6-30-1990

An Evaluation of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks Community Service Intervention Project

Gerald F. Blake
Portland State University

Martin L. Abbott
Portland State University

Debra Lynn Lindberg
Portland State University

AN EVALUATION OF COLUMBIA VILLA/TAMARACKS COMMUNITY SERVICE INTERVENTION PROJECT

Gerald F. Blake
Martin L. Abbott
Debra Lindberg

FINAL REPORT
June 30, 1990

Center for Urban Studies
School of Urban and Public Affairs
Portland State University
Portland, Oregon 97207-0751

Dr. Blake is a Professor of Urban Studies and Planning at Portland State University. Dr. Abbott is a Professor of Sociology at Seattle Pacific University and was Senior Evaluator for the Project. Debra Lindberg is a Research Assistant, Center for Urban Studies, Portland State University.

Support for this project was provided by Multnomah County, Oregon.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Description and Methodology

The Community Service Intervention Program (CSIP) is a unique public agency response to a multifaceted set of problems confronting low income residents living in Oregon's largest public housing project. The primary goals of the CSIP are to reduce crime, reduce the fear of crime among residents, and to improve the quality of life of the families living in Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

The evaluation of the CSIP combined a number of different research methods, on different analytical levels, to provide a summary assessment. Data were collected from individuals, from agencies, and from police records in a post facto analysis of the CSIP.

Problems and Limitations

The primary limitations of the evaluation of the CSIP relate to the dynamics of the program operation. Arrangements to evaluate the CSIP were made after the program was being implemented. The resultant evaluation design was, thus, done after the fact, which precludes making causal statements about the effects of the CSIP.

Additionally, agencies that provided services to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks began activity incrementally, over the space of many months. This fact, along with the unique approach of the CSIP to social services, made it difficult to clearly assess the independent impact of the services at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Individual Level Analyses

The data suggest that things have gotten better at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks over the last year. Respondents seem to be clear in reporting that crime, fear of crime, and general quality of life have improved. To the extent that the respondents are representative of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents, these are indeed grounds for optimism in terms of the stated goals of the CSIP. While it cannot be concluded that these changes are due specifically to the CSIP, and while much remains to be done, the trend is toward overall improvement.

While the direction of the change during the last year is positive, there are still areas of concern among residents. There appears to be a certain amount of fear of crime that still exists at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. In addition, other concerns expressed by questionnaire respondents include the need for job opportunities, day care and other activities for children, and improved maintenance (in terms of services needed).

Analysis of Crime

As a whole, the analyses of crime over the two year period May, 1988 to March, 1990 at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks indicate that many categories of crime have declined. This is generally the case if one examines either what has happened at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks independently, or relative to Portland as a whole.

What is not clear from the analyses, is the reason for whatever decline is represented. Although the CSIP has undoubtedly had an effect on the decrease in crime, it cannot be concluded how, or

to what extent, it's impact was registered. Since the trend lines are heading downward even prior to the CSIP intervention, we cannot say how it has affected crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. The data cannot measure the independent effects of the CSIP on crime.

Agency Data

Questionnaires were administered to key agencies providing services to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. In general, providers believe there is some improvement in the overall quality of life, but that there are still areas in need of attention (i.e., child care, job opportunities, community involvement, and air quality).

Some interagency networking is reported, but it does not exist on the scale originally envisioned by CSIP planners. Social service providers mainly contact agencies which are well known to them, or use the CSIP social worker as a central referral source.

Conclusions

Overall, the results from the various data analyses indicate that things have improved at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during the last couple of years. Resident attitudes appear to have become more positive, crime appears to have decreased, and agencies are providing more services to residents.

The primary question to be asked is why have things improved at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks? Because of the nature of the design, and the implementation of the CSIP, it is not possible to identify the key causal factors, or to attribute specific effects to the CSIP.

Concerns to be addressed on the level of the individual resident include job opportunities, Columbia Villa/Tamaracks resident participation in the CSIP, and fear of crime. On the agency level, there are questions remaining about the approach utilized by the CSIP.

Recommendations include: a higher profile by the County to coordinate, plan, manage, and evaluate services according to a set of carefully chosen set of objectives; a longitudinal evaluation of CSIP efforts; greater involvement by Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents; greater job opportunities and job training for Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents; additional participation in the CSIP by the Fire Department, Tri-Met, Metro (Solid Waste), and DEQ.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

INTRODUCTION

This report is the final evaluation of the Columbia Villa/Tamaracks Community Service Intervention Project (CSIP), conducted by the Center for Urban Studies, at Portland State University. The evaluation was contracted in June, 1989 and was performed by:

Gerald F. Blake, Ph.D.
Principal Investigator
Professor of Urban Studies and Planning
Portland State University

Martin L. Abbott, Ph.D.
Senior Evaluator
Center For Urban Studies
Portland State University

Debra Lindberg, M.A.
Research Assistant
Center For Urban Studies
Portland State University

The purpose of the evaluation is to describe and assess a unique social service intervention program planned and implemented by Multnomah County, Oregon. Through a specific analysis of the elements of the CSIP, the report will provide assistance to continuing efforts to improve conditions at Columbia Villa/ Tamaracks.

While the results of the evaluation will shed light on the effectiveness of the CSIP, the findings are best understood as a baseline of information for subsequent analyses that will extend over a number of years.

INTERVENTION HISTORY

History of Columbia Villa

Shortly after the United States entered WWII, the city of Portland was flooded with thousands of shipyard workers and their families who were engaged in the war effort. Portland was a large producer of military supply ships, but lacked adequate shelter for shipyard workers and others working in allied plants. The seriousness of the housing shortage and its effect on production led to action at the national level. To meet the demand for safe and sanitary housing, the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) was developed under the United States Housing Act of 1937.

Portland Mayor Riley and HAP Chairman Gartrell took part in a small groundbreaking ceremony on May 5, 1942 for Portland's first public housing project, Columbia Villa. First residents assumed occupancy of the North Portland housing project in October of that year and construction was completed in June of the following year. The total cost of construction and land was $1,427,581. It is the only project built, owned, and operated by the Portland Housing Authority.

Columbia Villa, one of only two permanent housing projects in Portland, was described by national housing officials at the time, as one of the most beautiful war housing developments in America. Made distinctive by its "country life" atmosphere, the houses were a modification of the Eastern Oregon ranch house style, unfurnished, but equipped with gas ranges, electric refrigeration, gas water heaters, and gas circulating heaters.

Compared to other public housing projects, Columbia Villa was a relatively low density settlement. The project led the coast region for the lowest population density (five families to the acre), owing to the space included in the design of the group by architects, Stanton & Johnston. Arranged in a fan-shaped design with the flare to the streets, the 164 buildings were set at wide intervals over a site viewing Mount Hood, Mount St. Helens, and the Cascade range. Attention was paid to such amenities as landscaping and Victory garden areas, as well as space provided for parking lots and playgrounds (HAP, 1946).

Low Income Housing

Originally built to accommodate the influx of shipyard workers and their families, Columbia Villa/Tamaracks currently serves the residential needs of approximately 1600 low-income people. This represents Oregon's largest public housing project, encompassing three-quarters of a square mile, and consists of 598 units (6 per cent of which are currently vacant, primarily due to remodeling, but also because of recent concerns about crime).

Statistics provided by the Housing Authority of Portland indicate a relatively youthful population, with 73 per cent of the households headed by single females under 30 years of age. Over half the residents are under 18 years of age, and more than half of those are under the age of 8. Elderly residents comprise 21 percent of the population.

Columbia Villa/Tamaracks encompasses an ethnically diverse population. Whites comprise 53.4 percent of the residents; African Americans, 35.9 percent; Southeast Asian immigrant groups, 5.3 percent; Native Americans, 1.9 percent; and Hispanics, 3.6 percent.

Annual household incomes range from $2,500-$12,500. Approximately 3 percent of residents are considered "lower income" (those with income 80 percent or less of the average in the metro area) and 97 percent are considered "very low income" (income 50 percent or less of the average

in the metro area). Rents range from $0-234+, with most of the households paying in the $51-150 range (HAP, 1990).

Increased Crime and Increased Human Services

Recent problems associated with gang activity and drug sales, use, and related activities in Columbia Villa/Tamaracks were responsible for making a zone of fear. Some residents who could afford to leave or had other options elected to leave for environments they perceived as safer. Fear was intensified for others by the knowledge that there was no other affordable housing to which they could escape. Gangs and drugs not only changed the type of problems confronting North Portland, but also multiplied them in number and complexity.

The drive-by shooting death of a Columbia Villa resident (an 18 year old male) in August 1988 was the impetus for local government officials. The mayor, the county chair, and the director of HAP met on September 18, 1988 to discuss municipal services they could combine to reduce negative and increase positive conditions in the community. Research on social services in the North Portland area indicated that 44 individuals, employed by nine Multnomah County agencies, were providing a varied array of services. It was also found that little systematic coordination occurred between agencies, that there were gaps in the delivery system, and that there was little capacity to serve the immediate-need client. It was determined that a program implementing greater cooperation, coordination, and increase in services might better meet the needs of low income clients. It was thought that these changes could lead to improvement in the conditions at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

The program they envisioned would involve two major focus areas:

- increasing citizen involvement to create a community of shared goals and values, and
- developing an interdisciplinary team from staff of agencies which provide service to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks to work together, on site, to better coordinate and deliver needed services to the neighborhood.

In order to facilitate the increase in citizen involvement, HAP appointed community organizers would:

- survey neighborhood attitudes and concerns,
- identify potential neighborhood leaders and invite them to become involved,
- begin holding neighborhood meetings, and
- assist neighborhood leaders in presenting concerns to the interdisciplinary team, HAP, and other agencies.

The interdisciplinary team would be comprised of staff assigned by the city, county, and HAP. The project staff would be responsible for:

- providing direct services which affect crime, fear of crime, and quality of life issues, both on a day-to-day and long-range basis,
- identifying a long-range approach to service delivery which would likely be supported by the community,
- regularly evaluating the status of the neighborhood and service delivery approaches, and
- networking among the interdisciplinary team members.

In an effort to provide speed and flexibility in responding to neighborhood needs, team members would report to an on-site project coordinator, rather than to their agency supervisors. They would also consult daily, as a group, to monitor the status of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks and individual residents.

The program would be an attempt to more effectively distribute existing resources (rather than seek new) and to develop more appropriate responses to individual and community concerns (Multnomah Co. Dept. of Human Services, 1988).

Columbia Villa Community Service Intervention Project

In the fall of 1988, the beginnings of the new approach emerged. The Columbia Villa Community Service Intervention Project (CSIP), a three-year commitment, is headed by the county departments of Justice Services (represented by Norm Monroe) and Human Services (represented by Maggie Gereau), but also includes city, county, and state agencies; the public housing authority; private non-profit organizations, and local foundations.

There are three primary objectives of the CSIP. They are to: 1) reduce actual crime, 2) reduce fear of crime, and 3) increase the quality of life. CSIP is designed to be an aggressive social delivery system, dealing not only with problems associated with gangs, drug dealing, and drug addiction, but also with those of living in the perceived inescapable environment of poverty and chronic state of fear.

In developing approaches to combining interdictive strategies with well-coordinated human services there are additional focus areas.

- To improve networking among service providers.
- To provide assistance in development of new or modification of existing programs.
- To provide support in assuring the effectiveness of linkages between residents and service providers.
- To develop, between residents and agencies in collaboration, a continuum of services, which strengthens or expands existing programs and establishes new program to fill service gaps.
- To further empower residents to identify their own needs, develop a stronger sense of community identity, and become more effective advocates for their own interests.
- To foster hope and optimism among residents by involving them in solving problems and focusing on positive conditions and improvements in the community.

In March 1989, the team began regular bimonthly meetings to collectively solve problems, plan intervention strategies, and encourage networking. Ownership in the project, maximization of limited staff and resources, and reduction of competitiveness with other agencies were additional concerns. It was believed that positive interagency interactions would better facilitate the cooperation and information sharing components of the effort.

The Housing Authority of Portland increased its presence within the Columbia Villa/Tamaracks projects to full-time in the fall of 1988 while the CSIP became an entity and opened an office on the premises in March of the following year. Throughout the spring and summer of 1989 the bulk of the participating agencies either located branch offices within the complex or raised the level their of availability to residents.

Selection of programs to provide service to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks was based on the general characteristics and needs of the population. For example, many residents may not seek assistance from helping agencies except during times of crisis when immediate institutional responses are necessary. Therefore, an outreach approach is required for many service providers. In addition, gang related problems are multiple and are more than that which a single agency can effectively manage and so require the interdictive services of law enforcement agencies in concert with human service efforts.

Participating Agencies

The CSIP consists of a core of social service agencies playing a major role in facilitating intervention at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. Some agencies have been serving residents in the North Portland area for many years; some have been providing service for approximately one year; and a few are more recent participants. Agencies participating in the CSIP are listed below.

Housing Authority of Portland (HAP)
Assists residents with tenant issues and social service referrals.

Community Service Project
Social worker provides individual and family counseling to residents, makes home visits and referrals to services, and helps with school problems.

North Portland Youth Service Center
Provides support and assistance to young mothers, youth employment training, and other services.

University Park Community Center (Parks and Recreation)
Provides recreational and educational programs for children and adults; day care; and SWING Programs: Boys and Girls Club, Campfire, Girl and Boy Scouts.

Vocational Rehabilitation
Assists persons with handicaps or disabilities which interfere with ability to work or become employed.

North Portland Community Health Nurses
Provide home visits to assess health and social service needs.

Mainstream
Provides drug and alcohol treatment, support, education and counseling to individuals (21 years old and younger) and their families.

Safety Action Team (Multnomah County Sheriff's Office)
Engage in community policing (problem solving oriented) law enforcement, serve as positive role models, and build long term relationships with residents.

Private Industry Council
Provides job and skill training to youth (14-21 years old).

Adult and Family Service (AFS)
Assess eligibility for AFS, food stamps, and medical cards.

State Employment Division
Assist with job search, job applications and training.

Youth Gang Task Force
Outreach workers work with youth involved in gang activity.

Agencies also providing services include:
North Portland Health Clinic, Multnomah County Juvenile Justice Division, Project for Community Recovery, Saturday School, Adult Basic Education/GED (Parks and Recreation), and Children's Services Division (scheduled to open Fall 1990).

Funding

In addition to commitments by the City of Portland, Multnomah County, and the State of Oregon, funding has been developed through a variety of sources. United Way has provided monies for programs through Portland Parks and Recreation over a two year period and the Oregon State Mental Health Division has been responsible for the development of a drug and alcohol treatment program. Also, a grant proposal has been submitted to Fred Meyer Charitable Trust for assistance in filling gaps in service areas and HAP has selected program hours specifically for project use.

Leadership Changes

CSIP was originally placed under the direction of Norm Monroe with the assistance of Sarah Smith. In October of 1989, Mr. Monroe was assigned the task of coordination of similar intervention models in other Portland housing projects. Sarah Smith has assumed the duties of that position in addition to her own as social worker at the housing project. Funding for the continuation of project coordinator has recently been approved.

Conclusion

The result of the intensive publicity focusing on gang activity in Columbia Villa/Tamaracks was that more, and more concentrated levels of services were directed at a variety of social problems. Part of the mission of the CSIP has been to reach people by, in addition to crisis intervention, performing "preventative" activities (e.g., information dissemination, assistance with completion of schooling, job training, substance abuse prevention, prenatal and parenting classes, identification of acceptable leisure activities, preventive health care, etc.).

There has also been an on-going commitment to providing support to the population and to assistance in developing the sense that, despite the low-income housing situation (and all that that infers), residents have the power to create a decent neighborhood in which to live full and dignified lives.

LITERATURE REVIEW

New Challenges for the Poor

In spite of the "unconditional" war on poverty launched over twenty years ago, poor people are still a sizable minority in this country. Some might be only temporarily poor, through a personal tragedy or by choice; some chronically mentally ill or disabled; still others come from several generations of poverty. Many poor people are employed, though inadequately; and many are the "newly poor": victims of the economic upheaval of the last decade (Harrington, 1984; Levitan and Shapiro, 1987). Regardless, of the path traveled to reach the condition of poverty, the enormity of the challenges facing impoverished individuals and families is exhausting and consuming. Poverty overwhelms people, alienating them from the mainstream of life and preventing them from escaping the debilitating life conditions.

It has been bad enough to see few ways out of poverty and to contend with the daily struggle and myriad hardships, but recently, low income urban areas have also been facing a wave of new, more complicated, and more insidious difficulties: Drug gangs are invading some neighborhoods and housing projects bringing with them the violence related to their activities. With this invasion has come increased crime and heightened levels of fear, lowered property values, a driving out of business, and an erosion, and simultaneous "resegregation" of school enrollments (Rohe and Burby, 1988).

Gang and drug activity has also complicated the work of social service systems. Traditionally overloaded, and now strained to capacity, providers are finding they have been neither professionally prepared, nor their agencies physically and financially equipped to deal with the multiple and highly complex situations confronting them. They are in a quandary as to how to meet the immediate needs of clients as well as to perform educational and preventative work as well.

Suggested as propitious for meeting the new challenges has been a holistic approach - diverse services and disciplines coordinated beneath one umbrella, to work toward common goals. With this strategy, a continuum of services could link specialized human services, interdictive strategies, and educational and community organizations, to facilitate positive change in neighborhoods. It is believed that increased access to a broad array of services will help recipients to feel empowered to effect their own environmental improvements in crime rates, levels of fear, and overall life quality.

Improvement in the Quality of Life

The concept and measurement of "quality of life" is elusive and changes over time. It is, a concept which is relative and abstract enough to provide many perplexities for practical application and research. The most that social science can do is to measure a few fleeting indicators and hope that they capture the essence of what is meant by quality of life. In general, however, "quality of life" tends to encompass income; employment, health, and education; social status and mobility; public safety; family status; and living environment measurements (Smith, 1973; Andrews, 1986).

Moreover, many of the variables are intricately intertwined and difficult to separate. Income for example, relies on education and employment. Health depends on income, family status, and employment, while state of the family depends on several indicators.

The definition is further clouded when one approaches quality of life from the perspective of deprivation. Levitan (1985) states that, "... poverty can be defined as a lack of goods and services needed for an 'adequate' standard of living... [but] because standards of adequacy vary with both the society's general level of well-being and public attitudes toward deprivation, there is no universally accepted definition of individual or family basic needs" (p.1).

Ziemba (1988) holds a similar view, "In too many cities, public housing has become the embodiment of virtually all the ills that plague urban America: broken families, poverty, unemployment, crime, racial and economic segregation, and deteriorating housing". Improvement for some of the very poorest, then, means calling for an increase in opportunities to obtain decent housing, employment, and education which are more readily available to others (Jaynes, 1989).

Some concrete efforts are being made to solve particular issues regarding the poor. For youth at-risk of becoming involved with gangs, improvement in the quality of life is affected by outreach counseling and recreation programs focusing on the future, self-esteem, and opening the door on alternative choices (Willis-Kistler, 1988, Fairfax, et al, 1988). Some cities are attempting to address the improvement in housing needs by combining corporate grants, federal tax credits, and state mortgage programs in complex arrangements to encourage the building or rehabilitation of low-cost housing by the private sector (Garland, 1988).

Other attempts to improve in quality of life have included increased access to health care (Wilder, 1972; Levitan, 1985), easier access to welfare as insurance against temporary economic misfortune (Duncan and Hoffman, 1988; Levitan, 1985), and new approaches to maintenance of neighborhood civil order (Kelling and Stewart, 1989; Kelling and Moore, 1988; Walsh, 1988; Ziemba, 1988).

Reducing Crime in Poor Neighborhoods

One of the major problems confronting low income neighborhoods is the escalation of criminal violence among youth gang members and the proliferation of drug use, particularly "crack" cocaine. The drug and gang problem is responsible for skyrocketing crime rates and general disruption in stability for, not just the users, but all involved.

According to the AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY, "crack" cocaine, because of its dramatically intense effects, is the drug of choice for many gang members, and often underlies the crime and violence associated with gang activity. Crack is highly addictive, and has been known to lead to assaultive and homicidal behavior which may last long after the drug has been metabolized (Kaufman, et al, 1987). In addition, the drug abusing life style often results in a tragic disruption of stability, for the users and those associated with them. These circumstances can increase the likelihood of being either the perpetrator or the victim of violence (Kaufman, et al, 1987; Newcomb, et al, 1988).

One approach to the reduction of gang involvement has been "community policing." It has evolved or, more appropriately, re-emerged, not only to counteract the overload of violent crime, but also because it is believed to be "better policing" (Kelling and Moore, 1988). Community policing is an attempt to refocus the organization of police services away from professional autonomy of police and toward the establishment of effective problem-solving partnerships with communities.

Community policing relies on an established intimate relationship between police and citizens, accomplished through long-term assignment of officers to beats, programs that emphasize familiarity between citizens and police (police knocking on doors, consultations to officers of

"caseloads" of households with ongoing problems, problem solving, etc.), revitalization or development of Police Athletic League (PAL) programs, educational programs in public schools, and other measures as deemed appropriate. Police are encouraged to respond to the feelings and fears of citizens that result from a variety of social problems or from crime victimization. Emphasis is placed on information sharing between patrol and detectives to increase the possibility of crime solution and clearance (Kelling and Moore, 1988; Walsh, 1988; Hammonds, 1988).

Reducing Fear of Crime

Fear of crime can have a strong negative effect on residents living in urban neighborhoods. Fear of being a victim can paralyze persons and significantly alter their plans and activities. Rohe and Burby (1988) state that contrary to previous thinking, physical and social characteristics of public housing residents (adult-teen ratio, low income, unemployment rate, and number of single-parent households), do not significantly contribute to fear of crime, nor do some indices often used to measure vulnerability such as age, sex, and income. They claim that higher levels of social offenses (gangs and drug users, public drunkenness, etc.) and, to a lesser extent physical offenses (abandoned cars, litter, graffiti, decaying residences and other signs of disorder) perceived by residents contributes most to the level of fear experienced. In addition, having previously been a victim of crime, is associated with fear, as is race (being black has been considered to be an indication of social vulnerability due to societal standing). Fear of crime may also be associated with proximity to downtown, number of housing units, and population density. Fear of crime, as much as actual crime, is having the effects mentioned earlier: lowering property values, driving out businesses, and changing school enrollments (only the very poor who cannot afford to relocate will remain). It can also lead to behaviors such as staying in at night, avoiding areas such as parks or shopping districts, or avoiding the use of mass transit, (Rohe and Burby, 1988; U.S. HUD, 1978).

Attempts at reducing the fear of crime are as important as a reduction in actual crime. Research indicates that although housing project management style does not influence fear of crime directly, it may have an indirect effect through its influence on the extent of the previously mentioned offenses allowed to remain on the premises. Project management can aid in reduction of fear by addressing physical offenses (especially cosmetics). This can be achieved through improved lighting and more strictly enforced housing project rules. In addition, tenants can be encouraged to become involved in neighborhood meetings designed to address and deal with their concerns, and sports teams and summer recreation programs can be organized (Rohe and Burby, 1988).

Other research indicates that fear of crime can be reduced by the presence of police foot patrols and other community policing efforts. However, there also needs to be an identifiable working office within each housing project and patrolling officers need to make arrests and answer calls when needed, not just act as public relations officers for this approach to work (Kelling and Moore, 1988; Walsh, 1988).

Community Service Intervention Project

An approach which attempts to integrate key social services and law enforcement strategies can be effective for the "new" problems facing the poor and social service agencies. The Community Service Intervention Project (CSIP) is an attempt to reduce crime, reduce fear of crime, and increase the overall quality of life for residents in Columbia Villa/Tamaracks housing projects through these means.

Actual crime is fought by the location of a Multnomah County Sheriff's Department special branch within the property boundaries of the housing project. Deputies practice a community policing approach including relying on the assistance of residents in reporting crime.

Reduction in fear of crime is effected by the presence of the Sheriff's deputies, the active role residents take, and the improved physical condition of the property.
With a reduction in actual crime and fear of crime, it is expected that the quality of life for residents will improve. Social service agencies will be able to better fill their roles when they and tenants are able to move freely to access one another.

Between agencies trust, humility, selflessness, and cooperation are needed. The greater community, including the governments and others with power must endorse the efforts. Recipients of services can become part of their improved living conditions through participation in community meetings and activities, and availing themselves of information and services from which they might benefit.

EVALUATION PROGRAM DESCRIPTION

Chronology of the Evaluation

The Principal Investigator (Dr. Gerald F. Blake) was first contacted by Mr. Norm Monroe of Multnomah County, Oregon in February, 1989 about the need for evaluation of the CSIP. A preliminary proposal from Dr. Blake followed, and an agreement was developed between Multnomah County and the Center for Urban Studies, Portland State University, for the purpose of providing evaluation services (June, 1989).

The Evaluation Team was formed, and, through several meetings with Mr. Monroe, the Community Service Team (consisting of representatives from participating CSIP agencies), and other County officials during June and July, 1989, determined the project objectives to be evaluated. A final Proposal, including specification of objectives to be evaluated and preliminary instrumentation information, was presented to Mr. Monroe July 17, 1989.

Subsequent to the Proposal, the Evaluation Team devised the primary data collection instruments and finalized specific evaluation plans. The initial phase of data collection (Time 1 interviews of Agencies) primarily took place during August and September of 1989.

In order to protect the rights and welfare of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents who would be asked to complete a questionnaire, the Evaluation Team submitted the questionnaire to the Human Subjects Research Review Committee at Portland State University. Approval for use of the questionnaire was granted December 11, 1989.

The Evaluation Team met with Mr. Monroe and the Planning Team on Dec. 14, 1989 to review evaluation plans and progress. Plans for surveying Villa residents were discussed at that time. Members of the Community Service Team from the Housing Authority of Portland (HAP) agreed to assist in collecting data from the resident survey at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Additional primary data collection took place between January and May, 1990. Although each of these processes are described in detail later in the report, a summary of data collection activities follows:

- Resident questionnaires were pilot tested, revised (revision approved by PSU Human Subjects Review Committee Feb., 1990), and distributed (in two waves);
- Police data were collected and coded;
- Time 2 interviews were conducted with agencies.

The Evaluation Team met with Myra Glasser and members of the Community Service Team on March, 13, 1990 for a progress update, finalized data collection, and prepared the Final Report for the project.

Primary Program Objectives

The primary goals of the CSIP were initially identified through discussion with the Community Planning Team, and through program descriptions (Columbia Villa Project, 1989). The goals of the CSIP were included in the 7/17/90 Evaluation Proposal as follows:

Improve the quality of life of residents,

Reduce the fear of crime,

Reduce the incidence of actual crime.

Other goals (noted in the Columbia Villa Project description) were indirectly addressed at a (6/23/89) meeting of the Evaluation Team and the Community Service Team. Primary among these was the identified need for Service Providers to increase network relationships with one another in order to address problems at the Villa.

Methodology - General Process and Design

The overall design strategy of the evaluation was to combine a number of methods to assess different analytical levels of the program effort. This is similar to "triangulation" methodology (Babbie, 1989: 99) in that different research methods are brought to bear on the research topic. In addition, specifying different analytical levels in the current evaluation (as described below) strengthens the approach. The research objective was to identify common trends from the different analyses so that general descriptive statements could be made.

Primary data collection for the evaluation project included a number of different methods such as survey research, analysis of existing statistics, observation, and interview. Each of these methods and the resultant findings are discussed below.

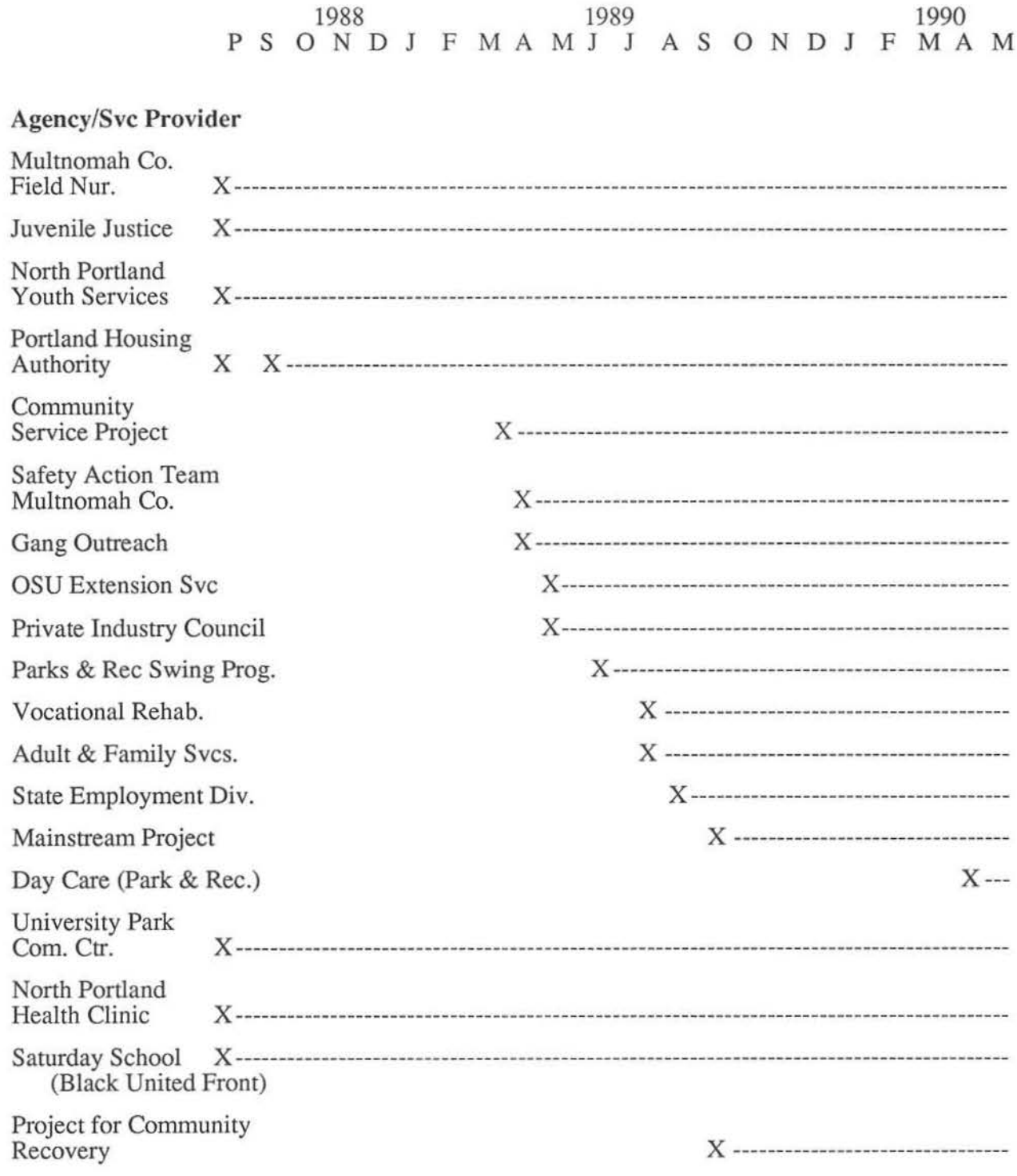
The evaluation design called for a multi-level analysis of the program objectives in the attempt to address both individual and structural dimensions of the problem. This combined an analysis of individual residents of the Villa (questionnaire), of participating agencies (questionnaire and interview), and of police involvement (longitudinal analysis of existing statistics). Each of these analyses are included in separate sections of the report.

Because the research design is primarily post facto in nature, that is, the evaluation was contracted after the program intervention began, causal analyses were precluded (an extended discussion of this point is included in the "Problems and Limitations" section). In some cases, attempts were made to employ quasi-experimental design elements when appropriate data were available (i e., in the case of using "pre-intervention" data from police reports, general comparisons can be made to events during and after the CSIP). Taken together, the findings provide a partial, descriptive, picture of the status of the CSIP in terms of the program objectives.

Intervention Window

The CSIP included a number of agencies that targeted the delivery of services to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks in the attempt to meet the program objectives. Figure 1 lists the agencies and illustrates, for each, dates of "intervention," or beginning dates. The fact that programs started at different points in time and that services were delivered incrementally over the space of about 1 year (with the most recent being added in April, 1990) presented a complicating factor for the evaluation since the total program impact cannot be evenly assessed. Each agency has a different history of contribution to the CSIP.

Figure 1
Window of Intervention



P - Indicates "pre-program" presence of services

PROBLEMS AND LIMITATIONS

1. The chief limitation relating to evaluation of programs of this nature is that intervention strategies were not linked to evaluation designs from the outset. That is, although problem areas were identified, and general goals noted, the program did not specify evaluation objectives or include formal evaluation until after the program was initiated. In the current study, evaluation was contracted and initiated during June, 1989, while the program was planned and implemented earlier in the year.

   In determining the effectiveness of an intervention, ideally data are collected before the intervention and compared to data collected after the intervention (under controlled conditions) to note changes. The difficulty with the "detachment" of evaluation from program conceptualization and design in the CSIP is that it limits the methodology that might be employed and the conclusions that can be drawn. Thus, the evaluation design in the CSIP is largely post facto since pre-intervention data were not systematically collected (except in the case of existing police report data).

   The overall result is that causal analyses are precluded. That is, conclusions cannot be made that identify the program intervention as the cause of whatever program results are noted. In most cases, the evaluation data are only descriptive in nature.

   For these reasons, caution should be exercised when reporting program results, and when attempts are made to generalize the findings beyond the specific settings in which the data were collected.

2. Because of the nature and scope of the CSIP, the overall intervention was not systematically accomplished. The CSIP strategy of providing more comprehensive services to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents was implemented incrementally over the space of several months (see the "intervention window" section). Thus, the evaluation is further complicated since it is difficult to specify a precise "onset" date from which to measure outcomes (except in the case of police records where actual dates are recorded).

3. A related problem is the difficulty of determining the effects of agency services within the time frame of the CSIP evaluation. Many of the agencies provide services that are designed to have longer-term effects on individuals and families (e.g., child nutrition, counseling intervention services, etc.), and therefore, their impact cannot be adequately detected and measured within only a few months.

4. The evaluation is primarily "summative" in nature in that the primary purpose is to provide a determination of the overall effectiveness of the program to achieve program goals (Kaufman and Thomas, 1980:111). Several suggestions were made by the Evaluation Team in the initial evaluation proposal, however, these were not utilized in the CSIP. The "Suggestions" section, discuss these briefly.

5. The uniqueness of the CSIP approach to social services created unique problems. Management clarification was an important factor in creating the proper atmosphere for, sometimes, conflicting agencies to unite to achieve program goals. Budget allocation was problematic in that agencies contribute different resources, differently (e.g., staff time, dollars, etc.), thereby creating problems of accountability and level of involvement. The ideal mix of services, and the appropriate "level of effort" by each, was an unknown.

   These, and other, issues were not comprehensively spelled out in the CSIP, and therefore, cannot be "tracked" in the evaluation of the program. Additionally, The high visibility of the project placed pressure on service providers that might have affected their delivery of services.

RESIDENTS' SURVEY - INDIVIDUAL LEVEL DATA

Perhaps the most important part of this, or any, evaluation of program results is to assess individual attitudes of those who would be impacted by the program. This section describes the methods used in gathering this important information from Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents, and a general summary of findings.

Procedure

One objective of the evaluation of the CSIP was to identify who residents were, their frequency of contact with participating agencies, and their assessment of crime, fear of crime, and quality of life at the Villa. In order to do this, the researchers developed a questionnaire for the evaluation. (Some of the items in this form, and in other questionnaire and interview forms used in the evaluation were modelled after questionnaires used in the 1986 Seattle-King County Emergency Shelter Study Update, King County Department of Planning and Community Development, 1986).

As noted earlier, the questionnaire used to survey Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents was approved by the Human Subjects Research Review Committee at PSU for use in the project. Prior to implementation, however, a pilot test was performed using a small number (5) of individuals. Analysis of the pilot test resulted in a revision of the questionnaire that was then re-approved by the Human Subjects Research Review Committee.

The questionnaire was to be mailed to heads of household of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks in such a way that anonymity and confidentiality could be assured. This took the form of a process described by Babbie (1990) in which post cards, with names of heads of household, were included with the questionnaire (which had no identifying marks). These post cards were to be returned by residents separately from their completed questionnaire to ensure that individual residents could not be identified from the questionnaire, and to allow subsequent stages of the mailing.

Resident Managers from HAP assisted in delivering questionnaire "packets" to residents. Prior to the delivery of the questionnaires, however, the Resident Managers participated in a training session that included information on the nature of the study, what to say to residents who might ask questions, and to identify residents who might have difficulty filling out the questionnaire (e.g., due to difficulty speaking English, illiteracy, etc.). The questionnaire packets included: the questionnaire; pre-paid return envelope (addressed to PSU Center for Urban Studies); written instructions (even though Resident Managers were there to explain the questionnaires); and, a pre-paid post card (also addressed to PSU Center for Urban Studies).

A list of heads of household who reside at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks was obtained from HAP. The first mailing of the questionnaire was initiated 2/12/90 and the second mailing on 3/14/90. Of the total number of resident questionnaires sent out (431), 167 were returned, yielding an overall return of 39 percent. This is an acceptable return, however, since it was not a probability sample (since every head of household was given the questionnaire), the results are not necessarily representative of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents. The "Findings" section discusses this further.

Findings

The purpose of the questionnaire was to obtain information about individual residents' current attitudes toward the CSIP objectives (i e., crime, fear of crime, and quality of life). In addition,

the questionnaire also included items that examined the resident's assessments of changes in these areas during the past year.

Demographic Data

Since this was not a probability sample (and since only heads of household were surveyed), data from the questionnaire are not necessarily representative of the true population of residents living at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. Thus, it was first necessary to ascertain how similar to the total population the returned questionnaires were. One method to assess the similarity was to perform statistical analyses comparing sample data to known population data. The only available population data, from HAP, included Race/Ethnicity and Family Type information. Therefore, Table 1 compares the questionnaire respondents and population information on these categories.

The data in Table 1 indicate that the proportions of the population and the questionnaire sample are not significantly different from each other in terms of the categories available for analysis. (Only in the case of the Hispanic category is there a significant deviation, although this may reflect the low total number.) In the categories of Race/Ethnicity and of Family Type, the proportion of respondents to the questionnaire was very close to the actual proportion at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Thus, the questionnaires received are generally representative of the population in terms of the known demographic information. Although this does not insure representativeness of attitudes, it does increase confidence that the sample reflects the overall population on some key descriptive categories.

Table 1
Sample to Population Comparison by Race/Ethnicity and Family Type (%)

Race/Ethnicity	Population (N=530)	Sample (n=157)	z test
White	53.4	54.8	NS
Black	35.9	31.2	NS
Hispanic	3.6	0	$p<.05$
American Indian/ Native Alaskan	1.9	3.8	NS
Asian/Pacific Islander	5.3	1.9	NS
Family Type 1	Population (N=519)	Sample (n=160)	z test
Single Female/ Head of Household	84.2	86.2	NS
Single Male/ Head of Household	11.6	10.6	NS

NS – Non significant
1 – Questionnaire categories. (HAP categories are listed only in terms of "male and female single parent".)

Analysis of the Objectives of CSIP

The questionnaire included items that attempted to assess the residents' appraisal of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks, in terms of the primary objectives of the CSIP:

- reduction of crime;
- reduction in the fear of crime;
- improvement in the quality of life.

Data analysis from the questionnaire on each of these objectives are reported below in separate sections. In each case, data are reported on residents' appraisals of the current condition of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks, and whether changed had occurred during the last year. This was to provide a general assessment, from residents' views, toward each of the objectives of the CSIP.

Crime. Table 2 provides the findings from the questionnaire regarding respondents' perceptions of current level of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Table 2
Respondent Perception of
Level of Crime

Level of Crime*	Percent	Number
Low	24	5
Medium	60	88
High	16	24
Total	100%	147

* Based on questionnaire item #12 - "Low" = categories 1,2; "Medium" = categories 3,4,5; "High" = categories 6 and 7

Table 2 indicates that twenty-four percent (24%) of the respondents felt that there is a low level of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks at the current time, whereas sixteen percent (16%) reported that there was a high level of crime. The majority (60%) indicated that crime was neither high nor low. Overall, respondents lean slightly toward the perception that crime is low (24% versus 16%). However, the perceptions are fairly evenly distributed across categories. The data indicate that the respondents hold a wide range of opinions regarding the current condition of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Table 3 provides a measure of respondents' opinions about whether crime has changed during the last year at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. By combining categories of the questionnaire item, it is clear that the vast majority of respondents (9 out of 10) felt that there had been a reduction in the level of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Table 3
Change in Level of Crime During Last Year

	Percent of Respondents	Number
Improved 1	90%	137
No Change	9%	4
Worse 2	1%	2

N=153 (excludes missing values)

1 – Includes "Improved Greatly" and "Improved Somewhat"
2 – Includes "Gotten Worse" and "Gotten Much Worse"

Taken together, Tables 2 and 3 indicate that, from the point of view of the respondents, crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks has become less of a problem during the last year. However, it is important to remember that many respondents feel that the level of crime is still a problem at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Fear of Crime. Table 4 illustrates respondents' perceptions of the current fear of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

Table 4
Respondent Perception of
Level of Fear of Crime

Level of Fear of Crime*	Percent	Number
Low	23%	33
Medium	48%	69
High	29%	41
Total	100%	143

* Based on questionnaire item #12 - "Low"=categories 1,2; "Medium"=categories 3,4,5; "High"=categories 6 and 7

Data on this item show a slightly different pattern than the data on the level of actual crime. More of the respondents indicate a higher level of fear of crime. Twenty-three percent (23%) of respondents indicate that fear of crime was not a problem while 29% indicate that a high level of fear of crime exists at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. Most of the respondents indicate neither extreme, however, with 48% reporting a medium level of fear of crime. In general, these findings indicate that a good deal of fear of crime still exists at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

As with the analysis of the level of crime, the evaluation sought to determine whether respondents noted a change in fear of crime over the last year. Table 5 provides the results to this question.

Almost 3 out of 4 respondents indicate an improvement in fear of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during the last year. Taken together with Table 4, this suggests that the fear of crime has been reduced, although several respondents still feel that this is a problem.

Table 5
Change in Fear of Crime During Last Year

	Percent of Respondents	Number
Improved 1	74%	12
No Change	22%	33
Worse 2	4%	7

N=152 (excludes missing values)

1 – Includes "Improved Greatly" and "Improved Somewhat"
2 – Includes "Gotten Worse" and "Gotten Much Worse"

Quality of Life. Obtaining a measure of "quality of life" is problematic since it is such an amorphous concept. The academic literature includes many different variables as composing the quality of life. Items were included in the questionnaire that were identified as being important indicators of quality of life in the literature, and that are relevant to the CSIP. The items were: job opportunities, health services, recreation, community involvement, physical condition of environment, and air quality. When these areas are combined with crime and fear of crime (since they are also important, partial, measures of quality of life) they form a crude "index" of quality of life. Table 6 gives these results in terms of an overall "low" "medium" or "high" rating by respondents.

TABLE 6
Overall Quality of Life Index

	Percent	Number
Low	13%	15
Medium	62%	72
High	25%	29

N=116 (excludes missing values)

Twice as many respondents rated the quality of life at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks as high than low (25% versus 13%). Sixty-two percent of respondents rated the quality of life as being "average" or medium overall.

In order to gauge the specific components of the quality of life, Table 7 describes respondents' attitudes in several different areas that are important in a partial assessment of quality of life (excluding crime, and fear of crime).

Table 7
Respondent Opinion on Quality of Life Areas

Job Opportunities	Percent	Number
Excellent	18%	23
Adequate	55%	72
Poor	27%	35
Total	100%	130
Health Services	Percent	Number
Excellent	45%	65
Adequate	42%	60
Poor	13%	19
Total	100%	144
Recreational Opportunities	Percent	Number
Excellent	42%	59
Adequate	40%	56
Poor	18%	24
Total	100%	139
Community Involvement	Percent	Number
Excellent	26%	36
Adequate	52%	73
Poor	22%	31
Total	100%	140
Physical Condition	Percent	Number
Excellent	40%	59
Adequate	54%	80
Poor	6%	9
Total	100%	148
Air Quality/ Pollution	Percent	Number
Excellent	22%	33
Adequate	47%	70
Poor	31%	46
Total	100%	149

Note: some % for individual areas may not equal 100% due to rounding

An examination of the data show that respondents are generally positive about health services (45% rating as excellent versus 13% as poor), recreational opportunities (43% rating as excellent versus 18% as poor), and the physical condition of surroundings (40% rating as excellent versus 6% as poor). However, opinions are mixed with respect to community involvement (26% rating as excellent versus 23% poor), and slightly negative regarding job opportunities (18% excellent and 27% poor), and air quality (22% excellent and 30% poor).

It is also important to get a sense of whether respondents feel that the quality of life has improved over the last year. Table 8 provides an overall measure of respondents' opinions on this matter. It appears clear from this table that the great majority of residents believe that the quality of life has improved over the last year at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. Eight out of ten respondents indicated that conditions had gotten better.

Table 8
Change in Perceptions of Quality of Life
During Last Year

Quality of Life	Percent	Number
Improved 1	81%	126
No Change	17%	26
Worse 2	2%	3
Total	100%	155

1 – Includes "Improved Greatly" and "Improved Somewhat"
2 – Includes "Gotten Worse" and "Gotten Much Worse"

Taken together with the two previous findings on quality of life, it seems that respondents feel positive about changes at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks over the last year. In terms of the services in the CSIP, it is important to note the negative opinions that are registered regarding job opportunities.

Opinion of Current Services. The evaluation sought to determine respondents' opinions about the current services available at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. These findings are reported in Table 9.

Table 9
Opinion of Current Services Available

	Percent	Number
Outstanding	11%	18
Very Good	35%	55
Average	38%	60
Not Very Good	7%	11
Poor	5%	7
Doesn't Apply	4%	6
Total	100%	157

It is clear that respondents have generally positive opinions about services available at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. Almost half (46%) of the respondents rate the services as either outstanding or very good, while slightly less (38%) rate services as average. Only a small proportion (12%) of respondents indicate that services are not very good or poor.

Additional Findings

One additional finding from the questionnaire data came from respondents' suggestions for whether other major services are needed at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. This measure of attitudes was assessed by an open ended question.

Although most respondents did not make suggestions, those who did respond to the question pointed to several main areas. Those listed below represent the comments that were received with the greatest frequency.

> More attention to maintenance of the units (fences, windows, carpets, doors, etc.) (14 responses)
>
> More Police/Drug patrols (9)
>
> More (affordable) day care and activities for children (14)
>
> Access to Laundromat and Convenience Store in Columbia Villa/Tamarack (6)

It is important to note that each of these areas were also mentioned in a survey conducted at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during March, 1989 by the Community Planning Team (Columbia Villa Project, 1989:3). The positive note is that some problem areas noted in that report (i.e., need nearby Drug Treatment program; need to get rid of unauthorized male guests; need to do something about the gang problem) are not repeated with great frequency in the current survey. The negative note is that the areas listed above persist as problems to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Limitations

Findings from the questionnaire distributed to residents of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks should be treated cautiously in terms of providing evidence of the impact of the CSIP. First, respondents were heads of household, and, thus, do not represent the opinions of <u>all</u> residents.

Second, for the reasons stated elsewhere in this report (nature of the research design), the findings cannot be said to be <u>causally</u> related to the CSIP program intervention.

In addition to the limitations imposed by the overall design, interpretations of the questionnaire are potentially confounded in a number of ways. Chief among these is that <u>current</u> residents of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks may be different in a number of ways from <u>past</u> residents. To the extent that individuals left Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during the intervention period, then the insights from the questionnaire may be biased in many ways. The opinions of the current residents may be different in many ways from past residents, which would represent an effect independent of the CSIP.

Other limitations include a potential "Hawthorne effect" in terms of the attention given to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks by the CSIP, and a general "regression to the mean" effect of attitudes. This latter effect generally refers to the fact that when groups are chosen on an extreme measure, they will tend to change toward the average upon re-measurement. In the present context, this refers to the fact that the overall situation at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks (in terms of CSIP goals) was at an extreme, and, therefore, a measurement of attitudes one year later would normally tend to show some improvement aside from the specific effects of the CSIP.

It should be noted briefly that data from the instruments used in this evaluation are contextual in that they were developed specifically for use in this project, and, therefore, are not designed for use in other projects.

General Conclusions from Questionnaire Data

Despite the suppressive effects of the limitations of the data noted above, it is important to recognize some meaningful conclusions. Stated in a general way, things appear to have gotten better at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks over the last year. Respondents seem to be clear in reporting that crime, fear of crime, and general quality of life have improved. To the extent that the respondents are representative of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents, these are indeed grounds for optimism in terms of the stated goals of the CSIP.

While the tone about the change during the last year is positive, however, there is still cause for concern about respondents' appraisal of current issues. Primary among these concerns is the fear of crime that still exists at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks. A very sizable number of respondents indicate a great deal of fear. Respondents' appraisal of current crime is more mixed, yet, even here, there are many who indicate a crime problem still exists. This sentiment is underscored by the respondents who called for increased police and drug patrols.

It may be the case that attitudes of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks respondents are changing more slowly than actual conditions (with respect to crime). However, it is probably also the case that the decrease in actual crime has not made the crime that exists a more acceptable fact of life to respondents. Victimization is still victimization.

Another positive note from the data is the general assessment of changes in the quality of life at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during the last year. This is supported by the positive rating of current services available, however, since the latter was a generic measure, no specific services were identified.

The indicators from the questionnaire that rated the highest were also the ones that had the most visibility in CSIP programming (i.e., health, recreation, physical condition/remodeling). The quality of life measures that respondents rated the least positive were also less emphasized in CSIP programming (i.e., air quality, job opportunities, community involvement), with the exception of job opportunities.

Generally speaking, there is cause for guarded optimism about changes taking place at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks in terms of the general goals of the CSIP. While it cannot be concluded that these changes are due specifically to the CSIP, and while much remains to be done, the trend is toward overall improvement.

LONGITUDINAL ANALYSIS OF CRIME

One of the primary objectives specified for the CSIP is the reduction of crime. It is therefore important to examine the current level of crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks and make comparisons to the past. In this way, one can get an idea of whether, in general, crime is diminishing.

In this evaluation, we have collected existing data from the Portland Police Bureau (PPB) with respect to the number of calls made within the specific area of Columbia Villa Tamaracks over a two year period (May, 1988 to March, 1990). It was important to collect data prior to the CSIP "intervention" so that general comparisons could be made to "post intervention" information.

A significant limitation of these data is that actual criminal activity is not necessarily measured by the number of 911 calls made to the PPB. First, the research literature is clear that many crimes go unreported. Second, the number of calls made to the police can reflect citizen attitudes toward the police as well as an index of criminal behavior. Thus, increases or decreases in calls may better represent willingness to report crimes (on behalf of citizens) rather than an indication that crime has increased or decreased.

It is also important to point out that, due to the limitations of the CSIP discussed earlier, it is not possible to make causal conclusions about the effects of the program on reducing crime. The analyses of the data are post facto and, thus, are only suggestive of changes in crime as a result of program activity.

What can be done, however, is to look at the data to examine general trends over the past two years, to get an impression of the "crime history" of Columbia Villa Tamaracks. This does not eliminate the limitations noted above, however, it may provide insight if clear trends are present.

Procedure

To determine a baseline of criminal activity and changes in that baseline which might occur, stable, longitudinal indices for crime within the housing projects, as well as for Portland as a whole, were necessary. Portland Police Bureau crime reports were selected as research data because of the bureau's "first call" priority at the housing projects and because relationships drawn with city-wide crime statistics (also collected by PPB) would be comparable.

Police reports over a 2-year period (May 1988 to March 1990) provided the data for the study. Individual reports were examined for each call, and criminal activity occurring within the boundaries of the two housing projects were coded by date, time, type of incident, and whether it was gang related. Aggravated assault, burglary, simple assault, vandalism, and gang activity were crime categories selected as significant because they represent Part I, II, and III crimes (according to the FBI's Uniform Crime Reporting system), and due to their association with the types of disruptive behavior attributed to gang members.

The resultant data were aggregated by week and by month in order to gain perspective on the changes in criminal activity over time.

FINDINGS

Trends at Columbia Villa Tamaracks

Longitudinal analysis of crime data is very complex, especially if there are recurring cycles in the data (as is often the case with time-based analyses). Aside from the statistical procedures themselves, examinations of the data in graphic form are useful in providing insight into general trends. This section provides an analysis of several measures of crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks between May, 1988, and March, 1990 (by month).

Table 10 provides an overview of how the various categories of crime have changed at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks from May, 1988 to March, 1990. In terms of specific calls, for example, there were 3 calls for burglary at Columbia Villa Tamaracks in March, 1990, whereas there were 17 in May, 1988. This is a remarkable decline. As the table illustrates, similar patterns of decline exist in the other measures of crime calls (aggressive assault, simple assault, vandalism, and gang-related incidents). It is clear that each type of crime has dropped significantly between these two time periods.

Table 10
Change in The Number of Police Calls
May, 1988 - March, 1990

Category of Crime	5/88	3/90
Aggravated Assault	15	4
Burglary	17	3
Simple Assault	9	2
Vandalism	8	3
Gang Incidents	14	1

Table 11 lists the correlations obtained between each measure of crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks, and time.

Table 11
Measures of Crime by Time
(May, 1988 - March, 1990)

Crime	Correlation with Time
Aggressive Assault	-0.70
Burglary	-0.84
Simple Assault	-0.77
Vandalism	-0.70
Gang Activity	-0.81

As noted in Table 11, each of the correlations are fairly strong, and are inverse, indicating that, as time proceeds, each of the types of crime call decrease. These correlations suggest some important trends in criminal activity over time at Columbia Villa Tamaracks. During the (almost) two year time period, crime has decreased considerably.

Figures 2 through 6 are "scattergrams" for each measure of crime as it is related to time (measured in months beginning in May, 1988). This is a way to visualize the relationships noted above. Each graph includes Time on the horizontal axis, and individual measures of crime on the vertical axes.

On each graph a line is shown running through the data points. This regression line is a "line of best fit" that numerically represents the observations. When the line is sloped downward, as it is in each of the figures, this indicates that, as time increases, measures of crime decrease. Each of the graphs show a trend of decline in police calls between May, 1988 and March, 1990.

Figure 2

Burglary at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks
by Time

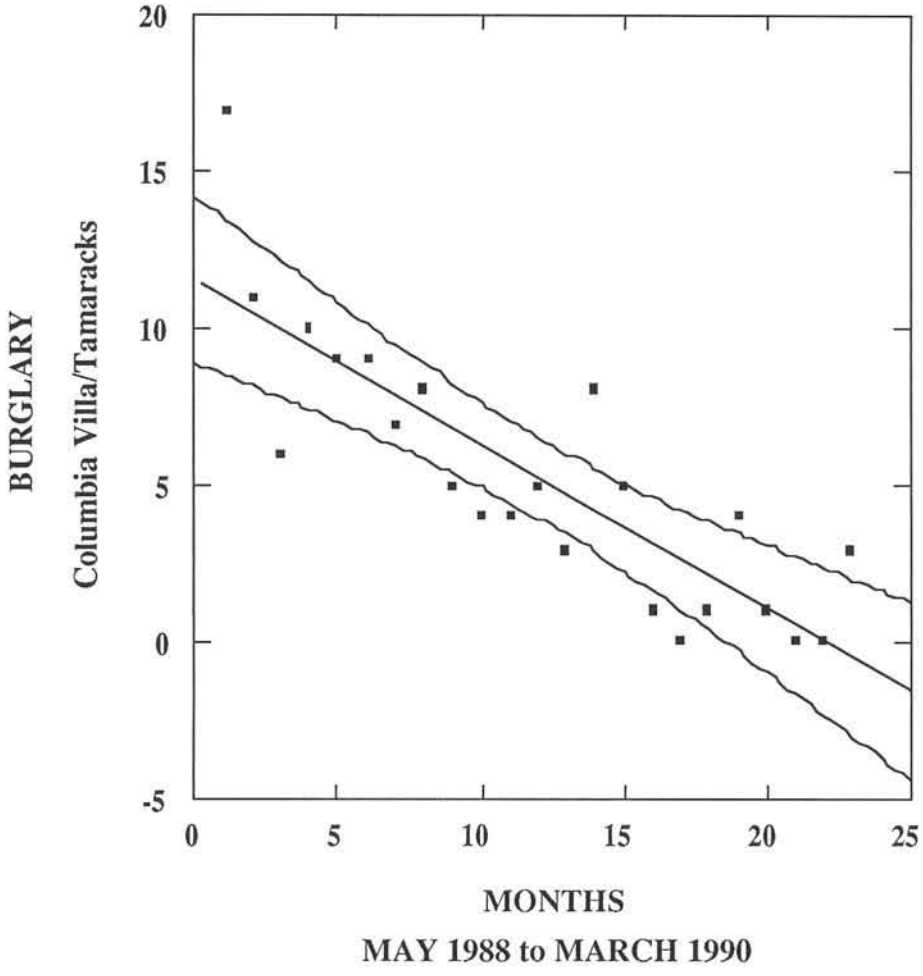


Figure 3

Aggravated Assault at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks by Time

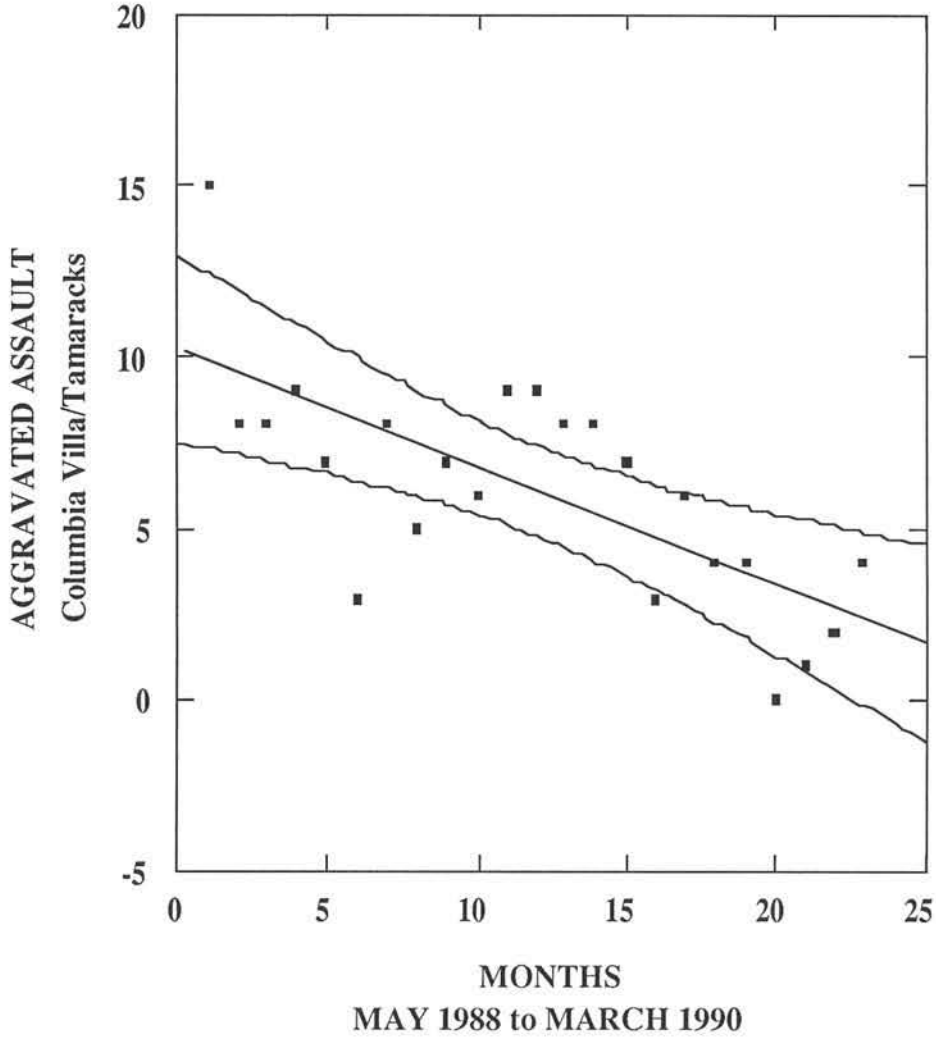


Figure 4

Simple Assault at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks
by Time

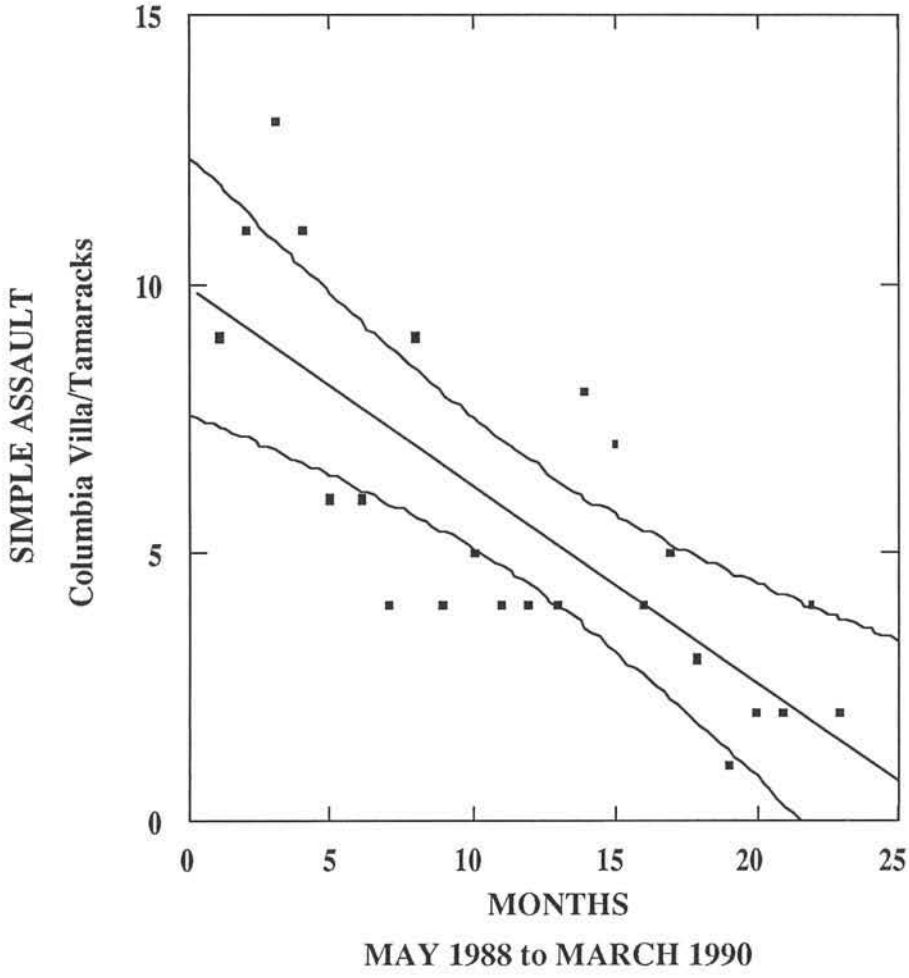
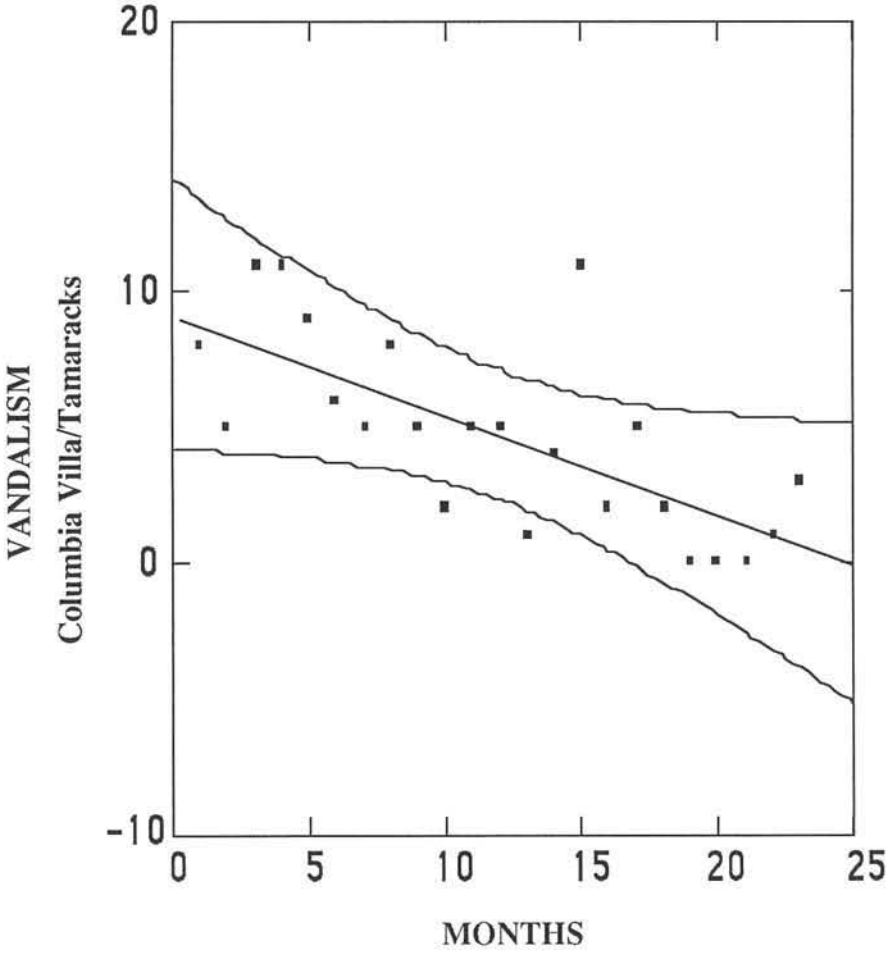


Figure 5

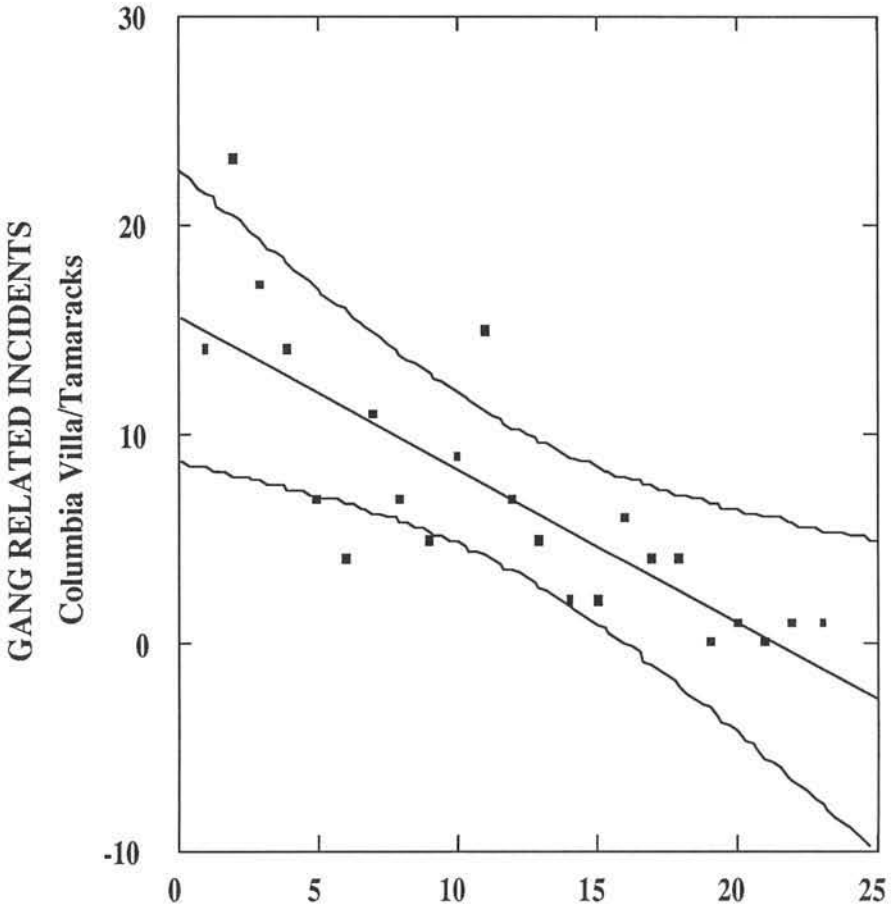
Vandalism at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks by time



MAY 1988 to MARCH 1990

Figure 6

Gang Related Incidents at Columbia Villa/Tamarcks by Time



Further statistical inspections of the data reveal potential problems that prevent interpretations of the efficacy of the CSIP "intervention." Although these technical analyses go beyond the scope of this report, it is important to note that no conclusions can be drawn about whether the CSIP resulted in a reduction of crime. This point can be visually confirmed by reexamining Figures 2 through 6.

As noted, the graphs show a relatively steady trend of decline over the two year period of data analysis. The problem with attributing the decline in crime to the CSIP is that the intervention was very "diffuse" in terms of participating agencies (see Figure 1, "Intervention Window"). Since a broad variety of services were added over a long period of time, it is not possible to isolate the effects of a single "intervention." Future data collected at Columbia Villa Tamaracks will be very useful in providing further clarity in determining specific crime trends.

Taken together, these graphs provide some important information about crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks over the last two years. Although it cannot necessarily be attributed to the CSIP, there has been a fairly steady decline in these crime measures over the two year period.

Columbia Villa Tamaracks Comparison to Portland

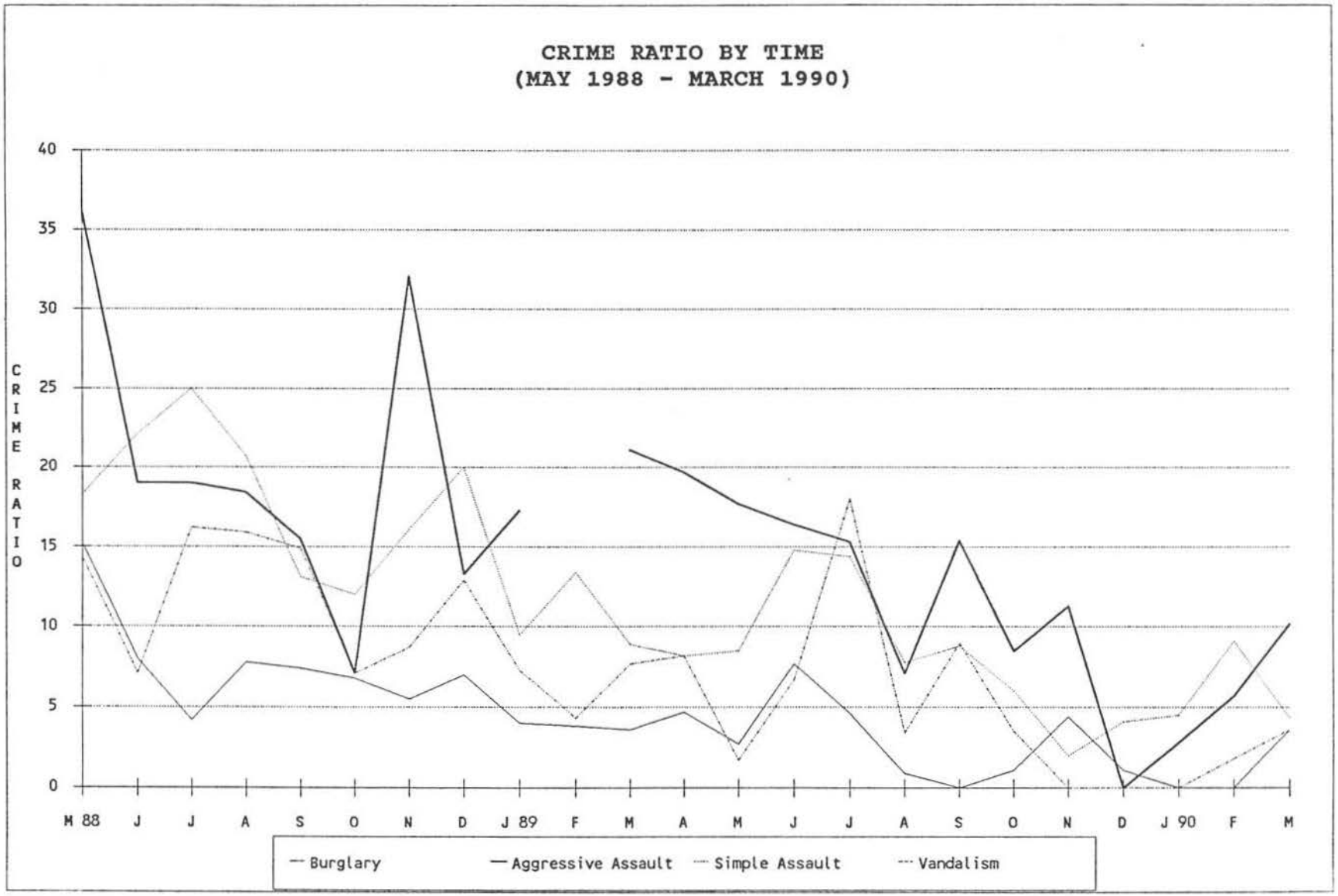
While it is informative to examine trends at Columbia Villa Tamaracks, it is also instructive to compare these general trends with crime trends in Portland as a whole. This section attempts to make direct comparisons so that we can determine the extent to which Columbia Villa Tamaracks is improving relative to the Portland area.

Figure 7 provides a comparison of crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks and Portland over the two year period May, 1988 to March, 1990. For each of 4 measures of crime, a line represents the overall ratio of crimes at Columbia Villa Tamaracks to crimes in Portland overall*. In this way, one can view how the crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks is a decreasing (or increasing) amount of the total Portland crime.

---

* The ratio was derived by the following formula: (V/P) x 1000, where V = Crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks, and P = Crime in Portland

FIGURE 7


CRIME RATIO BY TIME
(MAY 1988 - MARCH 1990)
CRIME RATIO
40
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
M 88
J
J
A
S
O
N
D
J 89
F
M
A
M
J
J
A
S
O
N
D
J 90
F
M
Burglary
Aggressive Assault
Simple Assault
Vandalism

The general trend for each measure of crime is an overall decline. This suggests that crime has decreased over the two year period at Columbia Villa Tamaracks relative to the changes in the overall Portland area. The pattern of the trend lines suggests a good amount of fluctuation by time. This suggests that Portland's crime trends vary and, in many cases, are declining as well. It may also indicate that cyclical trends are present in the data. (It is for these reasons that forecasting on the basis of data of this nature is problematic.)

Another way to view these trends is to create a "moving average" which "smooths" the lines. In this way, one can see the overall trend a bit more clearly. Figure 8 provides an examination of these smoothed trends.

As is clearly indicated, the lines move downward, and are interpreted as those in Figure 7. When the lines move downward with time, they indicate that crime calls at Columbia Villa Tamaracks are decreasing faster than any decline in Portland generally. The "spike" in the line for aggressive assault is due to data for one reporting period (Feb., 1989) that is abnormally low for Portland. However, this does not change the interpretation, since the trend for aggressive assault, as a whole, is similar to the other trend lines.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS REGARDING CRIME DATA

As a whole, the analyses of crime over the two year period May, 1988 to March, 1990 at Columbia Villa Tamaracks indicate that many categories of crime have declined. This is generally the case if one examines either what has happened at Columbia Villa Tamaracks independently, or relative to Portland as a whole.

The crime rate at Columbia Villa Tamaracks has traditionally been very high. The fact that crime has now declined substantially suggests that combined factors have had a marked impact. Not only has the crime rate at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks declined, but it has declined faster than the crime rate of Portland as a whole. This is especially remarkable since a crime rate equivalent to Portland's would have been considered a positive expectation.

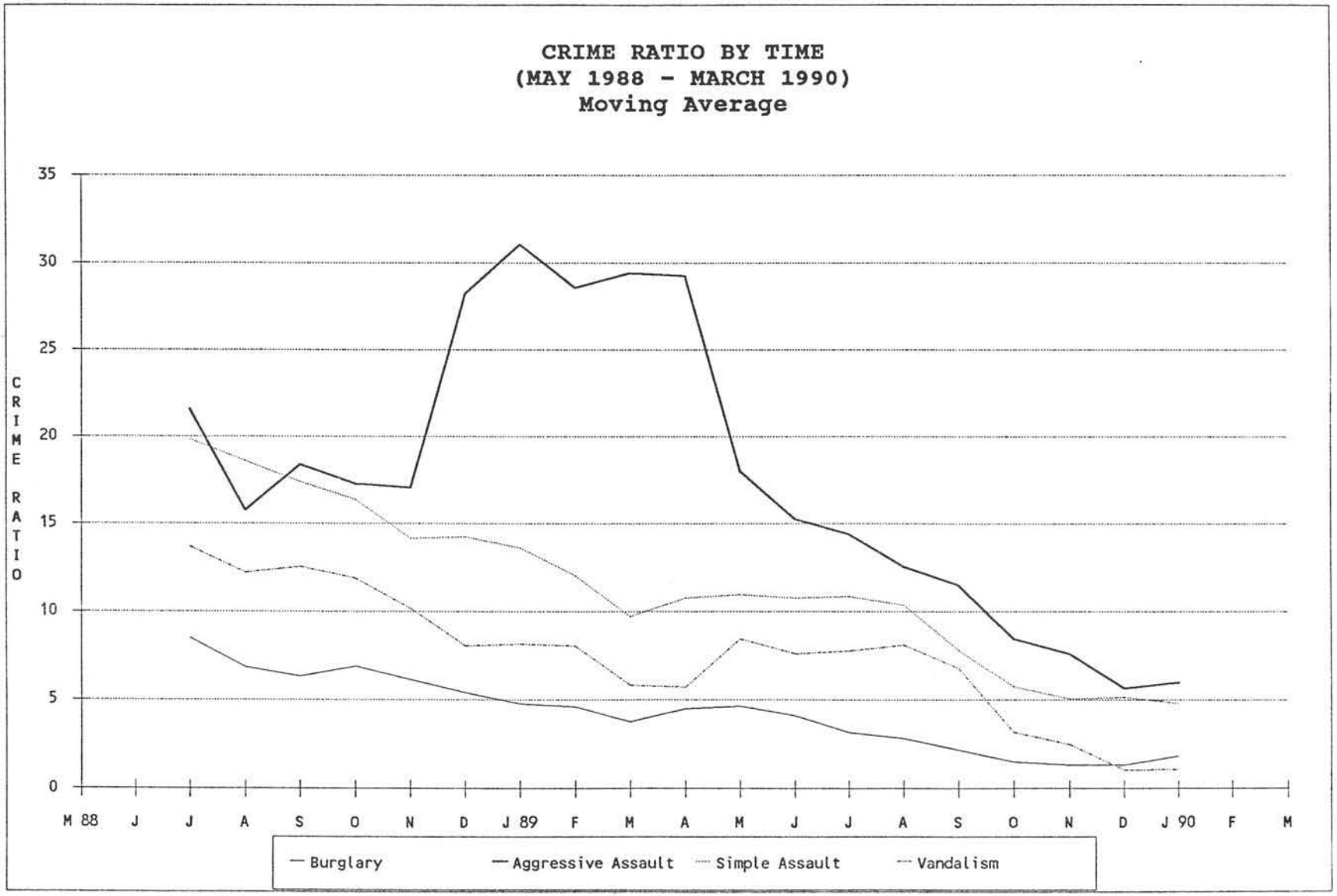
What is not clear from these analyses, is the reason for whatever decline is represented. Although the CSIP may have had an effect on the decrease in crime, it cannot be concluded how, or to what extent, it's impact was registered. Since the trend lines are heading downward even prior to the CSIP intervention, we cannot say how it has affected crime at Columbia Villa Tamaracks.

Thus, we are not in a position to say that the CSIP, by itself, caused the positive changes we observed. It should be noted, however, that, to whatever extent we could say that the CSIP was effective, we would have to credit the Safety Action Team as an effective influence at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

A potentially complicating factor in the interpretation of the crime data is the effect of a changing population at Columbia Villa Tamaracks during the 2 year period of the study. If the population changed significantly, then this change, rather than the CSIP specifically, could be partially responsible for the reduction in crime.

For example, there are some indications that there were changes in the characteristics of the Columbia Villa/Tamaracks population during the time period of the analysis. One of the effects of the remodeling efforts by HAP may have been that residents who were involved in criminal behavior were relocated. If this occurred, then the remodeling efforts had an effect on crime independent of the CSIP. This, and other potentially confounding events, make it very difficult to isolate the singular effects of the CSIP.

FIGURE 8


CRIME RATIO BY TIME
(MAY 1988 - MARCH 1990)
Moving Average
CRIME RATIO
35
30
25
20
15
10
5
0
M 88
J
J
A
S
O
N
D
J 89
F
M
A
M
J
J
A
S
O
N
D
J 90
F
M
Burglary
Aggressive Assault
Simple Assault
Vandalism

AGENCY DATA - INTERVIEWS

As mentioned, part of the approach of the evaluation includes interviews with key agencies providing service to the Columbia Villa/Tamaracks housing projects. This section describes the methods used in gathering information from involved social service agencies.

Procedure

A questionnaire was devised to be administered at Time 1 (at the beginning of the intervention) and Time 2 (after the intervention had been in operation for several months). It was designed to elicit such concrete information as goals and objectives, types of services offered, client demographics, numbers of people served, and percentage of clientele residing in the housing projects, as well as to gauge networking between agencies. In addition, provider attitudinal positions relative to the problems and population in Columbia Villa/Tamaracks would be assessed.

The main body of Time 1 interviews took place between May and September 1989 as agencies began to establish their presence as part of the CSIP. For initial interviews, key service providers were identified and personnel at the agencies were contacted. Dialogue sessions, approximately one hour in length, were conducted in person, either at the provider's Columbia Villa office cite or home office.

Revisions were made in the questionnaire to reflect the passage of time and to calculate changes which occurred (in population, numbers, services, perceptions, etc.) during the interim between the first and second interviews. The revised version was conducted as a telephone interview in May 1990.

Some of the items in these questionnaires (along with others used in this evaluation project) were modelled after questionnaires used in the 1986 Seattle-King County Emergency Shelter Study Update (King County Department of Planning and Community Development, 1986).

Findings

All agency interviewees (11 of 11) stated that there were no changes in goals and objectives or service delivery between the times that the interviews were conducted. Six agencies stated that services had been added to their offerings, and one agency reported that the emphasis of their offering had changed. In spite of additional services mentioned, most of the agency representatives interviewed (9 of 11) stated that levels of intensity of service had not changed. One agency representative stated that due to loss of personnel, the level of service had temporarily dropped. Those who responded (8 in all) to whether numbers of clients have changed over the past year stated either that they had increased greatly (5) or that they had remained much the same (3).

Service providers who were interviewed stated that they do network (i.e., maintain regular contact with other CSIP agencies). However, most agencies list only a few other agencies with whom they interact, and the contact is usually weekly.

It appears that those agencies dealing with youth populations engage in the most networking. Mainstream, Gang Outreach, Children's Services Division, and Portland Public Schools were among the most often cited. (Also, many providers stated that they contacted the social worker at the Community Service Project because they were sure that she would know where and how to refer clients.)

Most agency representatives interviewed (6 of 8) stated that they believed that the overall quality of life in the housing project had improved. None of the representatives reported a perception that the overall quality of life at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks had decreased, however 2 of 8 respondents noted little or no change. Areas still of concern to the service providers are child care needs, job opportunities, community involvement, and air quality.

CONCLUSIONS

The Columbia Villa Community Service Intervention Project (CSIP) is a unique public agency response to a multifaceted set of problems confronting low income residents living in Oregon's largest public housing project. The concern for the residents of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks is evidenced by the struggle of CSIP administrators and service providers to construct a net of services intended to ameliorate a complex problem. Although the effectiveness of programs of this nature are difficult to assess, it is clear that the CSIP has been established with integrity and clear purpose.

Overall Assessment of Program Objectives

1. **Reduce the incidence of actual crime.**

As the "Analysis of Crime" section indicates, there has been a reduction in aggravated assault, burglary, simple assault, vandalism, and gang activity at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

2. **Reduce the fear of crime.**

Responses to the resident survey indicate a reduction in the fear of crime at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

3. **Improve the quality of life of residents.**

Respondents to the resident survey report that the quality of life has improved at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks over the last 12 months.

Overall, the results from the various data analyses indicate that things have improved at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks during the last couple of years. Resident attitudes appear to have become more positive, crime appears to have decreased, and agencies are providing more services to residents.

The primary question to be asked at this point in the evaluation is why have things improved at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks? Because of the nature of the design, and the implementation of the CSIP, it is not possible to identify the key causal factors, or to attribute specific effects to the CSIP.

What makes a specific evaluation of CSIP objectives difficult is the nature of the program itself. A broad range of services were developed to provide assistance to Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents. While this was a positive step, there was no clear articulation of how each service was being targeted to specifically address each of the program objectives. Thus, agencies as varied as Mainstream, PIC, Saturday School, etc, were intended to generically reduce crime and fear of crime, and to increase the quality of life.

The program was further complicated by the fact that these agencies contribute different amounts of time and budget, and they initiated services at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks over about an 18 month interval. At best, the first year of service delivery is atypical, and should be examined over the course of several years. For this reason, the data from the evaluation could provide an initial assessment in a longitudinal study of Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

On the level of the individual resident, there are still issues to be addressed:

- Of all the quality of life indicators that were assessed by respondents, the category of job opportunities was the one that appears to need the most improvement.

- There appears to be very little participation by Columbia Villa/Tamaracks residents in the planning and functioning of the CSIP. The findings from the resident survey (regarding community involvement) may indicate that residents desire a higher level of participation in the CSIP.

- There still appears to be a substantial amount of fear of crime among residents at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks.

On the agency level, there are questions remaining to be addressed about the approach utilized by the CSIP:

- A unique approach to service provision and networking did not develop in the CSIP. Rather, the CSIP consisted of a number of individual social service agencies, each delivering their specific services. Agency staff were not released from conducting "business as usual" when new and unique approaches were needed. Of all the participating agencies in the CSIP, the Safety Action Team exhibits elements of a unique approach.

- While the Safety Action Team appears to be the most important ingredient in the effectiveness of the CSIP, is the County prepared to support the high level of special police involvement that exists at Columbia Villa/Tamaracks? The Multnomah County Safety Action Team is the only agency that has as it's mandate, an order to serve Columbia Villa/Tamaracks, exclusively.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. This was the first attempt by Multnomah County to coordinate a variety of state, county, city, and private services to address a serious community problem. In this respect, the County should be commended. Subsequent efforts should emphasize a higher profile by the County to coordinate, plan, manage, and evaluate services according to a set of carefully chosen set of objectives. This might require the appointment of a Director (and staff) who can create and manage the following:

    - Liaison between agencies, levels of government, and individuals.
    - Systems to increase networking between agencies.
    - Designs for outcome evaluation.
    - Accountability and risk management systems.

2. Multnomah County should extend the evaluation of the CSIP (and related programs) design over several years so that the specific effects of intervention can be identified. The data from the current evaluation could be part of a longitudinal effort that would strengthen an understanding of the effectiveness of what was accomplished. In subsequent programs, evaluation activities should be a part of initial planning efforts so that evaluation precedes the intervention, and continues after the intervention.

3. There needs to be greater involvement of residents by the CSIP (and related programs) so that those who feel the impact of the program might be part of the structure of the program. In this way, residents would be more fully empowered to act on the events that affect their lives.

4. Greater job opportunities and job training are needed at Columbia Villa/ Tamaracks. It is feasible that residents could be trained to work in areas that are identified as needs to improve the quality of life (e.g., day care, grocery, laundromat, and residential services including security and maintenance). Residents could also be trained to work in area businesses.

5. The CSIP would benefit from the additional participation of new agencies, particularly the Fire Department, Tri-Met, Metro (Solid Waste), and DEQ.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Andrews, F.M. (Ed.). (1986). The subjective life quality of Black Americans. In RESEARCH ON THE QUALITY OF LIFE (pp.194-199). Ann Arbor: University of Michigan.

Babbie, E. (1989). THE PRACTICE OF SOCIAL RESEARCH (5th ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth.

Babbie, E. (1990). SURVEY RESEARCH METHODS (2nd ed.). Belmont: Wadsworth.

Garland, L.B. (1988). Teaming up to solve the low-income housing puzzle. BUSINESS WEEK, 3049, 133.

Hammonds, K. (1988). The new face of public services. BUSINESS WEEK, 3076, 57-60.

Harrington, M. (1984). THE NEW AMERICAN POVERTY. New York: Holt, Rinehart, and Winston.

Housing Authority of Portland. (1946). The first five years.

Housing Authority of Portland. (1990, April). Tenant report.

Kaufman, E., Khantzian, E., Westermeyer, J., Czechowizc, D., Mirin, S., & Meyer, R. (1987). Position statement on psychoactive substance abuse and dependence: Update on marijuana and cocaine. AMERICAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY 144(5), 698-702.

Kelling, G.L. & Moore, M.H. (1988). The evolving strategy of policing. PERSPECTIVES ON POLICING. New Haven: National Institute of Justice.

King County Department of Planning and Community Development. (1986). Homelessness revisited. Seattle.

Levitan, S.A. (1985). PROGRAMS IN AID OF THE POOR (5th ed.). Baltimore, Johns Hopkins University.

Levitan, S.A. & Shapiro, I. (1987). WORKING BUT POOR: AMERICA'S CONTRADICTION. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University.

Multnomah County Department of Human Services. (1988, August). A proposal for neighborhood safety and improvement at the Columbia Villa/Tamarack Housing Project.

Newcomb, M.D., Fahy, B.N., & Skager, R. (1988). Correlates of cocaine use among adolescents. JOURNAL OF DRUG ISSUES, 18, 327-354.

Rohe, W.M. & Burby, R.J. (1988). Fear of crime in public housing. ENVIRONMENT AND BEHAVIOR, 20(6), 700-720.

Smith, D.M. (1973). THE GEOGRAPHY OF SOCIAL WELL-BEING IN THE U.S. New York: McGraw Hill.

Walsh, F.J. (1988). Orlando police implement old ideas with a new twist. THE POLICE CHIEF, 55(12), 48-50.

Ziemba, S. (1988). Is public housing on its last legs? PLANNING, 54(9), 15-16.

BLDG. LEGEND

	TYPE OF BLDG	NO. OF BR'S	NO. OF BLDGS	NO. OF UNITS
A	FOURPLEX	2-1BR, 1-2BR, 1-3BR	36	144
B	DUPLEX	2-2BR	96	192
C	DUPLEX	2-3BR	26	52
D	DUPLEX	2-4BR	10	20
E	DUPLEX	3-3BR	10	30
F	DUPLEX	2-4BR	5	10
G	TRIPLEX	3-2BR	1	3
H	FOURPLEX	4-4BR	4	16
J	FIVEPLEX	5-4BR	1	5
K	SIXPLEX	6-3BR	1	6
L	LAUNDRY		7	–
P	PLAYGROUND		12	–
	TOTAL BLDGS		198	–
	TOTAL UNITS			478

N. DANA AVE.
N. FESSENDEN
N. NEWARK AVE.
N. TRENTON ST.
N. HOUGHTON ST.
WAREHOUSE
MAINT. OFFICES
AREA OFFICE
N. WOOLSEY AVE.
N. WOOLSEY AVE.
N. WOOLSEY AVE.
N. DWIGHT AVE.
N. NEWMAN AVE.
N. COLUMBIA BLVD.
N. TRENTON PLACE
N. HOUGHTON ST.
N. FISKE AVE.
N. WOOLSEY AVE.
N. WOOLSEY COURT
N. DRUID AVE.
N. FISKE AVE.
N. FESSENDEN ST.
N. HAVEN AVE.
N. ADRIATIC AVE.
N. CECELIA ST.
N. FESSENDEN
N. NEWARK ST.
N. TRENTON ST.
N. HUDSON ST.

SITE PLAN

SCALE 0 50 100 200 300

N

COLUMBIA VILLA HOUSING PROJECT

HOUSING AUTHORITY OF PORTLAND OREGON
4400 N.E. BROADWAY PORTLAND, OREGON

DATE April 1, 1972
REV.
DRAWING 1
OF [illegible]

The Sunday Oregonian

FORUM

SECTION D

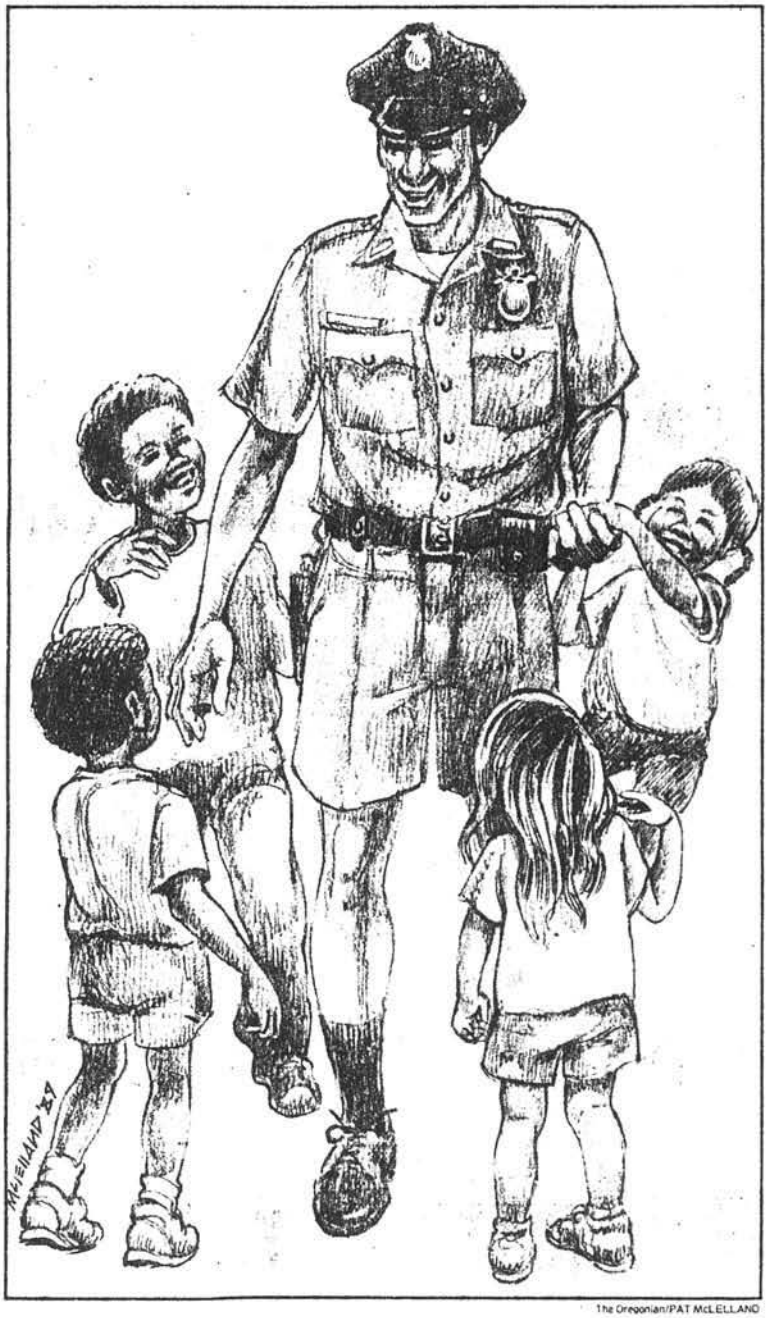
JULY 30, 1989

Community police techniques at Columbia Villa may offer glimpse of Portland's future

Walking a new beat

"THIS IS THE WAY ALL POLICING SHOULD BE"

By LARRY HILDERBRAND
Associate Editor, The Oregonian



The Oregonian/PAT McLELLAND

"If you don't have anything else going on, reach out and hug a kid."

With that last word in early April, Lt. Rod Englert of the Multnomah County sheriff's office put his three deputies and two community-service officers to work in Columbia Villa. This is a public housing project in North Portland where the norm has been for most of the residents to retreat behind closed doors and keep shades pulled even in the daylight.

Today, these same residents gather on their porches even into the dusk and evening hours.

And the hostility and distrust that greeted the deputies on their first walks through the neighborhood have changed to smiles, waves, pleasantries, an occasional whispered exchange, handshakes and, yes, hugs for and from the children.

To all appearances, the gamble is paying off for Don Clark, director of the Housing Authority of Portland, who contracted with the sheriff for special policing.

Furthermore, it's a peek into Portland's future, if Mayor Bud Clark and the rest of the City Council continue to support the move of the Police Bureau toward community policing.

Their job: Maintain public order and safety, but as partners working with the residents in responding to emergencies.

The returns on the one-year contract are just starting to come in. Portland State University's School of Urban & Public Affairs will monitor and evaluate the program so that the public can rely on more than impressions of success. A starting point will be a survey asking residents, among other questions, "Do you feel safer?"

If the answer is as affirmative as the apparent change in lifestyle suggests it will be, it will say much about the need for increased police presence in troubled Portland neighborhoods.

However, it also should be interpreted as a commentary on the type of police presence.

Deputy Wayne McDonnell is a veteran of Multnomah County's team policing in the 1970s. He takes pride in wearing a London bobby's whistle, which was given to him after a year studying with Scotland Yard before he became a sheriff's deputy here.

"I believe this is the way all policing should be," he says of his Columbia Villa assignment, adding that he dreads the day when he may be reassigned to radio car duty.

"If that day should come, I've learned one thing, and that's to park the darned car, get out and walk and talk to people. Your effectiveness as a policeman is just increased tenfold."

Fellow Deputy Dan Thompson agrees. For him, the assignment stirred childhood memories. He has pictures of his father in front of one of the houses on his daily patrols. His father lived there as a shipbuilder shortly after the Villa was built as temporary housing during World War II.

The Villa he started working in slightly more than three months ago was nothing like the calm scene portrayed in the family scrapbook. He'd like to return it to the past in terms of livability.

"When we first got here, there was a severe gang problem, and a lot of hate toward us," he recalled.

"We broke that down by showing we respect them as human beings, number one. Then saying we don't care if you're in a gang here, because they're just quasi-neighborhood organizations. But we don't want you to do crimes."

That was the beginning. Today, the deputies sometimes work with gang leaders to reach certain people and resolve some problems.

They also work with 41 different county, city, state, Housing Authority, school and United Way agencies seeking to solve problems in Columbia Villa and its adjoining, also publicly owned, Tamarack apartments. Their goal is to help the residents help themselves. They won't be satisfied just to apply a summer Band-Aid to an inner-city sore.

Many of the social-service agencies have shared the broader goal for years. The missing ingredient, Clark believes, was policing.

"How can you help people who are living in constant fear?" he asked.

His answer was to contract with Multnomah County for policing of public housing to supplement the Portland Police Bureau patrols. And, he wants to try doing things a little differently.

The two community-service officers are part of the difference. David Dixon's education and background are in counseling. Chris Shelton's experience is in athletic administration. "They do everything the deputies do, except carry firearms and make arrests," Clark says.

That includes asking residents what they need and how the team can help. It also means reading the crime and arrest reports regularly provided by the Portland Police Bureau, then going to the affected homes and trying to find out why assaults or child abuse, as examples, took place.

Drugs and drunkenness are major causes, but so are job loss and prolonged unemployment. Dixon and Shelton have found 40 jobs for residents since April 10.

They screen their applicants, make sure they're dressed appropriately, coach them for interviews, sometimes even introduce them to employers. Occasionally, they advance them bus fare, to be paid back from the resident's first paycheck.

They also put Villa youngsters to work picking up litter, erasing graffiti and doing other necessary cleanup jobs.

McDonnell, summing up the team approach, says, "Our job, the way we see it, is to help people solve their problems here."

But it's not all work and no play. There are trips to the zoo, the courts, the state Capitol and assembly plants. On the summer agenda are some fishing and camping trips.

The officers have scheduled shifts, which vary to serve the area's needs instead of their own. But these public servants clearly contribute time beyond a 40-hour week.

McDonnell took his wife and children — and more than a dozen Columbia Villa/Tamarack youngsters — to the weekend Highland Games.

He recalled, "On the way back, we drove by the (Columbia) river, and some of the kids said they had never seen it."

That is surprising until the demographics of the 1,100-resident housing development are considered. For example:

- The income of the population ranges from low to lower — for 3 percent of the population it is 80 percent or less than the average income of residents in the metropolitan area; for the other 97 percent, it is 50 percent or less.
- 83.3 percent of the homes are headed by single-parent females.
- Half the population is less than 30 years old.
- 46 percent is minority — 39 percent black, 6 percent Asian and 1 percent American Indian.

It is little wonder why this is a troubled neighborhood.

Until the deputies arrived, most of the residents thought their security depended on tough males, who often were

Please turn to POLICING, Page D4

Policing: Early skepticism turns to enthusiasm

■ Continued from Page D1

temporary residents and, more recently, gang members. City police responded to emergency calls, but then returned to their cars and to patrols elsewhere.

They continue to do that, but the deputies and community service officers are there every day.

Working with Portland Police was, in fact, one of the early challenges of the program. While commanders at North Precinct gave wholehearted support, the team reported, skepticism, even hostility, was apparent at the patrol level.

After about a month, that changed to a cooperative, even friendly, working relationship as both parties established their own turfs. City police continue to handle priority calls to the housing project; the county team tries to defuse problems before they explode and work to see they don't recur.

That friendly working relationship is apparent now among all the agencies assisting at Columbia Villa. Parole and probation officers exchange information with the deputies and community-service officers. So do social-service workers and maintenance workers, some of whom once were afraid to change light bulbs in some sections of the project.

But more has to be done:

- More jail space is needed to allow locking up of adult males arrested for criminal trespass after being evicted from the housing project. Just the threat is an important tool for the deputies because the men see the Villa, which houses their women and children, as their home. But the threat must be backed by sanctions or it becomes as useless as a hammer separated from its handle.
- At least one more deputy. Three deputies and a lieutenant can't cover all the hours when security is needed and problems must be addressed.
- Another community-service officer could help organize the tenants to get involved with solving their mutual problems. For example, earlier resident patrols that dissolved as gang strength increased might be reactivated, with deputies accompanying them.
- More job, recreational and alternative-education opportunities are needed, particularly for teen-agers.

A livable neighborhood

These are on the agenda of "The Committee," formed to remake Columbia Villa/Tamarack into a livable neighborhood. Its members are Clark, Mayor Bud Clark, County Chairwoman Gladys McCoy, Portland School Superintendent Matthew Prophet and David A. Paradine, president of United Way of the Columbia-Willamette.

Topping the agenda, though, ought to be child care.

"That is the only way I can see to really stop this generational repeat of molestation, drug abuse and assault," Don Clark says. The documented success of early childhood help programs, such as Head Start, support his thesis.

Residents feeling safe enough to sit on their porches after dark, regaining their self-esteem with paying jobs, acknowledging respectful treatment as human beings, conceding that the villa's crime rate is falling — all are measurements of progress.

However, the ingredients of success — caring and continuity — are articulated best by Deputy McDonnell:

"I'd like this to be a generational thing . . . I'd like to follow this for a generation and really turn this around."

The deputy was standing on a curb in open shirt, short pants, badge — and gunbelt — four or five children, ages 4 to about 10, plucking at his flashlight and bobby whistle, gently competing for hugs and shyly trying to plant a kiss on his cheek. He continued:

"Most of these kids don't really get out of the neighborhood from what I can tell. They don't see other things in life that are available to other people and could be available to them if they knew how to work for them.

"The kids here have no concept of the future. They haven't had anything in their lives they could depend on tomorrow.

"And that goes for us, too. If this project lasts only a year, it will be just another letdown for them."

Don Clark knows of no major housing project being turned around after becoming as troubled as Columbia Villa/Tamarack. But no universal law says that neighborhoods have to die once they have begun to decay. Perhaps, as is beginning to happen here, caring, attention, commitment, respect, discipline, help and self-help can confound the Grim Reaper. And if it can happen here, why not elsewhere?