

HOPE VI PROGRAM EVALUATION
THE SECOND YEAR

JANUARY 2006

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HOPE VI Project – Utica, New York: Year Two Program Evaluation

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HOPE VI Program Evaluation: Year Two Executive Summary

The Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA) submitted a successful grant proposal to HUD in 2003 and was awarded \$11.5 million dollars, with an intent to leverage tens of millions of dollars more for city transformation. The project intent is to:

- Demolish the Washington Courts Housing Project and relocates residents to improved housing in better neighborhoods targeted to be less racially segregated and with mixed incomes.
- Improve a target area of the city of Utica known as Cornhill. Improvements envisioned are renovated housing and new housing rentals; opportunities for home ownership; improvement of physical appearances of homes, yards, and sidewalks; improvement of community facilities, such as schools and parks; and increased well-being in the lives of neighborhood residents.

On a national level, the HOPE VI program has demonstrated success in improving public housing and in de-concentrating poverty, and HOPE VI is not the sole factor leading to neighborhood change. Neighborhoods are complex entities that are affected by many factors, including the strength of the economy, government action, community group involvement, and the availability of investment and credit. Community activism, a strong economy, and increased private and public sector funds all contributed to economic and social turnaround (Zielenbach, 2002). Integrating real estate development and self-sufficiency programming is a necessity for success (Clancy and Quigley, 2001).

The HOPE VI project in Utica, New York consists of several **programs or areas of activity** within the project:

- Relocation and Community Services Coordination
- Housing and Home Ownership Development
- Community Facilities in the Cornhill Target Neighborhood

Relocation occurred much more quickly than staff expected. In Spring of 2004, 36 residents had moved since July, 2004 and 26 units remained occupied at Washington Courts. HOPE VI staff were busy trying to accommodate the service needs and hardships of non-senior disabled residents. **Most of the relocated residents were satisfied with the process of moving and with their new homes and neighborhoods.** They all had received their Relocation Allowances, were informed of their options for comparable housing, and were provided with transportation to view their options. However, despite the efficiency and care of HOPE VI staff, the **rules and regulations of public housing as well as available social services are sometimes inconsistent, inflexible, and inadequate** in providing for its majority residents, the disabled and/or elderly.

The residents remaining at Washington Courts described a **number of obstacles to their moving** including needing a place without stairs, more bedrooms, or adjacent apartments for family members. A few residents complained that staff did not properly describe the changes that would take place when the program started or that there was no reason to move the

housing project and to lose their homes. Staff explain that they are attempting to meet all of the remaining resident needs, and that the obstacles to placing the elderly, disabled, and family members who want to be near each other are creating some delays.

The **majority of the Washington Courts residents moved to either Gillmore Village, in South Utica or Humphrey Gardens, in North Utica, both public housing projects.** These residents are now in neighborhoods that are **less racially segregated** and that have a **higher median income** for residents than their previous neighborhood around Washington Courts. Many relocated residents had **moved with family and friends**, thus transferring some of their support networks from Washington Courts and facilitating their transitions. Many residents did not know their neighbors well, often because they had recently relocated. Still, **most felt safe in their new neighborhoods** and trusted their neighbors. Most residents who were utilizing support services had been doing so since before the inception of HOPE VI. Most of the residents were either retired or disabled.

Housing and home ownership development are moving along on schedule. Phase 1 of the housing development process, the **Kembleton Phase has been completed** with 27 new and renovated units of housing. In addition, 11 new homes will be constructed and be for sale this summer. Although this is a small portion of the target community, the impact of the new homes is clearly evident in the Cornhill neighborhood. Several nearby residents expressed their approval of the new houses during interviews, noting that the houses are some of the most aesthetically pleasing in the area.

The **most significant community services will lie in the Community School** planned as renovations to the existing Martin Luther King Jr. Elementary School -- the heart of the HOPE VI Project. The mission of the Community School is "to ensure the physical, emotional, and educational, well-being of children, families, seniors, and other members of the Cornhill community through the provision of integrated and enriched service delivery and expanded use of facilities, connecting school to community."¹ Due to the lack of services, job training, and educational opportunities in this area, the construction of a community school in this neighborhood will not only revitalize this community, but also provide a solid base for the future of the HOPE VI program. Plans for the Community school include: Health Center, childcare, adult education through GED classes, job training, mentoring programs and apprenticeship programs and a computer-tech center.

One of the main goals of Hope VI is overall life improvement, but this will not come from new housing alone. The residents have indicated their needs and they must be provided if the goal is to be met. Clancy and Quigley stated so eloquently, that "**to produce viable new communities, such visions must address not only housing, but also schools, retail and commercial amenities, parks and recreation space, transportation access, physical security and community building**" (2001, p. 537). This is an excellent suggestion and should be taken seriously by the HOPE VI project and all of its partners as it moves forward.

¹ Meeting Minutes/Community School Meeting- 11/25/03.

HOPE VI Program Evaluation: Year 2

Introduction

In 1992 the Nation Commission on Severely Distressed Public Housing findings indicated that 86,000 public housing units were “living in extreme poverty in almost unimaginable and certainly intolerable conditions” (Zielenbach, 2002, p. 40). The call for improvements of public housing was long overdue; public housing is deeply associated with minorities and people below the poverty line. Congress subsequently initiated the Urban Revitalization Demonstration Program commonly known as HOPE VI as part of the Quality Housing and Work Responsibility Act. The federal department of Housing & Urban Development (HUD) administers HOPE VI projects.

The Utica Municipal Housing Authority (UMHA) submitted a successful grant proposal to HUD in 2003 and was awarded 11.5 million dollars, with intent to leverage tens of millions of dollars more for the city’s transformation. The project proposed to demolish the Washington Courts Housing Project, built in the 1950s, and to relocate the residents of that housing project to better neighborhoods. The new neighborhoods would be, as proposed, less racially segregated and with mixed incomes. In addition, the intent was to improve a target area of the city of Utica known as Cornhill. Improvements envisioned are new rentals through renovated housing and new housing; opportunities for home ownership; improvement of physical appearances of homes, yards, and sidewalks; improvement of community facilities, such as schools and parks; and increased wellbeing in the lives of the neighborhood residents. Earlier Hope VI projects concentrated on physical construction and home renovation rather than the revitalization of the entire community. Thus, these early program have not been as successful as other more recent projects which focus on the entire community (Zielenbach, 2002).

In order to determine the effectiveness of the Hope VI project in Utica, a formative program evaluation is ongoing. The purposes of a program evaluation can be varied. Broadly stated, program evaluations determine: if the program has been implemented as designed; the needs of the program for optimal design; and if the program’s goals have been met. The ongoing program evaluation will focus on the needs of the Washington Courts residents and the Cornhill Community; how the program implementation is proceeding; and how well Utica’s Hope VI program is meeting its goals of revitalizing Cornhill and improving the well being of the Washington Courts residents.

Background

The Residents

Residents targeted by HOPE VI programs have experienced high unemployment rates and low levels of income. Political observers have noted that “welfare reform has given a new urgency to HOPE VI- focused programs that help public housing residents prepare for, find, and retain jobs” (Cuomo, 1999, p.13). Providing new and affordable housing for low income families is not enough to ensure long term success. The success of HOPE VI programs hinges on the promotion of self sufficiency, as “public housing residents, due to unmet needs

for self sufficiency programming, will not be better off in the new mixed-income developments constructed to replace demolished projects” (Clancy and Quigley, 2001, pp. 530-1).

The HOPE baseline report provides an overview of the employment and income situations for HOPE VI residents (Popkin, 2002). Of the surveyed respondents under the age of 62, 59 percent reported they were unemployed, and only 27 percent reported that they were employed full time; 14 percent were employed in part time work. Although the annual income of residents varied among the five locations from which residents were surveyed, the percentage of households with an income below \$10,000 ranged from 45 to 80 percent. The surveyed residents indicated several barriers to finding or keeping a job; key factors were a lack of job availability, lack of child care, lack of work experience and lack of transportation. Education also factored into unemployment. While 72 percent of those employed full time have a high school equivalency, only 47 percent of the unemployed did (Popkin, 2002).

The Baseline report assessed the potential for improvements in self sufficiency. The report concluded, “If these former residents move to lower-poverty neighborhoods with greater opportunity, their overall levels of labor force participation may increase (Popkin, 2002).” Improvements in neighborhood safety and collective efficacy could motivate more residents to seek employment. The problems with finding employment are being long-term welfare recipients with no or little work experience and having health problems. These barriers are likely to bar residents from ever entering the work force (Popkin, 2002).

A 2002 study of eight HOPE VI communities found that while HOPE VI neighborhoods were still some of the more economically distressed areas of their cities, some significant improvements had occurred. The study found increases in per capita incomes, education levels, and employment rates. These factors led researchers to believe that the HOPE VI projects have increased the economic well-being of the residents involved (Zielenbach, 2002).

Buron and colleagues (2002) point to a lack of neighborhood jobs as another issue. The study also finds that 82 percent of surveyed households earned less than 30 percent of the median area income, suggesting that many HOPE VI participants were working in low-wage jobs. Clancy and Quigley (2001) write that some early HOPE VI efforts failed in part because employment programs emphasized quick job placement over living wages. They observe that a prominent non-profit organization has been successful in self-sufficiency programs because it provides individualized planning and work supports in addition to jobs. Clancy and Quigley argue that this attention to the varied needs of families is the only way to truly “make work pay” and to combat employment problems (2002, p. 8). Individualized attention helps connect families with social services, which may have been inaccessible due to isolation or problems navigating through the confusing array of available options.

The findings of the Schiff Group’s Washington Courts Resident Survey (2002) give insight into the needs of the residents in order to become self sufficient. Only 17 percent of the survey respondents were currently employed, but 59 percent claim that they would be willing to enroll in job training programs if they were available (Schiff, 2002). When residents were asked what kinds of programs they perceived as important for becoming independent, more

than 80 percent responded positively to General Equivalency Degree (GED) training, childcare, legal assistance and programs to help prevent domestic violence. When questioned about the responsiveness of the Utica Municipal Housing Authority to the needs of the residents, only 31 percent felt that they were very responsive, while 50 percent felt they were somewhat responsive (Schiff, 2002).

The Target Community

One of the central aims of the national HOPE VI program is to revitalize distressed public housing, thereby improving the living conditions of public housing residents (Cuomo, 1999). When creating the program, the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also took note that the isolation of public housing residents led to exclusion from the “world of work and the habit of responsibility” (p. 4). Therefore, HOPE VI follows a strategy of creating mixed-income developments in the hope of fostering a culture of work, as well as promoting community re-investment. For the most part, the communities across the country that HOPE VI will target consist of a large minority population with high unemployment levels. In the average HOPE VI neighborhood, 9.8 percent of residents consider themselves to be White, 32.1 percent Black, and 40.1 percent identify themselves as Latino; the average unemployment level is 14.4 percent (Zielenbach, 2002).

Housing authorities have great flexibility in the methods they use to improve housing; they can replace, demolish, rehabilitate or modify existing housing. However, this flexibility must be used in order to achieve the de-concentration of poverty locally, as well as to improve public housing neighborhoods in a sustainable fashion (Clancy & Quigley, 2001). On a national level, the HOPE VI program has demonstrated success in improving public housing; 63 percent of respondents in the HOPE VI Resident Tracking Survey reported an improvement in their housing quality (Buron et al., 2002). Many of those who did not report a quality increase either lived in sites such as Denver’s Quigg Newton, where the HOPE VI project only rehabilitated existing housing, or they moved out of public housing via Section 8. This finding paints Utica’s strategy of building a new mixed-income community in a favorable light, and it also implies that the new housing needs to be of better quality than current “affordable” private market housing.

Nationally many HOPE VI relocates still report serious crime problems in their neighborhoods (Buron et al., 2002). They cite problems with drugs and gangs, along with violent crime. Crime rates tend to be lowest in unsubsidized housing, suggesting that Utica’s approach of creating mixed-income housing instead of rebuilding an existing site may help with the crime problem. The Resident Tracking Study also notes that, “Unsubsidized households in our sample reported significantly higher levels of collective efficacy than those living in public housing or using vouchers” (Buron et al., 2002, p.7). *Collective efficacy* assesses neighborhood health through measures of how well neighbors help each other and monitor their area. The new mixed-income Utica HOPE VI target neighborhood should promote these factors. However, respondents in the tracking study had low levels of social interaction with neighbors despite increases in collective efficacy. The study suggests that beneficial social networks may be difficult to form because of language barriers, because

neighbors are often not home, or simply because people prefer not to form relationships (Buron et al., 2002).

HOPE VI is not the sole factor leading to neighborhood change. Zielenbach (2002) writes that neighborhoods are complex entities that are affected by many factors, including the strength of the economy, government action, community group involvement, and the availability of investment and credit. However, he also notes that the most promising HOPE VI projects are wide in scope, using these factors to their advantage. For example, the redevelopment of the Orchard Park housing complex was only the first step toward revitalizing Boston's Dudley Square neighborhood. Community activism, a strong economy, and increased private and public sector funds all contributed to its economic and social turnaround. The promise that this HOPE VI project shows is the product of local program implementation that may lead to success or failure. Such a strategy is also necessary to sustain positive neighborhood change.

An example of the economic improvement potential of the HOPE VI program can be taken from the successful program in the Dudley Square neighborhood of Boston. From the 1950s to the 1980s, the area dropped from an urban commercial center with many businesses and residents to a deteriorated urban landscape with 1500 vacant lots. The Orchard Park housing development became one of the worst areas in the city, with crime rates higher than any other area of Boston. In 1995, the Dudley Square community was awarded a \$30 million grant that would allow them to demolish most of the Orchard Park housing project and replace it with new housing development. The improvements to the community were transformational. Crimes in the housing project area dropped from 752 in 1989 to 57 in 2001, and redevelopment led to the revitalization of the Dudley Square community. The number of business establishments in the Dudley Square area increased by 24 percent. Property values have also improved; the median sale price of single-family homes increased by over 325 percent from 1996 to 2001 (Zielenbach, 2002).

The Harvard Law Review Association's analysis (2003) suggests that a key factor in a successful HOPE VI program is the accountability of both the public and private sectors. They argue that the contractual arrangement between HUD and municipal housing authorities leads the housing authorities to value efficiency over residents' needs and input. For example, the Boston Housing Authority leveled the Clippership housing development, claiming it was *distressed*, even though it was merely obsolete; most residents held jobs. The authors of the Harvard analysis also find that the emphasis on relocation, the strict standards for public housing reoccupation and the many barriers to obtaining good housing for voucher users lead some participants to live in neighborhoods characterized by the same problems as their old public housing.

There are three sections to this evaluation: Section One addresses the former Washington Courts residents; Section Two focuses on the new residents who are moving into the first renovated housing for the HOPE VI Project – the Kembleton apartments; and Section Three focuses on the target community of Cornhill.

Section One: The Former Washington Courts Residents

This section of the evaluation will focus on the former Washington Courts residents and assessing their current state with regards to self-sufficiency and employment. At this point in the project, all original Washington Courts residents have moved out of Washington Courts. Now that the residents have relocated, the HOPE VI project must ensure their well-being has improved. In order to evaluate the current self sufficiency of the residents, their employment status, education and self sufficiency assessment will be determined. This report includes a description of the program, methods uses in the evaluation, the evaluation results and discussion of the results.

Program Description

After the relocation of the former Washington Courts residents, the case managers continued to work with the residents in order to follow through with the mission of HOPE VI. The case managers, Bill Bryant and Carmen Roman-Castro, are working with the residents to promote self sufficiency and increased general well-being. Since such a low percentage of the residents were employed at the start of the HOPE VI Project, unemployment and underemployment is a major focus as a social problem. The promotion of self sufficiency falls under the goals of the HOPE VI project, and the case managers provide information pertaining to educational programs, job training and support services. The program theory to address the underemployment and unemployment of former Washington Court residents is suggested in Figure 1.

Social Problem	Program Activities	Goals	Outcomes
Underemployment/ Unemployment	Education, awareness, advocacy/advice, referrals, advocacy/advice Job fairs GED Job training	Increased education, Increased employability Increased employment	Increased self- sufficiency among former Washington Court residents

Figure 1. Program theory for the design of services for Washington Court residents

Who are the residents?

At the start of the HOPE VI project in July of 2003, there were approximately 60 households in the Washington Courts apartments. Most were single; 51 of the heads of household were single, never married, 2 separated, 1 divorced, and 1 widowed. Only 5 residents were married. Heads of household are primarily African-American (80%, n=48), and 12 are Hispanic/Latino (20%). Nearly 40 percent of residents are over 55 (39.65%), and 10 percent are 25 years of age or younger. About 50 percent of the residents are in the prime working-age period of 26-55 years of age (n=29).

However, many of the residents are disabled and unemployed. Thirty-six of the sixty residents (60%) replied yes to disabilities that included heart trouble, back and leg problems, seizures, asthma, depression and other mental health issues. Of those who are disabled, 10 residents are over 65 years of age, but 26 are of an age that they would be working, in the absence of any other barriers. Fully half of the residents receive Supplemental Security Income (SSI) (n=30); nine households receive Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) funds; and twelve households receive Social Security monies. Employment and income are explored later in this report.

There are a total of 67 children associated with the 60 households that were displaced. Six of those children have been born since July 1, 2003, the start of the project. Seventeen children were under 5 years of age at that time, 22 were between 5 and 11, 14 were between 12 and 16 years of age, and 8 youth were over 16 years of age. A number of the children are in the care of aunts, uncles, grandparents, and other relatives or family friends, and their housing situations have changed over time.

Displaced residents at start of HOPE VI Project		# of residents	
		Total = 60	Percentage
Marital Status:	<i>Single</i>	51	85.00%
	<i>Divorced</i>	1	1.67%
	<i>Widowed</i>	1	1.67%
	<i>Separated</i>	2	3.33%
	<i>Married</i>	5	8.33%
Race:	<i>Hispanic</i>	12	20.00%
	<i>Black</i>	48	80.00%
	<i>White</i>	0	0.00%
Age: (Two ages unknown. Thus, 58 total.)	<i>16-25</i>	6	10.34%
	<i>26-35</i>	16	27.59%
	<i>36-55</i>	13	22.41%
	<i>56-64</i>	13	22.41%
	<i>>65</i>	10	17.24%
Disability	<i>Total No</i>	24	40.00%
	<i>Total Yes</i>	36	60.00%

(Source: Utica Municipal Housing Authority, Utica, New York)

Methods

In order to obtain information about each resident, we conducted interviews on several occasions with case managers Bill Bryant and Carmen Romano as key informants. Our first interview took place on April 14, 2005 at their business office in Utica (see Appendix A for interview schedule). One of the main goals of this initial session was to gain an understanding of the case managers' position in implementing the broader HOPE VI goals. We were previously aware of the national program's push for "self-sufficiency" among displaced residents, but desired a more concrete definition and description for this term. Additionally,

we searched for information on the current employment and education status of the former Washington Courts residents. Once a general overview of the population was obtained, we anticipated generating a database to store and organize the information on each resident.

After reviewing the information received from the initial meeting with the case managers, we decided to narrow our goals to include only an extensive look into the specific situations of the “gainfully employed” individuals. Romano offered to collect the information for us, citing difficulty of direct access to files due to infringement on confidentiality rights of residents. Romano gave information for the nineteen employed head-of-households through a combination of previously collected data and phone call follow-ups.

For the purposes of this report, we focused on only those residents who were currently employed. We were not able to obtain as much data for the unemployed and disabled population, but we see this as a logical next step in determining the self-sufficiency of the former Washington Courts residents group as a whole. Figure 2 illustrates the evaluation methods planned for this section of the Year 2 Evaluation.

Residents	Research Question	Methodology	Source/Indicator
Needs Assessment	What are the characteristics of the employed population?	Staff interviews, review of existing documents	Key staff interviews Client files
Process Analysis	What is the role of the case managers in promoting self-sufficiency?	Staff interviews at UMHA	Case manager interviews
Outcome Evaluation	Are the residents increasingly self-sufficient?	Periodically rank the residents (1-5)	Data from previous years

Fig 2. Evaluation methodology for the former Washington Courts residents

Needs Analysis

Our needs assessment focused on the currently employed former Washington Courts residents, for which we asked the question, What are the characteristics of the employed population? Although this included only 19 residents, we observed a wide range of situations among the group. An overview of the employment situation is displayed in Figure 3. The unemployed segment includes disabled, elderly, juveniles, and those relying on public assistance. Thirteen of the nineteen employed residents are employed full-time, although the nature of the employment varies greatly. Salaries range from \$3,000 to \$20,000/year; excluding the two lowest outliers gives a median income of \$14,500. Over half of the heads-of-households are unemployed for various reasons.

The level of education also spanned a wide range, although since we are lacking information regarding the ages of the residents, it is difficult to tell what level of education is appropriate to each individual. Figure 4 shows a comparison of education level to yearly salary. We

excluded those earning an hourly wage for clarity. It is clear that income is not dependent on level of education from our data; the range remains fairly constant between high-school educated residents and those with or working towards a college degree. Finally, we looked at public assistance among the residents; 14 of the 19 residents receive some type of government aid.

Employment Overview of Former W/C Residents

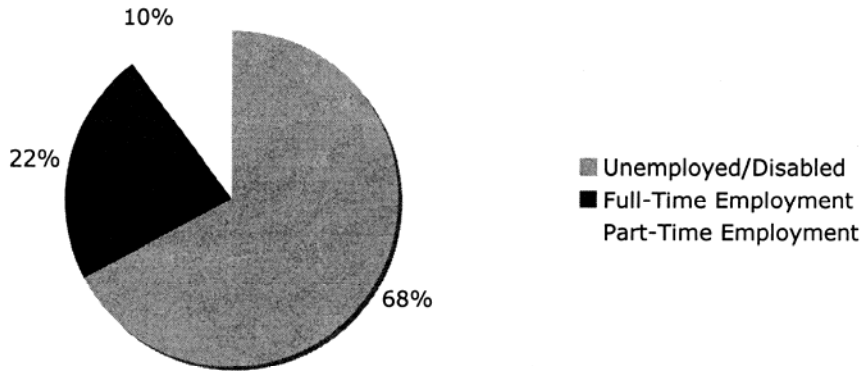


Figure 3. Current employment and unemployment patterns for residents.

Comparison of Yearly Salaries to Education Level

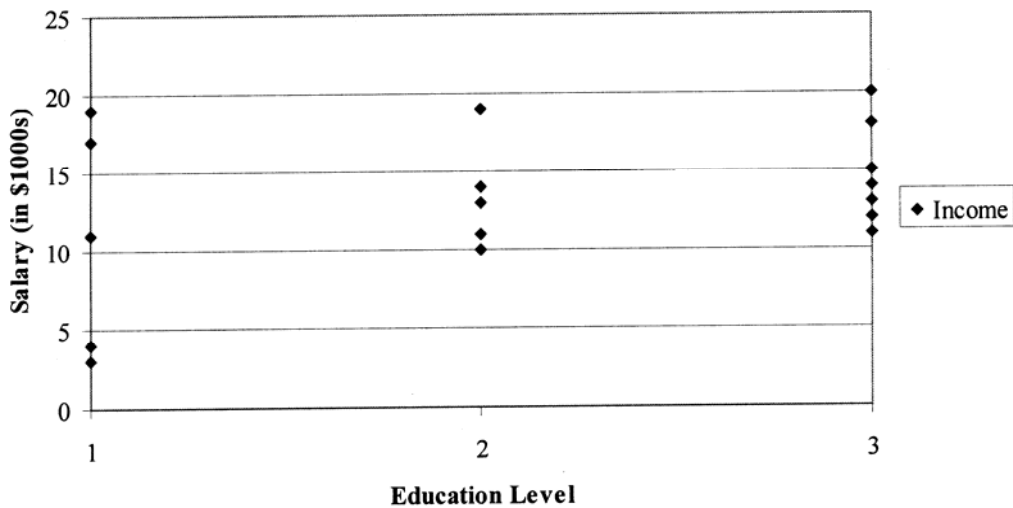


Figure 4. Correlation of Education to Income. 1 = <HS; 2 = HS/GED; 3 = some level of college education. There is no clear correlation between education and salary for this population.

Process Analysis

Our process analysis addressed the role of the case managers, namely Bill Bryant and Carmen Romano, in promoting self-sufficiency among the residents. Through interviews with them, we were able to obtain a general impression of the level of their involvement with the residents, and subsequently clarify any further questions regarding their services as employees of the Utica Municipal Housing Authority. Bryant and Romano operate their services on an individualized and informal basis. Although there are some common protocols that they apply to all the residents, interactions vary depending on the particular situation.

In general, the case managers aim to improve the self-sufficiency of each of the 61 residents that are currently under their “care.” The case managers defined a self-sufficient individual as one who has reached his or her potential in education and employment. Bryant and Romano described their program activities as notifying people of local job fairs, providing transportation to work, and raising awareness about child-care services. The case managers notify the unemployed residents of local job openings appropriate to their skills and encourage them to apply. They aid in resume development and refer people to interview skills workshops. The case managers also encourage employed residents to make efforts to rise within their company in order to increase their salary, to attend classes part time, or to return to school for a degree. Because of their close personal relationship with the residents, the case managers try to be aware of the potential of each individual and encourage them to take further steps in promoting self-sufficiency according to this perceived ability.

Outcome Evaluation

To complete our picture of the employed residents, we needed a quantitative evaluation of their self-sufficiencies. We asked Romano to utilize a rating scale of 1-5, with 1 indicating unemployed and 5 indicated self-sufficient. Because we had previously decided that self-sufficiency could only be judged on an individual basis, the rankings necessarily had to be subjective. For consistency then, we decided to leave the subjectivity up to Romano, allowing her to apply her knowledge about the residents’ particular situations in order to make a judgment. The bar graph (Fig 5) depicts the results of these rankings. Seven of the nineteen residents were classified as fully “self-sufficient,” with nearly 75% of the employed residents receiving a 4 or 5. Full-time employment was necessary to receive the highest ranking, although 4’s were assigned to those holding part-time jobs as well.

Self-Sufficiency Rankings for Employed Population

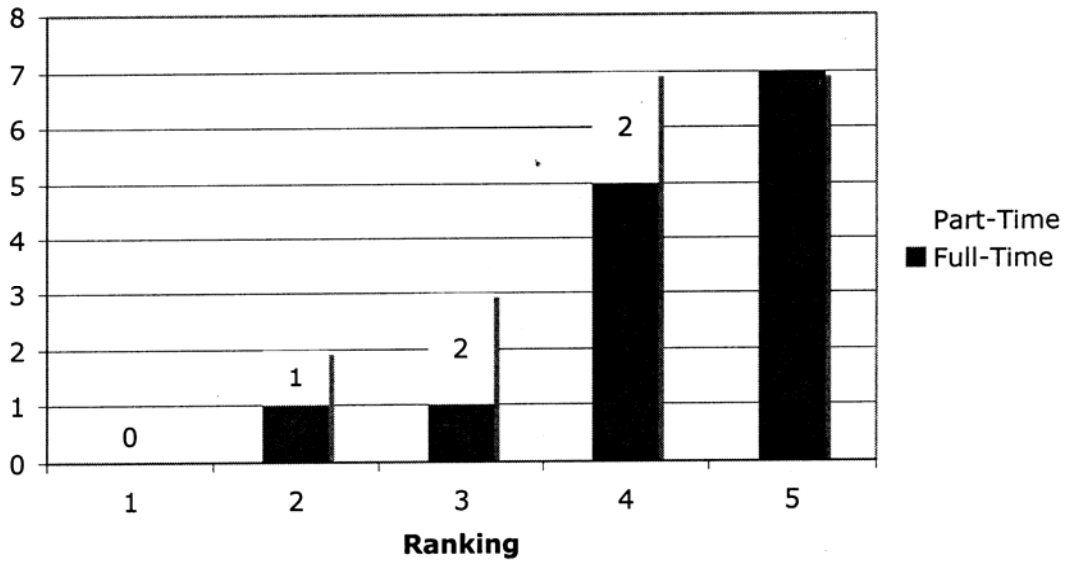


Figure 5. Ratings assigned by Romano to the 19 employed residents. Full-time employment is necessary to receive a 5, although it does not automatically indicate self-sufficiency.

Analysis of the residents’ self-sufficiency is a transient factor that will continue to change with time. The 1-5 rating scale developed for self-sufficiency is intended to provide a concrete basis for evaluation, although we are aware that the definition of this characteristic is not well-defined quantitatively. We anticipate that future students examining the characteristics of the former Washington Courts residents will utilize the same rating system, enabling them to compare their results with the data that we obtained.

Discussion/Recommendations

The Hope VI program and its case managers provide a network of services for the residents to utilize in their road to self sufficiency. The case managers inform residents of local job fairs and encourage participation in educational programs. Despite the involvement of case managers, there exist gaps in the program. Does encouragement really lead to self sufficiency? The measure of self sufficiency is difficult to measure since a clear definition does not exist. Ultimately, the case managers are very hands off, and the residents must be self-motivated.

The ability of the case managers to promote self sufficiency among those that are disabled is limited. Thus, most services and program initiatives are aimed at the gainfully employed and those that are willing to work. Self motivation is necessary for the program to work for the individual resident. In conducting this evaluation, questions for further inquiry arose. Many of those residents that are gainfully employed are also receiving public assistance.

- A determination of the definition of self-sufficiency and whether one can be deemed self-sufficient while receiving a form of public assistance is important.
- In addition to focusing on the gainfully employed population, further exploration into the disabled and otherwise unemployed population is necessary in order to conduct a full evaluation of the former Washington Courts residents.

Section Two: The New Residents of Cornhill – Kempleton

Program Description

The Hope VI project has included *Kempleton*, a series of renovated apartment buildings, as Phase I of the revitalization of Cornhill, which is one of the project's main goals. Hope VI has a vested interest to keep an eye on Kempleton in order to see how the new residents are doing and adjusting into the neighborhood. Kempleton received \$1 million from the Housing Trust Fund Program and an allocation of credit from DHCR's **Low Income Housing Tax Credit Program** worth more than \$3.8 million in private investment. The seven buildings that comprise Kempleton House include (10) one-bedroom units, (9) two-bedroom units, (2) three-bedroom units, (5) four-bedroom units, and (1) five-bedroom unit. The apartments are affordable to households with incomes of up to 60 percent of area median income. Some of the buildings date as far back as 1875 and were built in the Italianate, Colonial Revival and Queen Anne style of construction.

New York State Senator Raymond A. Meier praised the project saying:

In addition to providing more affordable housing, Kempleton represents an important psychological shot in the arm for our community. Over the past few years, we have seen Cornhill and other neighborhoods change dramatically with the assistance of New York State grants for project funding. Thanks to the Governor and Commissioner Calogero, we are continuing to sow the seeds for revitalization and progress, and the winners are the people of Utica.

Kempleton apartments were renovated by and are managed by Housing Visions, Inc.

Methods

Figure 6 illustrates the research questions that we posed and the methodology and source of information that was used to answer the questions about these new residents of Cornhill. In the time that was available, the chief method used was interviews with residents. Over time, the other research questions posed will be important issues to address.

New Residents Moving into Cornhill	Research Questions	Methodology	Source! Indicator
Needs Assessment	What are the needs of the new residents? What services would they like to see provided? What improvements would they like to see and what are their complaints?	Interviews Observation	Residents Housing Visions staff Existing records
Process Analysis	Are HOPE VI staff and public servants following through with the needs of the residents? Are the residents participating in and helping improve the neighborhood?		Resident and staff interviews
Outcome Evaluation	Has the level of drug and crime activity decreased? Are their less unwed pregnancies? Are youth getting off the streets? Is the neighborhood more racially integrated and does it have a greater mix of incomes?	Surveys Review of existing data	Residents, service providers, census data

Figure 6. Methodology for program evaluation of Kempleton, HOPE VI.

In order to assess the needs of the new residents on Kempleton Street we went door-to- door conducting interviews, after an introductory letter was mailed. We created a 28- question survey based on previous Hope VI surveys as well as the survey created for Washington Courts Residents the previous year. Residents were asked to assess their needs and satisfaction with their neighbors and with the physical state of their apartments. In addition to the surveys, we gathered information about the project in a couple of different ways. The first assessment of Kempleton street apartments was on a walking tour with John Mills who worked for the City of Utica and who had a large role in the revitalization process. Another method was talking to administrators with Housing Visions, the organization that manages the Kempleton apartments.

Building new apartments or housing or renovating existing apartments or housing is predicated on the notion of improving the neighborhood and improving the quality of residents who rent or buy in the neighborhood. A program theory did not exist for the new residents of the projects, although guidelines were set for screening new residents of the

apartments. A program theory is suggested in the discussion of the results of our interviews later in the report.

Results

We were able to interview 11 residents out of the 27 in Kembleton apartments. Although the numbers of participants are small to analyze as quantitative data, the qualitative data that we obtained from the residents was valuable and unanticipated. Still, even with just 11 families, we are able to describe, “Who are the residents of Kembleton?” The impression we formed on the neighborhood were from the personal anecdotes and grievances the residents revealed to us.

Who are the residents?

Of the heads of households interviewed (n=11), two were in their 50s, four were in their 40s, three were in their 30s, and two were under 30. All were born in the United States, which is significant to note because approximately 12 percent of the residents of the city of Utica are foreign born (American Factfinder, 2000 Census). Most respondents were members of one or two person households. Four of the eleven respondents had no children under 18 years of age in the house, five had one child, one had three children, and another had five children. Over half had lived at the address for 8 months, and all had lived there for one year or less.

Most of the residents said that they liked the neighborhood, although only one-half stated they would want to live there for a long time. Ten of the eleven said they felt safe or somewhat safe, but most also agreed there is a lot of crime committed, as well as a problem with drug abuse and dealing.

Residents were interested in a number of services: crime prevention programs, youth programs, a neighborhood police station, and a neighborhood-owned store were at the top of the list. Training to start a business, computer training, and community festivals were next, followed by alcohol and drug abuse prevention workshops, job training, and a health care center. Most respondents said they would like to get to know their neighbors better, but nearly all said they had not been involved in any neighborhood or community group in the last year.

Seven of the eleven respondents said they were either not aware of or only somewhat aware of services, and the same number said they’d never participated in any of the programs listed. When asked who they would turn to for help in obtaining community services, 8 listed family, 5 named friends, 4 said they would turn to religious organizations, and 2 named community agencies. No one selected the city of Utica or the County, although they were listed as choices (more than one response allowed, so numbers add to total greater than 11).

What are the needs of new residents?

1. Drugs and crime. Every person that we interviewed mentioned that there was a problem with drug abuse and criminal activity in the neighborhood. Although all of the residents did indicate that most of the problems were outside of their buildings, there was some mention of drug abuse and dealing within the households, especially in the two houses closest to the corner store. Although residents are screened before they are permitted to rent the apartments, there are many loopholes within the system. First, only residents over the age of 18 are required to be screened, and many of the drug abusers are under 18. Second, former addicts are allowed to rent the apartments as long as they have been through rehabilitation or have been shown to be clean; however, after moving to Kembleton, the drug-infested area may encourage a relapse. Lastly, many dealers or abusers do not have a police record or have committed themselves to an addiction center and are able to circumvent the examination.

Although police officers frequently visit the area, it appears from what residents say that they have little impact on the drug activity. Many drug deals are done in plain daylight and can be witnessed by anyone visiting the area. This lack of enforcement encourages a perception among youth and non-abusers that this behavior is acceptable. Furthermore, there is a “word on the street” that it is culturally unacceptable to turn in your fellow neighbors, breeding a deeper sense of fear among residents. Additionally, one resident mentioned that, if a drug crime was reported to a landlord, little would happen until the lease is up or until the resident fails to pay the rent.

2. Family structure -- In every family we interviewed, there was only one resident above the age of 18. There was not a single family with both a mother and a father, nor were there any apartments occupied by both a child and a male over the age of 18. It seemed that, under the circumstances, it would be hard to raise a healthy family. Youth may not have role models, and single parents in this neighborhood may have too many responsibilities. It is a tough situation for most families and creates a large burden on every member; many residents appear to be stuck in a cycle of poverty.

3. Youth -- The youth of the community were a major concern of the residents we interviewed. Many felt that something needed to be done and we got an array of answers to help solve the problem. Some of the problems included teen pregnancy, drugs, and lack of education. We found some common patterns. Residents felt that misguided youth in Cornhill could be traced to dysfunctional family structures, with parents not instilling proper values and morals. This, in combination with the condition of the neighborhood, creates the current situation of the youth and many teenage parents throughout Cornhill. It contributes to youth stealing, drinking and doing drugs throughout the neighborhood. It has led to the youths' general disrespect toward everyone. Residents felt that there is a major need in the community for something to be done to help the youth of Cornhill.

4. Economic and racial diversity -- Out of everyone we talked to at Kembleton, all but one was African American. We feel that this is an important area to note. Everyone we interviewed, although surviving, was living in tough economic situations. The community needs to try to add diversity and provide economic stability to the area.

Discussion

The network of services provided in neighborhoods is very strong in some aspects and weak in others. In the Kembleton apartments, there is little to no contact with the residents by Housing Visions or the City of Utica. Once the residents are passed through the screening process, they are left alone. People complained that, if there are complaints about residents, the complaints are only brought up when the resident's contract is up for renewal. This leads to the problem with the lengths of the contracts. Many residents complained that the two-year contracts they signed were not fair. They felt tricked into thinking they were going to a nice clean neighborhood, when in some cases the drug houses or the "Castle" as many call it in Utica was only about 100 feet from their doors.

The perceived lack of effort from the City of Utica involving the drug activity on Kemble Street posed a large problem or gap in services. While interviewing and talking to the residents, it seemed fairly clear what was going on and that the criminal activity was not hidden. These residents have the right to feel safe letting their teenage daughters walk down the street, with out drug dealers or users making inappropriate sexual comments.

Talking to the residents, a large part did not know the services that were provided in the neighborhood. Although more services will be very useful and appreciated, it is important to get the residents involved in the current services provided. A few residents were very involved in their churches, and it seemed to be a really bright spot in their lives, while offering many helpful programs and services.

Many good, law-abiding people moved into the Kembleton apartments, and more will move into other new Hope VI housing. These people will not stay if something is not done about the people who corrupt the neighborhood. A key to this will be the communication between different organizations in Utica. Then, finally the unanswered question is what will the residents who we were not able to survey have to say? Why, in some cases, did they not want us to survey them? (Several residents refused to be interviewed, although they were at home.) We would have liked to complete all 27 surveys for a broader representation of resident views and perspectives. The limited number of responses narrows the generalizability of our study.

The program theory in Figure 7 is presented as one that emerges out of the responses of the residents and what they view as important to be addressed in the target community for new residents of HOPE VI housing.

Problem	Program Activities	Goals/Objectives	Outcomes
High level of drug and crime activity	Increase police force in neighborhood Tougher screening of new residents Drug prevention programs Close neighborhood store	Increased collective efficacy Higher perception of security	A safer neighborhood
Family structure	Sexuality education Classes for teen girls and boys	Fewer teen and/or unwanted pregnancies Fewer single mothers	Children raised in better environment Increased standard of living
Positive youth development	Increase youth activities Create neighborhood curfew	Break cycle of substance abuse among parents/neighbors/children	Families living drug and alcohol free Increased standard of living and achievement
Lack of economic and racial diversity	Renovate apartments and build new housing Create neighborhood watch	Attract higher income families to area Decrease racial tension among ethnic minorities	Mixed income families and ethnically integrated community.

Figure 7. Program theory - program services to address needs of new residents.

Conclusion/Recommendations

Much information was gathered through the conversations before, during and after the actual survey questions with the residents. The residents were very honest and upfront about what they wanted changed and what they liked. It is very important that Hope VI, Hamilton College and the City of Utica stay in contact with these residents. They provide a valuable resource and have their fingers on the pulse of the community. The majority of the residents are successful in a tough community and would like to see changes in the right direction. The City of Utica and the Utica Municipal Housing Authority are working hard to clean up the area and to address long term goals, but there needs to be a very viable short run solution that will help the community until those long term goals are met.

- Before Cornhill revitalization can really take steps forward, the crime and drug situation has to be solved. No one will want to move in or stay in a neighborhood when there is so much illegal activity going
- One goal for revitalization is to get the neighbors together doing activities and involving them in the many services already provided before assigning new services.

Section Three: The Revitalization of the Target Community of Cornhill

Geographically, the Cornhill target community is defined as an approximately fifty city block area in the northwest quadrant of Cornhill. Physical improvements and crime prevention will provide the main focus for the target community section of the HOPE VI program evaluation. At this time not enough progress has occurred with the community school for it to play a large role in target community. Evaluating the current revitalization of the Target Community of Cornhill is focused on two areas:

1. Affordable quality housing and improved appearance of the neighborhood
2. Decreased crime and drug activity

Program Description

The HOPE VI project in Utica follows other HOPE VI projects with goals of improving public housing structures, revitalizing public housing communities, and decreasing the isolation and concentration of very low income families. The Utica Municipal Housing Authority created specific goals for the Utica project, which require review. The first stated goal is to “Replace 111 severely distressed units in Washington Courts with a minimum of 194 affordable units in Cornhill” (Owens-Manley, 2005, p.11). The target area for revitalization has been identified as a fifty block area in the Cornhill section of Utica.

At the time of publication of the year one report only Phase I: Kempleton had been completed. The second phase is scheduled to start this summer. The Year 1 report asserts that the impact of the new homes on the community is evident. Residents are pleased with the new homes and their contribution to the appearance of the neighborhood.

HOPE VI provides financing help for new homeowners. A baseline household income of \$16,000 annually has been set as the minimum for eligibility for moving into a HOPE VI home. Phase II: Steuben Village had construction beginning on four properties in July of 2004, five properties by September 15th, and ten by November 1. These properties are intended as a mix of public and non-public housing and are scattered throughout the revitalization area. Construction was also slated for Phase IV: Oneida Homes planned as affordable homeownership units in the immediate vicinity of Martin Luther King Elementary (initially, not all of the planned building has sites yet). All of Phase IV is new construction, with eleven homes scheduled to be built in 2004-2005 and twelve in 2005-2006.

Kempleton is the first phase of the HOPE VI building, with twenty seven units have built or renovated. Construction is under way on approximately thirty more out of a planned one hundred seventy to one hundred ninety four units (HOPE VI Development update literature). The minimum number of units has dropped, but the planned replacements well exceed the number demolished for an overall gain in housing. In terms of affordability **three of the four phases of the project have received Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC) status and all have permanent financing set up** (Development update, Rebuild Mohawk Valley, Inc.).

In addition to the improvements to housing, Utica MHA will include **improvements to the neighborhood** which are scheduled to be completed in 2008 along with housing construction. One of the improvements will be a **park and playground** area which the city of Utica has committed to build. The hope is that the playground will, “tie the new housing development activity to a **renovated Martin Luther King school**” (Renewal Areas Plan). Improvements to the infrastructure of the community will hopefully make it more appealing and tie people together. Some of the **planned infrastructure improvements** are newly paved streets, sidewalks and curbing, ornamental street lighting, and trees and landscaping. These improvements are planned to start in the renewal areas in the summer of 2005 and be completed by year end 2005. The funds for the infrastructure improvements are coming from a combination of state and federal funds and private investment.

Out of the fifty block area that comprises the Cornhill target community, **seven Community Renewal Areas have been designated for specific focus**. These areas consist generally of two to three city blocks where concentrated improvement will occur. The improvements “will involve new construction, façade improvements, interior home improvements, systematic codes enforcement, infrastructure improvements, and community services” (Renewal Areas Plan). **All of the renewal areas will have significant HOPE VI construction work**. The improvements to the houses will come first and be followed by infrastructure improvements.

Program Theory

The two needs addressed by the HOPE VI Project for the target community are to decrease crime and drug activity and to increase affordable quality housing and the appearance of the neighborhood. Program activities are listed, proximal outcomes and distal outcomes in Figure 8.

Needs	Activities	Proximal Outcomes	Distal Outcomes
Decrease crime & drug activity	Screening new residents Neighborhood watch association and security staff Utica Police Cornhill task force	Increased social cohesion Increased perception of safety Higher collective efficacy	A safe and attractive Cornhill Community
Affordable quality housing & improved appearance of neighborhood	Construct new housing & rehabilitate existing housing Access funds for street & sidewalk repair Increase recreational areas	Decrease vacant lots Noticeable aesthetic improvements Increased resources spent in neighborhood	A mixed income & racially diverse neighborhood

Figure 8: Program theory for Target Neighborhood Revitalization.

Methods

This year’s evaluation of the Cornhill target community included two components, decreasing crime in the neighborhood and improving the physical appearance of the neighborhood. The methodology chart in Figure 9 gives an idea of our initial plans and expectations based on the identified needs.

Process Analysis	Is the construction proceeding on schedule? What program does Utica have to combat crime and what are the results?	Obtain current progress report, speak with builders. Weed and Seed Reports and observation from another tour.	Compare with planned progress set forth in Year 1 report. Evidence of improvement in Weed and Seed report and visual assessment.
Proximal Outcomes	Do the residents feel safer? Do the residents interact more as a community?	Survey at future date Survey at future date	Compare to First Year Report Survey
Distal Outcomes	Is Cornhill a safer community than before HOPE VI? Is Cornhill a more attractive neighborhood than prior to HOPE VI?	Weed and Seed reports and Utica police statistics from future years. Ratings system applied over future years.	Decreases number of crimes. A significantly higher overall rating at the end of the HOPE VI project.

Figure 9. Methodology for Target Neighborhood Evaluation

To assess the physical appearance of the community as a whole, a home ranking scale was devised to rank houses, so overall assessments of the quality of housing and trends could be determined. The scale was made to be a simple assessment of housing that could be carried out in subsequent years of the evaluation so it could be determined if progress was being made. The scale ranked houses with a score of one (lowest) to five (highest). Houses of ranking one were those that were unoccupied (boarded up) or in an unlivable state of disrepair. Houses of a five ranking were all HOPE VI constructed houses and any others of exceptional upkeep and quality. Houses were ranked on quality of construction, outward appearance and cleanliness of yard. This ranking system intended to provide a picture of the quality of housing in the neighborhood, so improvements in the neighborhood housing could be assessed objectively.

The ranking of the houses took place during two walking tours, one on April 25th, 2005 and one on April 27th, 2005. The first walking tour was done with John Mills, who identified the fourteen and fifteen hundred blocks of Miller and Howard Street as a place to start. The second walking tour covered all of Renewal Area One, which includes all of Louisa and Leah streets and portions of Hobart, Stueben, Eagle, and Elm streets. All of the houses on those streets were ranked on the same criteria, described above. Time constraints prevented ranking of more renewal area houses.

Results

Needs Assessment

During our walking tour of the Cornhill Community we observed the high level of crime and drug activity in the neighborhood. While the new HOPE VI houses did help the overall appearance of the neighborhood, the prevalence of problem homes detracted from the neighborhoods overall appeal. John Mill identified these problem houses as areas of know drug activity. These homes were in disrepair and the yards were covered with trash. The high level of drug and crime activity must be addressed before the Cornhill Community can be improved. A decrease in the crime and drug activity will increase the overall appearance and appeal of the Cornhill Community.

Process Analysis

The HOPE VI staff is working with the Weed and Seed program to reduce drug and crime activity in the Cornhill Community. In an interview with Steve Smith of HOPE VI he addressed their efforts to reduce crime and drug activity in the Cornhill Community. We also review Weed and Seed's progress report for the last six months of 2004. The interview and progress report gave us a clear picture of the process. Steve Smith outlined HOPE VI's crime and drug activity reduction plan. He noted that all new residents were subject to a background check for a criminal record and highlighted the hired security that patrols the Cornhill Community.

The Weed and Seed progress report exhibited a much more detailed plan to reduce drug and crime activity in Cornhill. Weed and Seed has initiated a number of town hall meeting in conjunction with HOPE VI, and public safety was one of the discussion points.⁷ Weed and Seed has a two-pronged approach to reducing the crime and drug activity in Cornhill. Weed and Seed is combining Law Enforcement and Community Policing in their effort. The goal of Weed and Seed's Law Enforcement effort is, "To reduce the incidence of violent crime and street level narcotic activity" (Allen, 2004, p. 7).

The Utica Police Department is working in conjunction with federal, state and local law enforcement agencies to achieve their goal. With their goal they have highlighted five objectives. The first objective is to increase the number of arrests in the target area through executing existing warrants. The second objective is to increase the number of arrests for prostitution and patronage of prostitution in the target area. The third objective is to increase the number of for the sale or distribution of tobacco and alcohol to minors. The fourth objective is to reduce the level of violent crimes and drug activity by increasing felony arrests with the execution of high risk warrants. The final objective is to reduce drug and crime activity by increasing high visibility patrols within the neighborhood. Community Policing will augment the Law Enforcement effort.

Outcome Evaluation

An important goal of HOPE VI is to create an attractive, model community and with all of the grant money going to construction, assessing the physical appearance of the neighborhood is integral. In order to successfully evaluate the progress made in the attractiveness of the community a basic rating system was devised. The ranking system took into account quality of construction, outward appearance and cleanliness of yard. This year's rating results are intended to act as a baseline for future evaluators to track overall improvements in physical appearance of the target community neighborhood. Over the course of the two tours through the Cornhill target community individual rankings for two hundred thirty houses were compiled. While these rankings do not tell a complete story they provide a picture of the housing in two areas of the target community, Renewal Area One and the fourteen and fifteen hundred blocks of Miller and Howard streets.

The walking tour provided a great deal of information about the target community, through observation. From touring the neighborhood, it became apparent that scattered site housing really meant just that. **The improved houses cropped up at different places along the many streets** surrounding the community school. Having new homes in different sites gave the area **a feel of liveliness as each street seemed to have some sort of activity. The new homes seem to serve as an example to other homeowners on the street rather than segregating the neighborhood into new and old developments.** The Cornhill target area does have plenty of work ahead of it, as the non-HOPE VI homes on the street need work in order to have a balance of appearance in the neighborhood. Several homes in disrepair were reported areas of heavy drug trafficking. **No crime statistics could show as well as personal observation that the homes that housed drug dealers were clearly eyesores to the neighborhood.** Seeing the direct correlation between the homes of drug trafficking and their poor appearance, made it clear that the drug dealers need to be pushed out of the neighborhood from an aesthetic perspective.

The ratings for the individual houses ran the gamut with little discernable pattern. Out of the two hundred and thirty houses that were ranked the **mean average rating was 2.76 out of 5.** The mean average for the two areas differed little with Renewal Area One (115 homes rated) scoring a 2.8 and the Miller and Howard blocks (115 homes) scoring a 2.4. The street rankings showed much wide gaps ranging from a high mean of 3.33 for the twenty one homes on Leah Street and a low mean of 1.9 on Louisa Street. It is important to note that Leah Street featured seven HOPE VI construction homes (which automatically received scores of five); while Louisa Street had no finished HOPE VI construction at the time of assessment (both are in Renewal Area One). The home rating scores for the Miller and Howard blocks were much had a much smaller difference with Miller scoring a mean of 2.96 and Howard scoring a mean of 2.58. That area featured no HOPE VI construction at this time but did have seven houses which scored a five.

Area/Street	Number of Houses Rated	Mean Rating
Miller	55	2.959
James	3	2.333
Howard	57	2.579 Renewal
Area I		
Stueben	29	2.926
Hobart	17	2.412
Leah	21	3.333
Louisa	16	1.875
Elm	18	3.056
Eagle	14	2.769

Table 1. Ratings of external housing conditions in two areas of Cornhill

The distribution of the scores shows a more complete figure of how the individual streets shaped up and what contributed to the mean ratings (Table 2). From the distribution of individual home scores generalizations about the housing conditions can be made. For example out of sixteen houses Louisa Street had no fours or fives and only three scores of three indicating that all of the housing on Louisa Street needs considerable work as it is consistent poor. Conversely, Eagle Street has only one score of one, while having two five's out of fourteen homes. Eagle Street then needs to work on that one home and the five homes which scored a two to get the street to consistent high quality. Leah Street had seven scores of three and seven scores of five in a twenty one house street indicating a need to upgrade some of the homes so there will not be a glaring disparity in quality. Most all the streets had few homes at either extreme with the majority of homes landing in the middle as six out of eight streets had a median score of three. The two other streets had median scores of two. The scores provide a picture of a neighborhood with a little less than satisfactory housing, with specific pockets of excellent and poor housing.

Number and Condition of House Ratings					
	1	2	3	4	5
Miller	8	12	16	13	6
James	1	2	0	0	0
Howard	9	15	25	7	1
Stueben	3	8	12	2	4
Hobart	2	9	4	1	1
Leah	2	4	7	1	7
Louisa	5	8	3	0	0
Elm	0	4	9	5	0
Eagle	1	5	6	0	2
Miller/Howard	18	29	41	20	7

Table 2. Distribution of external housing condition ratings in two areas of Cornhill (Ratings = 1-5 where 5 is the best.)

The Cornhill Community still appears to be ridden with crime and drug activity, yet the **Weed and Seed progress report clearly shows improvement**. The Weed and Seed progress report notes that all goals have been met or surpassed. They have seen and increase in arrests across all of their objectives. The program is clearly having an impact on crime and drug activity in the neighborhood. The impact of Weed and Seed's program on the appearance of the Cornhill Community may take more time. The Weed and Seed program met all of its arrest goals within the Law Enforcement program.' There were vast improvements in police visibility, 157 high visibility patrols in the period from July 1 — December 31, 2004. Weed and Seed's Community Policing program also met its goals. There were 36 block association meetings with high ranking Utica Police Officers in attendance. There was also a high level of community involvement in the "Hot Spot" program; there were 91 "Hot Spot" forms submitted resulting in 79 "Hot Spot" locations. The Weed and Seed program is meeting or surpassing all of its goals.

Discussion/Recommendations

No program is without its flaws, and the housing ratings of the two areas in the Cornhill target community prove this point. The HOPE VI housing has done a great job improving the appearance of the neighborhoods, but at the expense of continuity. Now streets feature beautiful, model homes next to boarded up collapsing homes. In order for the HOPE VI project to be successful in improving the appearance of the neighborhood all the houses in the community need to improve. Some home owners are receiving grants through HOPE VI and with the help of HOPE VI workers to improve their homes. This will help a great deal in getting the whole neighborhood closer to the level of the HOPE VI homes. Hopefully the members of the community will see the model homes and be inspired to improve the appearance of their own homes. Whether or not this will happen is the biggest hole in the HOPE VI plan. If the new homes have the desired effect then the community will truly be a model community. If not, it will be a community lacking in continuity with alternately attractive and dilapidated homes.

Another important question still to be answered is, "What effect will the infrastructure improvements have on the community both in appearance and in encouraging residents to improve their homes?" At the time of this year's rankings, no improvements had begun in these two particular areas, so the promised improvements could not be taken into account. Also no parks or green spaces have begun construction or been designated so they could not be factored in accordingly. The rating system was begun in hopes of having a way to quantify the improvements to the neighborhood. When they occur, the improving scores should reflect the community's improvement.

With the institution of a rating system into the evaluation some discussion is needed into its limits and flaws. The rating system while quantifying community and housing improvements retains some subjectivity. A set of rating criteria has been established for future evaluators to follow, but the personal feelings of the evaluators will always play some role in the ratings. Additionally the rating system was only able to be applied to two hundred and thirty houses, including one out of seven targeted renewal areas. Ideally the rankings should cover a much

larger area, if not the whole Cornhill target community to assess the success of the HOPE VI program in improving the appearance of the neighborhood.

- After this year's evaluation it is recommended that the housing rating system continue to be used as prescribed as a method of quantifying the results of the HOPE VI project. Continuing to use the rating system will help provide a better conceptual idea of the improvement of housing conditions. Although too time consuming to fit into this evaluation it is possible to create a map of the streets rated and color code houses according to their score in order to provide a true picture of housing quality in the Cornhill neighbor. It is our hope that the rating system will make future evaluations on the quality of housing in the target community much easier to assess. Photographs that have been taken of housing in the neighborhood are another source of data to evaluate and assess housing improvements.

The orchestrated effort of HOPE VI and Weed and Seed is having a positive effect on the Cornhill Community. There has been a marked increase in the number of arrests within the community. However, we believe that HOPE VI could do more to address the crime and drug activity within the target community. While there have been an increase in the amount of arrests, this may not correlate with decreased crime and drug activity. Prior to the Weed and Seed program, there was little effort to combat the crime and drug activity in Cornhill; the increase in arrest may simply represent an increased police presence in Cornhill. It is very difficult for us access the progress due to the young program. We are also unsure of the new programs effect on residents' perception of safety.

- We recommend that either HOPE VI staff or future program evaluators use a survey of the residents' perceived safety as a way of determining the projects success.

Summary

Year Two of the program evaluation focused on self-sufficiency of the former Washington Court residents, new residents of Kembleton apartments, and rating improvements of housing in the target community of Cornhill. The road to self-sufficiency with the Washington Courts residents is difficult to determine, due to so many of the residents being elderly and disabled. Few are employed, and disabilities have not been fully defined as permanent or temporary. It is unclear how much progress can hope to be made with the residents as a group toward employability or self-sufficiency and how the end goal with each resident will be defined. Kembleton residents are satisfied in the main and hopeful that the community will continue to move in the right direction. They have concerns, though, about crime and drugs in the neighborhood and unresponsiveness of their landlords, and communication could be improved. Housing improvements are very visible in the target community, and new, model homes stand out among dilapidated housing in need of improvement. The next few years will demonstrate how successful the HOPE VI Project will be in moving those improvements, including promised infrastructure improvements toward a more unified and improved presentation of the neighborhood.

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Appendix A

April 14: Questions for Bill Bryant and Carmen Roman-Castro

1. Definition of Self-sufficiency
2. To what extent have individual/family employability assessments been made?
3. Are there services that can be designed so that residents can be employed within them?
4. What is your perception of the overall motivation of residents to seek jobs and skill training?
5. How aware are the residents of the employment situation and opportunities in their area?
6. Are residents asking for services in education, job training or family support?
7. What is the situation with disabled population and long-term unemployment?

Appendix B. Information Regarding the Gainfully Employed Washington Courts Residents

<i>Employer</i>	<i>Employment Status: Full-time (F) or Part-Time (P)?</i>	<i>Benefits</i>	<i>Length of Employment</i>	<i>Income</i>	<i>Dependents</i>	<i>Education (highest level achieved)</i>	<i>Assistance</i>	<i>Source of Assistance</i>	<i>Rank (1-5)</i>	
Day Care	F	n/a	6 mos	\$11,148.00 annually	2	2 years of college	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4	
Janitor (St. Luke's)	F	yes	3 mos	\$8/hr	7	11 th grade	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4	
St. Joseph's Nursing Home	F	n/a	9 mos	\$7/hr	4	12 th grade	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4	
P.G. Green	F	yes	n/a	\$13,848.00 annually	1	12 th grade	No	-	5	Note: second in-household income, \$26,000
Swag's Factory	F	no	3 yrs	\$10,784.00 annually	2	11 th grade	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	3	
Gold Metal Rome	F/P	n/a	5 yrs	\$9,672.00 annually	5	12 th grade and vocational training	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4	
Utica Auditorium	F/P	n/a	10 yrs	\$4,238.00 annually	0	11 th grade	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	3	
Wal-Mart	F/P	n/a	2 yrs	\$13,260 annually	4	G.E.D.	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4	Note: second in-household income employed, \$10,608
Con Med	F	Yes	22 yrs	\$17,212 annually	0	10 th grade	n/a	n/a	5	

ASC	F/P	Yes	2 yrs	\$19,760.00 annually	0	Attending college	No	-	5
ASC	F/P	Yes	3 yrs	\$14,136.00 annually	0	Attending College	No	-	5
R.C.I.L.	F	No	18 mos	\$11,076.00 annually	4	G.E.D.	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4
Utica Head Start	F	n/a	n/a	\$15,000 annually	2	College	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	5
Utica Transit Authority	F	Yes	16 yrs	\$19,344.00	0	11 th grade	No	-	5
Price Chopper	P	No	2 yrs	\$12,972.00 annually	3	College degree	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4
Utica Neighborhood Center	F	n/a	18 mos	\$12,269.00 annually	1	Some college	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	3
Bank of America	F	Yes	1 yr	\$17,640.00	1	Some college	Yes	n/a	5
Utica Auditorium	P	No	n/a	\$2,756.00	1	8 th grade	Yes	n/a	2
O.D. Paper	F/P	No	7 yrs	\$18,848.00	3	12 th grade	Yes	Oneida County Dept. of Social Services	4

