

## **DAYTON NORTHWEST WEED AND SEED Target Area Assessment**

According to the annual ranking of the nation's safest and most dangerous cities, compiled by Morgan Quitno Press<sup>1</sup>, **Dayton now ranks as the 25<sup>th</sup> most dangerous city in the United States.** The Dayton Northwest area is plagued with drugs (dealing and using) and much violent crime. While the Dayton Police have made progress in combating crime throughout the city, the target area is perceived – both by residents and by those living outside the area – as drug and crime infested. Statistics show that this perception is also a reality.

**The target area represents approximately 7% of Dayton's population, and it is important to note the alarming increases in crime within the target area.** The target area accounts for 20% of homicides, 11% of arsons, 9% of robberies, 9% of aggravated assaults, 8% of burglaries, 8% of vandalism, and 6% of grand theft auto in 2005. In addition, the target area is under siege by drug dealers; drug arrests are up 44% since 2005 alone. Even so, we know that residents are not reporting much on the drug crimes due to fear of reprisal. While some of the above figures may not seem alarming, **the crime rate is growing at a much higher rate than the rest of the city and accelerating.** The target area is at tremendous risk, and – because of its key location – threatens the stability of the entire northwest sector of the city.

The city's crime rate data showed a 6.1 percent decrease in crime overall across the city in 2007, compared to 2006 figures. In 2006, there was a rise in crime nationwide and in Dayton, according to FBI data. The city had experienced a four-year high in homicides in 2006 with 40. That number more than reversed itself in 2007 with a five-year low of 29, the data showed. Motor vehicle thefts that rose to 1,915 in 2006 fell by nearly 500 last year.<sup>2</sup> Even in the face of these reductions city-wide, the target area is threatened by significant increases:

- ✓ Arson increased by 14.3% since 2005 (primarily vacant properties with evidence of drug use)
- ✓ Felony assault increased by 22.2% since 2004
- ✓ Misdemeanor assault increased by 17% since 2004
- ✓ Burglary increased by 37% since 2005
- ✓ Homicide increased by 400% since 2004, and now accounts for 20% of the city's homicides
- ✓ Robbery increased by 28% since 2003
- ✓ Sex offenses increased by 10% since 2005
- ✓ Vandalism increased by 21% since 2005
- ✓ Misdemeanors (marijuana offenses) increased by 92% since 2004
- ✓ Weapons violations actually decreased since 2005 (as did citywide), but are up 60% since 2003 (arrests may be down, but gunfire is reported as one of the top problems by residents in the Community Survey – and the two most recent homicides were innocent bystanders killed in drive-by shooting incidents – just within one month – and the target area now accounts for 10% of the city's weapons violations
- ✓ Narcotics arrests increased by 44% since 2005

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Morgan Quitno Press using data from F.B.I. "Crime in the United States". Violent crimes are offenses of murder, forcible rape, robbery and aggravated assault.

<sup>2</sup> Source: Dayton Daily News, January 19, 2008

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These figures show that crime is moving into the target area at an alarming rate; Dayton Police report that many of the crimes listed above are key indicators of drug problems, and will lead to increased violence. **Our target area is a keystone in redevelopment efforts for the entire northwest quadrant of the city; if these neighborhoods fall, it will not only undo the gains of our first Weed and Seed initiative and the first year efforts of the new initiative, but it will also obstruct major redevelopment plans for areas surrounding the target area.**

**Youth crime is also a major concern for target area residents, and statistics confirm their fears.** Miami Valley law enforcement agencies are seeing an increase in gang activity – much of it involving juveniles, and Dayton Police are beginning to track gang activity in the city.<sup>3</sup> Youth in our target area are at serious risk of criminal/gang activity, as illustrated by the following statistics. Out of 42 zip codes<sup>4</sup> within the county, the target area has the 2nd highest percentage in Montgomery County of youth on probation, ranks 2<sup>nd</sup> in the number of violent youth offenders, 1<sup>st</sup> in youth violence incidents, 1<sup>st</sup> in physical abuse cases, 4<sup>th</sup> in sexual abuse cases, 2<sup>nd</sup> in neglect cases, 2<sup>nd</sup> in emotional maltreatment, and 1<sup>st</sup> in cases of dependency. With 157 referrals, the target area also had the largest number of truancy referrals to Juvenile Courts for the 2004-2005 school year – an increase of 13% over the previous year. Based on the composite index on youth issues and conditions, these factors clearly identify the Weed and Seed target area as the worst zip code out of 42 Montgomery County zip codes for youth mistreatment, violence and lack of development.

**We also face the on-going challenge of high incidence of incarceration as well as offenders re-entering the community.** Our research in planning and implementing the Miami Valley Reentry Initiative demonstrates that there are many challenges to prisoner reentry. Prisoners today are typically less prepared for reintegration, less connected to community-based social structures, and more likely to have health or substance abuse problems than in the past.<sup>5</sup> In addition to these personal circumstances, limited availability of jobs, housing, and social services in a community can affect the returning prisoner's ability to reintegrate.<sup>6</sup> These challenges affect more than returning prisoners and their families; they can also have serious public safety implications for the communities to which prisoners return.

Prisoners from Montgomery and surrounding counties account for a sizable proportion of the state's incarcerated population, generally ranking 4<sup>th</sup> or 5<sup>th</sup> in annual commitments. In the latest Census of Prisoners in state institutions, there were 1,123 prisoners whose commitment originated from Montgomery County<sup>7</sup>. 77% (865) of them are incarcerated

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<sup>3</sup> Source: Dayton Daily News, "Gangs in the Miami Valley" 2/17 – 2/18/2008

<sup>4</sup> "Youth Issues and Conditions: An Ongoing Review", Montgomery County, OH 2004 - 2006

<sup>5</sup> James Austin "Prisoner Reentry: Current Trends, Practices, and Issues." *Crime and Delinquency* 47, no. 3 (2001): 314–334; T.M. Hammett, C. Roberts, and S. Kennedy "Health-Related Issues in Prisoner Reentry: *Crime and Delinquency* 47, no. 3 (2001): 390–409; and Lynch and Sabol (2001).

<sup>6</sup> For an in-depth discussion of prisoner reentry nationwide, see J. Travis, A. Solomon, and M. Waul, *From Prison to Home: The Dimensions and Consequences of Prisoner Reentry*. Washington, D.C.: The Urban Institute (2001).

<sup>7</sup> Source: Bureau of Research/Office of Policy and Offender Reentry.

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for nonviolent offenses, and we know that 80% (692) of those nonviolent offenders will return to the same county upon release.

### Part I Crimes [Current and 3 Years of prior data]:

CRIME INDICATOR	TABLE 1. TARGET AREA				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2007 %CHG
Assault	494	514	488	506	4%
Burglary	314	198	271	264	-3%
Destruction/Vandalism	325	201	216	233	8%
Drug/Narcotics	168	164	193	196	2%
Homicide	3	4	9	6	-33%
Larceny	310	229	245	249	2%
GTA	192	203	151	88	-42%
Prostitution	37	17	14	4	-71%
Robbery	73	71	71	60	-15%
Weapon Law Violations	79	91	62	69	11%

CRIME INDICATOR	TABLE 2. CITY OF DAYTON				
	2004	2005	2006	2007	2007 %CHG
Assault	5890	5770	5614	5575	-1%
Burglary	3583	3131	3372	3112	-8%
Destruction/ Vandalism	3617	3132	3300	3015	-9%
Drug/Narcotics	2356	2483	2903	2936	1%
Homicide	33	32	40	29	-25%
Larceny	6708	6074	6060	5612	-7%
GTA	2159	1953	1915	1421	-26%
Prostitution	840	878	780	762	-2%
Robbery	865	794	753	699	-7%
Weapon Law Violations	698	791	691	679	-2%

CRIME INDICATOR	TABLE 3. % OF CITY CRIME OCCURRING TARGET AREA			
	2004	2005	2006	2007
Assault	8%	9%	9%	9%
Burglary	9%	6%	8%	8%
Destruction/ Vandalism	9%	6%	7%	8%
Drug/Narcotics	7%	7%	7%	7%
Homicide	9%	13%	23%	20%
Larceny	5%	4%	4%	4%
GTA	9%	10%	8%	6%
Prostitution	4%	2%	2%	0%
Robbery	8%	9%	9%	9%
Weapon Law Violations	11%	12%	9%	10%



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target area shows almost twice the level (33.3%) of structures in similar conditions.<sup>9</sup> Their rehabilitation/repair is a key element of restoring this area, as demonstrated by the successful restoration of homes in the historic district and the Dayton View Triangle. Part of addressing the housing needs of this area will include a zero-tolerance attitude referencing housing and zoning complaints including abandoned vehicles, vacant houses, overgrown vegetation, bulk waste, and graffiti.

### **Our Steering Committee has identified the following resource needs and gaps in service:**

1. Law Enforcement
  - a. Increase in targeted enforcement to address indicators of drug/violent crime in target area
  - b. Increased funding for targeted enforcement activities
  - c. Improved crime analysis and mapping of drug hotspots
  - d. Increase in patrol teams between police, probation, housing inspection
2. Community Oriented Policing
  - a. Increased police presence in the target area
  - b. Strengthening of positive relationship between police and residents
    - (1) outreach workers to educate residents about crime reporting and neighborhood watch program, and code enforcement standards
    - (2) coordinator to help organize block clubs
3. Prevention/Intervention/Treatment
  - a. Activities that address underlying causes of crime
  - b. Re-entry program for ex-offenders
  - c. Violence prevention/intervention programs for youth offenders
  - d. Volunteer job training opportunities for youth
  - e. Family counseling services
  - f. Health/socialization programs for seniors
4. Neighborhood Restoration
  - a. established community standards and sanctions regarding the maintenance and upkeep of residential and business properties
  - b. code violation enforcement
  - c. increase in neighborhood cleanup activities
  - d. better tracking of absentee landlords to increase enforcement/prosecution
  - e. economic revitalization plan

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<sup>9</sup> Source: 2001 Blue Book, A Blueprint of Dayton's Neighborhoods, Dayton Department of Building Services Housing Inspection Division