

Addressing Crime and Disorder in Seattle's "Hot Spots": What Works?

City of Seattle
Office of City Auditor

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Purpose of Report:

1. Summarize Hot Spots Research
2. Describe Hot Spots Efforts in Other Jurisdictions
3. Present Recommendations for Seattle

What is a Hot Spot?

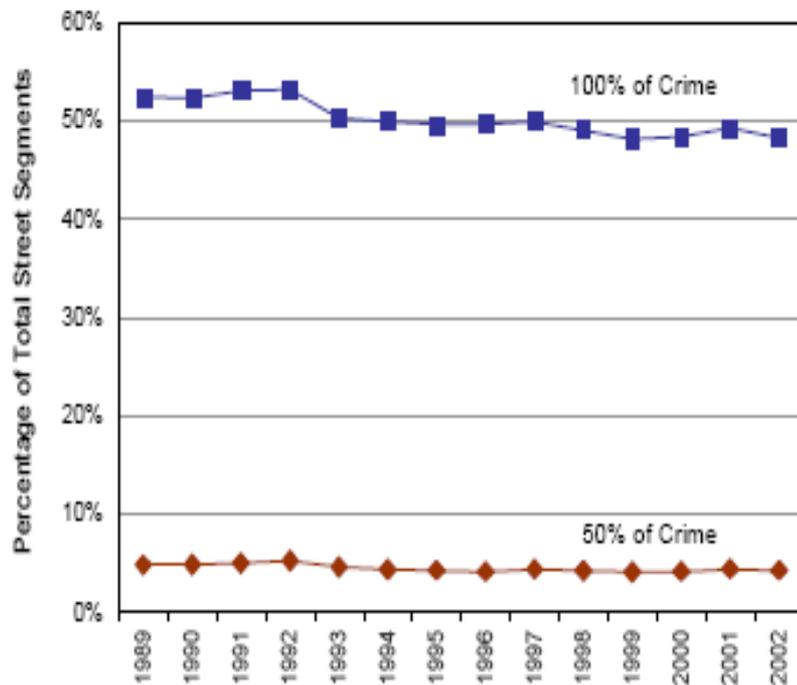


- Much smaller units of geography than neighborhoods, police precincts, or what is generally thought of as a community.
- Occur when crime and/or disorder are concentrated in an area such as a single address, a block face, or a small concentration of blocks.
- Researchers refer to these small geographic areas as “micro-places.”

What do we know about hot spots
of crime and disorder in Seattle?

Seattle hot spots are concentrated and stable over time.

Figure 1: Percentage of Street Segments with 50% and 100% of Incident Reports from 1989 to 2002.



Source: Weisburd et al. (2004).

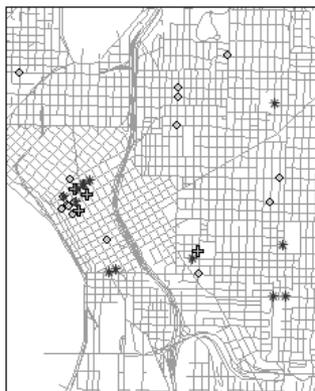
- On average about 1,500 street segments (4.5%) accounted for 50 percent of the crime each year during this period.
- During the same period, 6,108 offenders were responsible for 50 percent of the crime each year.
- Also, the hot spots of crime experienced tremendous stability over the 14-year period.

Point Map of Medium to High Juvenile
Arrest Incident Trajectory Blocks
Seattle, Washington
1989 - 2002

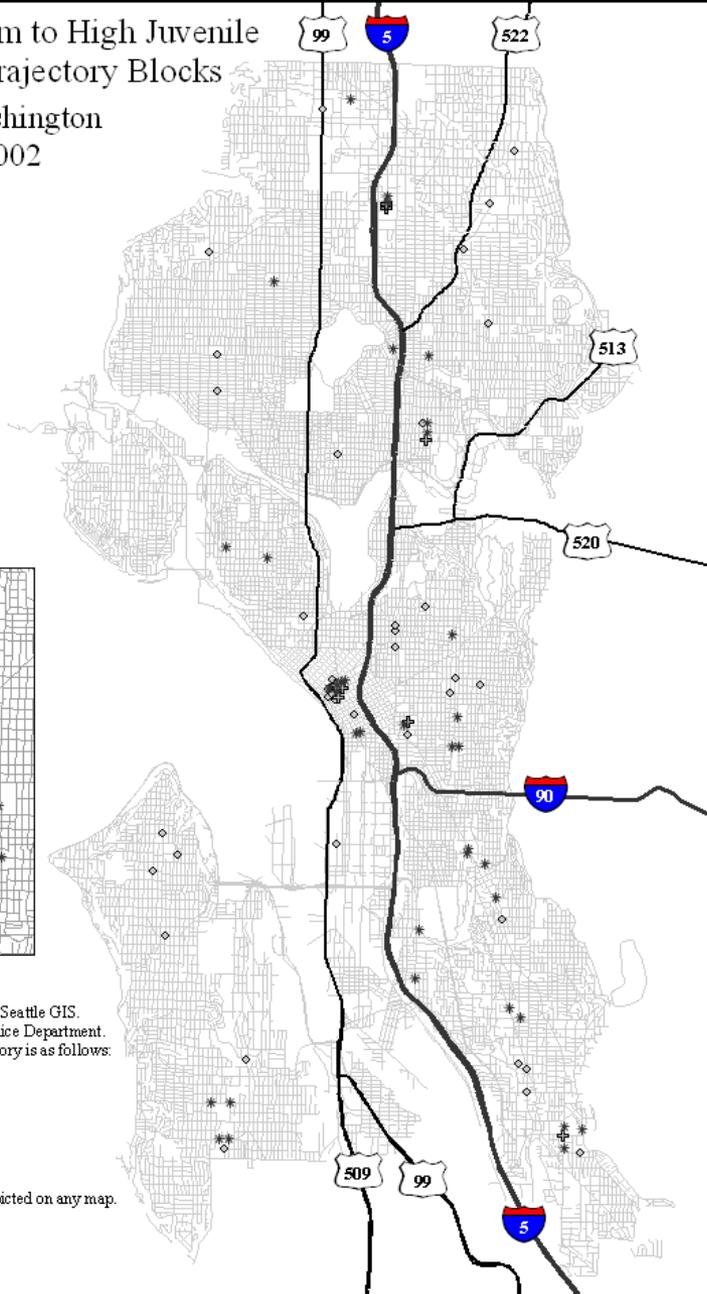
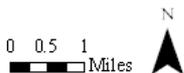
Trajectory Groups

- ◊ Group 6
- ⊕ Group 7
- * Group 8

Downtown



Source: All base files were obtained from Seattle GIS.
Crime data was supplied by the Seattle Police Department.
The number of street blocks in each trajectory is as follows:
Group 1 N = 296
Group 3 N = 2,553
Group 4 N = 336
Group 5 N = 67
Group 6 N = 40
Group 7 N = 8
Group 8 N = 38
Trajectory group 2 (N = 26,067) is not depicted on any map.

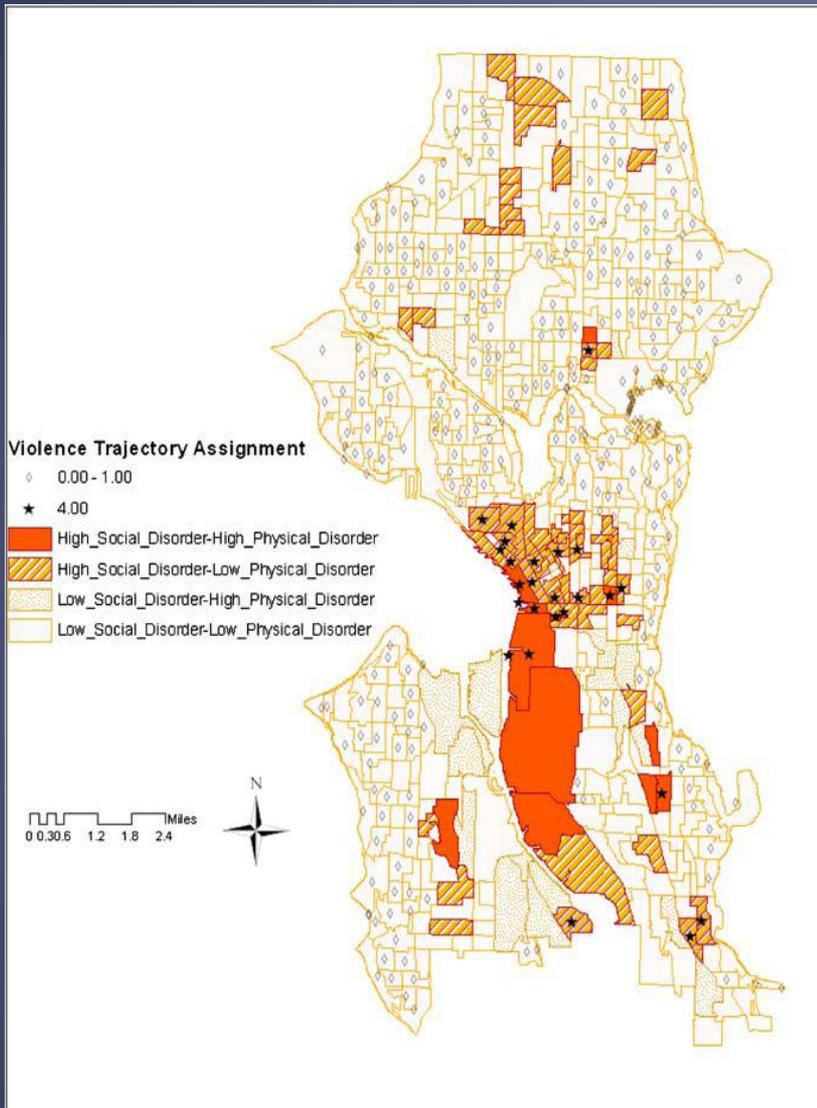


Juvenile Crime Hot Spots

- 86 street segments accounted for over 1/3 of all juvenile arrests between 1989 and 2002.
- In these street segments, arrests were much more likely to occur at activity spaces including schools, youth centers, and shopping areas.

Disorder and Violent Crime

- About 12% of the census blocks accounted for almost half of Seattle's social disorder.
- Less than 5% of the census blocks accounted for almost 23% of physical disorder.
- In addition, disorder and violence are correlated at these places, and the relationship is sustained over time.



Source: Yang, Sue-Ming. (2010). Assessing the Spatial–Temporal Relationship Between Disorder and Violence. *Journal of Quantitative Criminology*, 26, 139-163.

Key Findings Regarding Seattle Hot Spots:

- 50 percent of Seattle crime occurs on just 4.5 percent of our block faces.
- Hot spots were stable during the 14-year study period.
- Juvenile crime in Seattle is even more concentrated.
- Physical disorder and social disorder in Seattle are also concentrated in hot spots.
- Disorder and violence in Seattle are correlated at the same locations.

What hot spot approaches have
been proven effective in other
cities?

Research Evidence Regarding Effectiveness of Place-Based Approach

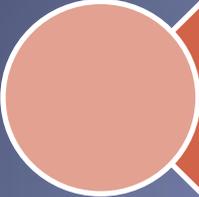
- Rigorous research studies have shown that a place-based approach results in statistically significant crime prevention.
- No evidence of significant displacement of crime.
- Evidence of a “diffusion of crime control benefits.”

Case Studies

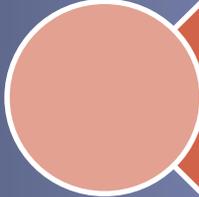
- **Beat Health Program,
Oakland, California**
- **Auburn Boulevard
Redevelopment Program,
Sacramento, California**
- **Cincinnati Neighborhood
Enhancement Program,
Cincinnati, Ohio**



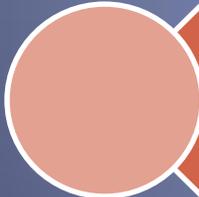
Four Common Elements



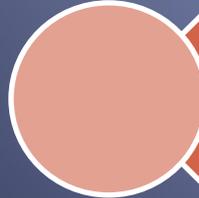
A focused approach that uses data to define problems and determine outcomes



Collaboration with the community



Institutional structures that facilitate multi-agency coordination



Problem-oriented policing

What steps can Seattle take to create positive change in hot spots of crime and disorder?

Implementing a hot spot approach



Select target areas based on need and capacity



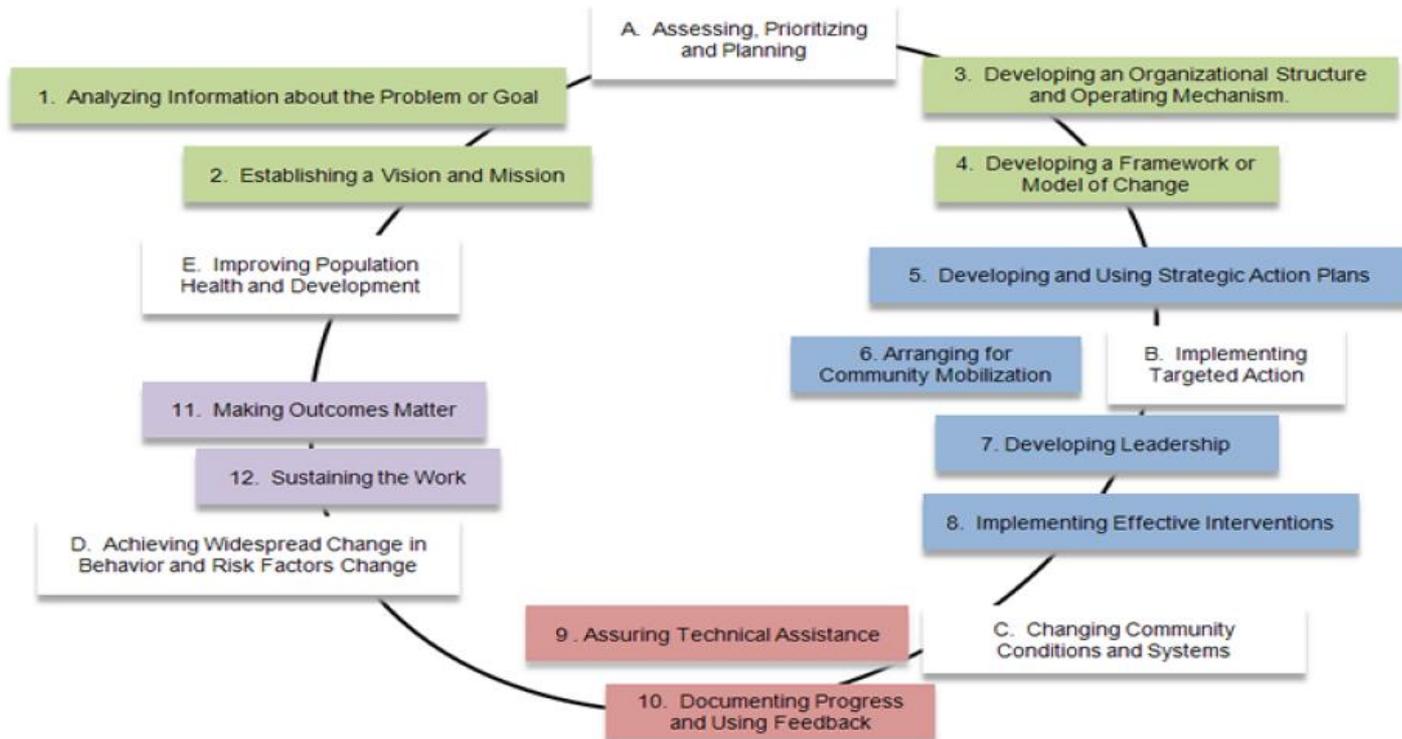
23rd and Union: Physical disorder measured in Community Appearance Index



23rd and Union: Community assets include an urban farm

Use a process framework that works

Best Process for Community Change and Improvement



This interactive web tool developed by the University of Kansas provides information about proven-effective practices for implementing a community change process.

Focus existing City resources strategically

