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At the National Level

The U.S. Department of Justice's Weed and Seed program was developed to demonstrate an innovative and comprehensive approach to law enforcement and community revitalization, preventing and controlling violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in target areas.

The program, initiated in 1991, attempts to weed out violent crime, gang activity, and drug use and trafficking in target areas, and then seed the target area by restoring the neighborhood through social and economic revitalization. Weed and Seed has three objectives: (1) develop a comprehensive, multiagency strategy to control and prevent violent crime, drug trafficking, and drug-related crime in target neighborhoods; (2) coordinate and integrate existing and new initiatives to concentrate resources and maximize their impact on reducing and preventing violent crime, drug trafficking, and gang activity; and (3) mobilize community residents in the target areas to assist law enforcement in identifying and removing violent offenders and drug traffickers from the community and to assist other human service agencies in identifying and responding to service needs of the target area. To achieve these goals, Weed and Seed integrates law enforcement, community policing, prevention, and intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration efforts.

The Weed and Seed program is being implemented in more than 150 communities across the country.

At the Local Level

Boundaries

West - 8th St.

East - 28th St.

South - 13th Ave. and Roby Road

North - 2nd Ave.

1.24 total square miles with 20% of total population = 9,742

General Demographics

**Median household income = \$13,351 compared to the City at \$23,234

**48.8% of individuals are below poverty level compared to the City at 24.7%

**Median housing value is \$43,100 compared to the City at \$65,400

**Individuals with Bachelors degree or higher is 8.6% compared to the City at 22.4%

**32.9% of the families are below the poverty level compared to the City at 17.5%

**Comprises over 60% of all crimes and 38.5% juvenile arrests for drugs and crimes 50% juvenile arrests for robbery

Top Four Most Pressing Community Needs and Gaps

Law Enforcement

Youth Activities

Neighborhood restoration and revitalization

Prosecution of Crimes

At the Street Level

In 2008, HPD Drug Unit was responsible for:

**245 individuals arrested

**Seizure of over

\$183,339 in cash

1280 grams of marijuana

1801.4 grams of cocaine

734.4 grams of crack cocaine

559 packets of Heroin

35 firearms

Along with a number of other legal prescription pills including Loritab, Oxycontin, Xanax and a variety of other prescription drugs.

Through controlled undercover buys, HPD was also able to recover:

- 60.33 grams of cocaine
- 83.85 grams of crack cocaine
- 15.2 grams of marijuana
- 15 balloons of heroin

In January 2009, two men were arrested after an undercover agent arranged a meeting at a hotel along 16th Street Road which is the main thoroughfare through the heart of the Weed & Seed area. The men showed up after negotiating a deal to pay \$255,000 cash for 600 pounds of marijuana, according to preliminary testimony from Huntington Police Detectives. In a subsequent search of one of the men's houses, police found a machine gun and eight additional firearms, \$70,000 cash and marijuana packaged for resale.

The investigation was spearheaded by the Huntington Police Department and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration.

Future Plans

The City's plan is to renovate a former day care center into a multi-agency, multi-purpose facility. This field office will house the Weed & Seed program, HPD Canine unit, bike patrol, special emphasis unit, along with providing afterschool tutoring and mentoring programs.

Space will be available for neighborhood organizations and groups to hold meetings, attend and conduct training, host parties and activities that promote a drug free, violence free lifestyle.

Mayor Wolfe has also suggested the implementation of a citizen's police academy which will allow citizens to be educated and informed as to police policies and procedures.

Cabell County has also been designated as a county to implement and expand the Drug Court. From the Drug Court concept a Teen Court hopes to be established and can be housed in this field office.

Other programs and activities to be housed in the field office will be parenting classes, scouting programs, diversion programs and activities, job training and placement programs, linkages to other service providers such as college placement, employment and career training, family support services, drug education/prevention programs, home ownership classes, and creative arts programs.

A major revitalization project is underway throughout the Weed and Seed area. This revitalization project is designed to remove abandoned, dilapidated homes and structures and replace them with modern, energy efficient, affordable housing and provide for integration of new home owners, rental property and low incoming housing throughout the weed and seed area.

Neighbor revitalizations cannot and will not be limited to new homes and apartments being built. There must be a fresh infusion of new attitudes, volunteerism, ownerships, neighbors taking care of neighbors, in the hearts and lives of those who live and work within the weed and seed area.

Our Strategies...

Include reducing violent crime, drug crime, and juvenile crime in the designated Weed and Seed Areas of Huntington.

These problems will be addressed by increasing protective factors against crime and drug use through expanded alternative activities and educational support for youth, and increasing the Police Department's presence in the

Weed and Seed Area through directed patrol, bicycle patrol, undercover drug operations and community education programs.

This will allow our city to focus on the removal of chronic and violent street criminals from the designated area. Interagency collaboration between federal, state and local law enforcement agencies will continue to be stressed.

The Huntington Police Department will continue to be a part of the Huntington Violent Crimes Drug Task Force and plans to assign one officer to work directly with the DEA.

Our goal is to “weed” out the negative influences of drugs and crime within this designated area while at the same time to “seed” it with positive programs and activities that focus on improving access to educational, recreational, spiritual, social, and financial opportunities.

Our goal is to turn this area from the highest crime and drug activity area to the lowest and safest area in our city. We want to change it from the place people want to move out of to the place people want to move in to.

The key to the success of the Weed and Seed program is not placed upon the backs of the new Mayor and his administration, or at the feet of the Huntington Police Department, nor in the neighborhood revitalization projects. The key to success truly lies within the hearts, spirits and cooperation of and with the residents who live and work within the Weed and Seed area.

For more information on the Weed and Seed Program, contact Tim White, Weed and Seed Program Coordinator at the Huntington Police Department Field Office at 1524 10th Avenue or call 304-751-6251 or via e-mail at whitet@cityofhuntington.com.