

Evaluating Gang and Drug House Abatement in Chicago

April 2000

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Evaluation funded by

U.S. Department of Justice

Office of Community Oriented Policing Services

This project was supported by cooperative agreement #96-CN-WX-0017, awarded to the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services, U.S. Department of Justice. Points of view or opinions contained within this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the U.S. Department of Justice.

Printed by the authority of the State of Illinois, April 2000\
Printing Order #00-119
200 copies

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The following individuals deserve a special word of thanks for their support, advice, and assistance during the design and implementation of this evaluation research project: from the Chicago Police Department – Superintendents Matt Rodriguez (former) and Terry Hillard, Director of Research and Planning Barbara McDonald, former Deputy Director of Research and Planning Nola Joyce, Patrick McPhilimy and Ann Cibulskis; from the Department of Law – Deputy Corporation Counsel Norma Reyes and Chief Assistant Corporation Counsels Patricia Holmes (former) and Bill Shaver; from the Department of Buildings – Project Manger Robert Fogue ; from the Cook County State’s Attorney’s Office – Assistant State’s Attorney Chuck Boskey. In addition, from the Authority – Executive Director Dr. Candice Kane, Associate Directors of Research and Analysis Roger Przybylski (former) and Dr. Gerard Ramker, and Dr. David Olson, Jennifer Hiselman, Cristin Monti, Erica Morrow and Paolo Nico. Finally, we thank Professor Wesley Skogan from Northwestern University for sharing important data with us.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In November 1996, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) implemented a multi-agency program designed to combat increasing criminal gang and narcotics activity in Chicago. Funded under the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services' (COPS) Anti-Gang Initiative, and furthering one aspect of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), which is CPDs community policing program, several city departments joined forces to execute the Municipal Drug and Gang Enforcement (MDGE) pilot program.

The program is a joint effort of the CPD, Chicago Department of Law, Chicago Department of Buildings, and other city departments. This report describes the evaluation methodology developed for the MDGE program, and presents the findings of a process and impact evaluation conducted by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority with whom CPD contracted for this purpose.

The mission of the MDGE pilot program was to tackle gang and drug problem buildings, known as "non-owner occupied multi-unit dwellings." The program targeted multi-unit dwellings because they were believed to foster gang and drug crime. According to CPD, certain buildings act as magnets for illegal activity, including gang and narcotics crime (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Compounding the problem, according to CPD, is a lack of cooperation from building owners and managers. The CPD Anti-Gang Initiative states, "a lack of attention to structural deterioration, inadequate screening of potential tenants, failure to monitor who has access to the building, and failure to take action against tenants who are known to engage in criminal activities all serve to feed the cycle of crime and disorder." (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Before the program, according to CPD, building owners or managers were not forced to manage their properties in a manner that contributed to the vitality rather than the decay of the neighborhood. The MDGE program strategy attempts to engage building owners as proactive partners in corrective measures -- and presents powerful deterrents against those owners who are unresponsive (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996).

The MDGE pilot program is an experimental supplement to an existing program known as the "Strategic Inspections Task Force" (SITF) operated out of the city's Department of Buildings. SITF identifies city buildings on arterial streets (major thoroughfares) and residential streets with documented drug and gang problems, conducts inspections for code violations, provides information and recommendations for improving the properties, and conducts administrative proceedings to bring landlords into compliance.

SITF refers some cases to city attorneys at the Department of Law for prosecution under the modified city nuisance abatement ordinance allowing the city to hold landlords accountable for some criminal activities of their tenants.

Also under the program, city assistant corporation counsels were placed in three field locations, each comprising two CPD districts, to assist with case identification and preparation. The premise of the pilot program was that locating attorneys closer to field operations would result in quicker access to better case information, and a better understanding of neighborhood problems. This would in turn lead to more efficient and effective prosecution of nuisance abatement cases, and, ultimately, to safer neighborhoods.

Assessing the impact of the anti-drug and gang initiative required the development and implementation of an evaluation research design based on a comparison of operations in a pilot program districts that have SITF cases with involvement of the new assistant corporation counsels to police districts that have SITF cases without involvement of the new assistant corporation counsels. The design called for process and outcome evaluation research, and qualitative and quantitative methods.

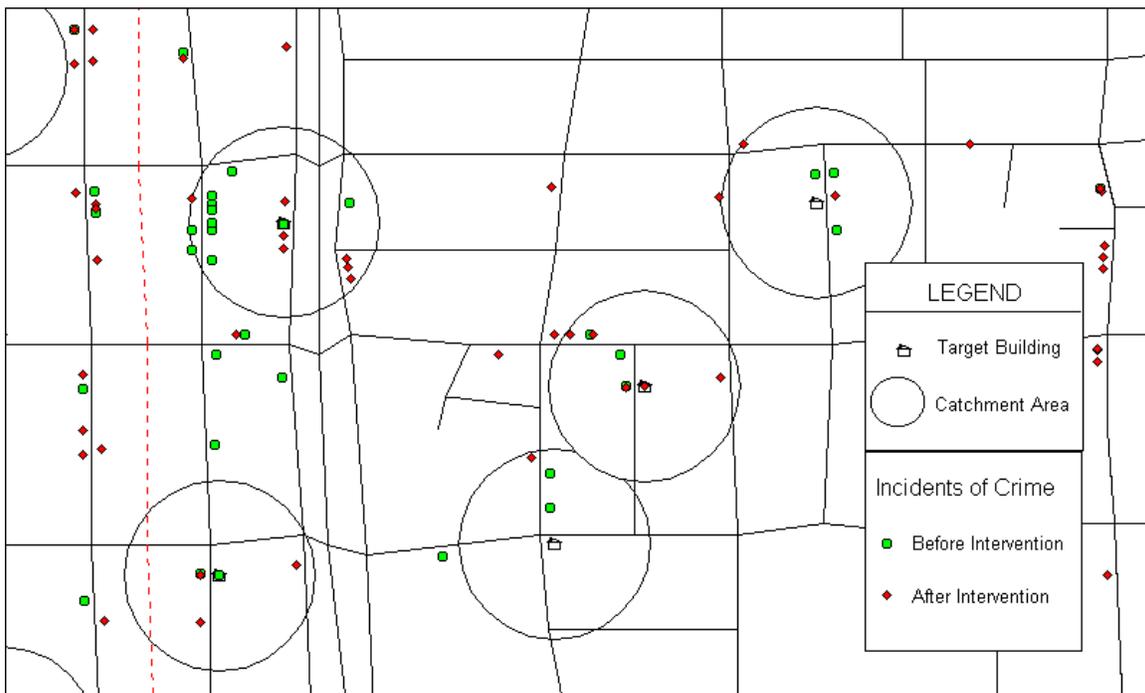
Process evaluation. The process evaluation involved a description of the current operations and implementation experiences of MDGE in pilot and comparison districts, and a comparison of current operations to the original plans and goals set for MDGE. Authority staff interviewed 29 Department of Building and Department of Law personnel and others associated with MDGE operations, and conducted observations of MDGE in action in pilot and comparison districts. Authority staff also collected administrative data from pilot and comparison districts to supplement interview and observation information with archival and administrative record data

The process evaluation found that:

- The MDGE project was implemented as planned
- Sensible adjustments to program operations were made during implementation based on the field experience and what was being learned from the evaluation
- Most of the dissatisfaction expressed by program staff was related to resources, not to personnel, political, or systematic problems
- Project staff and leadership understood the SITF and MDGE process, and their roles as well as the roles of others

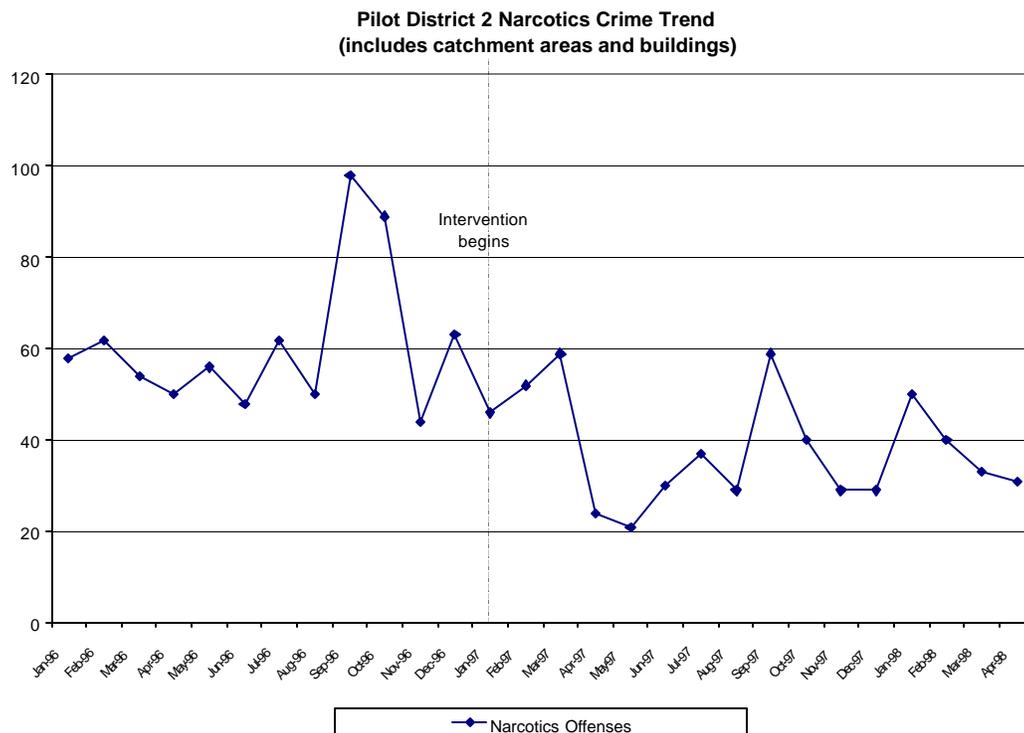
- Coordination and cooperation occurred in expected ways, and sufficiently often to support overall goals
- Most staff and leaders felt their work was productive and beneficial

The impact evaluation framework consisted of a quasi-experimental design using an address-based mapping application that compared before and after inspection time periods, as well as a pilot/comparison study of narcotics and gang-crime activity at buildings targeted by MDGE. Using this computerized mapping program, the evaluators conducted a geographic analysis of crime in and around targeted buildings in one pilot district (Police District 2). Criminal activity was mapped in a multi-layer analysis for one year prior to program implementation and one year following program implementation. Data and maps were then analyzed at individual buildings and catchment areas (a one-half block circular area around each building) to determine if the program's activities reduced criminal activity in and around targeted addresses (see map below). An equivalent analysis was then conducted using a sample of buildings in a comparison district (Police District 9) to measure the success of the program compared to an untreated area.



The impact evaluation found that:

- SITF and MDGE had the intended impact at the targeted building level, and within catchment areas around the targeted buildings
- A correlation between the building and catchment area in District 2 was found that would suggest that cleaning up an individual drug house might have the positive residual effect of cleaning up a nearby area of one-half block around the building.
- There may be some displacement occurring as a result of this program, but the research design did not address that issue specifically
- When comparing the pilot (District 2) and comparison (District 9) districts, there is evidence that the MDGE program (placing assistant city attorneys in the field, in the district offices) has an add-on benefit above and beyond the inspection/nuisance abatement program
- There is evidence that program effects are lasting; downturns in targeted crimes continued well after the inspection teams left the targeted areas



This report notes important limitations, such as resources available for evaluation research, available data, program operations that conflicted with evaluation plans, and the limited number of pilot and comparison districts. These limitations preclude any broad or sweeping statements about program impact and success -- it is not possible to generalize from one district to all districts, or from one sample of targeted properties to all other targeted properties.

It can be stated, however, that since the process evaluation concluded that program implementation was successful, and since the impact evaluation found evidence of program success, it is not unreasonable to make the logical connection between project implementation and positive outcomes. It would not be reasonable, however, to assume that replication of SITF and MDGE city-wide, over many years, would result in successful outcomes equal to those observed in the districts studied for this project. On-going, and more rigorous evaluation would be required to address those issues.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Purpose of Report

In November 1996, the Chicago Police Department (CPD) implemented a multi-agency program designed to combat increasing criminal gang and narcotics activity in Chicago. Funded under the U.S. Department of Justice's Community Oriented Policing Services' (COPS) Anti-Gang Initiative, and furthering one aspect of the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy (CAPS), which is CPD's community policing program, several city departments joined forces to execute the Municipal Drug and Gang Enforcement (MDGE) pilot program.

The program is a joint effort of the CPD, Chicago Department of Law, Chicago Department of Buildings, and other city departments. This report describes the evaluation methodology developed for the MDGE program, and presents the findings of a process and impact evaluation conducted by the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority with whom CPD contracted for this purpose.

This report contains four main sections. Part I gives an overview of MDGE's strategy and organizational structure, and the evaluation design, scope, and limitations. Part II presents the process evaluation methodology and findings. The third part presents the impact evaluation methodology and results – a quasi-experimental design using an address-based mapping application that shows before and after crime comparisons, as well as experimental/control comparisons of drug and crime activity at addresses targeted by MDGE. Finally, the last section of this report presents conclusions and recommendations.

Backdrop of Gang and Drug Problems in Chicago

As in many large cities, and increasingly in smaller cities, criminal gang and narcotics activity is a serious crime control problem in Chicago. In 1996, CPD estimated the existence of 132 Chicago-based street gangs; more than 75 different gangs were represented at least once in the nearly 20,000 gang-related criminal offenses documented (Block et. al, 1996). According to police statistics, problems associated with gangs and narcotics have grown in recent years. From 1993 to 1997, gang and drug-related crime increased by nearly one-half (Figure 1). Drug arrests increased 50.1 percent; gang offenses

increased 47.9 percent. This increase is compared to the relative stability in the number of arrests for all crime in that period – overall crime arrests decreased slightly by -0.9 percent (Table 1).

In a June 1995 report, the Chicago Community Policing Evaluation Consortium, funded in part by the Authority, tracked the frequency of problems identified by community residents in five CAPS prototype districts. The study found that of the top four community concerns, drug dealing was a concern in every district and gang violence was a concern in four out of five districts. Other concerns, most cited by residents, included youth problems and graffiti¹ (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Police also considered criminal gang and drug activity as a problem in 22 of 25 police districts.

Figure 1
Chicago gang offenses and drug arrests, 1993-1997²

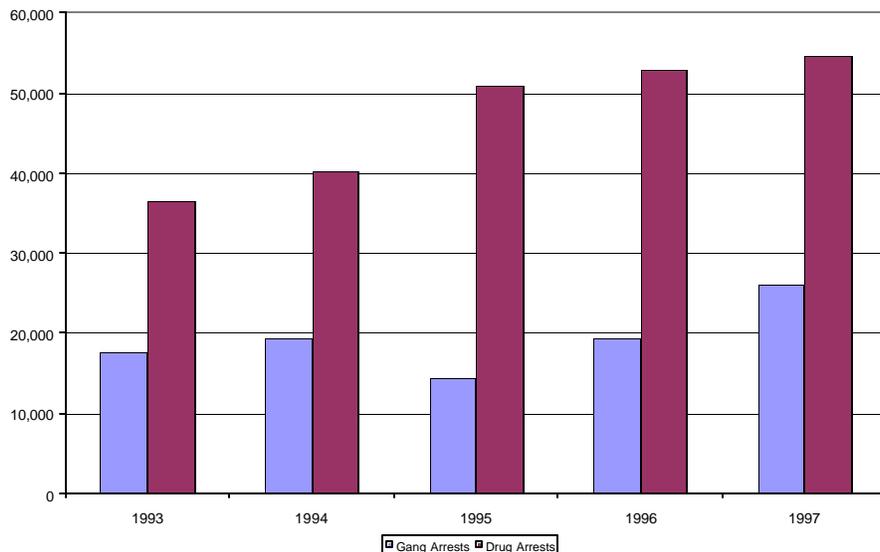


Table 1

¹ Gang activity is most likely a subset of these two problems as well.

² Source for Figure 1 and Table 1: Chicago Police Department Annual Reports, 1993-97 for arrest information and street gang data set for gang offenses.

Chicago gang offenses, drug arrests and all arrests
1993-1997

	Gang Offenses	Drug Arrests	All Arrests
1993	17,662	36,425	294,735
1994	19,300	40,290	294,631
1995	14,409	51,005	305,255
1996	19,485	52,903	301,890
1997	26,122	54,679	292,182
Percent Change 1993-1997	47.9%	50.1%	-0.9%

MDGE Strategy and Organizational Structure

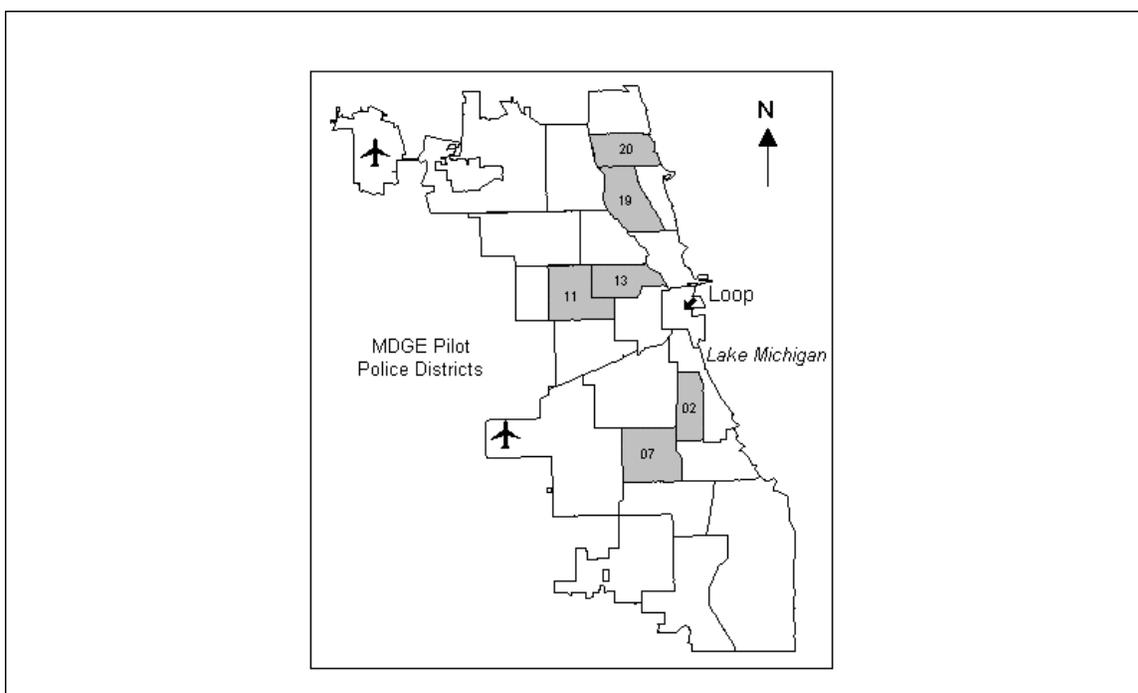
The mission of the MDGE pilot program was to tackle gang and drug problem buildings, known as “non-owner occupied multi-unit dwellings.” The program targeted multi-unit dwellings because they were believed to foster gang and drug crime. According to CPD, certain buildings act as magnets for illegal activity, including gang and narcotics crime (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Compounding the problem, according to CPD, is a lack of cooperation from building owners and managers. The CPD Anti-Gang Initiative states, “a lack of attention to structural deterioration, inadequate screening of potential tenants, failure to monitor who has access to the building, and failure to take action against tenants who are known to engage in criminal activities all serve to feed the cycle of crime and disorder.” (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Before the program, according to CPD, building owners or managers were not forced to manage their properties in a manner that contributed to the vitality rather than the decay of the neighborhood. The MDGE program strategy attempts to engage building owners as proactive partners in corrective measures—and presents powerful deterrents against those owners who are unresponsive (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996).

The MDGE pilot program is an experimental supplement to an existing program known as the “Strategic Inspections Task Force” (SITF) operated out of the city’s Department of Buildings. SITF identifies city buildings on arterial streets (major thoroughfares) and residential streets with documented drug and gang problems, conducts inspections for code violations, provides information and recommendations for improving the properties, and conducts administrative proceedings to bring landlords into compliance. SITF refers some cases to city attorneys at the Department of Law for prosecution under the modified city nuisance abatement ordinance allowing the city to hold landlords accountable for some criminal activities of their tenants. (See Appendix I for complete ordinance.)

Also under the program, city assistant corporation counsels were placed in three field locations, each comprising two CPD districts), to assist with case identification and preparation (Map 1). The premise of the pilot program was that locating attorneys closer to field operations would result in quicker access to better case information, and a better understanding of neighborhood problems. This would in turn lead to more efficient and effective prosecution of nuisance abatement cases, and, ultimately, to safer neighborhoods. This premise is directly linked to CAPS and the goals of its anti-gang initiative (CPD 'Together We Can', 1993 and Anti-Gang Initiative Section IV: Strategy Development and Implementation, 1996).

Map 1

MDGE program pilot police districts



The selection of the six pilot districts in which to implement the MDGE program was based on two criteria--geographic diversity and the presence of drug and gang activity. As Map 1 shows, two police districts were selected for program participation in the north, south, and west sides of Chicago.³ Within each region, districts with a high level of drug and gang-related crime were selected. The availability of resources and office space to house field attorneys also factored into the decision-making process.

³ Selecting two districts that were adjacent to each other was a practical consideration designed to make it easier for the field

How was MDGE Different from Other Operations?

Placing city attorneys in field locations for the program was significantly different from already existing operations related to nuisance abatement enforcement. Two other components of the program also changed the way nuisance abatement cases were handled at the city and county levels. First, MDGE utilized a change in the municipal code regarding nuisance abatement. Secondly, it utilized a newly created inspections task force to initiate building inspections at properties targeted for abatement.

Changing and amending the municipal code. Due to a change in the municipal nuisance abatement code, MDGE was able to handle cases through an administrative process rather than a formal, legal one. The Narcotics Nuisance Abatement Unit (NNAU) out of the Cook County State's Attorney's Office, a program that operates at the county level and was a precursor to MDGE, is more restricted in the way it can prosecute cases. First, NNAU is limited in its ability to identify and target cases. The observations or evidence gathered for an NNAU action must be identified as occurring inside a building, that is, they cannot observe violations, or evidence of criminal activity near or adjacent to a building to make a case against a particular property. MDGE, however, is not geographically restricted and can find linkages to particular properties whether the evidence is gathered inside or outside a building. Secondly, NNAU can initiate cases only through a formal, legal process handled in Chancery Court.⁴ On the other hand, most MDGE cases result in administrative remedies, such as requiring landlords to appear before the Department of Administrative Hearings (previously the Code Enforcement Bureau), sending notifications of violations to building owners, or recommending landlord training classes to code violators. These are options if voluntary abatement measures are not successful. This gave MDGE attorneys flexibility in finding solutions to nuisance abatement cases.

Creation of a coordinated inspections task force. Another key aspect of the MDGE program was the utilization of the SITF to conduct building inspections at targeted buildings. The use of a task force was a change over pre-existing inspection operations. Before the task force, each department responsible for building inspections acted relatively independent of each other, with each department generally following their own inspection schedules. The task force attempted to coordinate the efforts of inspectors and increase the sharing of information by creating teams that conducted inspections together.

attorney, by reducing travel time, etc.

⁴ Information regarding NNAU was based on an interview with a MDGE project manager.

Each team consisted of conservation, electrical, plumbing, fire, and revenue inspectors. Individual inspectors did not participate in every inspection, but were available on an as-needed basis, depending on the type of code violations expected by the task force. This increased level of coordination was a drastic change over past inspection programs.⁵

Evaluation Design

Assessing the impact of the anti-drug and gang initiative required the development and implementation of an evaluation research design based on a comparison of operations in pilot program districts that have SITF cases with involvement of the new assistant corporation counsels to police districts that have SITF cases without involvement of the new assistant corporation counsels. The design called for process and outcome evaluation research, and qualitative and quantitative methods.

Process evaluation. The process evaluation involved a description of the current operations and implementation experiences of MDGE in pilot and comparison districts, and a comparison of current operations to the original plans and goals set for MDGE. Authority staff interviewed 29 Department of Building and Department of Law personnel and others associated with MDGE operations, and conducted observations of MDGE in action in pilot and comparison districts.

Authority staff also collected administrative data from pilot and comparison districts to supplement interview and observation information with archival and administrative record data. These data covered case-level information such as addresses of dwellings, inspection dates, referrals to the Department of Law, and case outcomes.

The MDGE pilot program evaluation design asked the following process evaluation questions:

1. How does the MDGE process currently operate in pilot and comparison districts?
2. How do current MDGE operations compare to original plans and goals?
3. What has the implementation process been like?

⁵ It is important to point out that the Strategic Inspections Task Force was implemented city-wide and not just in the six pilot districts.

4. Are there differences in MDGE operations between pilot and comparison districts? If so, are these differences related to the MDGE Pilot Program (e.g., do the field-based prosecutors make a difference in nuisance abatement cases)?

Outcome evaluation. The intended impact of the MDGE program was a reduction of gang and drug crimes in and around locations targeted by the intervention. Therefore, the impact evaluation addressed the following two questions:

1. Was there a decrease in criminal activity in and around pilot district buildings targeted by the MDGE Pilot Program?
2. Was there a difference in crime levels in and around targeted buildings in the pilot district and a comparison district?

To answer these research questions, the impact evaluation framework consisted of a quasi-experimental design using an address-based mapping application that compared before and after inspection time periods, as well as a pilot/comparison study of drug and gang-crime activity at buildings targeted by MDGE. Using this computerized mapping program, the evaluators conducted a geographic analysis of crime around the targeted buildings in one pilot district (Police District 2). Criminal activity was mapped in a multi-layer analysis for one year before program implementation and one year after program implementation. Data and maps were then analyzed to determine if the program's activities reduced criminal activity around targeted addresses. An equivalent analysis was then conducted using a sample of buildings in a comparison district (Police District 9) to measure the success of the program compared to an untreated area. (Recall that treatment = placement of a field attorney in a police district.)

Scope of the evaluation. The MDGE program has operated since November 1996. The process evaluation report covers the first 16 months of the program, November 1996 to February 1998. For the outcome evaluation, data was analyzed for a 28-month period for each of the pilot and comparison districts, consisting of two 12-month periods before and after implementation of the program, and a 4-month intervention period.

Evaluation Limitations

There were two types of limitations to this research – design and information resources.

Design limitations. Observed differences in amounts and types of crime for before and after time periods, or pilot/comparison districts, cannot be inextricably linked to the operations of the SITF or field-based prosecutors. At best, when differences in outcomes, such as crime rates, are observed in the expected directions, and if process evaluation findings suggest that indeed the program was implemented in a systematic fashion, that can increase the confidence that the MDGE operation contributed in some way to the success. It cannot be said with a high degree of certainty that the program was the major reason for the success. The design did not control for many other variables affecting crime in city neighborhoods, rendering it difficult to make such direct and confident conclusions.

Information resource limitations. As is typically the case in broad-based program evaluation efforts, some required data were not available for collection or analysis. Information systems that were to be developed were not, or were not developed according to the original designs. Some data were available but entered into agency systems too late to be of use to the evaluation effort. Some data were inadequate for use in analysis. These problems did not derail the evaluation, but limited the number of cases available for analysis, and the number of pilot and comparison districts included in the evaluation effort.

Beyond the Scope of this Report

This evaluation does not measure the effect of the program on property owners themselves. Near the end of the first year of MDGE, a survey of property owners was initiated in an attempt to evaluate the effect of the program on some of the individuals most directly impacted by the MDGE program. This proved to be unsuccessful due to the nature of the legal process. Despite the fact that MDGE cases were somewhat expedited through administrative hearings rather than formal, legal ones, the number of cases that were closed in the first year of the program was relatively small. On average, it takes between six months and a year before a case is closed. This limited the pool of property owners who had gone through the MDGE process and would be able to comment on the program's fairness, the fairness of the ordinance, and other aspects, to roughly 60 property owners. However, an attempt was made to survey even this relatively small population. After attempting to contact about 12 property owners and experiencing little success due to typical survey complications such as refusals and repeated and un-

returned phone calls, the survey was abandoned. It was thought that the lack of a fair sample size would have made any conclusions drawn from the survey inaccurate in weight and value.⁶

II. PROCESS EVALUATION

⁶ Observations and anecdotal evidence suggested that property owners had both positive and negative reactions to the program. Therefore, this might be an interesting area of study in the future.

Process Methodology and Data

The process evaluation was initially designed to focus on a particular aspect of the overall MDGE project -- the pilot program involving placement of Assistant Corporation Counsels (field prosecutors) in a select number of police districts as an experiment to test whether such placement improved MDGE operations. As the evaluation findings reported below show, certain conditions and events limited the ability of the evaluation to address this question in detail. Most importantly, the scope and complexity of the MDGE (Drug and Gang House Initiative) were so great that the relative impact of one field prosecutor on a large team within a complex operation would be difficult to detect. In other words, while field prosecutors may prove to be important components of the gang and drug house inspection and code enforcement process, the impact of their individual contributions to cases, and to overall outcomes, is difficult to measure and may prove to be smaller than the overall impact of the entire team effort. In addition, representatives from the Departments of Buildings, Law, and Police desired an evaluation of the implementation process as well as more general program outcomes, which required that some evaluation efforts be directed to broader program-level concerns rather than to the narrow question regarding field-based prosecutors.

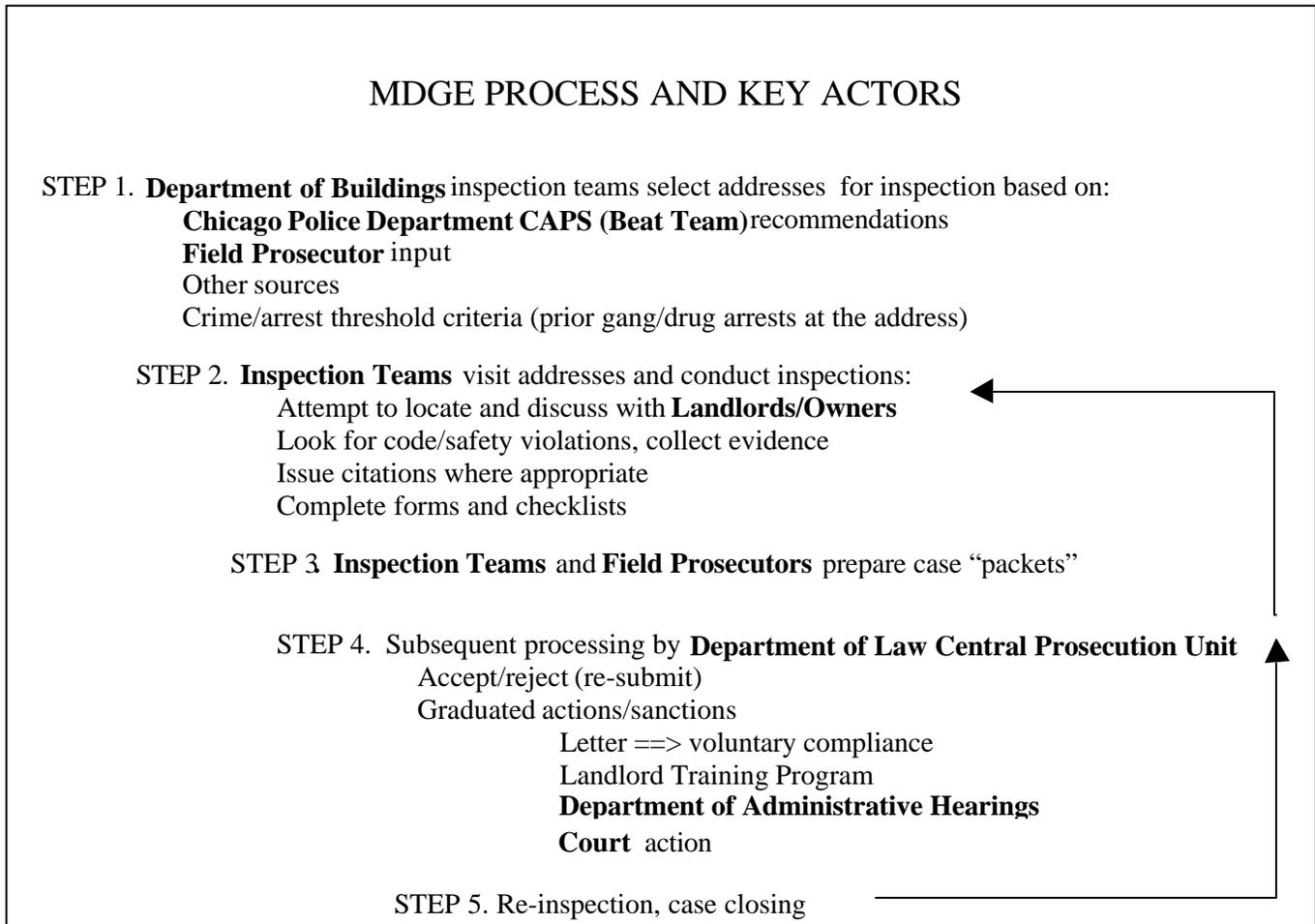
The process evaluation involved a description of the current operations and implementation experiences of MDGE in pilot and comparison districts, and a comparison of current operations to the original plans and goals set for MDGE. ICJIA staff interviewed 29 DOB and DOL personnel and others associated with MDGE operations, and conducted observations of MDGE in action in two pilot districts, one non-pilot district and the comparison district.

ICJIA staff also collected administrative data from pilot and comparison districts for the purpose of supplementing interview and observation information with archival and administrative record data. These data covered case-level information such as address of dwelling, inspection date, referral to DOL, and case outcome.

Planned Inspection and Enforcement Process

Figure 2 below depicts the model MDGE inspection and enforcement process (as originally planned), noting key actors and decision points.

Figure 2



STEP 1 -- Select Addresses for Inspection:

The MDGE inspection process begins with the identification, or targeting, of dwelling units⁷ for inspection.⁸ Targeting activities are usually initiated a few weeks before any actual case activity will take place. Inspectors will select districts and beats for inspections, and tour these areas with police personnel looking for physical (and other) evidence of code or criminal violations at specific addresses.⁹

⁷ Recall that MDGE plans call for a focus on multi-dwelling units (e.g., two-flats, three-flats, apartment buildings), not single family housing units.

⁸ This report addresses the MDGE Pilot Program and inspection process for gang/narcotics cases only, mostly multi-dwelling units and excluding arterial (inspection cases on main thoroughfares and in business establishments) and public housing cases. More specifically, the report focuses on a few treatment (pilot) and comparison police districts and does not include information on all pilot and non-pilot districts in the City of Chicago.

⁹ Inspections are usually conducted one district at a time per inspection team. Because there are two teams operating at the

Lists of buildings/addresses are completed and inspectors fill out “Abatement Check Lists” for candidate buildings covering physical and other evidence of crime of nuisance problems (damage to property, gang graffiti, poor lighting, litter, etc.).

Potential targets can be identified from other sources as well. Chicago Police Department CAPS Beat Teams may suggest dwelling units for inspection based on information gathered at beat team (community) meetings, from residents, or during the normal course of daily police work in the neighborhoods. DOL field prosecutors (Assistant Corporation Counsels assigned to pilot districts) may suggest dwelling units for inspection, and DOB inspectors themselves may suggest dwelling units for inspection. In essence, any public official or city employee who is an integral part, or linked to, the MDGE project, and any citizen who is connected with beat team (CAPS) meetings and operations may suggest a dwelling unit as a target for inspection.

For the MDGE project, nominated (or targeted) dwelling units must meet certain threshold criteria relating to gangs and narcotics violations to be inspected. At the time of this research was conducted, the main threshold criteria varied from the minimum required by the ordinance (two misdemeanors in the past six months or one felony) to up to five prior arrests for each dwelling unit (misdemeanors or felonies), with “hits” being for specific offense types associated with gang activity or drug trafficking. This was determined through inspection of specially prepared CPD arrest reports (from the Department's RAMIS information system) that provided arrest information by address.¹⁰

STEP 2 -- Conduct Inspections:

Once district and MDGE officials develop a list of dwelling units to be inspected, DOB inspection teams attempt to visit each address and conduct inspections. The teams typically include general building inspectors, electrical inspectors, and plumbing inspectors.¹¹ Depending on the dwelling unit, prior

same time, two districts are being inspected simultaneously. Once a district is “swept” (i.e. all the targeted buildings have been inspected at least once), then the inspection teams begin another district. It generally takes 2-3 months to sweep a district.

¹⁰ Interviews with DOB officials revealed that the threshold criterion varied across police districts. If the criterion was set too low in a district with a high number of dwellings with drug and gang activity, many more dwelling units would be identified than could reasonably be inspected in a timely manner with the personnel resources available. The threshold criterion is important as a guard against City officials inspecting dwelling units without sufficient cause under the authority of the new (revised) nuisance abatement ordinance.

¹¹ These are each inspectors; they are listed separately to reflect that there are distinctly different types and categories of inspectors, with different skills and knowledge, and with different responsibilities relating to the inspection of any one

information known about the dwelling unit, or anticipated problems, other officials such as police officers, beat team representatives, fire inspectors, health inspectors, or other specialists may join the inspection team, as may DOB or DOL supervisors.

The inspection process at any one dwelling unit follows a familiar routine. Generally, the team attempts to contact the landlord first, to notify him or her of the inspection and request admission to the property. When a landlord, building manager, or owner cannot be located, the team attempts to contact individual tenants to gain admission. An inspection team's success at gaining entry on the first attempt varies considerably; most times access is gained on the first visit, however, sometimes a few re-visits to the address are required before entry is obtained. In some instances a discussion with an owner, landlord, or tenant is not possible. In those cases, the team does the best it can to inspect the dwelling unit from outside and along the perimeter of the property.

The general aim of the inspection is to determine whether evidence exists of City building code violations on the property and, when such evidence is found, to document it through reports, and photographs where appropriate. Two related goals of the inspections include:

- (1) compilation of an organized, legible case file for review at DOB and DOL, with enough information to give DOL opportunities for enforcement and prosecution, and
- (2) contact with property owners and landlords to provide advice and inform them of information and resources available to them to better manage and screen tenants, fix properties, and avoid future problems.

A less formal but often articulated goal of inspections directly relates to the informal mechanisms through which CAPS and many other community policing initiatives operate -- the public inspection itself that lets landlords and neighbors know that community (or official) action is being taken at dwelling units that are known to have crime (gang and drug) problems.

STEP 3 -- Prepare Case Information:

Following an inspection conducted at a dwelling unit (and, often, repeated attempts to conduct the inspection), DOB inspectors prepare reports including evidence, list of citation violations, forms, checklists, photos and recommendations for further action. This information, compiled in "packets," is reviewed by DOB supervisors, amended and supplemented, if necessary, and delivered to DOL for review and consideration for further action.

DOB delivers the packets to DOL on a routine basis, with a two- to three-month time span between initial inspection and delivery of the packet.

STEP 4 -- DOL Action and Subsequent Case Processing:

In a process similar to the perhaps more familiar felony review of arrests by prosecutors, DOL attorneys review the inspection case packets to determine the quality of the case (Are there true citation violations? Have threshold criteria for cases under the new nuisance abatement ordinance been met? Is the case information organized, legible, and complete?). A case may be rejected (threshold criteria not met, no true code violations, insufficient evidence, etc.) or accepted. Rejected cases may be re-inspected or re-worked by DOB and still pursued as routine code violations, or they may be abandoned.

For each accepted case, DOL attorneys have four general courses of action they can pursue.¹² These include:

1. Send a notification of violation (NOV) letter to the landlord or property owner and pursue the course of voluntary compliance,
2. Require the landlord or owner to attend the Landlord Training Program, a special seminar on property improvement, tenant screening and management, etc.,
3. Pursue the code violations through a special administrative hearing that includes possible imposition of fines and other sanctions, and
4. Civil (Chancery) or other court hearings, the most formal sanction possible, typically used in cases of repeated criminal (gang and drug) violations, and refusal by the landlord or owner to pursue any other means to resolve the case.

¹² These are not mutually exclusive courses of action. Any single case may eventually include two or more of these courses of action. This list describes the general options available to DOL attorneys, and possible starting points, at graduated levels of seriousness.

STEP 5 -- Re-Inspection and Case Closing:

As this report explains further below, most inspection cases are resolved through voluntary compliance after a notification of violation. Re-inspection of dwelling units in the process of compliance or nearing case completion is a key component of the MDGE process. DOB inspectors re-visit most of the addresses they originally cite, regardless of whether they are accepted or rejected by DOL. It is DOL, however, who determines when a case has been completed successfully or unsuccessfully under the MDGE project. (See Appendix II for an example of an “Agreed Order of Abatement.”)

Case Processing

To examine the processing of MDGE cases, the evaluators documented the actions and dispositions noted in the case management file.¹³ The information collected on each case included the following: case identification number; property location (such as the address, police beat and district); dates of inspection and subsequent re-inspection; date when case packet was received from the Department of Buildings; date the work was assigned to an attorney; date a notice of violation was sent to a property owner; and date of a resolution meeting. Finally, the case management file provided information on the case origin (whether it originated from the task force, a city attorney, or another source); the basis for the case against a property (e.g. narcotics, gangs, building code violations, etc.); and the status of the case.

A summary of the case status report in the six pilot districts from November 1996 to February 1998 showed the following:

Types of cases targeted. In the six pilot districts, a total of 787 cases were reviewed by MDGE program attorneys. Virtually all of the buildings were targeted on the basis of narcotics activity (94 percent, n=740); a significant majority were targeted for building code violations (64 percent, n=507); and in three of every five cases both of these reasons together provided the basis for targeting a property (62 percent, n=486).¹⁴ On the other hand, very few properties were targeted for other reasons, such as prostitution, criminal trespassing and other activity related to disorder (2 percent, n=17). Geographically,

¹³ A non-automated case “Status Report” was provided to us by the Department of Law.

¹⁴ These are not mutually exclusive categories. Also, this breakdown uses the original “basis” for targeting properties so the data includes cases that might have eventually been rejected by the city attorneys for various reasons.

the highest concentration of targeted properties occurred in the two West Side police districts, District 13 (46 percent, n=364) and District 11 (18 percent, n=144). The next highest concentration occurred in the District 2 on the South Side (15 percent, n=120). In the remaining three pilot districts, District 7 on the south side and Districts 19 and 20 on the North Side, there was an equal number of targeted properties (roughly 7 percent, n=51 to 57).

Actions taken by MDGE. The most common action taken by MDGE was to “reject” cases under their review. As mentioned earlier, (Step 4: DOL Action and Case Processing) a case is rejected if it does not fit the elements of the ordinance; threshold criteria not met, no true code violations, insufficient evidence, etc. Of the 787 pilot district cases reviewed, 51 percent were rejected by program attorneys; notice of violation letters were sent in ten percent of the cases and nuisance letters were sent in four percent; another four percent of cases were closed/rejected for other reasons; and 31 percent of the cases were still pending at the time of this particular analysis.

Field Prosecutor's Role in the MDGE Process

It is important to note that the process described above was designed as a general course of action for cases under the MDGE project, regardless of whether they are located within or outside of pilot police districts and regardless of whether a field prosecutor is placed within a (pilot) district. While field prosecutors have specific roles to play in the process, they do not have specific steps they are independently responsible for; they are members of the district teams established as part of the MDGE project. The role envisioned for field prosecutors (Assistant Corporation Counsels from DOL assigned to work in the local districts rather than at the downtown central office) includes:

- Provide a liaison between the field (police and DOB) personnel who target and initiate inspection cases and downtown (DOL) prosecutors who carry the cases forward for action and resolution,
- Assist with the case identification process,
- Assist with the case information gathering and case preparation process, and
- Work with local officials and community groups to promote and explain the MDGE project.

It is also important to note that field prosecutors were placed in three distinct pilot field locations (with responsibilities for two districts at each location) to test whether this placement (versus working in the downtown office) resulted in improved MDGE operations, compared to operations in districts where there were no field prosecutors.

Planned vs. Actual Inspection and Enforcement Process

The process evaluation compared planned to actual MDGE operations in three different ways. First, research staff accompanied task force personnel on inspections and other work duties to observe actual operations. Second, and often in conjunction with site visits, research staff conducted formal, semi-structured interviews with MDGE personnel from DOB and DOL. The interview questions covered, among other things, daily task force duties and operations and implementation issues. Third, research staff reviewed administrative data provided by DOL regarding inspection cases from the pilot/comparison districts.

In general, based on the observations and interviews, task force operations and the roles played by key individuals and positions matched fairly well with the plans originally drafted for MDGE operations, as explained in the proposal submitted to the COPS Office. The process described above, steps one through five from case targeting to case completion, was essentially the process encountered and observed by researchers in the field. In addition, the roles envisioned for particular individuals and positions (e.g., inspectors, field prosecutors, supervisors, district police personnel, CAPS representatives) were those that were actually observed. A detailed presentation of data from interviews with task force personnel follows which addresses these points, but a few general points are worth making here.

Research observations and administrative data prepared by DOL support the notion that field prosecutors improved task force operations. They made contributions to the day-to-day operations related to targeting and inspecting properties. The specific roles played by the field (pilot) prosecutors varied according to important variables that were difficult to measure or control. Caseloads, housing stock, and crime problems, for example, vary by broad sections of the city (south versus west versus north side), as well as from police district to police district, and across neighborhoods within districts. For example, threshold criteria relating to the number of crimes occurring for a specific buildings were different depending on the attorney and the district. The ordinance requires the occurrence of at least

two misdemeanors within any sixth month period or one felony for a property to fall within the purview of the ordinance. However, some attorneys in higher crime districts raised the bar above the minimum threshold stated in the ordinance because of the sheer volume of cases that met that standard. According to one field attorney in a higher crime district, the standards set in the ordinance were much too low for one lawyer to handle in his jurisdiction. Instead, he used two felonies and one misdemeanor as a rule of thumb. He recognized that he might be missing properties that had serious crime problems but decided he had to “draw the line” somewhere. He appreciated the flexibility he had with the MDGE program.

Opportunities for close involvement by field prosecutors varied from week-to-week, and from neighborhood-to-neighborhood. In some districts, for example, field prosecutors were routinely involved in the dwelling unit targeting, inspection, and case preparation processes. In others, the field prosecutors became more involved (or sporadically involved) in other activities such as working with landlords, attending CAPS and other neighborhood meetings, and providing other types of assistance to MDGE personnel. The role of field prosecutors varied as well by individual prosecutor's skills, professional aspirations, experience with the inspection process, and other important variables. Thus, while it may be stated in general terms that the role of field prosecutors in the MDGE process was actually experienced and implemented as planned, variations in those roles and experiences occurred across jurisdictions, and across individuals.

Description of MDGE Staff

To understand the MDGE’s internal operations, evaluation staff interviewed all program staff and one former senior-level staff member. (See Appendix III for a copy of the staff survey instrument.) The research team interviewed twenty-nine (29) individuals involved with MDGE with a response and completion rate of 100 percent. Of the 29 respondents, 38 percent (n=11) were DOL personnel in various positions and 62 percent (n=18) were DOB personnel, also in various positions.¹⁵ As Table 2 shows, most of the staff consisted of Assistant Corporation Counsels or building inspectors of various kinds.

¹⁵ Because the task force operated out of the Department of Buildings, fire, health, revenue and plumbing inspectors were included in DOB survey results even though they technically worked for different city agencies.

Table 2

Respondents position with MDGE

	Number	Percentage
Management Staff:		
Department of Law:		
Deputy Corporation Counsel	1	3
Chief Assistant Corporation Counsel	1	3
Supervising Attorney	1	3
Department of Buildings:		
Project Manager, SITF	1	3
Deputy Project Manager, SITF	1	3
Assistant Corporation Counsels:		
Field Attorneys	4	14
Central Prosecution Unit	2	7
Inspectors:		
Conservation/Building	7	24
Health	2	7
Electrical	2	7
Plumbing	2	7
Fire	2	7
Support Staff:		
Paralegal	2	7
Administrative Assistant	1	3
TOTAL	29	100

Survey Methodology

The survey was conducted in-person to all staff at field locations or at the central offices of the Department of Buildings or Department of Law. In addition, we interviewed one former senior staff member who had recently left the Department of Law. The survey was administered in January and February 1998 and, on average, took one hour to complete.

The survey gathered data regarding respondents' backgrounds, their roles and responsibilities with MDGE, their perceptions of project goals and objectives, their involvement with other agencies, and their views on the implementation and case management processes.

Survey Results

Describing the respondents:

When asked if they volunteered to work on MDGE or were assigned to the job by their supervisors, nearly half (48%) explained that they were assigned by their superiors. Twenty-one percent (21%) said they volunteered or asked to join MDGE, and 31% indicated that they joined for other reasons such as: recruited for the position, developed or created the position, or hired because of specific skills. The majority of individuals who indicated they were assigned to MDGE (rather than joining out of interest and desire) were in comparatively lower-level positions, such as inspector, assistant, or paralegal. Those who volunteered, asked to join, or who created their own positions include those at the more senior levels (supervisors and project managers). The interview data suggest that personnel in DOB were more likely to be assigned by superiors than those in DOL, who were more likely to volunteer for MDGE or join for other reasons.

Respondents were asked how long they worked for MDGE, up to the time of the interview. Overall, respondents worked for MDGE for 16 months, on average (16.3). DOB personnel worked an average of 18 months (17.7) and DOL personnel worked an average of 15 months (14.5) at the time of the interview. When asked if they had changed positions within the program since they started working with MDGE, 93% (27 of 29) said they had not. When asked if they received any special training since they began working with MDGE, 90% (26 of 29) said they had not.

Describing task force work:

Survey respondents were asked to describe a typical work-day with MDGE using an open-ended question. Table 3 summarizes the responses to this question. The statements provided about everyday work with MDGE are consistent with what would be expected given the planned process outlined above. In the DOL section of the table, the ACC, after certain points indicates that these duties are typical of those described by Assistant Corporation Counsels, a further indication that they were performing tasks expected of them. While not shown in the table, statements made by supervisors regarding their daily duties were consistent with what would be expected from higher-level officials in MDGE (e.g., case review, scheduling personnel, working with the Mayor's office).

Table 3

Typical Working Day with MDGE	
Agency	Roles and Activities Described
DOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspections and re-inspections • Reports and paperwork • Court and Administrative Review Board hearings • Respond to information requests from team members and DOL • Handle day-to-day crises and emergencies • Prepare reports • Develop operating procedures and policies • Meet with the Mayor's Office
DOL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Case review and decisions on case management • Attend and present at community meetings (ACC) • Attend and participate in district/beat meetings (ACC) • Meet with district TAC and inspection teams (ACC) • Check cases (properties) (ACC) • Individual case actions: NOVs, resolution agreements (ACC) • Case work relating to Housing Court and Chancery Court (ACC) • Administrative hearings (ACC) • Meetings and discussions with landlords (ACC) • Review police reports (ACC) • Work with DOB on file preparation • Meet with the Mayor's Office

When individuals were asked what the key steps and decision points of the MDGE process were, the identification of properties for inspection was most frequently mentioned (38 percent of all mentions, n=10). Of these mentions, four were from DOL and six were from DOB. The actual building inspection was mentioned as a key step and decision point, representing 23 percent of the mentions (n=6), with two mentions from DOL and four from DOB. Compliance from landlords was also represented 23 percent of

the mentions (n=6), with one from DOL and five from DOB. Criminal activity reports were mentioned as a key step in the process 15 percent of the time (n=4, 2 from DOB and 2 from DOL).

When individuals were asked who were the most critical decision-makers in this process, the attorneys were the most commonly mentioned (28 percent of mentions, n=11). Of these mentions, 7 were from DOL and four were from DOB. The administration was mentioned as the most critical decision-maker 23 percent of the time (n=9, 1 from DOL and 8 from DOB). The inspectors were mentioned as the most critical decision-makers 18 percent of the time (n=7, 2 from DOL and 5 from DOB). The police department was mentioned 12 percent of the time (n=5) as the most critical decision maker, three from DOL and two from DOB. The community was mentioned 10 percent of the time (n=4) as the most critical decision-maker, two from DOL and two from DOB. The judge/hearing officer was mentioned as the most critical decision-maker 8 percent of the time (n=3 mentions, 1 from DOL and 2 from DOB).

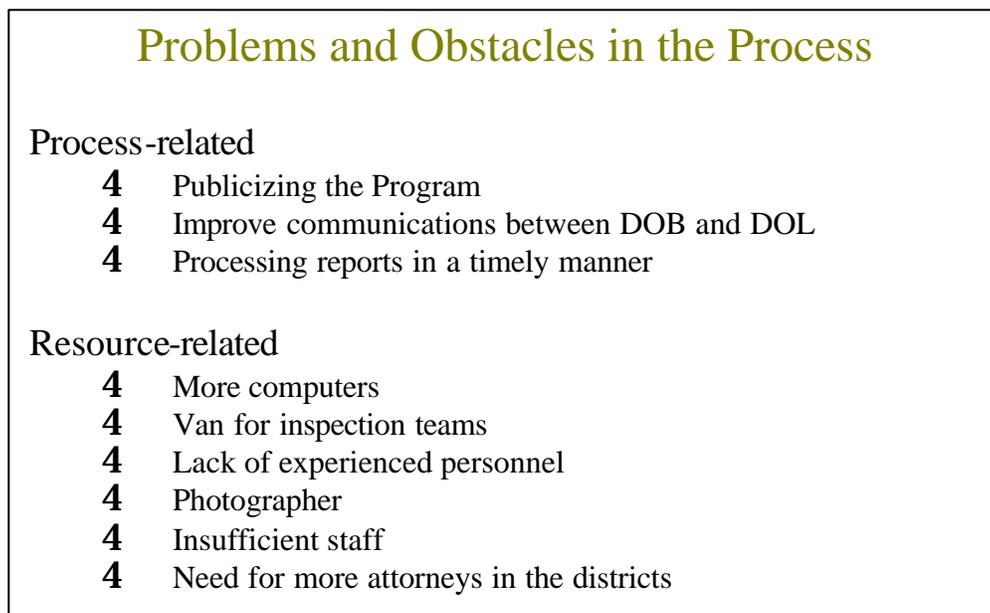
When asked what the key points of coordination of both people and information were in this process, communication and coordination between departments was most frequently mentioned (20 percent of mentions, n=10). Of these mentions, four were from DOL and six were from DOB. The police departments, field supervisors, attorneys, inspections, inspection reports, and the inspectors were each mentioned five times as the key points of coordination of both people and information. The identification of property and community beat meetings were mentioned four times as key points of coordination.

Problems and obstacles in the process:

Respondents were asked about current problems or obstacles in the process just described that they feel need further attention or improvement. The qualitative analysis of the responses to this open-ended survey question revealed a pattern of nine different responses from 21 respondents who made 31 “mentions” of current problems still needing attention. The most frequently mentioned recommendation for improvement was an increase in the number of staff (34 percent, n=13). Six of these mentions were from DOL and seven were from DOB. Processing inspection reports in a timely manner was another improvement recommended 16 percent of the time (n=6, 5 from DOL and 1 from DOB). Assigning one attorney to a district was another recommendation mentioned five times, all by personnel from DOL. A suggestion for more computers was mentioned twice by the personnel from DOL and twice by personnel

from DOB. Four DOB personnel suggested that a van be purchased for the inspection teams. Improvement in the communication between the departments was a recommendation mentioned 3 times, all by personnel from DOB. Recommendations for a photographer were also mentioned three times, twice by DOL and once by DOB.

Of the nine coded responses, six can be categorized as "resource-related" obstacles (insufficient staff, more computers, van for inspection teams, etc.), and three can be categorized as "process-related" obstacles (timely processing of reports, publicizing the program, need for improved communications) (Figure 3). While process-related obstacles should not be minimized or ignored, the fact that twice as



many of the mentioned current obstacles to the program are resource-related should be viewed in a positive light. Resource needs are greater than work process or communication problems in MDGE, in the view of most personnel.

Figure 3
Problems and obstacles in the MDGE process

Describing task force cases:

Survey respondents were asked to describe a typical MDGE case, the case they considered most successful, and the most difficult case of the project to date. When asked to describe a typical task force case from their perspective, most respondents described run-down buildings with high levels of drug and

gang activity, structural problems, and numerous safety violations. When asked to describe successful cases, respondents mentioned buildings that were rehabilitated and brought up to code violations, buildings that no longer had criminal, drug, or gang activity; and buildings that were ordered to be vacated and then torn down.

Implementing MDGE

While we have reasonable assurance that the project was set up as planned and that key individuals performed the appropriate duties and participated in the task force as planned, it is also true that MDGE, like any complex organization (especially a new one), experienced growing pains. The project encountered obstacles and constraints during its first year. For example, adjustments were made to operating procedures to accommodate the working cultures of different organizations, and new communication channels were opened. Interviews with MDGE personnel addressed these issues by asking questions about how individual roles within the task force changed over time, whether and how the goals and objectives of the task force changed over time, the reasons those changes took place, among others.

Following is a presentation and review of MDGE implementation experiences.

Changes in tasks or activities:

When asked whether their daily tasks or activities changed since they began their involvement with the project, 52 percent of respondents (n=15) indicated that they had changed, with an equal distribution between DOL (8) and DOB (7) responses. The qualitative analysis of responses to this survey question revealed a pattern of three different responses from 15 respondents who made 28 "mentions" of changes in their work, with nearly equal numbers of DOB and DOL personnel mentioning such changes. The three categories of changes in tasks and activities included increase in workload, more forms to fill out, and a revised process for selecting buildings for inspection. Each of these should be considered normal changes in the evolution of a new organization, adjustments to the realities and contingencies of the organizational environment, rather than unplanned or disturbing variations in activities.

Changes in MDGE goals and objectives:

The qualitative analysis of responses to this survey question revealed a pattern of four different responses from 29 respondents who made 41 "mentions" of MDGE goals and objectives. The four categories of current goals and objectives included elimination of drug and gang activity (from dwellings selected for inspection), provide safe housing and improve the quality of life (for tenants and residents), enforce codes and bring owners into compliance, and educate landlords. Each of these categories, gleaned from the verbatim responses of survey respondents, reflects goals for the project articulated in early project descriptions and the funding application, and consistently articulated by task force personnel during field observations. This finding, too, should be interpreted in a positive light.

Interview respondents were also asked to articulate whether they felt the goals and objectives had changed since they began their involvement with the project. Table 4 summarizes the responses to these items.

Table 4

Changes in the Goals and Objectives of MDGE	
<p>Current goals and objectives*:</p> <p>n = 29</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 43% Elimination of drug and gang activity (crime) • 24% Providing safe housing and improving the quality of life for tenants • 20% Enforcing codes and bringing owners into compliance • 14% Educating landlords to be more responsible and selective regarding their tenants
<p>Changes in goals and objectives?</p> <p>n = 8</p>	<p>YES: 28%</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project has become more selective in the buildings it Targets • Goals and objectives became clearer over time.

*Note: Responses to this question were open-ended. For this item, percentages reflect the number of times a particular topic was mentioned by survey respondents, not the number of respondents who mentioned the item. For example, elimination of drug and gang activity represents 43% of all responses to the question about current goals and objectives. It does not indicate that 43% of all respondents mentioned that particular goal or objective. The percentages do not add up to 100% due to rounding error.

Elimination of drug and gang activity/crime was mentioned 22 times as a current goal and objective of the project (43 percent of the goals and objectives mentioned). Of these mentions, 50 percent (n=11) were given by personnel from DOL, with the other 50 percent from DOB. Providing safe housing and improving the quality of life for tenants was mentioned as a goal and objective of the project 12 times (24 percent of the goals and objectives mentioned). Of these mentions, eight were from DOB and 4 were from DOL. Enforcing codes and bringing owners into compliance was mentioned as a current goal 20 percent of the time (n=10). Of these mentions, two were given by DOB and eight were given by DOL. Teaching landlords to be more responsible and selective of their tenants was mentioned seven times (14 percent of the goals and objectives mentioned). Of these mentions, three were from DOL and four were from DOB.

When asked if they felt the goals and objectives have changed, 28 percent of respondents (n=8) said "Yes." It was mentioned six times that the project has become more selective in the buildings it is targeting (once by personnel from DOL and five times by personnel from DOB). It was mentioned three times by DOB personnel that there were no clear goals and objectives in the beginning stages of the project. None of the DOL personnel mentioned this.

When asked if they felt the Anti-Gang and Drug House Initiative was set up as originally planned, 62 percent (18 respondents) said "Yes" and 17 percent (11 respondents) said "No." These 11 individuals were asked what they thought was different about the current set-up of the project. The identification of buildings was mentioned five times -- two from DOL and three from DOB. According to the respondents, in the beginning phases of the project building inspectors would go door-to-door conducting inspections. Now, they have become more selective. There were two mentions that the current setup of the project allows for more follow through of cases from beginning to end, both coming from personnel at DOL. Other differences mentioned by respondents suggested that a different organizational configuration than the current one was discussed early on in the task force's history. When asked why things were set up differently from original plans, a failure to properly select buildings

for inspection was mentioned six times. As a result of the overwhelming number of cases generated from the original procedure, the identification process was changed.

Most difficult implementation problems:

Respondents were asked what they felt the toughest implementation issues faced by the project were. Nineteen (19) respondents (66 percent) gave an answer to this question, mentioning an insufficient number of staff five times (29 percent of mentions). Of these mentions, two were from DOL and three were from DOB. The improper identification of properties for inspection was mentioned as an implementation problem four times. Of these mentions, one was from DOL and three were from DOB. Lack of proper or experienced inspection personnel was a problem mentioned three times, all by personnel from DOB. Slow processing of reports from DOB to DOL was mentioned three times, twice by personnel from the DOL and once by someone from DOB. Publicizing and building the reputation of the program was mentioned twice as in implementation problem, once by DOL and once by DOB.

Individuals were asked how these issues were resolved or what attempts were made to resolve them. Of the eight responses received to this question, four reported that attempts were being made to hire more staff. Attempting to meet with inspectors as a way of resolving issues was mentioned twice by personnel from DOL. Publicizing the project through community groups and meetings as a way of resolving issues was also mentioned twice, once by DOB and once by DOL.

When asked if implementation problems still exist in the project, 64 percent of the respondents (n=14) said "Yes." Of these respondents, six were from DOL and eight were from DOB. One of the most frequently mentioned existing implementation problems was a shortage of staff.

Opinions about the implementation process:

To assess the implementation process from a slightly different perspective, interview respondents were asked to describe the implementation process as problem free, smooth, or difficult using a closed-ended question. Figure 4 summarizes the responses to this item.

Figure 4

Views about the implementation process

No respondents chose the survey response items, "Problem free" or "Very difficult in unexpected ways" to describe the implementation process, and most respondents (77 percent) chose the response options "Mostly smooth" or "Difficult in expected ways. DOB respondents described project implementation (when responding to this particular question) in a more positive manner than did DOL respondents. DOB respondents were the only ones to describe project implementation as "Mostly Smooth." On the other hand, DOL respondents were slightly more inclined to describe the implementation process as "Difficult in Expected Ways," and less likely (compared to DOB respondents) to describe the process as "Difficult in Unexpected Ways."

Examining the high case rejection rate experienced by the program provides a stark illustration of the implementation difficulties and the learning process experienced by the program early on. For the period covered by the process evaluation, program attorneys rejected 51 percent of cases forwarded to them by DOB (as reported earlier.) Also as reported earlier, some reasons for rejected cases included the threshold criteria for crime not being met, insufficient evidence, no true building code violations, etc. According to one official, the high rejection rate was because of the lack of a nexus between the building and the reported crime. In other words, DOB was not establishing a crime connection to many of the buildings before they forwarded case packets on buildings to DOL for prosecution. Thus, a high case rejection rate was produced.

This problem stems from the lack of an effective verification process established at the beginning of the program. However, revisions to the operations protocol introduced later in the program showed that program officials understood the cause of this problem and made attempts to eliminate rejected cases. One change called for regular district rotations for three days every six weeks instead of the extended district stays they followed for the first year or so of the program. The change would serve to make operations more flexible and allow district personnel the ability to budget their manpower more efficiently. A second change called for the legal team to review district data two weeks before inspection to ensure that buildings qualified for enforcement under the ordinance. According to program officials these and other measures would "all but eliminate rejected cases."

Views about project operations:

Interview respondents were asked to rate seven aspects of project operations as good, fair, or poor. Table 5 below summarizes responses to this question. The highest overall ratings of project operations related to working relationships on-the-job. Seventy percent or more of the survey respondents rated staff morale, working relationships with co-workers, access to superiors, and communication as "Good," the highest possible rating for this question. Three items relating to office resources received the least favorable rating -- office space, availability of resources to do your job, and clerical support -- received overall "Good" ratings of 32%, 50%, and 32%, respectively.

Table 5

"Please rate the following aspects of the project operation as good, fair, or poor" (Percent responding "Good")			
Aspect of Project Operation	DOL	DOB	Total
Access to Superiors	10 (100%) (n=10)	15 (88%) (n=17)	25 (93%) (n=27)
Working Relationships with Co-workers	11 (100%) (n=11)	12 (71%) (n=17)	23 (82%) (n=28)
Communication	8 (73%) (n=11)	13 (76%) (n=17)	21 (75%) (n=28)
Staff Morale	7 (70%) (n=10)	12 (71%) (n=17)	19 (70%) (n=27)
Availability of Resources to Do Your Job	3 (27%) (n=11)	11 (65%) (n=17)	14 (50%) (n=28)
Office Space	7 (70%) (n=10)	2 (11%) (n=18)	9 (32%) (n=28)
Clerical Support	8 (73%) (n=11)	1 (06%) (n=17)	9 (32%) (n=28)

Analyzing Cooperation and Success

Apart from the outcome evaluation presented below, the process evaluation addressed three key issues relating to project success -- cooperation across the participating agencies, success at achieving stated

objectives, and success at achieving project goals. This section reviews responses for questions relating to these three issues.

Cooperation:

In addition to the observations made by the research team during field visits, interview respondents were asked the following four questions directly related to the issue of cooperation:

In your job, do you work regularly with people from other agencies?

Following is a list of agencies involved in some way with the Anti-Gang and Drug House Initiative. Please tell me, for each agency or department that I mention, whether your work brings you into contact with it frequently, occasionally, hardly ever, or never [The interview read the names of 16 different agencies, or units within agencies].

Is there an agency or unit I did not mention that you have contact with on your job?

What is it, or are there more than one?

97 percent (28 of the 29 respondents) indicated that they work regularly with people from other agencies, with one respondent from DOB answering "No" to this question. Table 6 summarizes the responses to the second question regarding the frequency with which respondents came into contact with 16 different agencies or units.

Table 6

"Please tell me, for each agency or department that I mention, whether your work brings you into contact with it frequently, occasionally, hardly ever, or never" (Percent responding "Frequently")			
Agency/Unit	DOL	DOB	Total

DOB Inspectors	10 (91%) (n=11)	15 (100%) (n=15)	25 (96%) (n=26)
CPD Gang Tactical Units	7 (64%) (n=11)	13 (72%) (n=18)	20 (69%) (n=29)
DOL MDGE Assistant Corporation Counsel	9 (100%) (n=9)	8 (44%) (n=18)	17 (63%) (n=27)
Fire Department Inspectors	3 (27%) (n=11)	15 (83%) (n=18)	18 (62%) (n=29)
CPD District Personnel	9 (82%) (n=11)	6 (35%) (n=17)	15 (54%) (n=28)
DOL Central Prosecution Unit	10 (91%) (n=11)	4 (27%) (n=15)	14 (54%) (n=26)
Department of Health Inspectors	1 (09%) (n=11)	13 (72%) (n=18)	14 (48%) (n=29)
Code Enforcement Bureau	6 (55%) (n=11)	7 (41%) (n=17)	13 (46%) (n=28)
CPD Criminal Housing Task Force	7 (70%) (n=10)	3 (25%) (n=12)	10 (45%) (n=22)
Court Advocacy Program	8 (80%) (n=10)	1 (07%) (n=14)	9 (38%) (n=24)
Cook County, Other Court	5 (50%) (n=10)	4 (25%) (n=16)	9 (35%) (n=26)
CPD Beat Officers	8 (73%) (n=11)	1 (06%) (n=17)	9 (32%) (n=28)
CPD Gang Investigation Section	2 (18%) (n=11)	4 (29%) (n=14)	6 (24%) (n=25)
Cook County Criminal Court	3 (27%) (n=11)	1 (06%) (n=17)	4 (14%) (n=28)
Cook County Chancery Court	2 (18%) (n=11)	1 (06%) (n=17)	3 (11%) (n=28)
Department of Revenue Inspectors	1 (09%) (n=11)	1 (06%) (n=17)	2 (07%) (n=28)

When asked if there were other agencies a respondent has contact with on the job, 52 percent (n=15) said "Yes."

Following is a list of agencies mentioned in response to this question:

- Health and Human Services
- Department of Children and Family Services
- Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms (ATF)
- CPD Neighborhood Relations
- Mayor's License Commission
- CAPS
- Alderman's Office
- Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority
- Illinois State Police
- Streets and Sanitation
- Gas Company
- Cook County Recorders Office
- Illinois Secretary of State
- State's Attorneys Office

Success at Achieving Objectives

Based on the inspection and enforcement process described earlier in this report, respondents were asked to rate the success of MDGE on nine distinct operations, such as identifying gang and drug involved properties, collecting information on targeted properties, and working with tenants and landlords. Table 7 below summarizes the responses to these questions.

Table 7

Success at Achieving Objectives (Percent responding "Very Successful")

MDGE Objective	DOL	DOB	Total
Visiting the targeted properties and making inspections	6 (55%) (n=11)	15 (88%) (n=17)	21 (75%) (n=28)
Identifying gang and drug involved properties for target cases	8 (73%) (n=11)	12 (67%) (n=18)	20 (69%) (n=29)
Collecting information on targeted properties to make cases	8 (73%) (n=11)	11 (65%) (n=17)	19 (68%) (n=28)
Following up on cases in the abatement process	7 (64%) (n=11)	7 (50%) (n=14)	14 (56%) (n=25)
Working with tenants	5 (56%) (n= 9)	7 (47%) (n=15)	12 (50%) (n=24)
Referring cases and information to the Department of Law	4 (36%) (n=11)	7 (58%) (n=12)	11 (48%) (n=23)
Working with landlords	8 (73%) (n=11)	5 (31%) (n=16)	13 (48%) (n=27)
Following up on cases that need additional work	3 (27%) (n=11)	10 (63%) (n=16)	13 (46%) (n=28)
Keeping crime away from targeted properties	4 (50%) (n= 8)	3 (25%) (n=12)	7 (35%) (n=20)

More than half of the respondents felt that MDGE was very successful at five of the nine objectives stated in this item -- identifying properties, making inspections, collecting information on properties, following up on cases in the abatement process, and working with tenants. Nearly half felt the project was very successful at referring cases to DOL, following up on cases needing additional work, and working with landlords. Keeping crime away from targeted properties was the one objective that fewer than 40 percent of respondents felt the project was very successful at, though this would be the objective they would least likely have detailed knowledge about. In addition, DOB and DOL respondents exhibited more disparity on this item than on any of the other eight included under this question.

When the two positive response items to this set of questions, "Very Successful" and "Somewhat Successful," are considered together, the percentage of respondents giving an overall response to this item increases considerably, as the chart below shows.

Combining responses of "Very Successful" and "Somewhat Successful" shows that respondents felt overwhelmingly that the MDGE project succeeded in achieving its objectives, with minor disparities between respondents from DOB and DOL. The lowest success ratings were recorded in relation to the "keeping crime away" item (for DOB respondents), and following up on cases in the abatement process (for both DOB and DOL respondents), though 80% of respondents indicated feeling the project was successful in this area (Figure 5)

Figure 5

Opinions about success at achieving objectives

Responses to general questions:

Interview respondents were also asked to indicate their feelings about working with the project by responding "Strongly Disagree," "Disagree," "No Opinion," "Agree," or "Strongly Agree" to a series of nine statements about working with MDGE. Table 8 below reviews the responses to these statements.

Table 8

Views About Working with MDGE (Percent responding "Strongly Agree")*			
Statement	DOL	DOB	Total
<i>I can't wait until this project is over with.*</i>	11 (100%) (n=11)	13 (72%) (n=18)	24 (83%) (n=29)
<i>The city can be proud of the work this project is doing</i>	9 (82%) (n=11)	12 (67%) (n=18)	21 (81%) (n=29)
<i>I am glad I am working with the Anti-Gang and Drug House Initiative</i>	10 (91%) (n=11)	13 (72%) (n=18)	23 (79%) (n=29)
<i>It doesn't matter what the pilot program does -- we can't change the gang and drug problem on the streets.*</i>	10 (91%) (n=11)	11 (65%) (n=17)	21 (75%) (n=28)

<i>Cooperation between my unit and the Chicago Police Department on task force cases is about as good as can be expected.</i>	6 (36%) (n=10)	8 (58%) (n=17)	14 (48%) (n=27)
<i>It seems that the amount of cooperation you get on cases depends on which part of the city you are working in.*</i>	3 (38%) (n= 8)	6 (40%) (n=15)	9 (39%) (n=23)
<i>Cooperation between my unit and other units and agencies (besides those mentioned already) on Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative cases is about as good as can be expected.</i>	4 (40%) (n=10)	6 (38%) (n=16)	10 (38%) (n=26)
<i>In general, cooperation is at an all time high with this project.</i>	4 (40%) (n=10)	6 (35%) (n=17)	10 (37%) (n=27)
<i>Cooperation between the Department of Buildings and Department of Law on pilot cases is about as good as can be expected.</i>	4 (36%) (n=11)	4 (29%) (n=14)	8 (32%) (n=25)
Note: The final three items in this series of statements were reversed in to reflect negative, rather than positive, statements about MDGE, to guard against patterned responses. For those items marked with an asterisk (), the values for the coded responses were reversed so that the percentages in the table reflect percentages of negative (Strongly Disagree) responses.			

Four of the nine items produced strongly positive responses from survey respondents (75% or more responding "Strongly Agree" to positive statements or "Strongly Disagree" to negative statements), those relating to pride, gladness, [not] wanting the project to be over, and feelings about being able to do something about the gang and drug problem on the street. Figure 6 shows responses to the same items when "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" (and the reverse coded "Strongly Disagree" and "Disagree" responses) are combined to produce a measure of generally positive responses.

When positive response options are combined for the nine statements, generally positive responses are evidenced by over 90 percent of all respondents for five statements, and by over 80 percent of all respondents for two others. The statement that received the lowest percentage of overall positive responses was the one suggesting that attention to cases may vary by geographic region of the city

Figure 6

Opinions about cooperation and working on the project

Summary of Process Evaluation Findings

Perhaps the most important finding regarding process and implementation is that Departments of Buildings, Law, and Police implemented the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative, and particularly the Strategic Inspections Task Force component of that program, as planned and with procedures and strategies consistent with the program's goals and objectives. In fact, the impact evaluation findings which address the outcome, or effectiveness, of the program, especially the logical link between the program and observed outcomes, hinge on the fact that the program was successfully implemented. The implementation of the program was not problem-free, and there were some deviations from the original plan. These deviations, though, were appropriate adjustments to the realities of field implementation rather than errors in implementation.

Additional process evaluation findings regarding program implementation include the following:

- Project staff understood the goals and objectives of the program, and the established procedures that formed the core of program operations -- the dwelling unit identification, inspection, and code enforcement processes.
- Project staff correctly identified key decision points in the dwelling unit identification, inspection, and code enforcement process, and the key actors in that process.
- When asked about problems and obstacles in the program implementation process, most obstacles mentioned concerned resource issues, not process issues, and not organizational relationship issues. Overall, over 75 percent of respondents to the personnel interviews (n=29) described the implementation process as "Mostly Smooth," or "Difficult in Expected Ways."
- Fifty-four percent (54%) of respondents stated that their daily tasks or activities had changed since they began working with the project, and 28 percent stated that they thought the goals and objectives of the project had changed. Regarding changes in daily tasks or activities, those

mentioned reflected purposeful adjustments to workloads and inspection procedures, not unplanned or unwelcome changes. Similarly, the changes mentioned in program goals and objectives reflected normal and expected adjustments given the nature of this program and the early stage of implementation.

- When asked to rate numerous aspects of working conditions on the project (such as access to superiors, working relationships, staff morale, and availability of resources), 70 percent or more of respondents rated key human and organizational relationship aspects of their work as "Good." Conversely, respondents rated the two resource-related items included in this question -- availability of resources, and office space -- as "Good," 50 percent and 32 percent respectively.
- When asked which of sixteen different groups project staff worked "frequently" with, more than 60 percent of respondents mentioned four: DOB inspectors, CPD Gang Tactical Units, DOL Assistant Corporation Counsels, and Fire Department Inspectors. Those mentioned at the lowest percentages (for working "frequently" with MDGE staff) included the Cook County Criminal Court, Cook County Chancery Court, and Department of Revenue Inspectors. These low percentages should be expected, since those units were not expected to be called upon to work with the task force.
- When asked about the success with which they thought the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative was achieving its objectives (e.g., identifying properties, inspecting properties, referring cases to DOL, the abatement process, working with landlords, keeping crime away), over 80% of respondents felt the project was "Very Successful" or "Successful" on eight of nine key objectives. The actual abatement process received the lowest overall rating (just under 80% of respondents rating the project as "Very Successful" or "Successful" in this area). The greatest difference between DOB and DOL respondents was found regarding the objective, "Keeping Crime Away [from inspected properties]." Approximately 75% of DOB respondents felt the project was successful in this area, whereas all of the DOL respondents felt that way.
- When given the opportunity to respond positively or negatively to nine statements regarding such issues as pride, project cooperation, and likelihood of project success, five of the nine statements received positive responses from 90% or more of respondents, and three more

received positive responses from 80% or more respondents. The item receiving the lowest percentage of positive responses concerned a perceived disparity in cooperation on inspection cases in different areas of the City (suggesting a possible variation in cooperation by region).

III. IMPACT EVALUATION

Part 1 of this chapter describes the questions, methodology, and data that were employed to measure the impact of the anti-gang and drug initiative. Part 2 addresses some important issues related to the design of the evaluation and the interpretation of impact results. The third part details the results of the analyses.

PART 1: Analysis Questions, Methodology, and Data

Question 1: Was there a decrease in criminal activity in and around pilot district buildings targeted by the MDGE Pilot Program?

The MDGE Pilot Program was a place-oriented, situational crime prevention measure that relied on the coordination of a multi-agency task force and city attorneys to control gang and narcotics-related activity at individual properties within selected police districts. The task force targeted individual multi-unit buildings based on reports of gang and narcotics-related crimes attributed to that location. Specifically, the anticipated crime control outcome of the program was a 20 percent reduction in gang and narcotics-related crime in and around targeted buildings (CPD Anti-Gang Initiative, 1996). Because of the programs address-oriented focus, measurement of the program's impact was designed to be address-based.

For the evaluation, a practical consideration involved determining whether the program achieved its stated objectives. To test the program's broader goal of crime reduction around targeted buildings, the impact evaluation operated under two basic assumptions. The first assumption relates to the nature of gang and narcotics-related crime, such as drug trafficking, and how those types of crimes occur geographically. While many crimes occur inside a building or at another part of the property, other crimes with connections to a particular building might not occur on the property's actual premises. For instance, while a targeted building might be the prime hangout of individuals involved in drug trafficking, a suspect of a narcotics sale might be arrested in the alley behind the property, in the vacant lot next door, or down the block from the source of the drug dealing or "drug house". It might be difficult, however, for an arresting officer to link the offense back to that particular drug house. It is likely that the offense would be assigned to the address closest to where the arrest was made, rather than where that offender lives or the place in which they conduct most of their business. Thus, by looking at drug trafficking encompassed by the geographic area surrounding suspected gang or drug houses, it is possible to capture incidents of crime close by that could possibly be linked to that gang or drug house. Failure to examine the geographic area surrounding targeted buildings might cause relevant crime patterns to be overlooked.

The second assumption is based on the potential effects of the program outside of areas that were not targeted by the intervention. The intent of the evaluation was not to measure a direct connection between an individual property and crime in the wider surrounding area but rather an attempt to measure the possible indirect connection a building unit has to crime. This evaluation addresses whether a building with crime problems acts as a magnet by attracting other crime to its immediate vicinity. Therefore it is anticipated that cleaning up buildings by imposing sanctions against property owners will not only have the intended effect of crime reduction in each particular location but also have a positive secondary effect of crime reduction in nearby areas. Many terms have been used to describe this phenomenon including the “multiplier effect” (Chaiken et al 1974), the “halo effect” (Scherdin, 1986), “spill over benefits” (Clarke, 1989) and “free rider effects” (Meithe, 1991). Clarke and Weisburd (1994) propose a standard definition of understanding these processes called “diffusion of benefits.” They define this term as “the spread of the beneficial influence of an intervention beyond the places which are directly targeted, the individuals who are subject of control, the crimes which are the focus of intervention or the periods in which an intervention is brought.”

Based on this practical and theoretical framework, the evaluation used four types of analyses to answer whether the program had its anticipated effect to reduce crime in and around targeted buildings. The first analysis looks at the impact of the program on targeted buildings. The next three analyses address whether the program produced a diffusion of benefits by measuring impact beyond targeted places, targeted crimes and targeted periods of time.

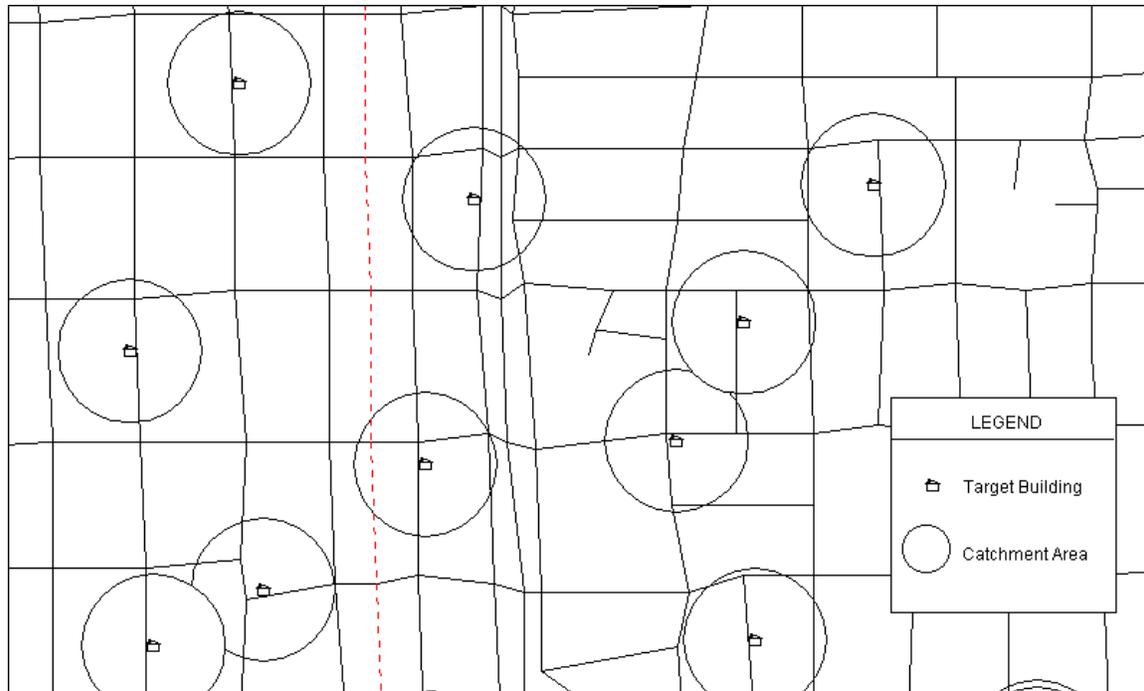
Measuring impact at targeted buildings. This involved a straightforward process of counting crimes occurring at targeted buildings for a specified time interval before the intervention of the program and comparing it to the number of crimes occurring for a similar time interval after the intervention.

Measuring impact beyond targeted places. To measure the program’s secondary effect on places not targeted by the intervention, a one-half block catchment area (330 feet) was drawn around each targeted location. The catchment area is a function of the abstractly defined circular area surrounding each building (Map 2). Similar to the analysis at targeted buildings described above, crime levels in catchment areas were compared before and after the intervention of the program. Although this catchment area size is somewhat arbitrary, it represents a compromise between making the catchment

area large enough to give the program a chance at success beyond a targeted building, but small enough that a link between the property and surrounding area could be reasonably assumed.

Map 2

One-half block catchment areas surrounding MDGE targeted buildings



Other fields have used this concept of a catchment area. Retail market analysis uses a catchment area or trade area to describe the spatial extent within which an individual retail outlet draws its customer base. Market analysts draw concentric rings of various radii or non-symmetrical contour lines around each location area to describe the primary, secondary and tertiary markets of the store. Theoretical models based on data of current store catchment areas can then be used to predict the likely catchment areas of new stores. *Add Archeology.....*

The catchment area concept also has been used in past nuisance abatement evaluations. Green (1995) defined a two-block catchment area around targeted sites for the evaluation of Oakland's Specialized Multi-Agency Response Team (SMART) program to measure the possible effects of spatial displacement or diffusion.

This analysis, therefore, borrows the use of this concept from other fields and a similar study and builds upon the use of a catchment area in measuring the effectiveness of situational crime control measures.

Measuring impact beyond targeted crimes. In addition to gang and narcotics activity, the evaluation addresses whether the program had any potentially positive residual effect on other more general types of crime. For that purpose, property and index crimes are used as secondary measures.

Measuring impact beyond targeted periods. Targeted addresses and catchment areas were examined at before and after time intervals -- crime changes were calculated by comparing crime levels for one year before the intervention began to crime levels for one year after the interventions.

Question 2: Was there a difference in crime levels in and around targeted buildings in the pilot district when they were compared to non-pilot district buildings?

Assessing the impact of additional corporation counsels in the field on the anti-drug and gang initiative required the development and implementation of an impact evaluation research design based on a comparison of operations in pilot program districts (police districts that have task force inspections with nuisance abatement enforcement by assistant corporation counsels) and comparison districts (police districts that have task force inspections without involvement of assistant corporation counsels).

It is important to note the way the real activities of the program affected the design of the impact evaluation. Ideally, a random sample of cases (targeted buildings) from each of the six pilot districts would have been used to assess the program's impact. These cases would then have been compared to a random sample of cases in untreated areas outside the pilot districts that would act as a comparison or control group. However, this was not feasible since three of the six pilot districts were fully inspected--"swept"¹⁶--before the implementation of the MDGE pilot program. Further, two additional districts were swept in late 1997 and early 1998, making inclusion of targeted buildings in those districts unfeasible because the inspections of those buildings were conducted outside the time-frame of the evaluation. These factors led to the exclusion of five of six pilot districts for consideration, leaving only targeted buildings in District 2 for inclusion to this study.

¹⁶ The initial stage of the MDGE operations involved the Strategic Inspection Task Force (SITF) inspecting a list of targeted buildings in each district. These were intensive operations that generally took between two and four months, depending on the number of buildings inspected in each district. Once each district was swept, the SITF would begin inspection operations in another district.

Essentially, the nature of the program dictated the design of the impact evaluation. As mentioned earlier in the report, the pilot program was supplemental to pre-existing task force operations so it had to fit into a pre-determined building inspection schedule that included all 25 police districts in Chicago. While it would have been helpful to the evaluation if the pilot program districts were initially inspected in early 1997, it would have been difficult to significantly modify the inspection schedule. These factors hindered the ability to select a random sample of cases and thus the ability to conduct a more rigorous experimental design.

A quasi-experiment was conducted using a non-equivalent control group design method.¹⁷ Applying this method to the MDGE program, reported criminal activity was compared at a group of targeted buildings in District 2 to reported criminal activity to a group of similar buildings in a comparison district before and after intervention of the program.

District 2 Study Area

Police District 2 is located on Chicago's South Side, beginning about four miles from the Loop. It is bordered by the Dan Ryan Expressway on the west, Cottage Grove Avenue on the east, 35th Street on the north and 60th Street on the south. It is one of the smallest police districts in both size and population. Most of its 67,683 residents are black, making it the most demographically homogeneous of all 25 police districts. Economically, most of its residents are poor with a significant portion of the population living in the Robert Taylor Homes, one of Chicago's largest public housing developments.¹⁸ In fact, large-scale housing structures are prevalent throughout the district as more than half of the district's buildings consist of 10 or more units.

Compared to other police districts, District 2 had more crime and building code violations. In 1996, the district had the highest violent index crime rates, and ranked in the top four for highest number of gang offenses, narcotics-related crimes and property index crimes and seventh for disorderly conduct offenses. In addition, the district ranked in the top 25 percent for both the highest rates of building code citations and building code court cases in 1991. These factors most likely contributed to the selection of the district for the MDGE program.

¹⁷ In this design a group of persons who are similar in composition to the group receiving the intervention is used as the control (or comparison) in both pretest and posttest observations (Royse and Thyer, 1996).

Selection of a Comparison District

One of the key issues in evaluating the success of the MDGE pilot program was determining the impact of the assistant corporation counsels. This impact was assessed by comparing pilot and non-pilot district operations with regards to the process involved and the impact. The selection of a comparison district, then, was an important first step in assessing this impact.

Using the best available data, districts with similar qualities were clustered (grouped) using data on crime, public disorder, population, demographics, and housing and land use information. Variables used for the cluster analysis were selected based on their availability by district and relevance to the evaluation. Crime and public disorder data included reported gang offenses and index offenses rates, disorderly conduct offenses and narcotics arrests. Population and demographic data included the percentage of the population ages 15 to 24 years, the percentage of black and Hispanic population, and variables related to education and income. Housing and land use data included variables related to vacant residential and commercial buildings, as well as the rates of building code citations and building code violation court cases.¹⁹

An initial cluster analysis was done for each of the following data types using the SPSS computer program: crime and public disorder data, population and demographic data, and housing and land use data using the SPSS computer program. A fourth cluster analysis was conducted combining the variables from the three data types. After the analysis was performed, the clustering was mapped for a graphical display of results.

After results of the cluster analysis were mapped, evaluation team members weeded out (eliminated, etc.) variables that were marginal or irrelevant for selecting comparison districts. For example, population and demographic variables were eliminated as they were not considered in selecting pilot districts.²⁰ Therefore, district-level data used for the final analysis was paired down to variables related to criminal activity, public disorder, and housing and land use characteristics:

¹⁸ Public housing was not targeted by MDGE because its policed by the Chicago Housing Authority.

¹⁹ All of the district-level population, demographic and housing and land use data for 1991 was provided to the Authority by Professor Wesley Skogan at Northwestern University. This data was previously used in selecting pilot districts for the Chicago Alternative Policing Strategy. The Chicago Police Department provided annual tabulations for the crime and public disorder data for 1996.

²⁰ Based on information from MDGE program management.

1996 crime and public disorder data:

- number of reported gang offenses
- rate of narcotics arrests
- rate of disorderly conduct offenses

1991 housing and land use data:

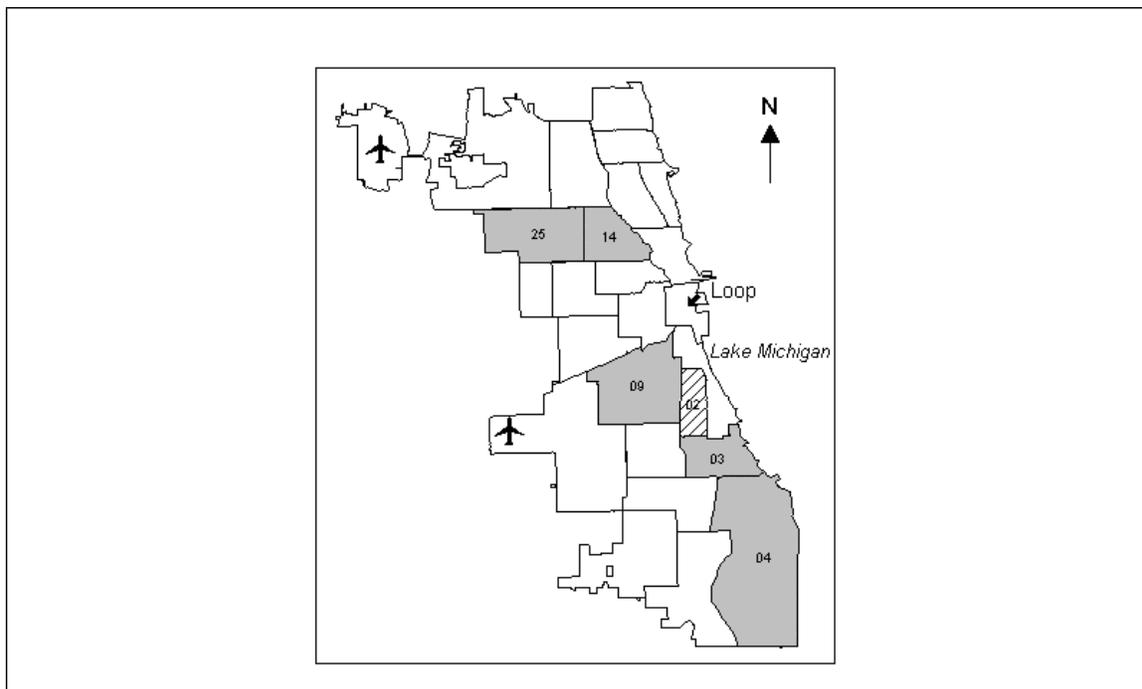
- rate of building code citations
- rate of building code court cases
- percentage of vacant housing units
- percentage of vacant commercial buildings
- percentage of commercial parcels

These variables also represented specific target objectives of the MDGE program and were deemed most important.

The final cluster analysis was also conducted using the Hierarchical Cluster Analysis routine in SPSS. The results showed that five districts 3, 4, 9, 14 and 25 closely matched District 2 (Map 3).

Map 3

Pilot District 2 shown with similarly matched police districts



While the clustering routine helped narrow the possible choices for a comparison district, an additional analysis was conducted to compare the rankings of each district based on the variables used for the first cluster analysis. Results of the rankings showed the District 25 was the most similar to District 2 based on crime data, District 9 and 14 were the most similar to District 2 according to housing and land use data, and the combined rankings show that District 9 was the most similar to District 2 overall (Table 9).

Table 9

Ranking of potential comparison districts
by crime and housing and land use variables

	Police Districts					
	2nd	3rd	4th	9th	14th	25th
Crime Data (1996)						
Number of gang offenses	5	8	3	7	6	4
Rate of narcotics arrests	4	9	13	10	14	8
Rate of disorderly conduct offenses	7	17	8	15	20	9
Average Rank	5	11	8	11	13	7
Housing & Land Use (1991)						
Number of building code citations	6	13	14	7	4	12
Number of building code court cases	5	12	14	4	9	11
Percent parcels vacant	2	8	12	10	14	21
Percent parcels commercial	14	17	21	11	8	15
Percent housing units vacant	1	5	12	14	9	22
Average Rank	6	11	15	9	9	16
Total Rank	5	11	11	10	11	12

The combination of two other factors contributed to District 9 being chosen as the comparison district. One contributing factor related to the fact that it was inspected completely in 1997, thereby giving it the most cases to select from for the evaluation time-frame (339 properties were inspected in 1997). District 3 and 25 were inspected in 1996, leaving only a handful of properties to look at in 1997. District 4 inspections straddled late 1997 and early 1998, leaving only 87 properties to examine for 1997. District 14 was the only district other than District 9 that potentially contained a sufficient number of cases with 147 buildings. A second contributing factor was the district's close proximity to District 2. It was preferred that a pilot district in the northern part of the city was compared to a non-pilot district in that same region--adjacent districts were most preferable.²¹ District 9 met this criteria. Therefore, based on the clustering routine, the comparing of ranks, the need to have a sufficient number of cases to analyze, geographic proximity and discussion between project principals and evaluation team members, District 9 was chosen as the comparison district for the impact evaluation.

Defining Intervention Period

Commencement of inspections at a building makes a visible statement that it is being targeted by the MDGE program. At the district level, the commencement of inspections activity generally takes place over two to four months, depending on the number of sites in each district. During this period, inspections are completed on targeted buildings in the pilot districts. Then, a case packet of information is forwarded to MDGE attorneys who proceed with enforcement of the nuisance abatement ordinance.

Specifically, in District 2, the initial inspection process occurred over a four-month period, from January to April 1997. This represented the district's intervention period. All criminal activity in the year preceding that period was classified as "before the intervention," and all criminal activity occurring in the year that followed was classified as "after the intervention." A similar four-month time span determined the intervention period for District 9. Specific dates for the intervention, as well as the before and after intervention periods for each district are defined below:

Pilot District 2

²¹ This was a decision agreed upon in a meeting with project principals.

Before intervention period (1 year): January 1, 1996 – December 31, 1996

Intervention period (4 months): January 1, 1997 – April 30, 1997 (Initial Inspection Period)

After intervention period (1 year): May 1, 1997 – April 30, 1997

Comparison District 9

Before intervention period (1 year): August 1, 1996

Intervention period (4 months): August 1 – November 30, 1997 (Initial Inspection Period)

After Intervention period (1 year): December 1, 1997 – November 30, 1998

Data Used to Measure Impact

The data used for the impact evaluation was obtained from three city sources. The Chicago Police Department (crime data), the Department of Buildings (data on inspected properties), and the Department of Law (data on buildings that were worked by assistant corporation counsels).

Crime data

This study examined Chicago Police Department crime data for the 2nd and 9th districts over the 28-month impact evaluation period for each district. Total reported incidents were examined for index crimes, gang offenses, narcotics activity, and disorderly conduct. These four indicators were addressed due to the primary and secondary crime reduction goals of the MDGE program. There were many attributes of each crime record but the street address where the crime occurred and the date of the crime were most pertinent to the evaluation. Since each crime record included the exact (reported) address of where the crime occurred, each crime could be counted at the building, catchment area and district levels.

Gang offense. Includes reported incidents. This analysis used the Chicago Police Department's definition of a gang-related offense. CPD determines whether an incident is gang-related based on the motive of the offender. The preponderance of evidence must indicate that the incident was propelled by

gang activity. Descriptors used to determine gang-relatedness include representing, recruitment, intimidation, turf violation, prestige, personal conflict, extortion, vice and retaliation.²²

Narcotics offense. Includes reported incidents. As defined in this report, narcotics offenses are an aggregate of all cases related to manufacturing, delivery, and possession of cannabis or a controlled substance.

Gang and narcotics offenses were used as the primary measures in the analysis because they were the types of crimes the nuisance abatement program intended to affect. Two points can be drawn from examining the data from 28-month impact evaluation periods. One, a significant majority of gang-related activity involved narcotics. In District 2, 82 percent of all gang offenses (2,194 of 2,662 records) were for possession, manufacturing or delivery of cannabis or a controlled substance. Similarly in District 9, 73 percent (1,675 of 2,304 records) were for the same activity. This suggests gang-related narcotics offenses would be a good indicator of the MDGE program's overall success at combating gang problems. Second, non-gang-related narcotics offenses accounted for about two-thirds of all incidents. In District 2, 65 percent of all narcotics offenses (4,019 of 6,213 records) were categorized as non-gang-related; in District 9, 69 percent (3,753 of 5,428) received that same categorization. This goes against a popular misconception that most narcotics crimes are committed by gang members. It also suggests the importance of a separate examination for gang and non-gang-related narcotics activity to determine if the program had any differential impact.

Secondary measures used in impact analysis were reported incidents of criminal damage to property offenses and index offenses. Index offenses were broken down by violent and property classifications. Violent index offenses include robbery, criminal sexual assault, homicide, and aggravated battery. Property index offenses include burglary, theft, arson, and motor vehicle theft.

Inspection data

²² For detailed descriptions of each descriptor see *Streets Gangs and Crime: Patterns and Trends in Chicago*. 1996. Block, et. al.

The Department of Buildings supplied information on each property inspected by the SITF in police districts 2 and 9. Variables included in this database were the property address and police beat location, date of initial inspection, date of any re-inspections and a case identification number.

The study draws upon the number of places that were inspected during 1997. In District 2, an initial inspection was conducted on 221 buildings between January and April (the intervention period). In District 9, 339 properties were initially inspected between August and November, 1997. Because of the focus of the MDGE program on multi-unit dwellings, most of the buildings inspected were residential, but other types of properties that were inspected included commercial establishments such as retail stores, taverns, gas stations and auto repair shops, and garages. Half of the buildings in District 2 (51 percent, n=113) were situated on arterial streets (major thoroughfares), the other half (49 percent, n=108) were located on non-arterial streets (feeder streets to major arteries). In District 9, 44 percent (n=149) of buildings were located on arterial streets while 56 percent (n=190) were situated on non-arterial streets.

Case data

The Department of Law supplied information on the cases targeted by the MDGE pilot program for the first 16 months of the program, from November 1996 to February 1998. The information collected on each case included the following: case identification number; property location (such as the address, police beat, and district); dates of inspection and subsequent re-inspection; date when case packet was received from the Department of Buildings; date the work was assigned to an attorney; date a Notice of Violation was sent to a property owner; and date of a resolution meeting. Finally, the case management file provided information on the case origin (whether it was from the task force, a city attorney, or another source), the basis for the case against a property, and the status of the case.

Types of cases targeted. In District 2, 109 cases were reviewed by MDGE program attorneys. Nine out of 10 buildings were targeted for building code violations (91 percent, n=99); four of every five buildings were targeted on the basis of narcotics activity (82 percent, n=89); and seven out of 10 cases (72 percent, n=78) were targeted for code violations and narcotics activity.²³ Only two buildings were

²³ These are not mutually exclusive categories.

targeted for other reasons such as prostitution, criminal trespassing, and other activity related to disorder.

Actions taken by MDGE. Three out of every four cases reviewed by assistant corporation counsels were either rejected or pending when building sites for the study were selected, 38 percent (n=41) and 39 percent (n=43), respectively. Nuisance abatement actions were taken on 19 percent (n=21) of cases. The remaining five percent (n=5) were closed for other reasons. In 16 of 21 cases in which nuisance abatement actions were taken, Notice of Violations (NOVs) were sent to property owners. Nuisance letters were sent in the other five cases.

At the time of this study, eight of the 16 NOV cases had either reached full voluntary compliance or voluntary compliance was in progress. In the remaining eight cases, compliance was pending. Of the cases that reached full compliance, in addition to other abatement remedies, four property owners were instructed to attend Landlord Training School.

Final Cases used in Impact Analysis

The first step in selecting targeted buildings to be used in the study was to exclude properties that were located on arterial streets, due to the nature of the properties targeted on those type of thoroughfares. The inspections task force divided itself into two teams -- arterial teams and narcotics teams. Arterial teams inspected buildings on major thoroughfares while narcotics teams inspected buildings on non-arterial streets. Through field observations, the evaluation team was reasonably assured that most buildings inspected by narcotics teams were non-owner occupied, multi-unit, residential dwellings targeted by the program. However, the same could not be assumed for buildings inspected by arterial teams. It was likely that arterial streets did contain similar buildings as well. But it was just as likely that they contained non-residential establishments, such as retail stores, taverns, gas stations and garages. To avoid having to ferret out this distinction, we excluded the arterial buildings altogether.

Eliminating buildings on arterial streets produced 109 cases from an original population of 221 in District 2 and 142 cases from 339) in District 9.

The next step involved matching the properties inspected by the task force to cases worked by field attorneys in District 2. Any buildings initially inspected by the task force from January to April 1997 were paired with buildings in which work was initiated by field attorneys from January 1997 to February 1998. In this step, buildings from the study were excluded for three reasons: the case was rejected by field attorneys (n=41); an attorney had not initiated work on a case (n=9)²⁴; or it fell outside the time-frame of the study (n=5). This process produced a final case population of 54 buildings for the District 2 pilot area.

A selection process similar to the one previously described was followed for the District 9 comparison area. However, cases were included solely on the basis of building inspections being conducted by the task force. Because the purpose of the comparison study was to isolate the impact of field attorneys, above and beyond the impact of inspections. District 9 buildings in which program attorneys worked were excluded. Similar to District 2, buildings that fell outside the evaluation time-frame were excluded.

This process produced a final case population of 126 buildings for the comparison area, District 9. Then finally, to achieve a more comparable number of buildings to the pilot district, a random sample was taken from this population of buildings. The sampling procedure produced a final sample size of 67 buildings for the comparison district.

Mapping Analysis

Using a computerized mapping program (MapInfo, 1997), a geographic analysis of crime was conducted around the targeted buildings selected for the evaluation in the 54 buildings in District 2. Criminal activity was mapped²⁵ in a multi-layer analysis for the one-year before and after time periods by crime

²⁴ If an attorney had not been assigned to a case it was assumed that no work had been initiated.

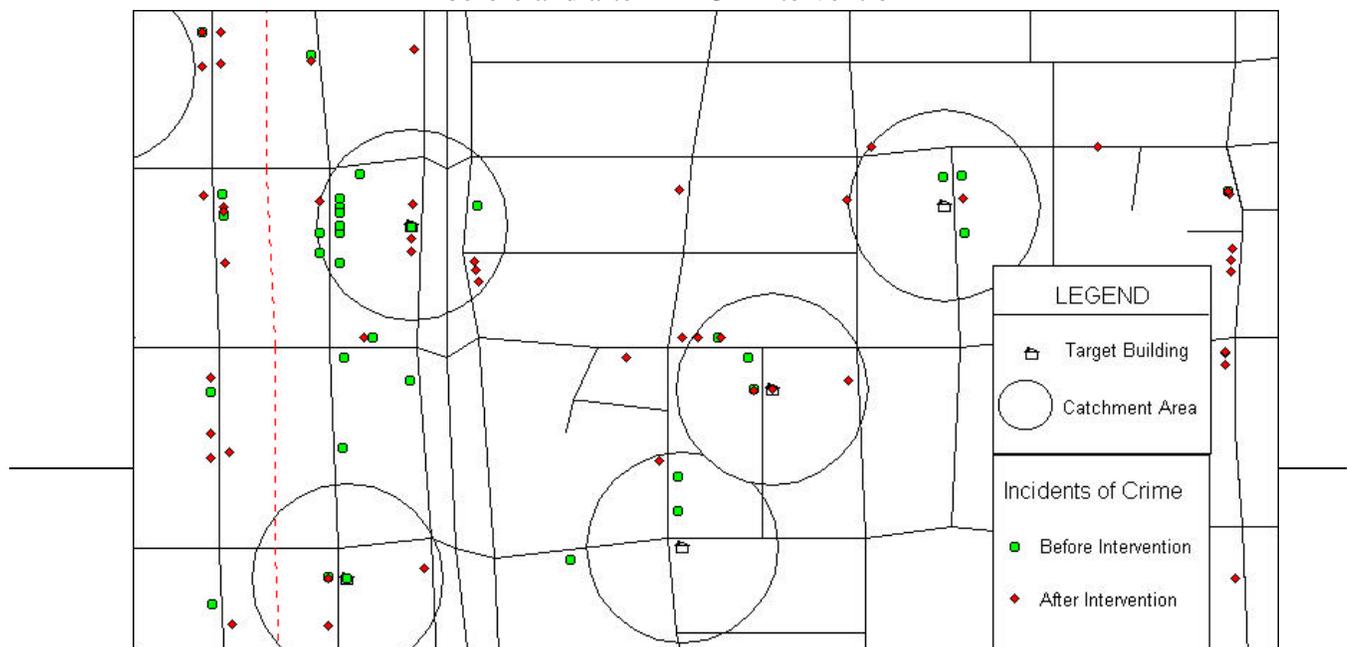
²⁵ The first step in the mapping process involves geocoding. Geocoding is the computerized mapping process of matching street addresses in an incident database to a mapping database containing an index of street names and addresses. When a successful match is made, the record is made "mappable" by giving it geographic coordinates, such as latitude and longitude. The geocoding of crime incidents for this evaluation proved successful in that it produced a 98 percent "hit rate". In other words, 98 percent of crime incidents in the original CPD data files were mapped. The small percent of incidents that were not used included cases in which an exact match to a specific address was not achieved. It was decided not to allow for the mapping program to assign these incidents to the nearest address thereby increasing the hit rate. The reason for this is that because the MDGE program was targeting very specific geographic locations, it was determined that this level of precision was not sufficient enough for those cases to be included in the analysis.

types. Data and maps were analyzed to determine if there was evidence of a reduced level of crime resulting from the program's activities at targeted buildings. An equivalent analysis was then conducted for comparison using the sample of targeted buildings in District 9.

The process used to conduct the analysis was equivalent for both districts with results calculated at two mutually exclusive, geographic levels: individual building; catchment area; and the remainder of the district. For each geographic level, calculations of change involved comparing the counts of crime incidents occurring at before and after time intervals ($(\text{after period} - \text{before period}) / \text{before period} = \% \text{ change}$) (Map 4). Calculations that produced a positive number represented an increase in crime; a negative value represented a decrease.

Map 4

Incidents of crime in and around buildings and catchment areas before and after MDGE intervention



Data produced from the mapping analysis was then analyzed in a variety of ways to measure the impact of the two types of treatments before and after intervention occurred. First, aggregate level comparisons before and after intervention examined the overall change in crime levels at targeted buildings and catchment areas, and in the remainder of the district. Secondly, the individual level effects of the intervention were revealed by examining crime changes at each specific property and catchment area. In this analysis, if there was evidence of a decrease in crime after the intervention then it could be said that the building or catchment area was improved as a result of the intervention. Conversely, if crime increased then it could be said that the building or catchment area grew worse despite the activities of the intervention. Lastly, mapping results at the catchment area level were analyzed temporally by examining longitudinal patterns of change in each district for the relevant 28-month study periods.

Conducting this type of mapping analysis presented a methodological problem related to the measurement of crime levels in catchment areas. Upon mapping the buildings and their standardized catchment areas of one-half block (330 feet), it became apparent that some catchment areas overlapped due to their proximity. In such cases, a decision must be made regarding whether or how to count the incidents that appear in two (or more) catchment areas (Green 1995). At the aggregate level, this did not pose a problem for this research since duplicate cases were eliminated from the analysis. Essentially, it is irrelevant in which catchment area a crime event occurred at the aggregate level as long as the incident is counted only once. However, at the individual building analysis level a decision must be made regarding how to count duplicate cases. One option was to count each incident multiple times, depending on the number of overlapping areas, thereby inflating the results. A second option was to exclude each multiple incident from the analysis altogether, thereby undercounting the totals. A third possible option was to randomly assign an incident to a particular catchment area. In this analysis, because the number of duplicates was not too large, it was determined the multiple counting of incidents would not present a significant problem in interpreting the results.²⁶

PART 2: Design and Interpretation Issues

²⁶ Of the 6,519 cases found in catchment areas, 22 percent (1,431) were duplicate cases.

Setting up the Quasi-experiment

Typically, a quasi-experimental study compares treated areas to un-treated areas. In this study, it should be noted that both districts were treated, but to differing degrees. The District 2 pilot area was treated with full MDGE program operations (work of the inspections task force plus work from assistant corporation counsel field attorneys). The District 9 comparison area was treated with only one (work from the inspections task force.)

Keep in mind that the inspections task force predated the MDGE pilot program by only a few months. The task force was created to coordinate and enhance the current activities of various city inspectors who, before the task force was formed, worked relatively independently of each other. Essentially, the creation of the task force was just the beginning of a collaboration by city attorneys as well, culminating in the MDGE pilot program

The design of the comparison study was selected to accommodate the request of program management staff who wanted to measure both the impact of the singular effects of task force operations and the combined effects of the operations of the task force and city attorneys. Also, this tact was chosen because it would have been difficult to find areas that were untouched by the Strategic Inspections Task Force for the extended time-frame required for the impact evaluation (28 months). In fact, buildings in all 25 police districts were inspected by the end of the first 20 months of the MDGE program, with similar types of districts inspected even sooner.

When examining the results of this study it is important to realize that they are based on the differential impact of a more stringent intervention experienced in the District 2 pilot area and a less stringent intervention experienced in the District 9 comparison area.

Selection of a Comparison District

The selection of a comparison district was influenced by both statistical and practical concerns. The evaluators attempted to match pilot to comparison districts based on variables relating to the way buildings are selected for inspection that were of concern to the MDGE program, and were likely to produce matches based on crime and housing variables. As with any statistical procedure, this selection

was limited by the accuracy of the data used in the cluster analysis. Since every inspection decision is not made “by the numbers,” it may have injected a measure of artificiality into the decision-making. The true accuracy of housing and crime data is not generally known, but they are known to vary over time, by type of crime, and in other ways. It can be certain that some inaccuracy was inherited in the analyses. Still, the cluster analyses and district match-ups made sense given what the evaluators know about Chicago neighborhoods.

Comparison District Contamination Effects

Due to the proximity of the adjacent pilot and comparison districts some contamination was experienced in the comparison district caused by the spillover of casework done by MDGE attorneys in that district. Field attorneys worked cases in District 9 without specifically being assigned to that jurisdiction.

The contamination can be partially attributed to the visibility of the program to nearby communities. Police personnel, alderman, community members, and others in nearby areas became aware of MDGE operations and made requests to have buildings inspected that they perceived to have serious crime or blight problems. One field attorney working in the South Side pilot districts, said he would not turn down a request to investigate a building from a nearby area simply to remain in the confines of his jurisdiction. If the problem was serious enough, he would look into it, or least forward the case to a program attorney working downtown.²⁷ To some extent, this occurred in non-pilot districts in other parts of the city as well.

In District 9, MDGE program attorneys reviewed 46 cases. Contamination was substantially reduced by excluding these cases from the analysis -- the street addresses of these 46 cases were cross-referenced with the street addresses of buildings inspected in the district with matching cases excluded. While the comparison district was not entirely “clean”, the limited exposure of the program represented by this number of cases was not considered a serious problem for interpretation of impact evaluation results.

Using Official Police Data

²⁷ Based on a discussion with a field attorney in District 2.

This study recognizes the potential limitations of using officially recorded police data such as the arrest and reported incidents statistics used in this report. Variations in arrest totals could be a function of changes in enforcement policies. Further, reported incidents are not the same as founded incidents and the gap between the two can disguise deceptive recording practices, such as police acting to avoid unpleasant or unproductive work, forestalling complaints about their behavior, or responding to pressure from supervisors to keep the crime count down (Skogan, 1999). That being said, there is no reason to believe that these potential variances in reporting were present in the MDGE program. Much information about the evaluation design methodology would have been needed by law enforcement personnel to affect the results, such as the selection of buildings used in the pilot and comparison districts, and crime categories examined, time frames for the before and after periods for each district. Due to the informal crime control nature of the program, the police personnel were minor participants in MDGE. Therefore it is doubtful that this information was well known to most beat officers, gang tactical officers or police management in the evaluated areas. Moreover, even if it could be argued that decreases in arrests were a function of enforcement patterns at individual MDGE buildings, there is no reason to believe that enforcement patterns were altered in the catchment area surrounding each building.

Crime Displacement

Crime displacement can take various forms: temporal displacement occurs when a criminal substitutes another time of the day, week, or season to victimize the same site or area; tactical displacement occurs when the criminal substitutes a different *modus operandi*; target displacement occurs when the criminal searches for an easier target in the same area; displacement by type of crime occurs when the criminal substitutes a type of crime not affected by the mechanical tactics of the community; and spatial displacement occurs when the criminal searches for a new area or region to operate in (Hakim and Rengert, 1981)

It is realistic to suspect that some displacement of crime occurred as a result of the MDGE intervention. Due to the nature of narcotics crimes, the greatest threat to the validity of results was the threat of spatial displacement. For example, there was a threat that narcotics traffickers who are evicted from their place

of residence moved their trafficking operations to another location. It is unlikely that every abatement acted as a deterrent or discouragement to offenders. Some might have been deterred for a short period of time until they found another locations to conduct their operations. Also, due to the more formal nature of gangs, this might be truer for gang-related narcotics offenses. If a gang-controlled drug house is abated, that market of drug buyers might be supplanted to another nearby gang-controlled drug house. In other words, traffickers at other gang hangouts would pick up the slack created by the enforcement activities occurring at a MDGE location.

It was not the intent of the evaluation to strictly measure spatial displacement. To analyze crime displacement effectively, data on the movement patterns of criminals who change their locations is necessary (Hakim and Rengert, 1981). This evaluation used incident-level data, not offender-level data, meaning it was not possible to track offenders from one location to another. Therefore, this evaluation did not attempt to determine whether or not displacement occurred. The most that could be said based on the types of analyses conducted was that evidence of possible displacement was found, particularly from a building to its catchment area and to other parts of the district. However, based on the types of data used, this was concluded with a low degree of confidence.

PART 3: Impact Analysis Results

The first stage of the analysis presents the results of an in-depth examination of the MDGE program's impact at targeted buildings in District 2. It presents the aggregate-level impact of the intervention for gang and narcotics offenses in targeted buildings and catchment areas for gang and narcotics offenses, and on other crime activities not targeted by the program, such as criminal damage to property and index offenses. Finally, to measure the individual effects of the program, a statistical analysis was conducted to determine whether there was a correlation between a building and its catchment area related to crime changes. The second stage of the analysis presents the results of the quasi-experiment which compared buildings and catchment areas in District 2 that received more stringent treatment delivered by the MDGE program to the comparison group of buildings in District 9 which received less stringent or partial treatment.

Before the results of the analyses are presented, a review of crime data depicts the nature of narcotics offenses occurring at buildings and catchment areas during the year that led up to MDGE intervention. With respect to the 54 buildings used in this analysis, 26 percent of narcotics offenses were gang-related while the other 74 percent were not related to gangs; 81 percent of offenses involved narcotics possession and 19 percent involved narcotics trafficking (manufacturing or delivery). Similar statistics were seen in catchment areas, where 28 percent of offenses were gang-related and 72 percent were not related to gangs. Also, 81 percent of catchment area narcotics crimes involved possession and 19 percent involved trafficking.²⁸ With respect to individual buildings, there were reports of at least one narcotics offense at 69 percent of them, while 31 percent lacked a single offense. In the 54 catchment areas, 94 percent (n=51) contained at least one narcotics offense. Lastly, the combined geographic area comprised by the buildings and catchment areas contained a higher geographic density of narcotics arrests than the remainder of the district. While the combined geographic area for the 54 buildings and catchment areas represented only 14 percent²⁹ of the whole district, it contained 20 percent of narcotics offenses. These results suggest that while there was evidence that narcotics offenses did not occur at every targeted building, the program was successful at identifying problematic locations.

Impact in Pilot District 2

When the mean number of narcotics offenses occurring at program buildings and in their catchment areas were examined, the data showed that the buildings and catchment areas contained fewer offenses after the intervention. Table 10 compares the total and mean number of offenses reported in the year before and the year after intervention occurred at pilot district sites and catchment areas and presents the percentage change from one year before to one year after.

Table 10

Total and mean* number of narcotics offenses for District 2 MDGE buildings and catchment areas** before and after intervention

²⁸ Gang offenses other than those that were narcotics related were excluded from the analysis due to the very low numbers of crime occurrences for the buildings and catchment areas used in this study.

²⁹ This figure was arrived at by multiplying the area of one catchment area by 54, subtracting the total area of overlap between catchment areas, and dividing by the total area of the district. One catchment area equaled 0.01214 square miles. The total area of District 2 is 3.744 square miles.

Narcotics Offenses					
	Before		After		Percent Change
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
Building	123	2.3	35	0.6	-72%
Area	410	7.6	284	5.3	-31%
Total	533		319		
*Mean represents N divided by the total number of sites (sites=54)					
**Categories are mutually exclusive					

As the table shows, there was a 72 percent decrease in offenses reported at MDGE buildings after the intervention. On average, offenses declined from 2.3 per site before the intervention to less than one offense after the intervention. In addition to the impact on targeted buildings there appears to have been a spillover effect in reducing offenses outside intended targets to the wider area surrounding each property. Examining crime occurring within one-half block catchment areas (330 feet) surrounding each site, the data shows that total drug offenses decreased by about one-third (-31 percent) after the intervention. On average, 7.6 offenses were made per catchment area before the intervention, and 5.3 offenses were reported after the intervention. While not indicated in the table, the data also show that the density of crime around targeted properties also declined substantially after the intervention. There were 613 crimes per square mile after MDGE intervention compared to 1025 before its implementation, a 40 percent reduction.

These results suggest that the work of city attorneys working with building inspectors and landlords was effective for buildings investigated in this study. Due to the nature of the program, this result was not entirely unexpected. Nuisance abatement at specific buildings tends to be effective. If a tenant is found to be trafficking or possessing narcotics, a landlord can take action to evict that tenant. A landlord then has an incentive to prevent criminal activity from occurring at his building, as he could face civil, or even criminal, prosecution. For landlords who are unaware of their rights, the Landlord Training Program provides them with information on their legal authority to screen out tenants with criminal backgrounds. These factors reduce the likelihood that criminal activity will re-appear at his building. The results also suggest a spatial diffusion of benefits from the work of the program to the surrounding area. Although the decline in offenses was more than twice as large at the property level, a 31 percent reduction in offenses in the catchment areas also was substantial.

Table 11 presents a breakdown of narcotics offenses by gang and non-gang categorizations to examine the differential change in narcotics offenses by crime type at buildings and catchment areas. The table shows there were significantly more non-gang narcotics offenses than gang-related narcotics offenses at both the property and catchment area levels. Also, it appears the program was more effective at reducing gang-related narcotics offenses than non-gang offenses, especially at the individual property level. Gang-related narcotics offenses dropped 88 percent while non-gang-related narcotics offenses decreased by 66 percent. However, due to the low numbers of gang-related narcotics offenses appearing at the building level and thus the limited interpretability from this data, this relationship is dubious. Thirdly, in the catchment areas, the decline in narcotics offenses was virtually equal across both categories representing no difference in impact at that level.

Table 11

District 2 MDGE buildings and catchment areas– percent change in narcotics by gang and non-gang offenses before and after intervention

Building			
	Before	After	% Change
Gang narcotics offenses	32	4	-88%
Non-gang narcotics offenses	91	31	-66%
Total	123	35	-72%

Catchment Area			
	Before	After	% Change
Gang narcotics offenses	116	79	-32%
Non-gang narcotics offenses	294	205	-30%
Total	410	284	-31%

A further examination shows the differential change for narcotics offenses by narcotics trafficking (manufacturing and delivery) and possession crimes. At individual buildings, the data show an eight percentage point difference in narcotics trafficking over possession, while in catchment areas the pattern was reversed as possession offenses decreased almost twice as much as narcotics trafficking (Table 12). In addition, there was a more precipitous drop in crime from the building to the catchment area for narcotics trafficking than possession offenses. The drop from the building to the catchment area in narcotics trafficking was 60 percentage points (78 minus 18) compared to 36 percentage points for possession offenses (70 minus 34). While it was not statistically tested, this result suggests a stronger connection between the building and catchment area in the reduction of possession offenses than

trafficking offenses. However, also due to the low numbers of trafficking offenses that appeared at the buildings, this relationship is dubious as well.

Table 12

District 2 MDGE buildings and catchment areas – percent change in narcotics trafficking and possession offenses before and after intervention

Building			
	Before	After	% Change
Narcotics trafficking offenses	23	5	-78%
Narcotics possession offenses	100	30	-70%
Total	123	35	-72%

Catchment Area			
	Before	After	% Change
Narcotics trafficking offenses	78	64	-18%
Narcotics possession offenses	332	220	-34%
Total	410	284	-31%

In addition to measuring the program’s impact on targeted crimes at buildings and catchment areas, the effect of the intervention on non-targeted crimes also was examined. In this analysis, criminal damage to property offenses were used as an indicator of the program’s impact on crimes related to public disorder. Index crimes were used as an indicator of the programs impact on more general types of crime. At targeted buildings, criminal damage to property offenses decreased by 20 percent and index crimes dereasedd by slightly more than 10 percent for both property and violent offenses. In catchment areas, crime levels remained relatively stable in all three categories (Table 13).

It is important to view the results of the analyses for narcotics and other offenses in the context of what is occurring in the rest of the district to determine whether the decreases found at buildings and catchment areas can be attributed to the MDGE intervention or are merely a reflection of the overall trend occurring in District 2. Table 14 shows percent changes for these crime categories for buildings, catchment areas, and the rest of the district.

Table 13

District 2 MDGE buildings and catchment areas – percent change for criminal damage to property and index offenses before and after intervention

Building			
	Before	After	% Change
Criminal damage to property offenses	55	44	-20%
Violent index offenses	150	133	-11%
Property index offenses	197	172	-13%

Catchment Area			
	Before	After	% Change
Criminal damage to property offenses	212	207	-2%
Violent index offenses	616	620	1%
Property index offenses	826	864	5%

The table clearly shows that the effected buildings and catchment areas are experiencing drastically different narcotics crime patterns compared to the rest of the district. Crime decreased significantly at the building and catchment areas while it went up in the rest of the district by 15 percent. A similar pattern was evident for criminal damage to property offenses. Those offenses also declined at building and catchment area levels, but show a 24 percent increase in the rest of the district. This suggests that the program had an impact on criminal damage to property crimes as well as narcotics offenses. While it was not studied in this analysis, it also seems to imply a relationship between narcotics and public disorder crimes and that improving drug buildings will have the positive residual effect of reducing incidents of damage to property in and around buildings. This pattern could indicate that individuals possibly a result of individuals who have been deterred from committing drug crimes, are also being deterred from committing disorder-related crimes as well, if indeed the crimes were committed by the same individuals. It also suggests that enforcement actions taken by the MDGE program, such as requiring landlords to correct building code violations, provide security, and to pay greater attention to the appearance of their buildings, might reduce criminal damage to property offenses in and around targeted buildings. Lastly, the data reports a modest decrease of violent and property index offenses at

the building level beyond what is occurring in the rest of the district. On the contrary, property and violent index offenses increased slightly in the catchment areas but dropped in the rest of the district.

Table 14

Percent change in crime at District 2 MDGE buildings and catchment areas compared to rest of district* before and after intervention

	Building	Area	Rest of District
Targeted Crimes			
Narcotics offenses	-72	-31	15
Other Crimes			
Criminal damage to property offenses	-20	-2	24
Violent index offenses	-11	1	-3
Property index offenses	-13	5	-4
*Categories are mutually exclusive.			

To reveal the individual effects of the intervention, changes in the number of narcotics offenses occurring at each of the targeted properties and catchment areas were measured. Table 15 presents a cross-tabulation of the targeted buildings and catchment areas that improved, worsened, or experienced no change when they are measured by the number of narcotics offenses that occurred before and after intervention. A building or catchment area is considered to have improved if fewer offenses in the area were reported after the intervention than before the intervention; it grew worse if more offenses were reported; and experienced no change if an equal number of offenses were reported.

Table 15

Number of MDGE buildings and catchment areas, by type of change in narcotics offenses

Catchment Areas	MDGE Buildings			Total
	Grew Worse	No Change	Improved	
Grew Worse	6	6	7	19
No Change	0	0	4	4
Improved	3	6	22	31
Total	9	12	33	54

Spearman's correlation =.37, p<.01

As the table shows, of the 54 properties targeted by the intervention slightly under two-thirds of the MDGE buildings improved (n=33; 61.1 percent), and nine grew worse (16.7 percent). By contrast, a similar percent of catchment areas improved (n=31; 57.4 percent) while the percent growing worse doubled (n=19; 35.2 percent). These results support the findings at the aggregate level and re-enforce that the intervention had a positive impact at targeted buildings and surrounding areas. However, it also shows that the program did not have a positive outcome in every case. In addition, the table shows the paired outcomes as a result of the intervention. In a paired outcome that shows a clear beneficial effect both the building and catchment area are improved (Green, 1995). The table reports shows that about 40 percent of the sites (n=22) demonstrated improvement at both the building and catchment area. Of the 12 sites that experienced no change in narcotics offenses, they improved or worsened at an equal rate (n=6, 11.1 percent). Seven buildings improved but grew worse in their catchment area. Roughly 11 percent of individual buildings and catchment areas (n=6) simultaneously grew worse as a result of the intervention.

Examining the statistical relationship between targeted buildings and catchment areas as they are measured by the changes in narcotics offenses shows a significant relationship between narcotics activity in an individual building and narcotics offenses in the building's surrounding area (Spearman's correlation = .37, $p < .01$). This relationship suggests that if an individual building is cleaned up, crime also will be reduced within the one-half block around each property. It also suggests that allowing drug trafficking and possession to exist unimpeded may have an adverse effect on the surrounding area.

While this finding is significant, it does not explain the entire variation between the two areas. More than one-third of the relationship between the building and catchment areas and narcotics crime reduction was explained by the data. That leaves almost two-thirds of the variation in narcotics offenses between the building and catchment areas to be explained by other factors. Also, this relationship is limited to a small area around the building. A study of a similar nuisance abatement program in Oakland, California found that the relationship between cleaning up a building targeted by the SMART program and its effect on a surrounding two-block area was statistically very strong ($r=.77$) (Green, 1995). It also is important to stress that the evaluation study of the MDGE program used a slightly different methodology and data than the methodology used in the evaluation of the SMART program.

Nonetheless, the results of this evaluation mirrors that study's results in that there is diffusion of benefits that occurs when drug houses are improved through nuisance abatement enforcement.

Comparison Study

Excluding the possible effects of spatial displacement, the MDGE program appears to have achieved its anticipated outcomes of crime reductions in and around targeted buildings in the pilot district. The question remains as to whether these results were any different to results at buildings and catchment areas in the comparison district. The differences might represent the relative effectiveness of city attorneys working in conjunction with the inspection task force (i.e., MDGE) compared to the singular effectiveness of the inspections task force operations. Changes in narcotics offenses were used as a measurement for the comparison study because they were the types of crime the MDGE program intended to effect. Also, based on the results of the pilot district analysis, the reduction in narcotics offenses was the most dramatic and significant.

Table 16 compares the mean average number of offenses reported in the year before and the year after intervention at District 9 buildings and shows the percentage of change during the study period. As the table shows, District 9 experienced declines in narcotics offenses for the evaluated buildings and catchment areas. Narcotics offenses declined 31 percent, from an average of 0.5 per building prior to the intervention to 0.4 following the intervention. In catchment areas, narcotics offenses declined by 21 percent, from an average of 8.7 offenses per catchment before the intervention to 6.9.

Table 16

Total and mean* number narcotics offenses for District 9 MDGE buildings and catchment areas** before and after intervention

Narcotics Offenses					
	Before		After		Percent Change
	N	Mean	N	Mean	
Building	36	0.5	25	0.4	-31%
Area	585	8.7	464	6.9	-21%
Total	621		489		
*Mean represents N divided by the total number of sites (sites=67)					
**Categories are mutually exclusive					

The percentage difference is somewhat misleading when interpreting the results for comparison buildings because changes from an already low number (36) to a somewhat lower number (25) will precipitate large decreases in percentage. Further, by looking at the mean average it can be seen that the buildings in the sample were relatively crime free as only one narcotics offense was reported for every two buildings. A closer examination of the data further indicates misleading results since only 23 percent of buildings (16 of 67) were the locations of reported narcotics offenses before the intervention began in District 9. In fact, one building alone skewed the results. It accounted for 36 percent of narcotics offenses before the intervention (n=13) and zero afterwards. If that building is excluded from the analysis, then the results show that narcotics offenses increased by nine percent rather than declined by the 31 percent indicated in the table. Therefore, because of the low numbers found at comparison buildings and the subsequent lack of interpretability this caused, results from analyses conducted at the building level were excluded from the comparison study.

More meaningful are the changes in narcotics offenses occurring in the catchment areas. In stark contrast to the buildings sample, the sample of catchment areas surrounding each building were hot spots for narcotics-related offenses. While comprising only five percent of the geographic area of District 9, they contained 35 percent of narcotics offenses.³⁰ Further, the mean number of narcotics offenses per catchment area before the intervention was comparable to the mean number found per catchment area in District 2, also found to be in high-density crime areas. The mean number of narcotics offenses per catchment area for District 9 was 8.7, while the mean number of offense per catchment area in District 2 was 7.6.

Table 17 presents District 9 narcotics offenses by gang and non-gang categorizations and a division by narcotics trafficking and possession offenses. For comparative purposes, it also shows what was reported for District 2 catchment areas. The table shows that in District 9 there were twice as many non-gang-related narcotics offenses as gang-related. Secondly, it appears that inspections operations are more effective at reducing offenses not tied to gangs than crimes related to gangs. In fact, it showed a minimal impact on gang offenses. In contrast, crime reduction was equally effective across both categories in District 2. Further the reduction in gang-related narcotics offenses was five times greater in District 2 than District 9. The data for District 9 show a moderately larger impact on trafficking offenses

³⁰ The geographic area encompassed by District 9 was 13.08 square miles.

than possession offenses. District 9 recorded a 10 percent greater impact on trafficking offenses than District 2 but 14 percent less impact on possession offenses.

Using aggregate level statistics, a comparison of changes in catchment areas show that there was a decrease in narcotics offenses resulting from both types of intervention but to differing degrees. There were reductions of 31 percent in pilot catchment areas and 21 percent in the comparison district catchment areas (Table 18). These results suggest that operations of the inspections task force alone appears to have had an impact reducing narcotics offenses. Also, it suggests that the MDGE program helped boost the reduction of narcotics offenses if enforcement measures, external factors, and the effects of spatial displacement were operating equally in both districts. These results imply a boost of 10 percent.

Table 17

District 9 catchment areas – percent change in gang and non-gang offenses and trafficking and possession offenses and a District 2 comparison

Catchment Area				
	Before	After	% Change	District 2
Gang narcotics offenses	187	176	-6%	-32%
Non-gang narcotics offenses	398	288	-28%	-30%
Total	585	464	-21%	-31%
	Before	After	% Change	District 2
Narcotics trafficking offenses	67	48	-28%	-18%
Narcotics possession offenses	518	416	-20%	-34%
Total	585	464	-21%	-31%

If the pattern of narcotics offenses are considered in the rest of the district (excluding catchments), it appears the boost from the MDGE program was even larger than 10 percent (Table 18). As the table shows, while narcotics offenses substantially declined in pilot district catchment areas, narcotics offenses rose by 15 percent in other areas of District 2. The absolute margin of difference between the catchment area and district total is 46 percent (31 + 15). On the other hand, the substantial decrease shown for comparison district catchment areas was in the context of modestly increasing narcotics offenses in the rest of District 9. The absolute margin of difference in the comparison district is 23 percent (21+ 2). If the margin of difference for the two districts are subtracted (46 minus 23), the

resulting total is 23 percent. This suggests a greater boost than the 10 percent reported earlier in the reduction of narcotic offenses attributed to the MDGE program compared to the inspections task force.

Table 18

Percent change in District 2 and 9 narcotics offenses for catchment areas and rest of district before and after intervention

Narcotics Offenses		
	Catchment Areas	Rest of District
District 2	-31%	15%
District 9	-21%	2%

Looking at aggregates provide a good summary of the data, but it can sometimes disguise the individual effects of these types of interventions. To get a handle on the individual effects of each intervention, calculations of change were made for narcotics offenses. Catchment areas were categorized as being improved, growing worse or experiencing no change, similar to the analysis done previously for District 2.

Table 19 shows two meaningful comparisons for the catchment areas—within and between district comparisons. Within-district comparisons show that in District 2, more than half of the catchment areas showed a decrease in narcotics offenses, whereas about one-third grew worse, or showed an increase. Calculating the difference between the two shows a success rate of 22 percent (57-35) -- success represents the difference between the percent improved and percent that grew worse. Similarly, the within-district comparison for District 9 shows a 15 percent success rate (49-34). Between-district comparisons show that the resulting difference in success rates between the two types of intervention was 7 percent. This indicates the combined efforts of city attorneys and the inspections task force provided a boost over the singular efforts of the inspections task force. For every 100 buildings improved through the inspections task force, theoretically, it could be expected that 107 would be improved by the operations of the MDGE program.³¹

Table 19

Percent of District 2 and 9 catchment areas, by type of change in narcotics offenses

Catchment Areas				
	Grew Worse	No Change ⁶⁹	Improved	n=*
District 2	35%	7%	57%	54
District 9	24%	16%	40%	67

³¹ Recall that the MDGE program included the placement of attorneys in the field.

Both the aggregate and individual comparisons suggest that the MDGE program was more effective than inspections task force operations alone at reducing narcotics offenses in one-half block areas surrounding targeted buildings. According to the data, narcotics crime was reduced in 7 percent more catchment areas; by between 10 and 23 percent overall.

Lastly, a longitudinal analysis of crime over the 28-month evaluation periods for each district shows the differing impacts of the interventions in each district. Figures 7 and 8 show two temporal patterns for each district -- the fluctuations in the number of narcotics offenses by month and regression (trend) lines. Using all the data points for one year a regression line was calculated for the year prior to the intervention. A second regression was calculated for the year following the start of intervention. For this analysis, the data for buildings and catchment areas were combined to measure the complete effect of each intervention.

Figure 7 illustrates a slight downward trend in narcotics offenses before the inspections task force began operation in District 9. At the start of the intervention (August 1997), while beginning at relatively the same level as August 1996, the downward trend became steeper, indicating a lower average number of narcotics offenses per month after the intervention compared to the prior year. This suggests that the inspections task force improved upon a pre-existing downward momentum. In District 2, narcotics offenses were on the rise the year prior to intervention (Figure 8). Narcotics offenses were reduced and remained at relatively low levels after the intervention began. In fact, monthly totals were lower for every month after the intervention. The MDGE program seemed to precipitate a directional change in narcotics crime trends for areas around targeted buildings in the pilot area. (Note: For full-page graphs, see Appendix IV.)

Figure 7

Comparison District 9 narcotics crime trend
(includes catchment areas and buildings)

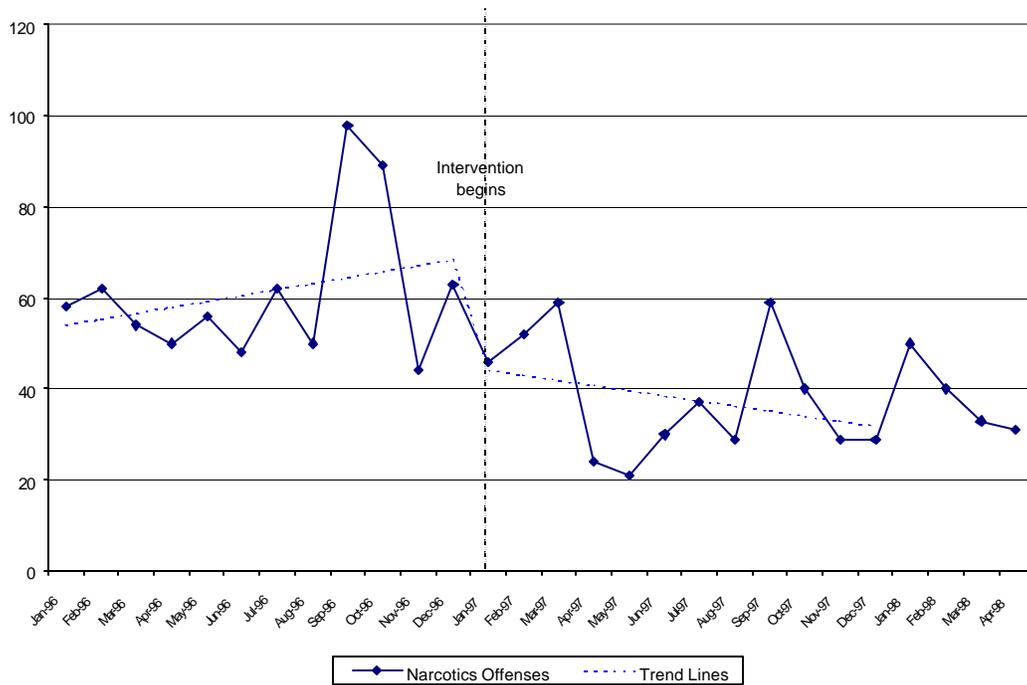
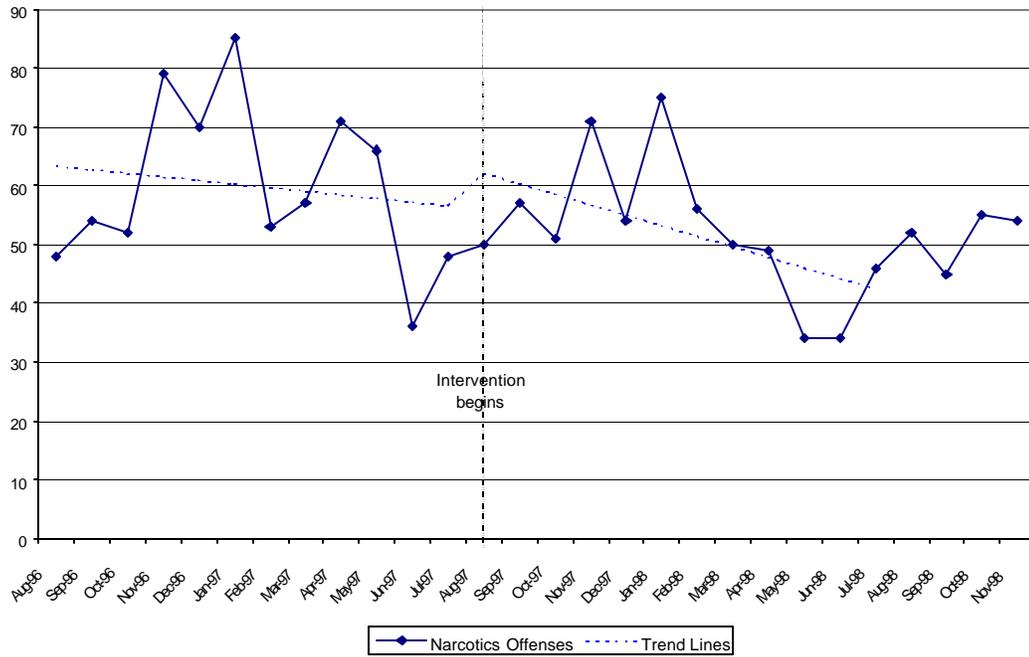


Figure 8

Pilot District 2 narcotics crime trend
 (includes catchment areas and buildings)



IV. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This evaluation project examined both process (implementation) and impact (outcome) issues regarding MDGE and SITF. While this approach entailed certain resource limitations, the evaluation team and lead agencies felt it crucial to the success of the project, and to the need for valuable information for decision-making, to include both implementation and outcome questions in the evaluation.

Studying project implementation without studying outcomes would produce good information for managers regarding such issues as resource allocation, roles and responsibilities, case processing, and coordination and cooperation, but would not address whether the program was improving the quality of life in neighborhoods. Conversely, studying impact without studying implementation would have prohibited the evaluators and lead agencies from making any link between program outcomes and project activities -- they would not, upon receiving positive impact findings, know whether the activities they funded contributed in any way to the observed outcomes.

This report describes positive process and impact evaluation findings, and thus allows the lead agencies to have confidence that SITF and MDGE operations contributed to the positive impact evaluation findings, even if there are some notable limitations to the research (see below).

To summarize, the process evaluation found that:

- The MDGE project was implemented as planned
- Sensible adjustments to program operations were made during implementation based on the field experience and what was being learned from the evaluation
- Most of the dissatisfaction expressed by program staff was related to resources, not to personnel, political, or systematic problems
- Project staff and leadership understood the SITF and MDGE process, and their roles as well as the roles of others
- Coordination and cooperation occurred in expected ways, and sufficiently often to support overall goals
- Most staff and leaders felt their work was productive and beneficial

The impact evaluation found that:

- SITF and MDGE had the intended impact at the targeted building level, and within catchment areas around the targeted buildings
- There may be some displacement occurring as a result of this program, but the research design did not address that issue specifically
- When comparing the pilot (District 2) and comparison (District 9) districts, there is evidence that the MDGE program (placing assistant city attorneys in the field, in the district offices) has an add-on benefit above and beyond the inspection/nuisance abatement program
- There is evidence that program effects are lasting; downturns in targeted crimes continued well after the inspection teams left the targeted areas

This report notes important limitations, such as resources available for evaluation research, available data, program operations that conflicted with evaluation plans, and the limited number of pilot and comparison districts. These limitations preclude any broad or sweeping statements about program impact and success -- it is not possible to generalize from one district to all districts, or from one sample of targeted properties to all other targeted properties.

It can be stated, however, that since the process evaluation concluded that program implementation was successful, and since the impact evaluation found evidence of program success, it is not unreasonable to make the logical connection between project implementation and positive outcomes. It would not be reasonable, however, to assume that replication of SITF and MDGE city-wide, over many years, would result in successful outcomes equal to those observed in the districts studied for this project. On-going, and more rigorous evaluation would be required to address those issues.

This report offers five recommendations for modifications to program procedures or concerning program resources. The basis for these recommendations lies primarily in the process evaluation, and stems from both the evaluation research and the on-going discussion between evaluators and MDGE staff during the course of this research project. These recommendations hinge on three key assumptions: (1) the Anti-Gang and Drug House Initiative (specifically the strategic inspections and nuisance abatement enforcement process) will continue for at least two more years, (2) it is likely that sufficient resources will be devoted to the improvements suggested, and (3) the City will continue with an

internalized program evaluation that incorporates some of the data and methods used in this research project.

Recommendation #1: Develop a Model Description of the Inspection and Abatement Process.

Explanation: One key element of an on-going project evaluation and assessment component is a standard against which to compare individuals, cases, or activities. At the outset of this project such a standard did not exist. Thus, while inspection and abatement cases included in this research were observed, described, and evaluated according to commonly accepted management and law enforcement principles, no standard existed against which to compare cases. In the future, a model case initiation, processing, and termination process should be developed, with input from all agencies involved; published and distributed; and utilized as an on-going (though not the only) assessment and evaluation tool. In essence, a "gold standard" case procedure should exist as an educational and evaluation tool for the project.

Recommendation #2: Revisit [and revise if necessary] Program Goals, Objectives, and Expectations.

Explanation: During the course of this research, project management made adjustments to the goals, objectives, and operating procedures of the dwelling unit inspection and abatement program. As this research was being reported orally to the key agencies involved, program changes were also underway or under consideration. In the wake of the first year's experience and the lessons learned from this evaluation, program leaders and managers should re-consider the overall assumptions, goals, objectives, plans, and operating procedures of the MDGE program, and make any reasonable adjustments to them, or to specific performance and outcome targets. This is not a recommendation for complete revision of the program, rather it is a recommendation to undertake a formal process of self-assessment and re-direction (if necessary) following the implementation and evaluation process.

Recommendation #3: Improve the Current Data Collection (case tracking) System.

Explanation: It was not until the latter stages of this research project that case-specific data on inspections, enforcement, and case outcomes were available for analysis. The data that were available came from an information system that is not based on current and easily accessible technology, and that

is not designed to share information across cooperating agencies. If the MDGE and SITF projects are to continue, they must be supported by a database with the following minimum capabilities and features:

- ▶ true database features such as editable, searchable, sortable fields;
- ▶ incorporate information of interest to the key agencies involved;
- ▶ ability to import/export data;
- ▶ ability to generate routine and special (ad hoc) summary and management reports such as: average case processing time (by individual, unit, region, and for different processing stages); rejection rates over time, across individuals, units, and regions; case outcomes by type and across individuals, units, and regions;
- ▶ ability to notify program staff about time-sensitive events (due dates, court appearances, etc.); and,
- ▶ ability to generate routine correspondence to staff, landlords, and cooperating agencies.

Such an information system would be of immense benefit as a management and evaluation tool. Should this recommendation be adopted, the development of this system should not be undertaken without the expected information systems planning, analysis, testing, training, and implementation processes. This could not be accomplished without commitment of adequate resources.

Recommendation #4: Maintain an On-going Internal Evaluation Program.

Explanation: Should this program continue, so should the evaluation. The City and program leadership should rely on this evaluation project as a basis for an on-going internal self-evaluation program that includes at a minimum the following:

- ▶ assessment of the nature and extent of cooperation, coordination, and working relationships between the key agencies involved,
- ▶ monitoring of progress toward [revised] goals and objectives, and
- ▶ assessment of program impact using the building-specific, catchment area, and other outcome measures found in this report.

In addition, consideration should be given to measuring the displacement phenomenon--whether reducing crime at one building increases it in other locations.

Recommendation #5: Initiate Review and Dialogue Regarding Evaluation Findings at the District Level.

Explanation: The findings of this evaluation project should be presented to and discussed with the individuals who contributed to it (administrative staff, interview respondents, staff who were observed during ride-alongs, etc.), and to other personnel at the regional, district, or beat level who play key roles in the implementation and success of the program. Their reactions and suggestions will either validate these reported findings and recommendations (thus making them stronger and more meaningful), or indicate instances in which the reported observations are inaccurate or off-the-mark (and, thus, requiring revision or additional research). If program evaluation activities continue into the future, evaluation findings should be presented periodically to these groups, for the same reasons -- as a check on their validity and to inform field practices.

APPENDIX III: MDGE Staff Survey Instrument

ILLINOIS CRIMINAL JUSTICE INFORMATION AUTHORITY

Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative

Interview Form

***** **FINAL DRAFT** *****

INTRODUCTION

Good (morning/afternoon). My name is _____ and I am here to conduct an interview with you about the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative which you are a member of (or have some connection with). I am part of an evaluation team from the Illinois Criminal Justice Information Authority, and we are working with the police department, Department of Buildings, and Department of Law on an evaluation project relating to the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative. The purpose of our project is to study how the task force operates, the level of cooperation among different participants, and how effective it seems to be at reducing drug and gang activity around delinquent properties at certain targeted addresses.

This interview will take about 40 minutes, and I will ask you about your job and your role in (association with) the task force, how you feel about certain issues regarding cooperation, successes, problem resolution, and effectiveness.

Your responses will be kept confidential and we will not mention you by name, rank, or title in our report unless you give us permission to.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

Yes 1 *GO TO A8.*
No 2 *SKIP TO PART B.*

A8. **Please tell me what positions you have held with the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative.**

A9. **Did you receive any special training when you started with the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative, or since you have been a program member?**

Yes 1

✎ **What training did you receive?** (*PROBE FOR TYPE OF TRAINING, LENGTH, WHERE RECEIVED, WHO GAVE IT?, WAS IT WORTHWHILE?, WOULD THEY RECOMMEND IT TO OTHERS DOING SIMILAR WORK?, ETC.*)

No 2 *SKIP TO PART B.*

A10. **Which department or agency do you work with?**

Department of Buildings..... 1	Courts 4
Department of Law 2	Department of Health 5
Chicago Police Department 3	Other 9

✎ **explain:** _____

A11. **Which unit or section do you work with?**

A12. **How long have you worked for them?** _____ yrs. _____ mos.

A13. **Have you changed positions within the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative since you started?**

- Yes 1 *GO TO 6.*
- No 2 *SKIP TO PART B.*

A14. **Please tell me what positions you have held up until now.**

PART B: ROLE AND INVOLVEMENT WITH MDGE

B1. **Please tell me about a typical day in relation to your work with the Anti-Drug and Gang House project.** *(FIND OUT ABOUT SPECIFIC JOB DUTIES ,DAILY/WEEKLY TASKS AND ACTIVITIES, TIME SPENT ON PARTICULAR TASKS, ETC.)*

B2. **Have these responsibilities and tasks or activities changed much since you began your involvement with the project?**

- Yes 1 *GO TO B3.*
- No2 *SKIP TO B4.*

B3. **How have they changed?**

B4. In your job, do you work regularly with people from other agencies?

- Yes 1 *GO TO B5.*
 No 2 *SKIP TO PART C.*

B5. Following is a list of agencies involved in some way with the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative. Please tell me, for each agency or department that I mention, whether your work brings you into contact with it frequently, occasionally, hardly ever, or never.

	F	O	HE	N	DK
Chicago Police Department Gang Tactical Units	1	2	3	4	9
Chicago Police Department Gang Investigation Section	1	2	3	4	9
Chicago Police Department Beat Officers	1	2	3	4	9
Chicago Police Department District Personnel	1	2	3	4	9
Chicago Police Department Criminal Housing Task Force	1	2	3	4	9
Department of Buildings Inspectors	1	2	3	4	9
Code Enforcement Bureau	1	2	3	4	9
Fire Department Inspectors	1	2	3	4	9
Department of Health Inspectors	1	2	3	4	9
Department of Revenue Inspectors	1	2	3	4	9
Department of Law Central Prosecution Unit	1	2	3	4	9
Department of Law MDGE Assistant Corporation Counsel	1	2	3	4	9
Cook County Criminal Court	1	2	3	4	9
Cook County Chancery Court	1	2	3	4	9
Cook County, Other Court	1	2	3	4	9
Court Advocacy Program	1	2	3	4	9

B6. Is there an agency or unit I did not mention that you have contact with on your job?

- Yes 1 *GO TO B7.*
 No 2 *SKIP TO PART C.*

B7. What is it, or are there more than one? (*ASK FOR FREQUENCY OF CONTACT FOR EACH.*)

Agency/Unit 1: _____	1	2	3	4	9
Agency/Unit 2: _____	1	2	3	4	9
Agency/Unit 3: _____	1	2	3	4	9

PART C: MDGE GOALS, OBJECTIVES, AND IMPLEMENTATION

C1. What are the current goals and objectives of the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative?

C2. Would you say that the goals and objectives of the project have changed since you have been working with it?

- Yes 1 *GO TO C3.*
- No 2 *SKIP TO C6.*

C3. How do you feel they have changed?

C4. Why do you think these changes were made or took place? _____

C5. Do you feel these changes have been beneficial to the project?

Yes 1

No 2

Please explain why: _____

C6. Do you feel the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative was set up as originally planned?
(RELATES TO DAILY OPERATIONS)

Yes 1 SKIP TO C9.

No 2 GO TO C7.

C7. What do you think is different about the current set-up?

C8. Why do you think things were set up differently?

C9. Now I would like to ask you a few questions about the implementation process for the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative. Our interest is in learning about the experience of setting this type of a task force up, the problems and obstacles encountered, and what, if anything, was done to solve the problems.

Would you describe the project implementation process as problem free, mostly smooth, difficult in expected ways, difficult in unexpected ways, or very difficult in unexpected ways? (CIRCLE ONE)

1	2	3	4	5	9
Problem free	Mostly Smooth	Difficult in expected ways	Difficult in unexpected ways	Very difficult in unexpected ways	DK

C10. **Please explain your answer:** *(TRY TO GET THE RESPONDENT TO TALK IN GENERAL TERMS ABOUT THE IMPLEMENTATION PROCESS, WHY THINGS WENT SO WELL, OR WHY THINGS WERE DIFFICULT)*

C11. **What do you feel were the toughest problems or issues the project had to face during its implementation?**

C12. **How were these issues resolved, or what attempts were made to resolve them?**

C13. **Do you feel that any implementation problems still exist, or are still being dealt with?**

Yes 1

✖ **Please explain:** _____

No 2

C14. Please rate the following aspects of the project operation as good, fair, or poor:
(CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH).

- | | | | | |
|---|------|------|------|------------|
| Office space | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Staff morale | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Clerical support | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Working relationships with co-workers | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Access to superiors | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Availability of resources to do your job | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |
| Communication | Good | Fair | Poor | Don't Know |

PART D: MDGE CASES AND THE CASE PROCESS

- D1. **Please describe for me the process by which the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative identifies and processes gang and narcotics nuisance abatement cases?** *(THE RESPONDENT MAY BE INTERESTED IN, OR ABLE TO, DESCRIBE HIS OR HER ASPECT OF THE PROCESS ONLY. THAT IS OK, BUT PROBE TO SEE HOW MUCH OF THE CASE PROCESS FROM START TO FINISH THE RESPONDENT CAN RELATE TO YOU).*

- D2. **In what you have just described to me:**

What do you see as they key steps and key decisions points in the process?

Who do you think are the most critical decision-makers in this process?

What do you think are the key points of coordination, of both people and information, in this process?

D3. Are there current problems or obstacles in the process you described that you feel need further attention or improvement?

Yes 1

➤ **Please explain:** _____

No 2

D4. Are there any (other) changes or improvements you would recommend to improve or strengthen the project's operations?

D5. Can you describe a typical target case from your perspective?

D6. **Can you describe what you consider to be the most successful case of the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative to date?** *(PROBE TO FIND OUT WHY IT IS CONSIDERED "SUCCESSFUL," WHAT HAPPENED, WHO WAS INVOLVED, DATE(S), DISTRICT, ETC.)*

D7. **Can you describe what you consider to be the toughest or most difficult case of the project to date?** *(PROBE TO FIND OUT WHAT HAPPENED, WHO WAS INVOLVED, DATE(S), DISTRICT, ETC.)*

D8. **Do these types of problems/problem cases occur often?**

Yes 1

↘ **About how often:** _____

No 2

D9. Please tell if you feel the Anti-Drug andGang House Initiative has been very successful, somewhat successful, somewhat unsuccessful, or very unsuccessful at doing the following things: *(CIRCLE ONE FOR EACH STATEMENT)*.

	<u>VS</u>	<u>SS</u>	<u>SU</u>	<u>VU</u>	<u>DK</u>
Identifying gang and drug involved properties for target cases	1	2	3	4	9
Visiting the targeted properties and making inspections	1	2	3	4	9
Collecting information on targeted properties to make cases	1	2	3	4	9
Referring cases and information to the Department of Law	1	2	3	4	9
Following up on cases that need additional work	1	2	3	4	9
Following up on cases in the abatement process	1	2	3	4	9
Keeping crime away from targeted properties	1	2	3	4	9
Working with tenants	1	2	3	4	9
Working with landlords	1	2	3	4	9

PART E: RESPONDENT'S OPINIONS ON MDGE pilot program OPERATIONS

I am going to read a series of statements about the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative. After each statement, please tell me if you strongly disagree, disagree, have no opinion, agree, or strongly agree with each statement. (CIRCLE THE APPROPRIATE NUMBER FROM 1 TO 5 CORRESPONDING WITH THE RESPONDENT'S ANSWER TO EACH STATEMENT.)

		SD	D	NO	A	SA	DK
1.	The city can be proud of the work this project is doing.	1	2	3	4	5	9
2.	I am glad I am working with the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative.	1	2	3	4	5	9
3.	Cooperation between the Department of Buildings and Department of Law on pilot cases is about as good as can be expected.	1	2	3	4	5	9
4.	Cooperation between my unit and the Chicago Police Department on task force cases is about as good as can be expected.	1	2	3	4	5	9
5.	Cooperation between my unit and other units and agencies (besides those mentioned already) on Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative cases is about as good as can be expected.	1	2	3	4	5	9
6.	In general, cooperation is at an all-time high with this pilot project.	1	2	3	4	5	9
7.	I can't wait until this project is over with.	1	2	3	4	5	9
8.	It seems that the amount of cooperation you get on cases depends on which part of the city you are working in.	1	2	3	4	5	9
9.	It doesn't matter what the pilot program does -- we can't change the gang and drug problem on the streets.	1	2	3	4	5	9

GO TO END STATEMENT

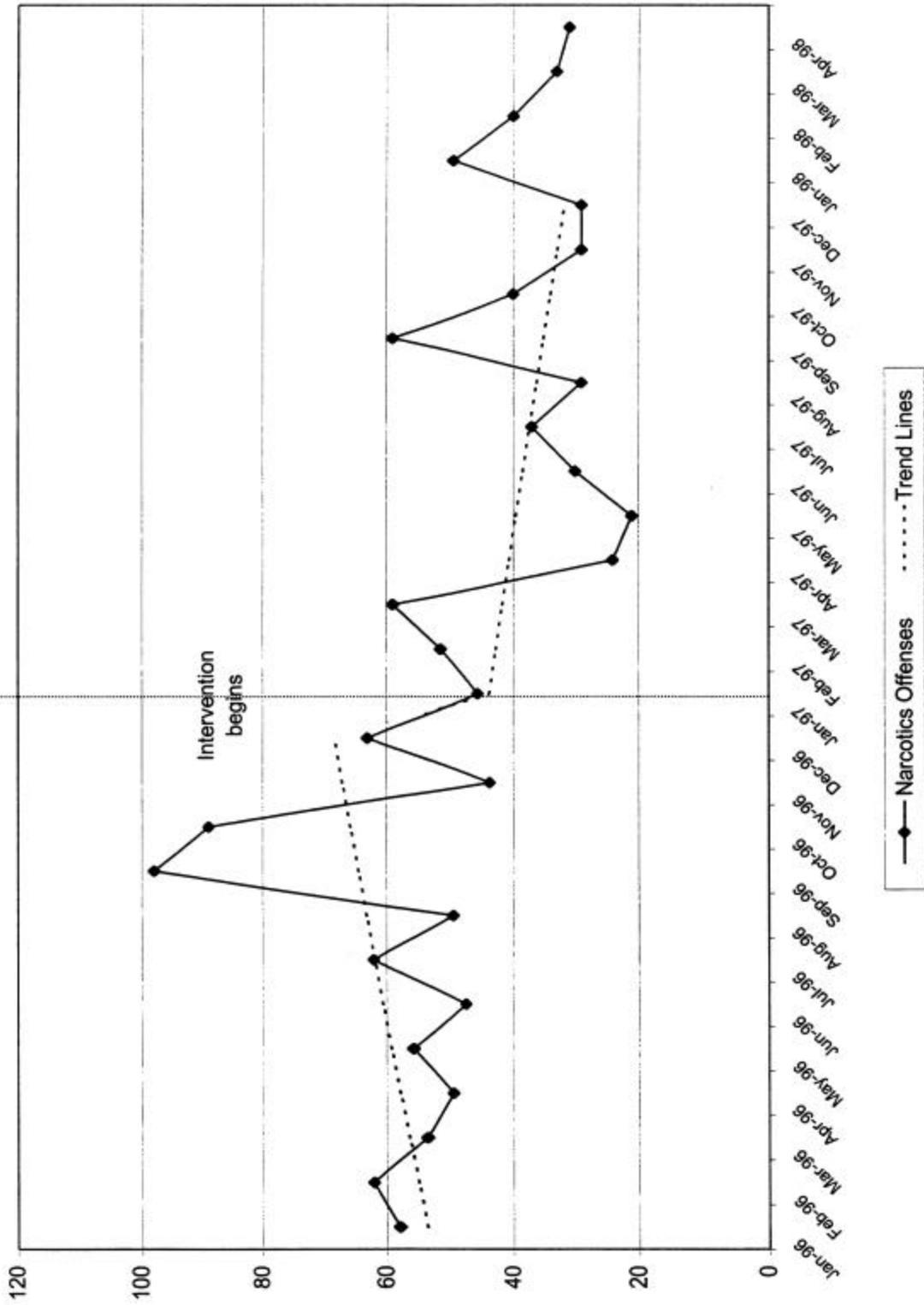
END STATEMENT

Thank you very much for your time today. It is important for us to obtain a variety of perspectives on the Anti-Drug and Gang House Initiative operations, and you have certainly helped us do that. Your opinions and ideas will be used, along with those of others involved in this pilot program, to prepare a final evaluation report early next year. We will be sure to make copies available to you.

Thanks again.

APPENDIX IV: Graphs of Districts 2 and 9 Narcotics Crime Trends

Pilot District 2 Narcotics Crime Trend
 (includes catchment areas and buildings)



**Comparison District 9 Narcotics Crime Trend
(includes catchment areas and buildings)**

