added to the service area of the Citizens' Organization. Funding from the state permitted the Citizens' Organization to employ a small staff consisting of a project coordinator, three part-time community organizers, and a part-time secretary. All other participants were citizen-volunteers.

The constitution and by-laws called for governance by a Board of Directors. The

Board consisted of six members elected at-large and two members elected from each of the constituent neighborhood districts. Board meetings were held at least once a month and special meetings could be called by either the President of the Board or seven of its members. Officers of the Board were elected at the Annual Congress of the Citizens' Organization. It is not necessary for officers of the Board to be elected to the Board itself, and board elections are conducted in a manner chosen by each of the districts. In an attempt to encourage regular attendance at Board meetings, the constitution and by-laws provided that a majority vote of the Board of Directors can declare vacant the seat of any member who failed to attend three consecutive regular meetings.

The composition of the Board of Directors is an important element in understanding the internal dynamics of the Citizens' Organization, largely because the members of the Board constitute the basic resource of the neighborhood organization. Aside from the coordinator and part time staff, all programs and activities are planned, designed, approved, implemented, and evaluated by the Board or one of its standing committees.

The first Board of Directors, set-up after the Citizens' Organization was established, consisted of fourteen members. After re-districting and the addition of two districts to the service area the Board increased in size to eighteen. Considerable turnover in board membership is reflected in the fact that thirty-nine individuals have held the eighteen seats on the Board since December, 1975. Only three of the original fourteen members remain on the Board of Directors. Of the eleven who are no longer with the Citizens' Organization in the capacity of board member, two stayed on the Board for two months or less and none stayed more than nine months. Replacements of vacated seats on the Board of Directors began as early as February, 1976, and have involved twenty-three individuals. Of those, only ten are presently members of the board. In quite a few instances individuals stayed on the board for as little as one or two months. Turnover in Board membership became an early problem in the life of the Citizens's Organization and has remained resistant to an effective, long-term solution. The majority of Board members who resigned indicated that the time demands were just too much to handle and more than they initially anticipated.

Members of the Board of Directors, past as well as present, come primarily from three occupational groups--retirees (5), housewives (7), and students (5). The remaining members of the Board hold various jobs consistent with the blue-collar composition of the neighborhood. The majority of those jobs are "on the line" in one of the many General Motors plants in the Flint area.

The constitution and by-laws establish a committee system to promote task specialization and the acquisition of expertise by members of the Board of Directors. The Board provides direction to the staff of the Citizens' Organization primarily through the committee

system. Nine standing committees existed at one time or another including:

Business, responsible for organizing the business community in the area served by the neighborhood organization and developing programs to reduce the incidence of business-related criminal victimization.

Community Congress, responsible for planning and preparation for annual community congress, which is the annual membership meeting of the Citizen's Organization. Responsible for all facets of meeting, including promotion, preparation of agenda and related materials, identifying speakers, arranging for adequate facilities, etc.

Complaints, responsible for receiving, reporting and investigating complaints by neighborhood residents concerning problems relating to incidents of victimization.

Election, responsible for election of officers of the Board of Directors and for filling vacancies on the Board when such are declared.

Finance, responsible for the financial records and affairs of the Organization.

Organization, responsible for planning agendas of meetings of the Board of Directors and for working with other crime prevention agencies and officials to coordinate activities and programs.

Publication, responsible for enhancing citizens' awareness of the existence of the Citizens' Organization, for promotion of special events and activities sponsored by the Organization, and for preparation and distribution of the bi-monthly newsletter.

Research, Planning and Evaluation, responsible for evaluation of on-going activities and programs of the Organization, for long-range planning of future programs and activities, and for research as may be necessary for evaluation and planning.

Youth Progress, responsible for developing programs and activities to serve the needs of young people living in the area served by the neighborhood organization.

OUTPUTS AND OUTCOMES OF THE CITIZENS' ORGANIZATION

In their study of public agencies in Oakland, Levy, Meltsner, and Wildavsky (1974) distinguish the outputs of agency decision and actions from their outcomes. The outputs of public agencies are the goods, services, and activities they produce; the outcomes are the

consequences of outputs for the citizen-consumers or clientele of public agencies. The distinction is useful for taking organizational and policy analysis beyond the specific and proximate measures of public goods and services. While outputs focused on identification of an organization's product, the concept of outcomes enables us to step back and ask what consequences those goods, services, and activities have for citizen-consumers. In the context of the present analysis, the outputs of the organization include the activities and programs developed and carried out in the neighborhood area; the outcomes are the changes that take place in the rate of criminal victimization, the extent of citizen participation in and utilization of crime prevention programs and measures, and the extent of citizens' awareness of and participation in a neighborhood-based institution like the Citizens' Organization.

The outputs of the Citizens' Organization are too numerous to describe in detail. During the period of operation the Citizens' Organization developed and carried out a variety of programs and activities to reduce the incidence of crime victimization in the target neighborhood. Some of these activities were directed at individuals and involved encouraging them to make use of a variety of crime prevention measures, e.g., house-sitters, alarms, and neighborhood watch. Other activities and programs were targeted at specific groups, e.g., retirees, persons living alone, etc., and focused on their vulnerability to particular types of crimes. It would be impossible to deal in-depth with all the programs and activities initiated by the Citizens' Organization. However, a brief description of selected examples should prove useful in understanding the scope and direction of community-based crime prevention programming.

1. formation of block clubs. The Citizens' Organization made an early decision to foster and assist in the formation of block clubs. These organizations were intended to develop greater community identification and serve as a communications network throughout the larger neighborhood area. They were also used as a vehicle for carrying out some of the specific projects developed by the larger neighborhood organization.
2. publication and distribution of a bi-monthly newsletter, "Community Crime Fighter." The bi-monthly newsletter is distributed to every household in the service area of the Citizens' Organization. It provides information on a variety of things, including recent crime statistics in the neighborhood, a calendar of events sponsored by block clubs and the Citizens' Organization, feature articles on precautionary measures to prevent specific kinds of crimes, e.g., car theft, rape,

- bicycle theft, shoplifting, residential and commercial burglaries, etc., location and names of officials at city and county agencies concerned with crime and crime prevention.
3. a complaint and information-referral center. The Citizens' Organization operates an information and referral center for citizens' complaints. Neighborhood residents can use the center to find out which public agency to call about a particular problem or, in many instances, the center itself will refer complaints to the appropriate agency and follow-up resolution of the problem. The Board of Directors has a standing committee to work with and improve the complaint-information referral function of the Citizens' Organization.
 4. specific projects and programs such as Project Transition, designed to assist residents in one of the city's urban renewal areas with residential relocation; Youth Progress, designed to provide community-based activities and projects for young people during the summer months; Vacation Watch, designed to provide surveillance of residential properties while occupants are away on vacation; and Project Whistle Stop, designed to establish a signal system for alerting residents of trouble on their street.
 5. regular and numerous open forums for neighborhood residents, attended by representatives of public agencies from city, county, and state government. These forums enable area residents to discuss problems as well as possible solutions to them. While the majority of forums deal with problems relating to individual and neighborhood crimes, some are devoted to problems dealing with the general performance of public agencies in areas other than crime and crime prevention.

The outcomes of programs and activities developed and sponsored by the Citizens' Organization are assessed by use of two kinds of data. First, the police department of the city of Flint collects and maintains records of crime, by type, for all areas of the city. Descriptive data of this sort is useful for the picture it provides of trends in criminal victimization in the area served by the Citizens' Organization. Second, two surveys were conducted to assess changes in residents' attitudes toward and participation in crime prevention programs and activities, and their awareness of and participation in neighborhood based institutions like the Citizens' Organization. The second survey was conducted approximately twelve months after the completion of the first and eighteen months after the initial start-up of the Citizens' Organization.

The data in Table I summarize incidents of criminal victimization in the area originally contained in the boundaries of the Citizens'

Organization. Both the total number of incidents of victimization and the percentage of change from one year to another are presented in the table. The data in Table 2 also present total victimizations and percentage changes from one year to another for the period from 1973-1977, but for a larger geographical area served by the Citizens' Organization. The neighborhood served by the Citizens' Organization was enlarged about six months after the project was begun. Consequently, data from police records was collected in such a way as to permit distinction between the original neighborhood area included within the boundaries of the Citizens' Organization and the larger neighborhood area served by the organization after the addition of two neighborhood districts.

The data in Tables 1 and 2 indicate a rather substantial and impressive reduction in criminal victimization, especially in the original area surveyed by the neighborhood organization. In Table I, where data is presented for the original project area, a reduction has taken place in all but one category of crime. Breaking and entering, for example, has decreased by 37% from 1975 to 1976, and is now well below the level of 1973. By the same token, robbery has decreased by 38% from 1975 to 1976 and is also below its 1973 level. Similarly impressive decreases have taken place with auto theft, assault, and drug-related offenses. The only type of crime to experience an increase from 1975 to 1976 is rape. The earlier decrease of 56% from 1974 to 1975 is balanced by a 100% increase from 1975 to 1976. However, the incidence of rape in the area served by the neighborhood organization still shows a decrease over the three year period from 1974 to 1976. Overall, the incidence of crime in the original area served by the neighborhood organization dropped 4% from 1974 to 1975 and 24% from 1975 to 1976.

The data in Table 2 reveal incidents after it was enlarged by the addition of two neighborhood districts. It is evident that the decrease in incidents of victimization in the larger neighborhood area is not as consistent and impressive as it was for the original one. From 1975 to 1976, for example, reductions in victimization took place in only three categories of crime (breaking and entering, 27%; robbery, 19%; drug-related offense, 19%), while increases took place in four. The comparable numbers for the original area in the same one-year period are six and one. Also, the overall reduction in incidents of victimization for the 1975-1976 period was only 8%. In fact, the neighborhood area had actually experienced a 10% increase in incidents of victimization for the one-year period from 1974-1975. The overall figures for the two one-year periods of 1974-1975 and 1976-1977 are substantially lower than their counterparts for the original area served by the neighborhood organization. Unfortunately, the data on hand do not permit examination of the possible reasons for these discrepancies.

TABLE 1

*Incidents of Victimization
In Original Area 1973-76*

	1973	1974	% Change from 1973 to 1974	1975	% Change from 1974 to 1975	1976	% Change from 1975 to 1976
Breaking and Entering	206	277	+34%	277	0	174	-37%
Robbery	32	27	-16%	24	-11%	15	-38%
Rape	N.A.	9	---	4	-56%	8	+100%
Auto	N.A.	55	---	55	-55%	22	-12%
Assault	N.A.	137	---	134	- 2%	99	-26%
Vandalism	N.A.	120	---	145	+21%	144	- 1%
Drugs	N.A.	41	---	30	-27%	23	-23%
TOTAL		666		639	- 4%	485	-24%

TABLE 2

*Incidents of Victimization
In Total Area 1973-76*

	1973	1974	% Change from 1973 to 1974	1975	% Change from 1974 to 1975	1976	% Change from 1975 to 1976
Breaking and Entering	N.A.	373	---	444	+19%	324	-27%
Robbery	N.A.	32	---	31	- 3%	25	-19%
Rape	N.A.	11	---	5	-55%	11	+100%
Auto	N.A.	78	---	30	-62%	31	+ 3%
Assault	N.A.	193	---	191	- 1%	216	+13%
Vandalism	N.A.	192	---	278	+45%	298	+ 7%
Drugs	N.A.	58	---	52	-10%	42	-19%
TOTAL		937	---	1,031	+10%	947	- 8%

The data in Tables 1 and 2 reveal the apparent effectiveness of the citizens' anti-crime efforts. A number of points should be made in this regard. First, there were no other anticrime efforts in the target neighborhood other than those initiated and carried out by the Citizens' Organization. Local police, for example, were not engaged in intensive patrolling or other extraordinary

services beyond those normally provided prior to the experiment with community-based crime prevention. Second, crime rates in each of the categories were relatively constant in the rest of the city during the period for which police data have been presented. No matched neighborhood areas without community-based anticrime efforts were identified for comparative purposes, so it is impossible to trace the

reductions in criminal victimization in the target area directly and conclusively to the efforts of the Citizens' Organization.

Data in the second sample survey conducted in the area served by the neighborhood organization were collected from a panel of respondents included in the initial survey. The second survey panel consisted of 270 respondents; 149 interviews were completed for a response rate of 53.6%. Though the response rate is lower than desirable, the use of the panel method for selecting respondents permits assessment of the effectiveness of the neighborhood organization in enhancing residents' interest and participation in both individual and community-based crime prevention programs and activities.

The data in Table 3 compare the rates of victimization and assistance in the target area from the two sample surveys. Two interesting findings are worth noting. First, the incidence of multiple victimizations and assistances has declined considerably. There are no instances of third, fourth, or fifth victimizations or assistances among respondents in the follow-up survey. Furthermore, the rate of second occurrence victimization decreases by 6%, while the rate of second occurrence assistance decreases by 2%. Second, there is a modest increase in the rate of first occurrence victimization (from 24% to 27%) and an equally modest decrease in the rate of first occurrence assistance (from 16% to 15%).

The data in Table 4 provide an indication of the frequency with which various kinds of crimes are being committed as well as the kinds of police assistance neighborhood residents need. It is readily apparent that burglary and theft are the two most frequently committed crimes. Over a third of the respondents (37.1%) reporting victimization as burglary or theft. Reinforcing the widespread occurrence of burglary and theft is the fact that attempted burglary is the second most frequently mentioned victimization description.

What is particularly significant in these data is that burglary/theft and attempted burglary were also the two most frequently mentioned victimization descriptions in the initial survey of neighborhood residents. At that time, 52.5% of the respondents indicated that they had been victims of burglary or theft in the last year, while 6.8% indicated that they had been victims of attempted burglary during the same period. It is interesting to note the substantial reduction in the frequency of burglaries and thefts (from 52.5% to 37.1%) despite the fact that these crimes are committed most frequently. It is equally interesting that the frequency of attempted burglary is slightly higher (from 6.8% to 8.1%) among follow-up respondents than among initial survey respondents.

The need for assistance with burglar alarms remains among the most frequently cited reasons for police assistance. In the follow-up survey, 11.3% of the respondents reported that they had called for police assistance because of a problem related to burglar

alarms, e.g., accidental signalling. This is a somewhat higher incidence than in the initial study, when 8.5% of the respondents reported needing police assistance because of a problem related to burglar alarms. It should be noted, however, that police assistance with burglar alarms was not the most frequently mentioned assistance description in the follow-up survey. A slightly higher proportion of respondents (12.9%) reported needing police assistance to deal with neighborhood nuisances.

Since one of the major goals of the Citizens' Organization was to encourage victims to report the occurrence of crime to police, it is important to examine whether there has been any change in the willingness to report victimization.³ The data in Table 5 relate victimization to calling for police assistance with regard to the incident. They indicate that a majority (55%) of victims called the police for assistance.

Community-based programming sought to acquaint neighborhood residents with crime prevention measures that could be taken in the hope of reducing the likelihood of victimization in the home or neighborhood. The data in Table 6.1 indicate 55% of those who took crime prevention measures in the home were not victimized, while taking crime prevention measures did not help 45% of the respondents to escape victimization. Table 6.2 explores this relationship from a somewhat different perspective by revealing the sequence between taking crime prevention measures in the home and the first victimization. The data indicate that almost two-thirds (64%) of the respondents who took crime prevention measures in the home did so after they were victims of a crime. Of equal importance, however, is the fact that so many respondents didn't take any crime prevention measures at all.

The effectiveness of the Citizens' Organization can also be gauged by looking at the extent of residents' awareness of its presence in the neighborhood. The data in Table 7 reveal respondents' awareness of the CCP in the initial and follow-up sample surveys. It is significant that none of the respondents in the initial survey had heard of an organization called the "Citizens' Committee on Crime Prevention." However, in the year or so between the two surveys awareness of the Citizens' Organization increased considerably. By the time the follow-up survey was conducted, 39.6% of the respondents indicated that they knew of an "organization for mutual protection or crime prevention existing in (their) neighborhood," i.e., the Citizens' Committee on Crime Prevention. While the extensive lack of knowledge among first survey respondents concerning the existence of the CCP is disheartening, the increase in awareness in the follow-up survey is considerable. It may be that the programs and activities of the Citizens' Organization are generating a limited pay-off in the form of increased awareness among neighborhood residents that an organization for mutual protection and crime prevention exists.

TABLE 3

*Comparison of Victimization and Assistance Dates
in the Williams School Area*

	1st Sample Survey		2nd Sample Survey		% Change from 1st to 2nd Sample Data
	N (193)	% of Total Sample	N (149)	% of Total Sample	
FIRST OCCURRENCE					
Victimizations	47	24%	40	27%	+3%
Assistances	31	16%	23	15%	-1%
SECOND OCCURRENCE					
Victimizations	12	6%	0	--	-6%
Assistances	6	3%	1	1%	-2%
THIRD OCCURRENCE					
Victimizations	2	1%	0	--	-1%
Assistances	2	1%	0	--	-1%
FOURTH OCCURRENCE					
Victimizations	2	1%	0	--	-1%
Assistances	2	1%	0	--	-1%
FIFTH OCCURRENCE					
Victimizations	0	--	0	--	--
Assistances	0	--	0	--	--

TABLE 4

*Victimization/Assistance Descriptions
in the Williams School Area*

Description	Frequency of Mention	
	N	%
Assaults	2	3.2%
Arson	2	3.2%
Burglary/Theft	23	37.1%
Child Molesting	1	1.6%
Stray Dogs, Dog Bites	1	1.6%
Kidnapping	1	1.6%
Vandalism	4	6.5%
Attempted Burglary	5	8.1%
Murder	1	1.6%
Family Disturbance	1	1.6%
Traffic Assistance	2	3.2%
Medical Assistance	3	4.8%
Other Assistance (esp. burglar alarms)	1	1.6%
Other Police Contact	7	11.3%
Neighborhood Nuisance	8	12.9%
TOTALS	62	99.9%

TABLE 5

*Victimization and Call for
Police Assistance*

Call for Police Assistance	Criminal Victimization	
	Yes	No
Yes	22 55.0%	1 .1%
No	18 45.0%	108 99.9%
TOTALS	40 100.0%	109 100.0%

TABLE 6

Occurrence and Sequence of Crime Prevention Efforts and Criminal Victimization

6.1 Criminal Victimization	Crime Prevention Measures Taken in Home		6.2 Relationship to first Victimization	Crime Prevention Precautions Taken in Home	
	Yes	No		Yes	No
Yes	30 45.0%	10 12.0%	Before	24 36.0%	38 46.0%
No	36 55.0%	73 88.0%	After	42 64.0%	45 54.0%
TOTALS	66 100.0%	83 100.0%	TOTALS	66 100.0%	83 100.0%

TABLE 7

Comparative Awareness of Citizens' Committee on Crime Prevention in the Neighborhood Area

	Number of Residents Mentioned CCCP	
	N	Sample Size
First Wave Data	0	193 ---
Second Wave Data	59	149 39.6%
% Change		+39.6%

THE CITIZEN'S ROLE IN URBAN SERVICES⁴

The role of citizen-volunteers in urban services is circumscribed by the institutional arrangements used in their production and delivery. In the case of Citizens' Organization the role of citizen-volunteers in community-based crime prevention was constrained by the presence of other key participants and their perspectives, including:

1. the Prosecuting Attorney's staff and consultants. The prosecutor held the reputation of innovator and had pioneered or been among the earliest to introduce several changes in prosecutorial functions. He broadened the role of the office and was one of the first to introduce the notion that an explicit crime prevention function rested with the prosecutor. The prosecutor was a highly visible and vocal proponent of the proposal to set-up the Citizens' Organization.
2. Police Personnel. Explicit crime prevention efforts by police agencies were not viewed as a fully legitimate and necessary police function within the department. Crime prevention efforts by non-police agencies were viewed with suspicion, skepticism, and, in some cases, hostility. Police spokesmen appearing at public meetings tended to be critical of other criminal justice agencies, and tended to have difficulty conceiving a "citizen" role in crime prevention.
3. Other criminal justice agencies. Several judges, other court personnel and representatives of adult and juvenile probation agencies were involved at various times in the meetings and discussions sponsored by the Citizens' Organization. Their involvement was, for the most part, peripheral. Like the police, their perceptions of a potential community role appeared to consist largely in having a citizenry more willing to inform them about complaints or problems.

4. The County Board of Commissioners. The Board initially approved 5 percent in matching funds when LEAA funding proposals for 1975-76 were reviewed. Its attitude changed in subsequent months, as reflected in refusal, for a period to approve matching funds for any program introducing obligations that could be borne by the county in subsequent years. Funding was approved, after almost two months' delay, with the proviso that no county funds would be provided after the second year, when the matching fund requirement would increase to 50%. Program effectiveness, if such should be demonstrated, appeared to be irrelevant to members of the Board in determining future support.

5. Regional and state funding agencies. The (sub-state) regional agency charged with evaluating and making recommendations to the state planning agency on requests for Law Enforcement Assistance Administration funding approved the crime prevention proposal for several reasons. A conviction that the project would be effective in preventing crime was not among those reasons. The most charitable description of the prevailing view was that no other approach had demonstrated significant results, that it made sense to involve citizens directly in crime prevention, and that therefore, the approach was worth trying. Although the project was approved unanimously (as were most projects that did receive approval by the thirty commission members present and voting), there were no more than four or five members who indicated any expectation that it would have any effectiveness in dealing with crime. The state agency, with which the final decision lay and within which staff recommendations tended to be decisive, reacting to the proposal strongly--and negatively. Primary objections were that the program was not tied administratively to the police department, that it was not clear what role a prosecutor's office had in crime prevention, and that the program did not follow a recognized methodology.

Data on the impact of the Citizens' Organization on the behavior of law enforcement agencies and their officials are, at best, impressionistic, indirect, and based almost wholly on the observations of participants. However, to the extent that participants' observations are consistent with one another and form a reasonable pattern that would seem to be worth reporting. Two public agencies were most directly and frequently involved with the programs and activities of the Citizens' Organization. They were the police department of the City of Flint and the Genesee County Prosecuting Attorney's

Responses from officials in the city's police department were mixed. In some respects police personnel cooperated with the Citizens' Organization. For example, the police department was receptive to permitting a representative of the Citizens' Organization to cull department records on a weekly basis for crime statistics in the target neighborhood. Also the department set-up an educational program within the structure of the existing police academy training program to familiarize residents of the target neighborhood with various crime prevention techniques and measures. Third, the department cooperated by redefining police patrol district boundaries to coincide with the project boundaries of the neighborhood organization. Finally, the police department seemed willing to let the Citizens' Organization serve as a link between it and the office of the Genesee County Prosecuting Attorney regarding citizen complaints.

On the negative side, there is some evidence of the department's lack of support for what Citizens' Organization was trying to do. For one thing, whenever the department received a request for the participation of command personnel in an Organization-sponsored program, they almost invariably sent a lower-ranking substitute. It was almost as though the programs of the Citizens' Organization were not worth the time of command personnel. Also, though this is more difficult to document, command personnel were openly skeptical and critical of the community-based crime prevention program and tended to be generally unfamiliar with its goals, objectives, strategies, and personnel.

Responses of personnel from within the office of the Genesee County Prosecuting Attorney were mixed. While the community-based crime prevention program was being established the Prosecuting Attorney's Office was actively supportive. The Prosecuting Attorney was one of the more visible and articulate supporters of the program when it was proposed for funding by the relevant state agency, and when differences with the state funding agency were being negotiated. However, the Citizens' Organization appeared to be relatively low on the list of continuing priorities of personnel in the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Perhaps the mere fact that it remained on the list of continuing priorities at all is an indirect measure of its relevance to that agency, but its role in relation to the Prosecutor never was fully articulated. In fact, the role of the Prosecuting Attorney in relation to crime prevention programming was never fully articulated. It was generally assumed that the Prosecuting Attorney would be available to bring action when the Citizens' Organization had a problem it couldn't deal with. However, the programs and activities of the Citizens' Organization, to say nothing of its personnel, were never linked to the intrinsic crime prevention functions of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office. Contact between the Prosecuting Attorney and the Citizens' Organization tended to grow out of and center around the former's role as chief law enforcement officer in the county, rather than around his institutional role and responsibilities for

citizen's group could utilize the Prosecutor's Office as a major resource, but the relationship was ad hoc rather than integral.

residents in various crime prevention programs and activities. These were at all times supplemental to the normal functions of police and other criminal justice agencies.

CONCLUSIONS

Any attempt to draw conclusions from the data presented in this analysis is conditioned not only by the impressionistic and indirect nature of the evidence, but also by the fact that the Citizens' Organization was, after all, an experiment in community-based crime prevention. It remains to be seen whether the experiences in one neighborhood area are anything more than an interesting case study.

Even the partial and indirect evidence, however, permit some comment on the admonitions of Norton Long (1957) and Vincent Ostrom (1961) to redirect the study of local government and politics. First, the mere fact that the Citizens' Organization got off the ground is significant, given the number of public agencies and officials at the local, regional, and state levels, whose implicit, if not active, support was necessary. Second, the experiment with community-based programming did, in the final analysis, involve more citizens in its activities than any other crime prevention program sponsored by a public agency. For the most part, citizens residing in the project area designed, developed, and carried out the varied and numerous activities and programs by which the organization sought to achieve its goals of reducing crime and expanding community participation in crime prevention. Third, the typical indicators of organizational effectiveness, including police records and sample surveys, reveal modest but impressive improvement in crime rates and related conditions in the neighborhood area served by the Citizens' Organization.

Perhaps the most disappointing aspect of the experience with community-based crime prevention is the failure to alter in any considerable way the behavior of key participants in local public agencies. Though both the police department and the prosecuting attorney's office cooperated with the efforts of the Citizens' Organization, it cannot be said that they ever really conceived of community-based programming as a potentially effective and legitimate role for citizens to play in local political and policy processes and systems.

The organizational structure developed by the Citizens' Organization closely approximates the self-help arrangement used in many neighborhoods to deal with specific and tangible service-related problems. Such organizations tend to assume a role that is supplemental to the responsibilities of public agencies. Their activities are designed to supplement (or prod), rather than replace or substitute for, the service delivery functions of local government. The Citizens' Organization followed such a pattern; it sought to reduce the rate of criminal victimization by involving neighborhood

FOOTNOTES

1. Economic Opportunity Act of 1964, Title II, Section 202(b).
2. Office of Economic Opportunity, Community Action Program Guide, Vol. 1, "Instructions for Applicants" (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 7.
3. Respondents were asked the following questions in both the initial and follow-up surveys, "Thinking back over the past twelve months, that is, since June 1, 1974, have you or any member of your household been the victim of any criminal activity? For example, has anything been stolen? Anybody been attacked?" and "Did you call the police?"
4. The discussion in this section draws heavily on Gluck and Perlman (1977), especially pages 12-15, and 33-35.

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