

ORIGINAL

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EVALUATION OF THE URBAN INITIATIVES  
ANTI-CRIME PROGRAM

HARTFORD, CT, CASE STUDY

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This report is one in a series that comprises a comprehensive evaluation of the Public Housing Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Demonstration. The Final Report provides an integrated analysis of the design, implementation and impact of the entire demonstration, and each of the 15 site-specific case studies analyzes the implementation and impact of the programs at individual participating local housing authorities. The complete set of reports includes:

Evaluation of the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program: Final Report

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## PREFACE

The Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Demonstration was created by the Public Housing Security Demonstration Act of 1978. The program was formally announced in May 1979 and awards were made by the following September. By early 1981, programs in all 39 selected sites were underway; and by mid-1982, all were essentially completed.

As the report notes, the design and implementation of the program were flawed. The demonstration was conceived and developed according to principles which the current Administration has sought to reverse--that influxes of Federal money and direct Federal involvement can provide solutions to local problems.

HUD is currently implementing a series of demonstrations designed to improve the quality of life of public housing residents. These demonstrations stress local autonomy in design and implementation, with communities free to tailor their programs to meet their own unique needs. The demonstrations emphasize the coordination of existing Federal, State, and local resources, rather than the duplication of existing efforts or the funding of new programs. They use existing HUD resources to leverage other public and private funds. And, they require the commitment of all sectors of the local community, with a special emphasis on public/ private partnerships.

The Department believes that the emphasis on local authority which characterizes current Administration policy and provides the basis for operating and planned demonstrations holds much more promise for improving the lives of low-income families than programs that are rigidly structured by the Federal government.

## I. CONTEXT

### A. The City

Hartford is the capital of Connecticut, the state's largest city, and the core of a seven-town chartered metropolitan area. Situated on the west side of the Connecticut River, about 100 miles northeast of New York City and 100 miles southwest of Boston, the city currently depends on a balance of business and industry for its economic vitality. Hartford is sometimes called "the insurance city" because it is the home of more than 25 insurance companies. Large banking institutions and retail outlets complement the insurance activity, while manufacturing of internationally known products -- typewriters, computing equipment, firearms, machine tools and gauges, and jet engines -- accounts for an even larger share of the economy.

Hartford's population has changed considerably over time, reflecting corresponding shifts in industrial and social trends. During the nineteenth century, the rise of water-powered manufacturing attracted young people from the agricultural upland towns to the growing mill towns like Hartford, and virtually all of the upland towns lost population. Towns with better resources for manufacturing grew rapidly.

The movement of people and industry into the cities was the dominant trend in Connecticut until 1920, at which time Bridgeport, Hartford, and New Haven, the three largest cities in the state, began losing their residents to the suburbs and beyond them to the former agricultural hill towns. In 1980, the population of Hartford stood at 136,392 -- 13.7% less than the 1970 figure.

Some sections of Hartford, notably the North End, have been increasingly populated by Blacks and Puerto Ricans. Slum conditions prevailing in much of this area have been the target of many private and public rehabilitative efforts.

B. Demonstration Sites and the Surrounding Neighborhoods

The Hartford Housing Authority selected three housing projects in the city's North End -- Harriet Beecher Stowe Village, Bellevue Square, and Nelton Court -- to serve as demonstration sites for the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program. All three of these projects, according to the proposal, served as the home of youths who were overrepresented in the city's juvenile justice system.

A fourth housing project, Charter Oak Terrace, was also considered as a possible demonstration site, since the crime rate was reportedly higher there than at any other housing project in the city. Charter Oak Terrace was located in Hartford's southwest end, however, and did not satisfy even HUD's rather loose definition of contiguity. Charter Oak Terrace, moreover, was already being "treated" separately through a \$10 million Public Housing Urban Initiatives Program grant when the application for Anti-Crime funds was made. In light of these circumstances, then, HUD would probably have taken a very dim view of any attempts to include Charter Oak Terrace in the preliminary application for participation in Anti-Crime Program.

Stowe Village, the largest of the three demonstration sites, is a 42.2-acre development on Kensington and Hampton Streets. Built in 1952, the development has 591 units in management, which house a total of 2,465 residents. The development is almost entirely occupied by families; as of 30 August 1979, Stowe Village had only 260 elderly residents, comprising 10.55 percent of the population.

Stowe Village consisted of 8 two-story, wood-frame duplexes and 23 three-story, walk-up brick buildings. Access to the area by outsiders was easy, due to the project's proximity to three main streets which intersect. The buildings themselves were spread out, and except for the duplex sections, it was difficult for residents to obtain a sense of ownership of the project. The buildings were

also easily penetrable, since entrances and breezeways provided unimpeded entry. Residents, for reasons of personal safety, chose not to question inappropriate behavior.

The vacancy rate at Stowe was, nevertheless, very low; on 30 April, 1979, only three of the 591 units stood vacant. In 1978, 67 units received new occupants, for a turnover rate of 11.3 percent.

Bellevue Square, a 12.57-acre project, is located on Wooster, Canton, Pavilion, and Bellevue Streets. Built in 1941, this project had 308 units in management when the Anti-Crime Program began, and housed a total of 1273 residents. As of 30 August 1979, Bellevue Square had 210 elderly residents, comprising 16.50 percent of the tenant population.

The name of the development, "Bellevue," was to some almost a misnomer; the project was described by many as a "brick yard" which rose out of an almost totally abandoned tract located between a cemetery (to the west) and a railroad track (to the east). Most of the Bellevue Square development consisted of three-story, walk-up buildings, housing four families per floor per entryway. There were two major gathering sites: an outdoor playground and a community building.

The vacancy rate at Bellevue was very low at the outset of the program; on 30 April 1979, there were no vacant units at the project. In 1978, 37 units received new occupants, for a turnover rate of 12.0 percent.

Nelton Court, a 6.85-acre project on Main, Westland, Acton, and Nelton Streets, was built in 1941. The project, which was comprised of two-story row units, had 154 units in management when the Anti-Crime Program began, and housed a total of 643 residents. Like the other two projects, this development was occupied largely by families; as of 30 August 1979, Nelton Court had 109 elderly residents, comprising 16.95 percent of the tenant population.

As was the case with much of north Hartford, the project was bounded by deterioration and abandoned housing. Access to Nelton Court by car was limited to a narrow one-way street, which was really one of the most attractive features of the environmental design; that street almost completely discouraged the use of the project as a thoroughfare to nonresidents. On the other hand, this same limited passageway served to limit city services, such as dumpster pick-ups, and presented a public safety hazard.

The vacancy rate at Nelton Court was, nevertheless, very low at the outset of the Anti-Crime Program; on 30 April 1979, only one unit was vacant at the project. In 1978, 20 units received new occupants for a turnover rate of 13.0 percent.

School enrollment data for Police District 2 (which contains Stowe Village) indicate that approximately 46.7% of the area's residents are Hispanic, 52.6% are Black, and 0.7% are White. In the Clay Hill/South Arsenal neighborhood (which contains Bellevue Square and which immediately abuts the neighborhood containing Nelton Court and Stowe Village), approximately 78% of the residents are Black, 20% are Hispanic, and 2% are White. In 1976, 64% of the neighborhood's residents earned less than \$5,000 per annum, and 68% of these low-income persons lived in Bellevue Square.

It is difficult to obtain reliable statistics on the level of unemployment in this very poor section of Hartford's North End. A survey conducted by Research Associates for Policy Action (of New Haven, Connecticut) in May 1979 indicated that, while the statewide unemployment rate for Connecticut was 4.3%, and the unemployment rate for the Hartford labor market (Hartford and 33 surrounding towns) was 4.0%, the unemployment rate for the North End of Hartford (including the better-off Blue Hills section, in which none of the demonstration sites is located) was 44.4%, which climbs to 51.4% when one added those who



have stopped looking for work. Fifty percent of those who had completed Federal job-training programs were unable to find work, and 57% of the 17-20 year-old age group in the North End was unemployed.

Yet, the crime rate at the demonstration sites does not appear to have been exceptionally high before the implementation phase of the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program began. In 1979, there were 26 recorded violent crimes (murders, rapes and assaults) at Stowe Village, 18 at Bellevue Square, and 9 at Nelton Court. Property crimes (burglary, larceny, and auto theft) appear to have been much more of a problem, with 145 reported incidents at Stowe Village, 42 at Bellevue Square, and 43 at Nelton Court. There were, lastly, only 12 reported robberies at Stowe Village, 14 at Bellevue Square, and 5 at Nelton Court.

A report by the Hartford Institute of Criminal and Social Justice revealed, however, that 56 percent of all project youths arrested in Hartford resided in the three Anti-Crime Program demonstration sites. In short, what this means is that one of out every seven juveniles under the age of 16 who was arrested for a crime in Hartford resided in one of the projected being "treated" through the Anti-Crime Program.

## II. METHODOLOGY

General discussions of process and impact methodology are located in other portions of this report and will not be repeated here. In this section we discuss only those site-specific methodological issues which in part determine how the data presented in this case study is to be interpreted.

Data collection in Hartford began on 16 December 1980 with a visit to the site by project directors from Harvard University's John F. Kennedy School of Government and the Police Foundation. Subsequent process data collection was handled by an on-site observer and a research assistant from Harvard University



who made at least five site visits to interview program staff.

Attitudinal and victimization data was collected by DAMANS and Associates from 22 May 1981 to 9 August 1981. Unfortunately, since very few of the proposed activities had been implemented by the time the survey ended, the survey results cannot be regarded as adequate measures of program impact. Some of this data is presented under the section labeled program impact, but given the timing of the survey relative to the progress in the implementation of program activities, the survey results might best be regarded as baseline data.

The sample size of one of the demonstration sites (Nelton Court) was also, disappointingly, quite small (13 respondents for the long form and 16 for the victimization survey). The small sample size here and the staff problems which DAMANS and Associates experienced at Nelton Court have combined to make the findings for this particular demonstration site generally unreliable. For this reason, we have chosen to omit any discussion of survey results relating to Nelton Court.

### III. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

Hartford's Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program was, for the most part, a product of the Hartford Institute of Criminal and Social Justice, a non-profit organization which had been working closely with the government agencies since 1969 to develop programs designed to address crime and other urban problems. Prior to its work on the Anti-Crime Program, the Institute had coordinated a very similar program -- the Hartford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program -- and was, therefore, familiar with problems which could arise in the implementation of such programs. The Institute had also planned and implemented a wide range of programs and reforms -- including a pre-trial diversion program, bail reforms, a program providing supported employment for ex-offenders and the chronically unemployed, and a methadone maintenance program. In many respects,

then, the Hartford Institute seemed to be the organization best suited to write the preliminary application for Anti-Crime funds.

The Hartford Insitute began assembling materials for this preliminary application in April 1979. In designing what was to become the Anti-Crime Program, the Institute relied very heavily on the model of the Hartford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program -- a program which had gained nation-wide attention and one which was regarded as a moderate success. Designed in 1974, the Hartford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program was comprised of three essential elements: (1) changes in the physical environment; (2) a reorganization of the police; and (3) attempts to increase the involvement of community residents. Four additional elements -- (1) improvements to PHA management of crime-prevention efforts, (2) the reduction of unemployment at the projects, (3) the provision of social services, and (4) the co-targeting of local government efforts -- were added to this basic design for the Urban Initiatives program in response to HUD guidelines. All of these elements, with the exception of that dealing with changes in the physical environment (which were formulated by the Housing Authority's Director of Modernization and Development), were designed by the Hartford Institute.

As was the case with the Harford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program, the Anti-Crime Program was to have been targeted on burglary and street robbery/pursesnatch. Domestic violence was also selected as a target crime in order to take advantage of crisis intervention services offered by the police department.

After a series of meetings with Housing Authority staff and project residents to discuss the proposed programs, the Hartford Insitute submitted the preliminary application to HUD (in June 1979). A month later, in August 1979, the Authority learned that it had been selected as a semi-finalist in the

competition for participation in the Anti-Crime Program. In order to remain in competition, however, the Authority would have to make several revisions to its proposal. More specifically, according to HUD reviewers, the Authority would have to increase the participation of other Federal agencies and the police. The Authority was also advised to obtain and coordinate specific commitments from neighborhood organizations, local businesses, foundations, city government, and Federal programs with proposed activities.

The Institute made most of the revisions to the program called for in HUD comments, and drew up a Victim/Witness Work Plan when it learned that the Housing Authority would be receiving LEAA Victim/Witness funds. The Institute also drafted the required vulnerability analysis, and prepared an application for OJJDP funds when the Institute learned that such funds had become available. The Housing Authority, for its part, prepared an application for ADAMHA funds to support a "Target Lifeline Program," but the proposed program was not funded.

The Authority and the Institute were ultimately successful in their attempt to bring the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program to Hartford, but actual funding of the program was delayed for a long time due to disputes which arose between the Authority and the funding agencies. HUD, for one thing, was uncomfortable with the proposed OJJDP-sponsored Education Advocacy Program, which was intended to train parents to serve as advocates for their children in the city's school system; although the concept had the support of OJJDP, a HUD consultant saw the program as confrontational and advocated a tutoring program instead. A second conflict arose over the concept of youth security patrols in the YCCIP component; DOL's position here was that the establishment of a youth security force under the program would violate Federal legislation then in effect.

With the help of tenants from the three housing projects participating in the Anti-Crime Program, the Institute was able to challenge successfully HUD's opposition to the Education Advocacy Program; when it became evident that the tenants strongly supported the concept of the Education Advocacy Program, HUD gave up the idea of a tutoring program and decided to fund the program which the Authority had proposed. The Institute was less successful in its dealings with DOL, however; realizing that the dispute with DOL over the youth security patrols threatened to hold up the execution of a cooperative agreement, the Institute staff decided to back down and go with the security and maintenance positions which had been approved during the application process.

The cooperative agreement between the Housing Authority and HUD was approved by the latter on 22 September 1980, fifteen months after the initial application had been submitted, and nearly nineteen months after the Institute first learned about the availability of funds. When it was all over, the Housing Authority stood to receive a total of \$1,107,000 in Federal funds -- \$658,000 in HUD Physical Security Modernization funds; \$79,000 in Community Development Discretionary Funds; \$250,000 in DOL Project Youth Employment Funds; \$100,000 in DOJ Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention funds; and \$20,000 in LEAA Victim/Witness funds. The Hartford Institute, by contrast, was now to move to the sidelines, serving as a technical advisor to the program which it had created.

#### IV. PROGRAM IMPLEMENTATION

##### A. Improved PHA Management of Crime Prevention

In order to improve its management of crime prevention efforts, the Hartford Housing Authority proposed to appoint a Public Safety Coordinator, hire six security aides to patrol the projects with the Authority's security force,

and hire two junior tenant relations aides to acquaint new families with life in public housing. The Authority also stated that it would submit a request for VISTA volunteers in support of tenant efforts toward crime prevention.

Only one of these activities was implemented as proposed, however; a Black woman resident of a moderate-income public housing project in Hartford was appointed Public Safety Coordinator on 4 February 1980, and served in this capacity for a total of 23 months. Her last day of work was 30 December 1981, and her duties were subsequently assumed by the Authority's Director of Special Programs.

Security aides and junior tenant relations aides were not hired, due to the loss of these positions through cutbacks in CETA funding. Use of VISTA volunteers, moreover, was reportedly contingent upon being notified by HUD that funds from ACTION were available. As the Housing Authority was not notified to this effect, no application for VISTA volunteers was prepared.

B. More and Improved Community Anti-Crime Service Facilities and Physical Redesign

The Housing Authority proposed a number of activities designed to increase community anti-crime service facilities and improve physical design at the demonstration sites. These activities included: (1) the creation of two vestibule entries at Nelton Court; (2) the installation of electrical intercom systems at each of the sites; (3) the installation of electrically operated doors and frames at Bellevue Square; (4) the improvement of entryway stair security in Stowe Village; (5) the replacement of deteriorated wooden doors and frames at Nelton Court; (6) the installation of steel security screens at Nelton Court; (7) the relocation of a basketball court and the construction of a secured parking lot in its place at Nelton Court; (8) the installation of metal

door astragals at Stowe Village; (9) the installation of vandal-resistant lighting at Stowe Village; (10) the refurbishing of a community building at Bellevue Square; (11) the conversion of a play area at Nelton Court; and (12) the acquisition of a security van.

The relocation of the basketball court, the installation of metal door astragals, the refurbishing of the community building, the conversion of the play area, and the acquisition of the security van had all been completed by January 1982. The installation of steel security screens and of the vandal-resistant lighting will be foregone, however, due to design problems; studies conducted subsequent to the submission of the original proposal showed that the new security screens would have prevented tenants at Nelton Court from opening their casement windows and that the electrical system at Stowe Village would not have been able to accommodate the additional lights. The creation of the two vestibule entries, the installation of electrically operated doors and frames, and the improvement of stair security will also be foregone (due to cost overruns), and the projects will receive new entry doors in their place. Because of cost overruns, intercom systems will only be installed at Nelton Court.

C. More Tenant Anti-Crime Participation

The Hartford Institute wanted tenants to have a major role in the implementation of the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program. In keeping with this goal, the preliminary application stated that: (1) two Public Safety Organizers would be hired to develop comprehensive crime prevention strategies and organize crime-prevention workshops, block watches, escort services, and corridor patrols; and (2) tenants would be educated on security-related matters. Both of these activities were to have been implemented by the Hartford Tenants Rights Federation, a city-wide tenant advocacy group.



The first two Public Safety Organizers (PSO's) were hired on 15 January 1981, and worked under the supervision of the Victim/Witness Director. (See Section IV. F.) Neither PSO lasted very long, however; one was terminated on 6 March 1981 for an alleged abuse of authority, and the other resigned in June 1981 "for family reasons." These PSO's were replaced by two residents of public housing, who remained with the Anti-Crime Program until January 1982.

Attempts to organize a Neighborhood Watch Program were largely unsuccessful, due to a lack of interest on the part of the tenants. The PSO's and the Victim/Witness Director did, however, organize at least nine anti-crime workshops for tenants -- three at each of the demonstration sites. These workshops were conducted by representatives of the Hartford Police and Fire Departments and the District Attorney's Office.

D. Increased Full- and Part-Time Employment of Tenants

In an effort to increase full- and part-time employment of tenants, the Housing Authority proposed to implement a DOL-sponsored Youth Employment Program. The Authority also stated that it would make provisions for tenant employment in work on Modernization items and find work for ex-offenders through an HEW-sponsored Troubled Families Program.

Responsibility for implementing the Youth Employment Program was actually subcontracted to Community Resources for Justice, a local agency which, up to that time, had been administering juvenile diversion programs in the area around the demonstration sites. Thirty youths started working on 1 April 1981; twelve additional youths were hired in September 1981 through a \$70,000 local match from the city. All of the youths worked as security aides, patrolling the projects until December 1981, when sixteen of the youths began to receive training in rodent control. Many of the security aides could not immediately be



placed with private security firms before the Youth Employment Program ended on 26 March 1982, since they did not meet the age requirement; one had to be 18 in order to work as a security guard. Five of the youths who were of age had interviews with Aetna Life and Casualty, and one was subsequently hired. Additionally, two of the eight rodent control trainees who took the February State extermination licensing examination passed, and one of the two who had passed was subsequently employed by a pest control outfit in Springfield.

Tenant employment in Modernization work was reportedly a routine practice, though it is not quite clear as to how many tenants actually found work on Anti-Crime Modernization projects and what kind of training these tenants received. The work with ex-offenders did not take place, however, since the Troubled Families Program was not funded.

F. More and Improved Services to Combat Crime or Assist Victims/Witnesses

The Housing Authority proposed to implement a number of measures designed to increase and improve services to combat crime and assist victims and witnesses at the demonstration sites. These measures included: (1) the implementation of an OJJDP-sponsored Education Advocacy Program (which was intended to train parents to serve as advocates for their children in the city's school system; (2) the implementation of an LEAA-sponsored Victim/Witness Program (which was to have provided long-term, on-site counseling to project residents and scheduled a series of workshops throughout the implementation period of the Anti-Crime Program); (3) the development of an Elderly Crime Prevention Program; (4) the development of a Troubled Families Program (which was to have provided counseling, organized recreational activities for youths, and found work for ex-offenders); and (5) the scheduling of police-community weekend retreats to give residents of the demonstration sites an opportunity to

discuss common concerns with representatives of the Hartford Police, Public Works, and Fire Departments and to formulate possible solutions.

Responsibility for implementing both the Education Advocacy Program and the Victim/Witness Program was subcontracted to the Hartford Tenants Rights Federation (HTRF) as part of a package which included the Public Safety Organizers mentioned above. The police-community weekend retreats were, additionally, planned by the Victim/Witness Director, and were, therefore, by extension, also HTRF activities.

The Director of the Education Advocacy Program was hired on 1 December 1980, and began implementing the program on 1 April 1981. Assisted by an administrative assistant and a team of volunteers, he had reportedly trained 396 parents, 116 other individuals (people other than resident parents), and 158 service providers by June 1982, when the program ended. Because of the high level of activity reported here, the Education Advocacy Program was regarded by many in the Authority as the Anti-Crime Program's most successful component.

The Victim/Witness Program, on the other hand, was adversely affected by staff turnover; the first director lasted only three months, and was replaced in April 1981 after a month of inactivity. As a consequence, perhaps, the Victim/Witness Program handled only 34 cases while it was in existence, many of which dealt with maintenance problems or rodents. The Victim/Witness Director and the Public Safety Organizers did form linkages with a statewide victim/witness organization, however, and worked at an information desk at a circuit court.

The Elderly Crime Prevention and the Troubled Families Programs were not funded. Three police-community weekend retreats were held, however, in May, July, and December 1981.

F. Increased Use of Better Trained City Police Officers

Activities proposed under this program area included: (1) the development of training programs for the Housing Authority's security force; (2) the development of a training program in anti-crime techniques for the Authority's maintenance personnel; (3) working with the tenant associations to develop a patrol system involving police personnel and project residents; and (4) providing police liaisons to assist the tenant organizations in planning and implementing public safety programs. All of these activities were to have been implemented by the Hartford Police Department.

Most of the Hartford Police Department's commitments to the Anti-Crime Program were not honored, due to a major reorganization of the department and the phasing out of the Housing Authority Security Patrol. The police department did assign a two-man neighborhood police unit to Stowe Village, however; two officers began working at Stowe Village in February 1981, and reportedly established a good working relationship with the residents at the project. The officers were reassigned in December 1981, and were replaced in January 1982.

G. Stronger Linkages with Programs from Local Government and Other Sources

Cooperating local government agencies and neighborhood organizations were to have included: (1) Public Safety Committees; (2) the Maverick Corporation; and (3) the Anti-Crime Consortium. The Hartford Institute of Criminal and Social Justice, additionally, was to have served as a technical advisor to the program.

The Hartford Institute was removed from the Anti-Crime Oversight Team, and was not kept informed of Anti-Crime Program activities. Public Safety Committees, moreover, were phased out with the reorganization of the police department. Other neighborhood organizations and local government agencies,

having made no real commitments to the Anti-Crime Program, tended to play a very small role in the program's implementation. A notable exception was Project Inter-Action, a youth program targeted on the Anti-Crime Program demonstration sites which made referrals to the Education Advocacy Program and which worked with the DOL supervisors.

#### V. PROGRAM IMPACT

##### A. Resident Survey Results\*

As mentioned above, attitudinal and victimization data were collected by DAMANS and Associates from 22 May 1981 to 9 August 1981. Some of the respondents were asked to answer a "long form" (which contained a wide variety of attitudinal items), while others were administered a "short form" (which dealt almost exclusively with the issues of fear of crime and recent victimization experiences). The distribution of completed interviews is presented below.

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\*We wish to remind the reader that the survey results presented in this section cannot be regarded as valid measures of program impact. We present the survey results in this section only to keep the format of this document consistent with that of the other case studies in this series. Please see Section II, "Methodology."

TABLE 1  
Completed Interviews

<u>Project Units</u>	<u>Long Form</u>	<u>Short Form</u>	<u>Total</u>
Bellevue Square	41	50	91
Stowe Village	73	72	145

To avoid reliance on possibly spurious results, only questions to which at least 20 residents responded will be analyzed.

1. Problems at the Sites. A list of 25 common problems was read, and residents were asked to specify whether each item was "a big problem," "somewhat of a problem," or "not a problem at all" at the site. Percentages of those stating that robbery, burglary, teenagers, and vandalism were "big problems" are presented below.

Table 2  
Percent of Respondents Identifying Robbery, Burglary,  
Teenagers, and Vandalism as "Big Problems"

<u>Demonstration Site</u>	<u>Robbery</u>	<u>Burglary</u>	<u>Teenagers</u>	<u>Vandalism</u>
Bellevue Square	26	38	42	82
Stowe Village	35	70	75	85

The data indicate that residents at Stowe Village were very concerned about burglary, teenagers, and vandalism at their site; 70 percent of those interviewed identified burglary as "a big problem," 75 percent viewed teenagers in a similar manner, and 85 percent perceived vandalism to be a big problem. Those seeing robbery as "a big problem" was considerably smaller, at 35 percent.

At Bellevue Square, only vandalism was seen as "a big problem" by more than 50 percent of the respondents. The percentages of those seeing robbery, burglary, and teenagers as big problems were 26, 38, and 42, respectively.

What the data as a whole suggest is that the Hartford Institute was perhaps

correct in targeting the program on burglary and teenagers. Robbery, on the other hand, does not seem to have been as much of a concern as the Hartford Institute thought it was. In light of the high percentage of residents at both sites who identified vandalism as "a big problem," the Housing Authority should perhaps have attempted to address the problem through the Anti-Crime Program.

## 2. Tenant Self-defense Capability

Respondents were also asked how much they and their neighbors could do to reduce crime at their site. Their responses were scored in the following manner: 1 = "Nothing at all"; 2 = "Very little"; 3 = "Some"; 4 = "A lot." Data from the tenant survey appear to suggest that the respondents thought that they were able to do "something" about crime at their site; mean scores at Bellevue Square and Stowe Village were 2.55 and 2.45, respectively.

When asked what they would do to combat crime at the projects, 75 percent of the respondents at Bellevue Square said that they would have someone "keep an eye" on their apartment while they were away. The percentage at Stowe Village was similarly high, with 62 percent of the residents saying that they would ask someone to check on their residence. A somewhat lower percentage (58 percent) at Stowe Village was reported to have installed extra locks. At Bellevue Square, however, only 22 percent reported having put in additional locks.

Percentages of respondents at Bellevue Square and Stowe Village reporting to have marked their property was 12 and 5, respectively. Fourteen percent of those at Stowe Village, additionally, were said to have a gun, while only 6 percent of those interviewed at Bellevue Square claimed to own such a weapon.

## 3. Resident Cohesion.

When asked how difficult it was to distinguish between people who did not live or work at the site and people who did, respondents from both of the demonstration sites stated that they could make such distinctions fairly easily.

This was also true of residents in the area around Stowe Village, which served as a comparison neighborhood for the purposes of the evaluation.

Yet, only 41 percent of those in Bellevue Square and 23 percent of those in Stowe Village felt that they and their neighbors "help each other." This was somewhat lower than the 49 percent reported in the area around Stowe Village. These findings suggest that the problem which the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program had to address in Hartford was not so much one of recognition, but was instead that of promoting a spirit of mutual cooperation among residents. One might wonder how much a program like the Anti-Crime Program could accomplish in that regard.

#### B. Recorded Crime Rates

Figures 1, 2, and 3 summarize recorded crime rates for Stowe Village, Bellevue Square, and Nelton Court. According to these figures, violent crime (here defined as murder, rape and assault) went up at all of the sites during the year prior to the implementation of the Anti-Crime Program. During this period, the number of reported violent incidents went from 9 to 13 at Nelton Court, 18 to 23 at Bellevue Square, and 36 to 46 at Stowe Village. This rise continued through the implementation period at Nelton Court and Stowe Village, but appears to have levelled off at Bellevue Square.

Predatory crimes (here defined as robberies) on the other hand, exhibited a slightly different pattern. Predatory crime rose somewhat at two of the sites during the year prior to the implementation of the Anti-Crime Program; reported incidents of predatory crime went from 14 to 17 at Bellevue Square and from 12 to 32 at Stowe Village. This rise continued through the implementation period at Bellevue Square, but appears to have levelled off at Stowe Village. There was no significant change in the incidence of predatory crime at Nelton Court before or during the implementation period; predatory crime remained rather low



throughout the period analyzed by the evaluation team.

When examining property crimes, however, we see a markedly different pattern. At Nelton Court, both theft (larceny and auto theft) and burglaries increased between 1979 and 1980; theft continued to rise between 1980 and 1981, but burglaries fell off somewhat during this period. At Bellevue Sqaure, once again, we see increases in both thefts and burglaries during the year prior to the Anti-Crime Program, although the incidence of property crimes here appears to have levelled off during the implementation period. So far, there has been nothing particularly surprising. When we turn out attention to Stowe Village, however, we find a dramatic rise in property crimes between 1979 and 1980, and a dramatic decrease in such crimes between 1980 and 1981.

Many criminologists will argue, of course, that recorded crime rates do not furnish the most reliable means for measuring rates of offending in a given area. Factors such as changes in methods for reporting crimes and changes in methods for classifying crimes, for example, can produce large fluctuations in recorded crime rates even when the actual rate of offending has remained constant. In our interviews with program staff and project residents, however, we were led to believe that while the graphs in Figure 3 may not accurately reflect the level of rate of offending at Stowe Village, they do accurately reflect trends in property crimes over the last three years.

How then, might we explain the dramatic shifts in the rate of recorded property crimes at Stowe Village? One possible factor, perhaps, is the DOL-sponsored youth security patrol which was operating on-site through much of 1981. Equipped with walkie-talkies, these youths made sweeps through the project at 15-minute intervals, and therefore probably had ample opportunity to observe crimes in progress. The youth patrol at Stowe Village was reportedly better supervised than those at the two other demonstration sites, which may

account for its greater impact at Stowe Village.

A more likely explanation, however, is that Stowe Village, unlike the other two demonstration sites, had a two-person neighborhood police unit operating on-site. The two officers, who began working at Stowe Village in February 1981, employed a number of proactive policing strategies which either drove criminal activity at the site "underground" or off-site.

#### VI. CONCLUSION

Despite the obvious problems which the Hartford Housing Authority encountered during the implementation process, it would be foolish to dismiss the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program in Hartford as simply a "failure". Yet, we also wish to avoid the equally strong desire to make certain invidious distinctions between the Urban Initiatives Anti-Crime Program and its more "successful" predecessor, the Hartford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program.

We believe, however, that at least one important distinction between the two programs needs to be highlighted: the Hartford Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program was, in essence, a much simpler program to implement, consisting of only three major components. One might argue that the HUD version, with its seven major components, was much more comprehensive than the Neighborhood Crime Prevention Program, but it must be recognized that this comprehensiveness put a tremendous strain on the organizational capacity of the Hartford Housing Authority. The Authority sought to "solve" this problem by subcontracting out major sections of its program for community organizations. This "solution," however, only created new problems -- particularly that of accountability -- since the subcontractors had interests of their own which were not always in line with those of the Authority.

One could argue, perhaps, that the Authority would probably have been more successful had there been fewer components to implement. Indeed, the program

would probably have been much better off if HUD had allowed the housing authorities to select from among the seven program areas those strategies which would have best facilitated on-going crime prevention efforts at the sites. The recorded crime data from Hartford (and, again, we qualify our remarks by noting that recorded crime rates are not always the most accurate measures of actual rates of offending) suggests that police foot patrols do represent an effective means of reducing recorded property crimes in the city's housing projects. And the Hartford experience does suggest that tenants are capable of playing a major role in program implementation if the conditions are right.

HUD, however, chose to require housing authorities to propose activities in each of the seven program areas of the Anti-Crime Program. In doing so, HUD may have undermined its attempt to have housing authorities devise crime prevention programs tailored to local needs, and more importantly, perhaps, discouraged the development of creative solutions to the problems of urban crime.

Figure 1  
Number of Reported Crimes At  
Nelson Court, 1979-81

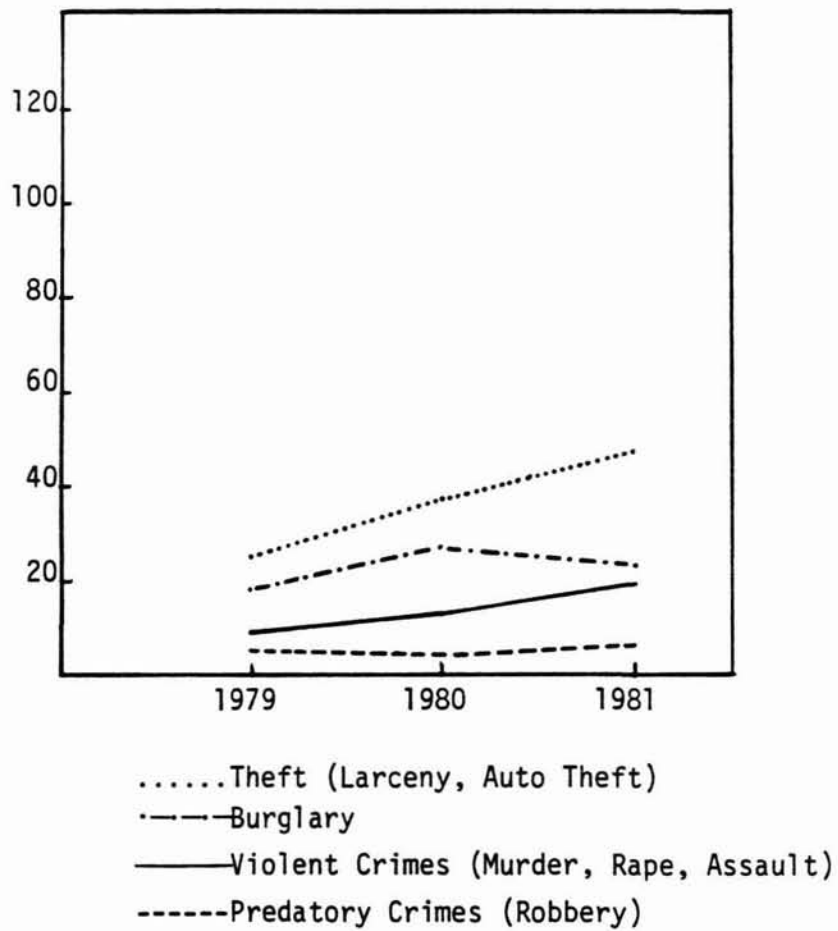


Figure 2  
Number of Reported Crimes At  
Bellevue Square, 1979-81

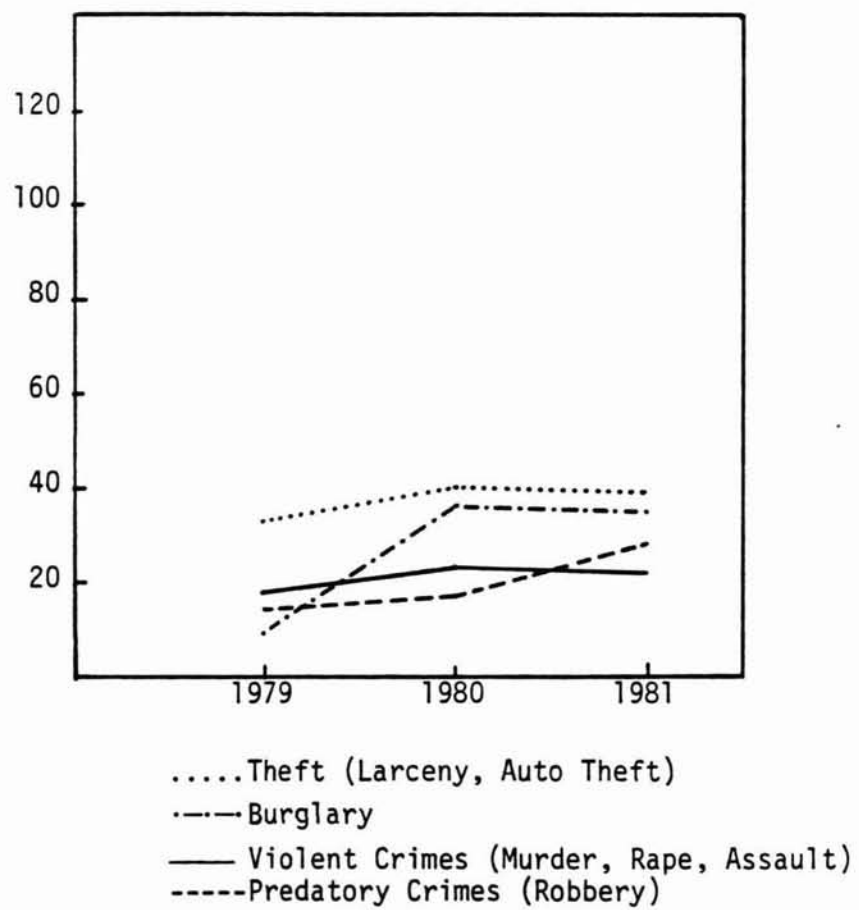
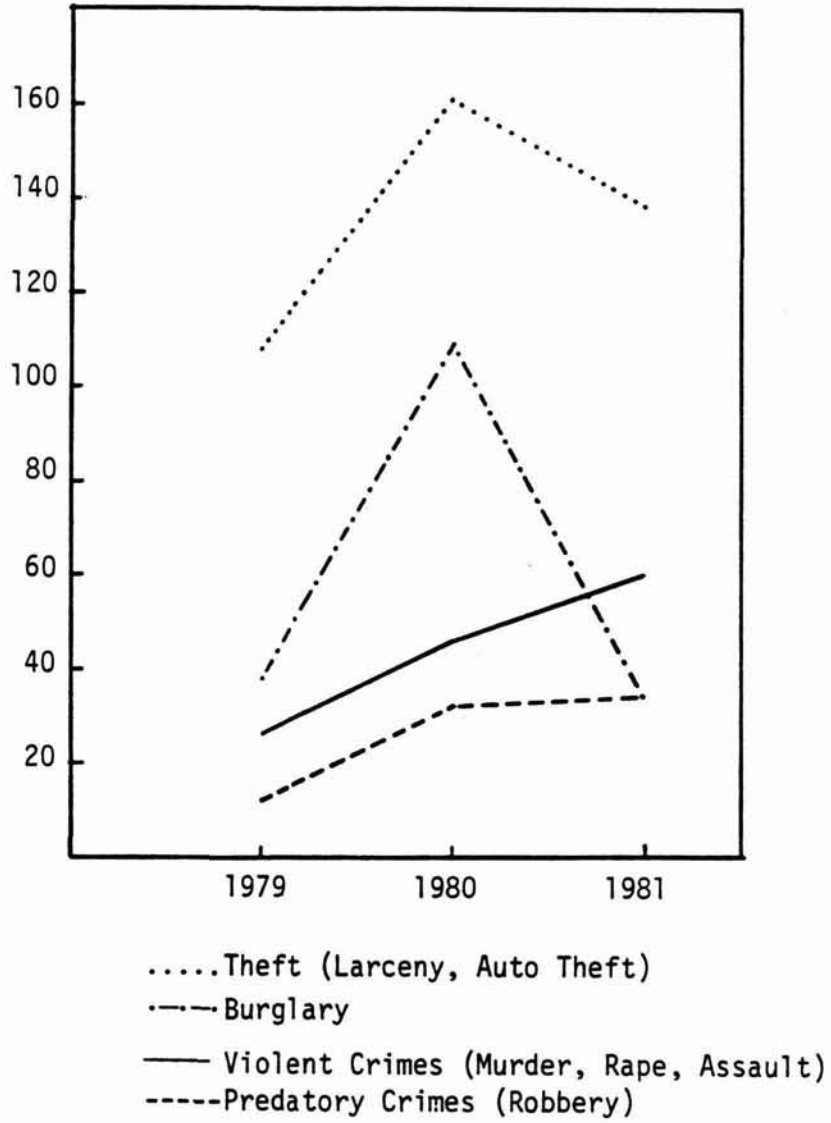


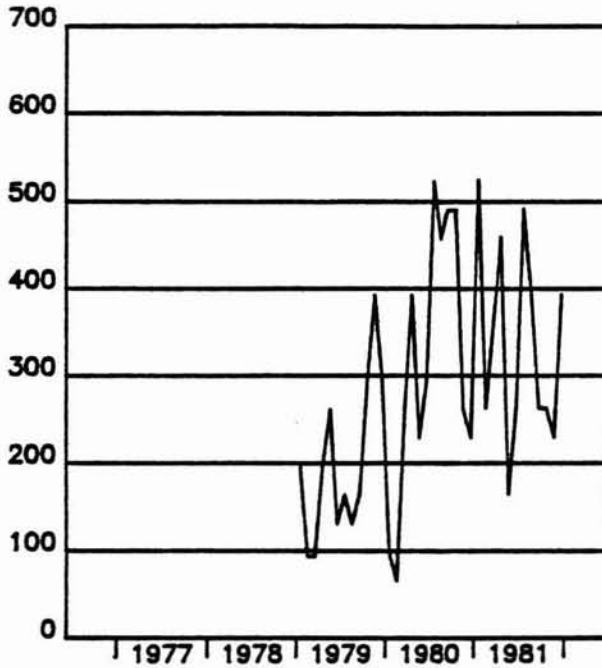
Figure 3  
Number of Reported Crimes At  
Stowe Village, 1979-81



HARTFORD  
Bellevue Square

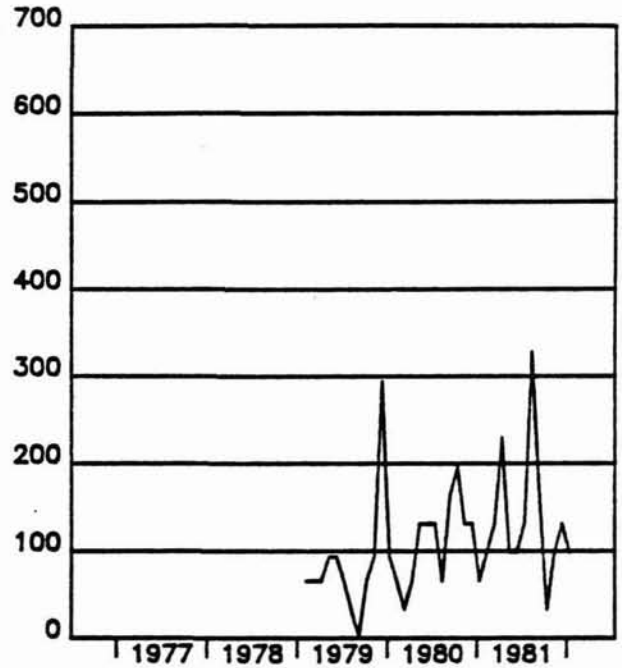
RECORDED PART 1 CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Personal and Property Crimes Combined)



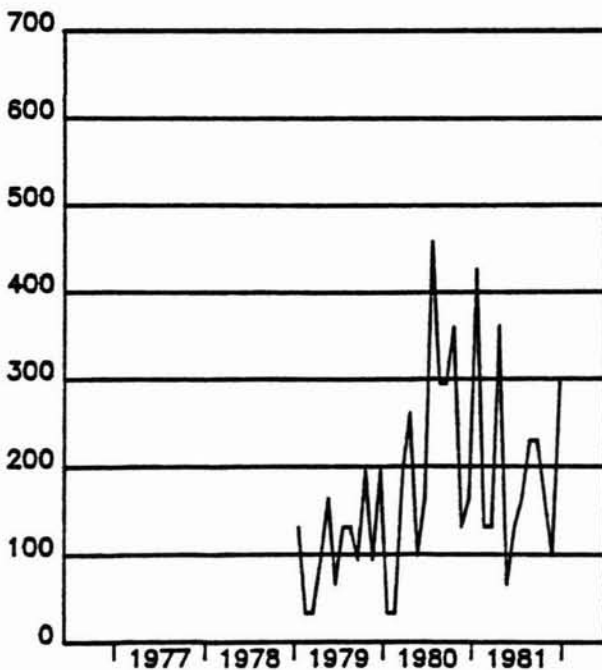
RECORDED PERSONAL CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Homicide, Rape, Aggravated Assault, Robbery)

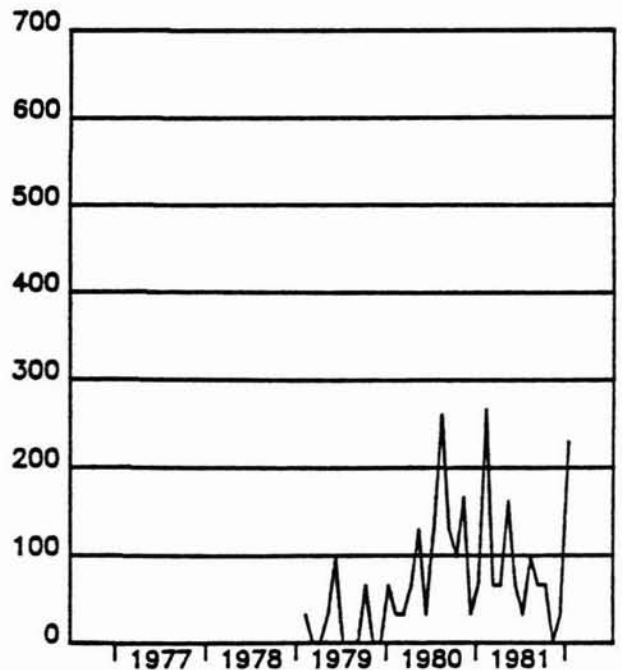


RECORDED PROPERTY CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Burglary, Larceny, Auto Theft)



RECORDED BURGLARIES  
Per 10,000 Occupied Units

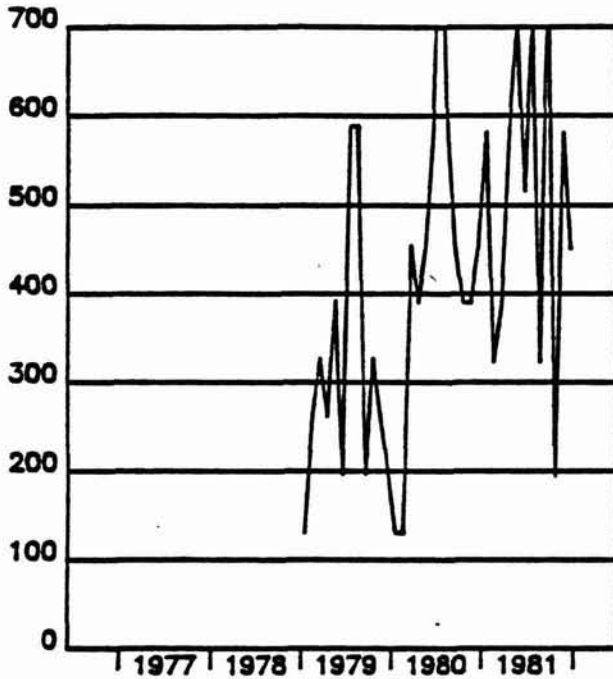




HARTFORD  
Nelton Court

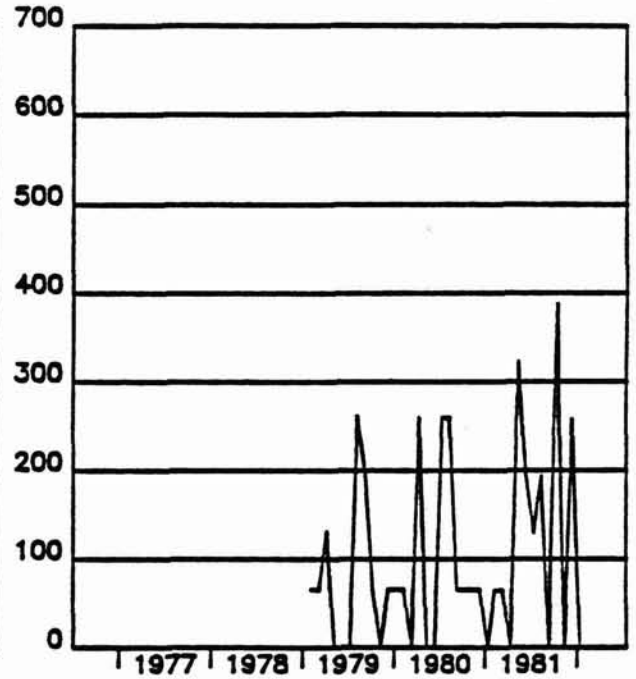
RECORDED PART 1 CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Personal and Property Crimes Combined)



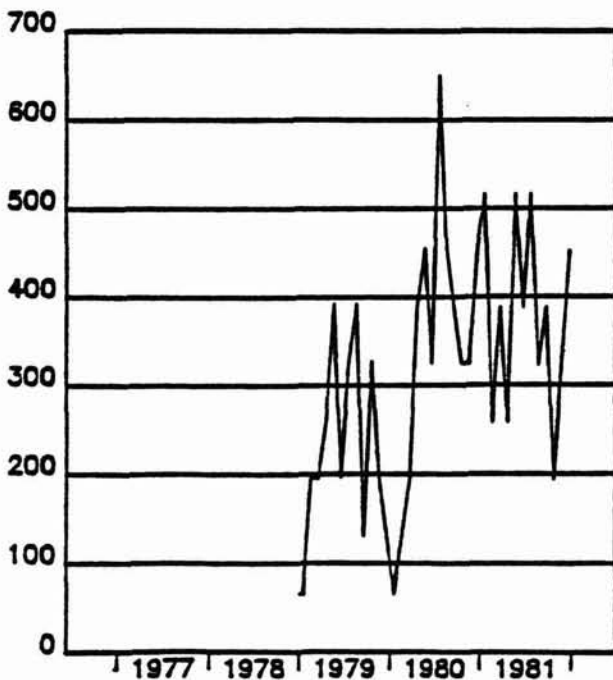
RECORDED PERSONAL CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Homicide, Rape, Aggravated Assault, Robbery)

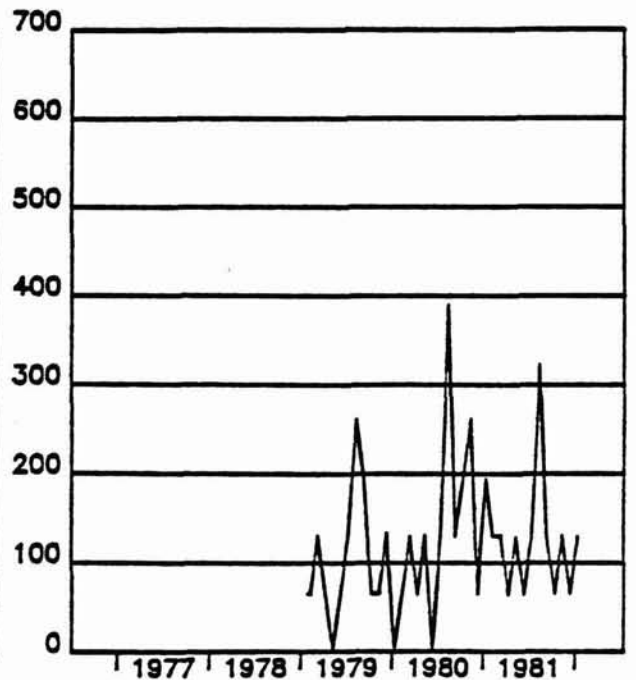


RECORDED PROPERTY CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Burglary, Larceny, Auto Theft)



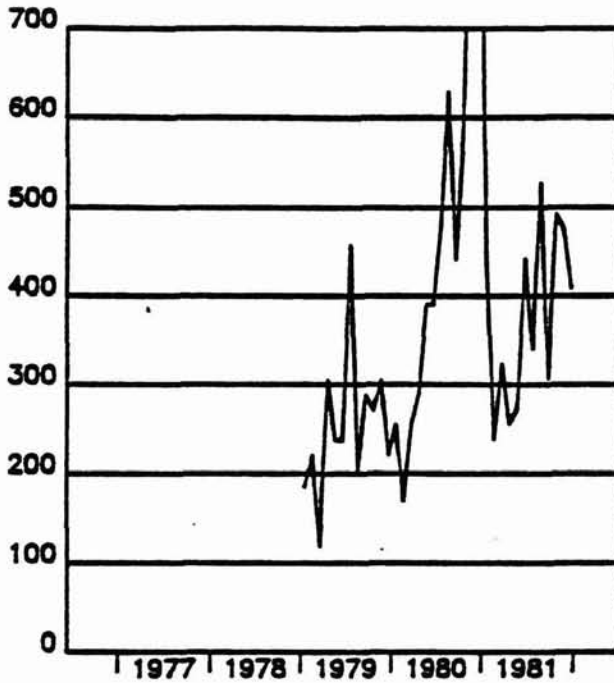
RECORDED BURGLARIES  
Per 10,000 Occupied Units



HARTFORD  
Stowe Village

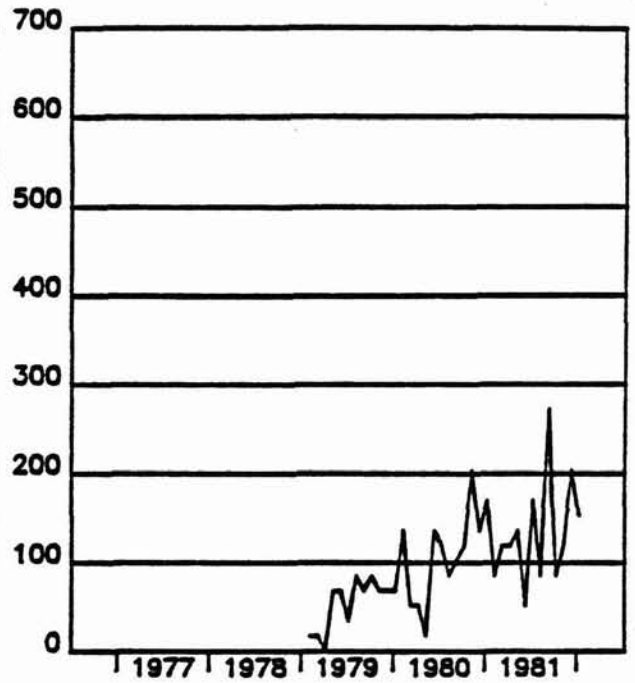
RECORDED PART 1 CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Personal and Property Crimes Combined)



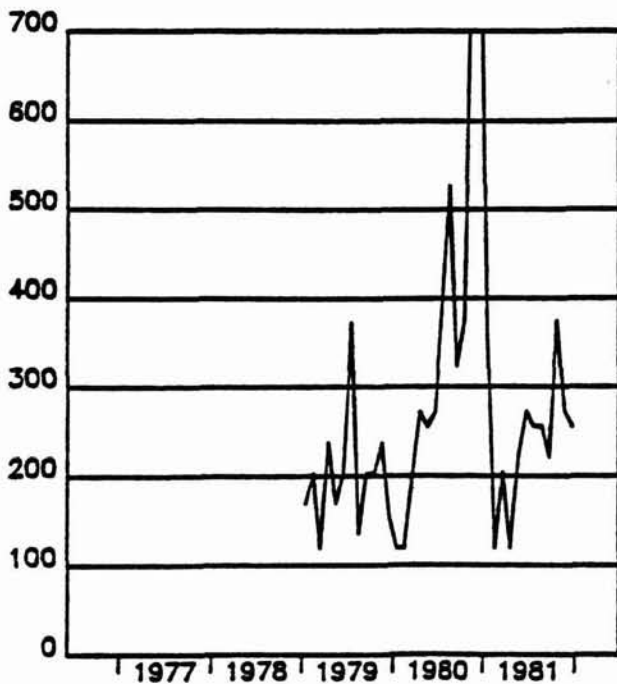
RECORDED PERSONAL CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Homicide, Rape, Aggravated Assault, Robbery)



RECORDED PROPERTY CRIMES  
Per 10,000 Persons

(Burglary, Larceny, Auto Theft)



RECORDED BURGLARIES  
Per 10,000 Occupied Units

