

WESTSIDE-SOUTH VALLEY WEED AND SEED STRATEGY

**UPDATED SOCIAL ATTAINMENT, DEMOGRAPHIC,
AND CRIME SITE CHARACTERISTICS**

Report Prepared for:

The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Strategy Steering Committee

The Residents / Stakeholders of the Neighborhoods Comprising
The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Site

And

The Department of Family and Community Services,
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to provide a general description of the neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Of particular interest are the structural and demographic characteristics of the neighborhoods that comprise the site as well as the patterns of criminal behavior that occur within the site's boundaries. This work builds upon the 2005 report, "*The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Site: Social Attainment, Demographic, and Crime Characteristics in Nine Contiguous Neighborhoods*," by updating community information and crime trends to the most recently available data¹. The information is presented as an aid to strategic planning for Weed and Seed site decision-makers, and provides information to community stakeholders. It is also useful baseline information to assist local evaluation efforts. This report was prepared by staff of the New Mexico Statistical Analysis Center (SAC), the research partner for this Weed and Seed site.

The Weed and Seed Strategy²

The Weed and Seed approach is a community-based strategy sponsored by the Community Capacity Development Office, (CCDO), Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice. Though communities apply for Weed and Seed funding, Weed and Seed is designed to operate as a strategy, not as a grant program. This strategy functions using a comprehensive multi-agency approach to law enforcement, crime prevention, and community revitalization. Weed and Seed is intended to revitalize communities by supporting local community based efforts to prevent, control, and reduce violent crime, drug abuse, and gang activity in designated high-crime sites across the country. Four fundamental principles underlie the Weed and Seed strategy: collaboration, coordination, community participation, and leveraging of existing community resources. The governance of the strategy is through a Steering Committee,

¹ New Mexico Criminal Justice Analysis Center. 2005. "The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Site: Social Attainment, Demographic, and Crime Characteristics in Nine Contiguous Neighborhoods." Albuquerque, NM: New Mexico Criminal Justice Analysis Center, Institute for Social Research, University of New Mexico. November 30, 2005.

which is maintained by representatives from the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site geographical area.

Weed and Seed relies on several strategies to meet the goal of community revitalization: law enforcement; community-oriented policing; crime prevention, intervention, and treatment; and neighborhood restoration. These activities are organized into a dual approach to community crime reduction. First, law enforcement agencies and prosecutors cooperate in "weeding out" violent criminals and drug abusers. Second, public agencies and community-based private organizations collaborate to "seed" human services into Weed and Seed communities, including prevention, intervention, treatment, and neighborhood restoration programs. Community-oriented policing bridges the weeding and seeding elements, which are reinforced by the Weed subcommittee members.

Citizen involvement is critical to the Weed and Seed approach. Residents of designated sites facilitate weeding activities by identifying groups and locations for justice intervention, and by providing information to assist law enforcement professionals. Residents also support seeding efforts by identifying community needs, participating in planning activities, and participating in programs as staff and volunteers.

In most Weed and Seed sites, (including the Westside-South Valley site) a law enforcement task force (the Weed subcommittee) comprised from all levels of government join together to reduce both crime and fear of crime, and to set the stage for community revitalization. Community-oriented policing embraces two key concepts: community engagement and problem solving. Community policing strategies foster a sense of responsibility within the community for solving crime problems and help develop cooperative relationships between the police and residents.

The prevention, intervention, and treatment component concentrates an array of human services on the designated neighborhood and links law enforcement, social services agencies, the private sector, and the community to improve the overall quality of services to residents. Every Weed and Seed site is required to establish a Safe Haven, a multi-service center where many youth- and adult-oriented services are delivered. The

² This description of the Weed and Seed strategy is adapted from the United States Department of Justice's Community Capacity Development Office website, at <http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/ccdo/ws/welcome.html>.

Westside-South Valley site has four Safe Haven sites. Through coordinated use of federal, state, local, and private-sector resources, neighborhood restoration strategies focus on economic development, employment opportunities for residents, and improvements to housing and the physical environment of the neighborhood. In the Westside-South Valley site, the Seed subcommittee collaborates with stakeholders and other partners on proactive measures toward development of human resources and programs that encourage positive alternatives. The creation, building and sustaining of community civic relationships enhances alliances toward a systemic functioning strategy to improve quality of life.

At each site, the U.S. Attorney's Office (USAO) plays a key leadership role in organizing local officials, community representatives, and other key stakeholders to form a steering committee. The USAO also facilitates coordination of federal, state, and local law enforcement efforts so that sites effectively use federal law enforcement partners in weeding strategies. In some instances, the U.S. Attorney's Office helps sites mobilize resources from a variety of federal agencies for seeding programs.

Promoting the long-term health and resilience of the community is a true goal of Weed and Seed. Identifying and securing existing and new resources and funding sources are essential in sustaining the Weed and Seed strategy beyond the life of the grant. Collaboration and partnerships are the core ingredients to assure a successful site.

Scope of the Report

This report is organized to address two principle goals. First, the information contained in this report provides the foundation for site evaluation efforts. The 2005 Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Site report provided crime data from 2000 to 2004, to serve as a baseline period from which to assess the success of Weed and Seed activities during the previous contract period. The SAC has continued to monitor crime trend data and will present expanded and updated statistics covering 1999-2006 in this report. Additionally, updates to water quality, voter registration and school performance measures have been added to this report.³ These updates should facilitate the manner and degree to which those involved in Weed and Seed activities in the Westside-South Valley

³ Decennial census-based data such as housing and demographics were not updated as newer data is not yet available.

site are able to evaluate the law enforcement, community policing, prevention/intervention/treatment and neighborhood restoration goals specified in the Westside-South Valley site's grant application to the federal Community Capacity and Development Office, throughout the contract period of this five-year US-DOJ grant.

Second, and consistent with the perspectives of interactive assessment and empowerment evaluation, this report is intended to provide basic information in a clear and useful format to the residents, neighborhood associations, and the community and professional leadership of the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site. The meaningful engagement of citizens and community leaders is critical to the success of the Weed and Seed strategy. We intend to facilitate their participation by widely disseminating the findings of this report through various venues. We have refined and expanded this document and it is our understanding that the Westside-South Valley strategy steering committee will make this report and its findings available to community members and key policy stakeholders with the aim of enhancing community engagement and improving the public dialog between citizens and government decision-makers.

The next chapter provides a general description of land use and resources in the neighborhoods that comprise the Westside-South Valley site. This will be followed in Chapter III by a presentation of individual and household characteristics of those residing in the Westside-South Valley site, including demographic, socio-economic, and social attainment information. Chapter IV discusses crime patterns within the site. These trends and descriptions are compared in several instances to those in the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, whenever such comparisons are appropriate.⁴ The report concludes with a general summary of the findings and directions for future activities in Chapter V.

⁴ The previous report also included comparisons with both the State of New Mexico and the United States. We have chosen to exclude these comparisons as the data are collected and compiled differently which may result in misleading interpretations.

CHAPTER II

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WESTSIDE-SOUTH VALLEY SITE

Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed activities began in 2003. Due to its persistent crime problems and other related high-risk characteristics, i.e., above average rates of residential mobility and poverty, and below average rates of resident employment and educational attainment, the area was selected as a Weed and Seed site in New Mexico.⁵ The boundaries of the site cut across those of the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County, recognized neighborhoods in the City and County, and census tracts.⁶ There are six active neighborhood associations within the Weed and Seed area: Alamosa, Crestview Bluff, Los Altos Civic, Pat Hurley, Vecinos del Bosque, and West Mesa. However, the Los Altos Civic neighborhood association has not maintained membership with the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed steering committee. Additionally, there are two other neighborhood associations that are no longer active (a portion of Armijo and all of Five Points) which are contained within the site. Finally, there are portions of the site that do not have any designation as a recognized neighborhood or neighborhood association. The area that makes up the present-day Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site is illustrated in the map below (Map II.1).

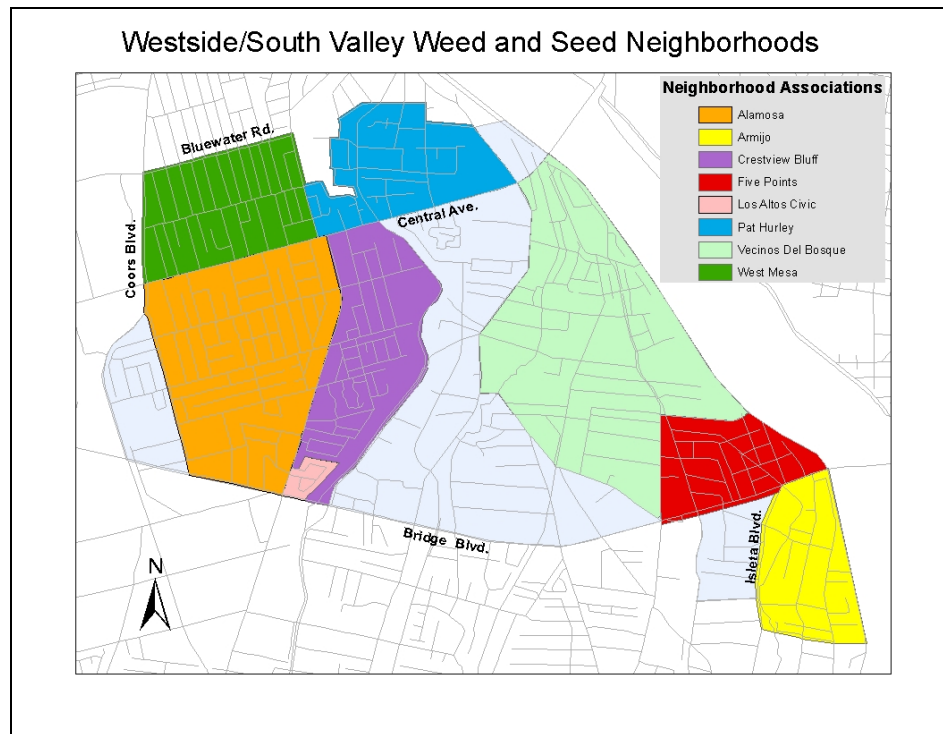
It is noteworthy that Central Avenue intersects this site. Central was the original route for Highway 66 through Albuquerque. After the development of the federal Interstate Highway system in the 1960s, many motels and other commercial businesses along Central fell into decay, creating blight and either attracted more high risk clientele or were replaced with less respectable establishments. As a consequence, the Central Avenue corridor became a magnet for drug and vice crimes. Government and private sector partners have labored in recent years to improve the area through strategies such as economic development, community restoration, neighborhood beautification, expansion of social services, public transportation improvement, zoning changes and nuisance abatement. These efforts have produced positive effects and, in fact, some relatively

⁵ See Application for Weed and Seed Official Recognition, Albuquerque, New Mexico, 2002.

⁶ Four census tracts are within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site. Census tract 23 is completely within the area; portions of census tracts 24.01, 24.02 and 23.00 are also contained within this area.

large areas within the site enjoy residential stability and relatively high levels of public safety. Still, the Central Avenue corridor is an area noted for its urban social problems relative to the entire Albuquerque metropolitan area.

MAP II.I



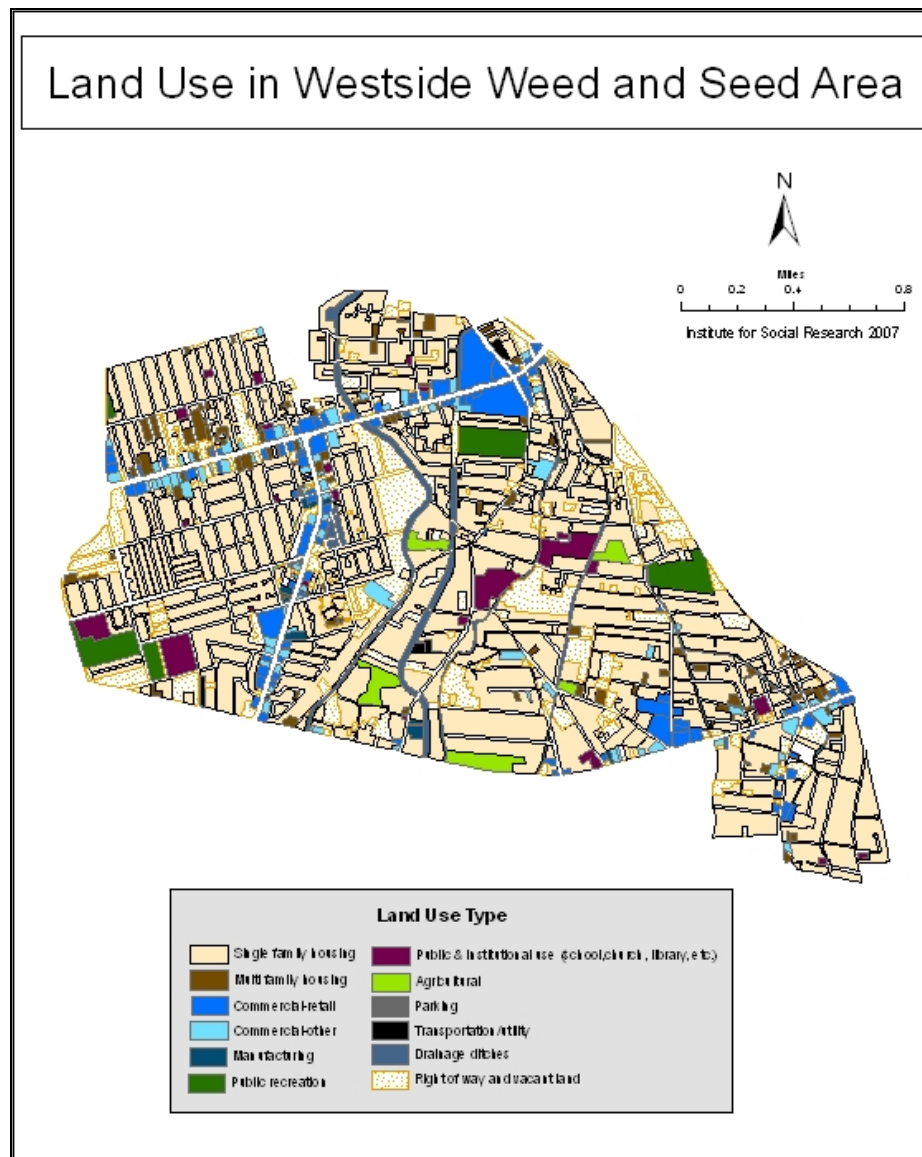
Land Use

Using data maintained by the City of Albuquerque's Planning Department, we are able to describe land use patterns in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site and gain some insight into the social environment of the area.⁷ Consistent with the rest of the city, the most common land uses within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site are single- and multiple-family residences, commercial/service/manufacturing use and vacant land. The area contains one group home/social rehabilitation residence and twenty religious facilities. The Westside-South Valley site currently has one public library, three public and two private schools, one community center, one fire station, and

⁷ See <http://www.cabq.gov/gis/download.html>

six parks. Other social service and City and County community support facilities are located on the periphery of the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site.

MAP II.2



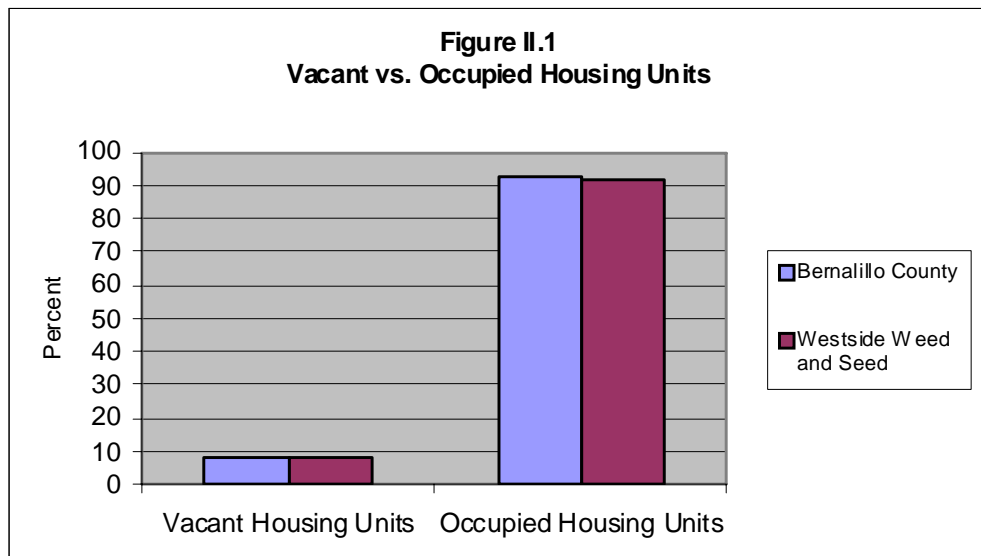
Housing

Over one-quarter of the residential properties in the Westside-South Valley site are designated as multi-family housing. This proportion is slightly greater than that in the city as a whole, where about 21% of residential units are multi-family. Most of these multi-unit residential properties in the Westside-South Valley site have fewer than 19 units; only one has more than 20 units.

Slightly less than 4% of single-family residences are located within mobile home parks. While these homes comprise a small percentage of all single-family residences, it is twice that of the city (3.6% compared to 1.8%).

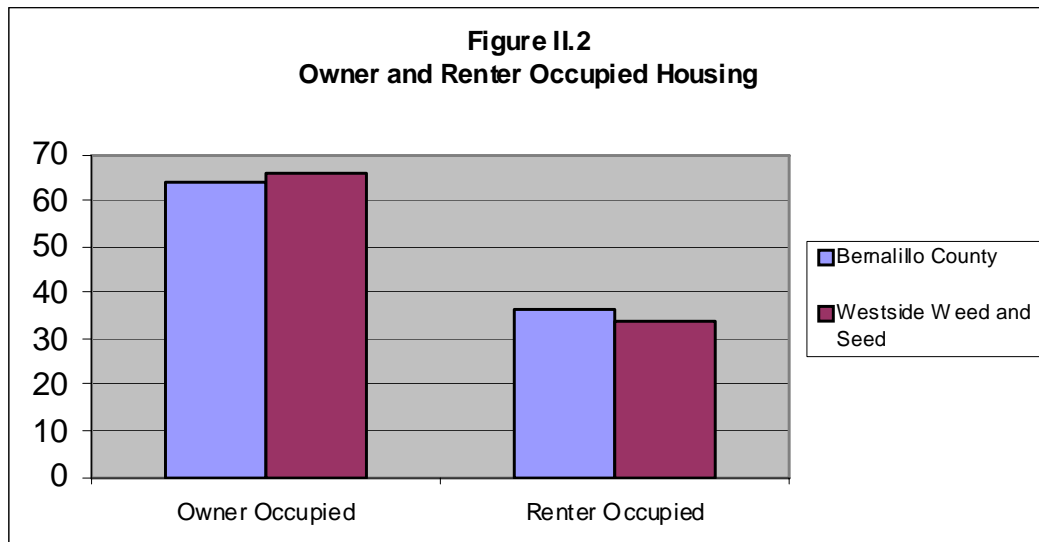
Vacant housing

As illustrated in Figure II.1, the percentage of vacant housing units is slightly higher in the Weed and Seed area (8.1%) than in Bernalillo County as a whole (7.6%). This is likely a reflection of the large number of rental units within the area.



Renter vs. owner-occupied housing

Among occupied housing units, Figure II.2 shows that a somewhat greater percentage of homes are owner occupied in the Westside-South Valley site, compared to Albuquerque as a whole.



Population

The 2000 census indicates that 16230 individuals live within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site.⁸ Given the rather small land area encompassed by the site, the overall population density is relatively high. Indeed, the population density is about twice that of the Albuquerque area. Population estimates suggest that the population in the area has increased by approximately 1.3% over the last five years.⁹

Public and Private Schools

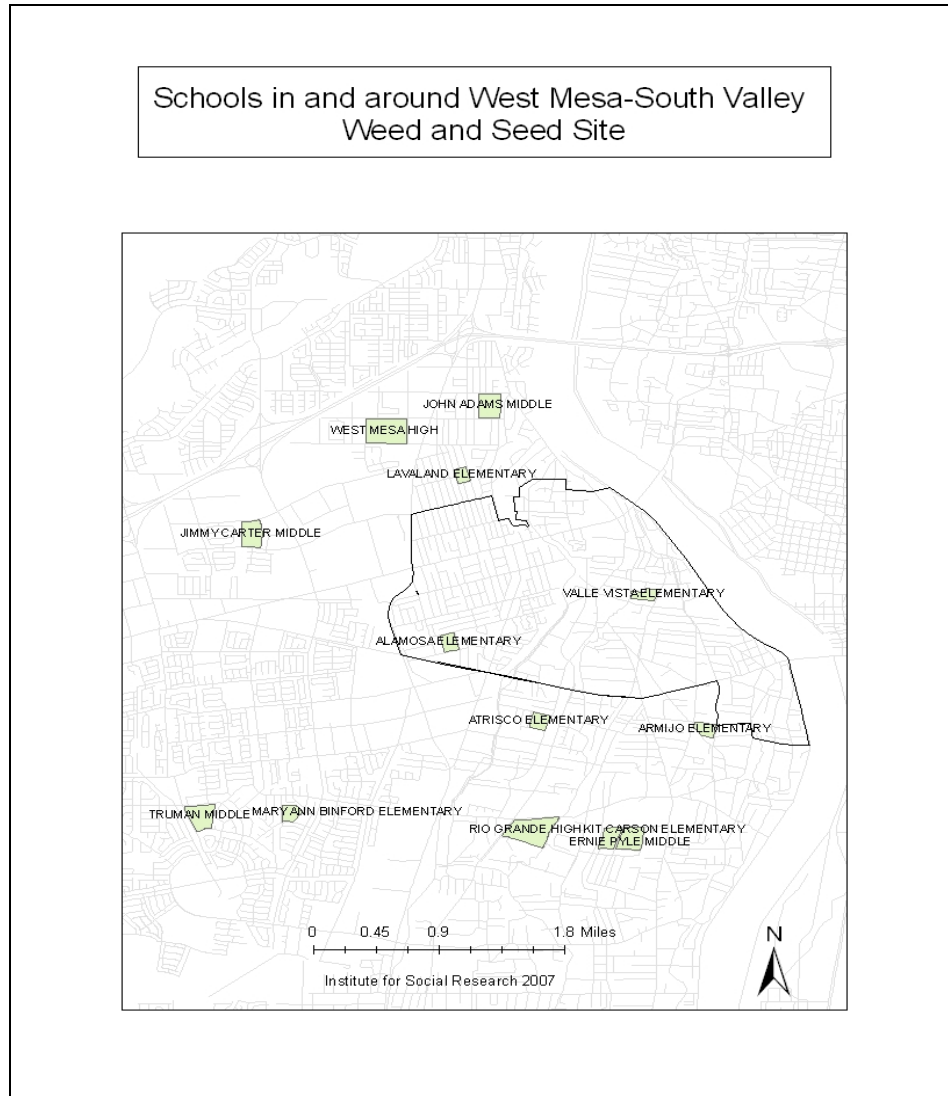
Students living within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site live within the boundaries of two APS clusters: West Mesa High School or Rio Grande High School. A new Albuquerque Public Schools (APS) southwest area high school is presently under construction. As shown in Map II.3, there are two public schools (K-12) located within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed boundaries. Both are

⁸ Population was determined at the block level. If a census block was mostly outside the area, it was excluded; conversely, if it was mostly inside the neighborhood, it was included.

⁹ See CCDO website (<http://www.weedandseeddatacenter.org/map.aspx?state=NM>)

elementary schools: Alamosa Elementary School and Valle Vista ES. Alamosa ES falls into the West Mesa High School cluster while Valle Vista ES falls in the Rio Grande High School cluster. The new high school will support both cluster feeder schools.

MAP II.3



Map II.4 illustrates the location of the public schools within the West Mesa and Rio Grande Clusters. The boundary of the Westside-South Valley site is outlined. In addition to Alamosa Elementary School, there are six other elementary schools in the West Mesa cluster as well as three middle schools (John Adams MS, Jimmy Carter MS and Truman MS). The Rio Grande cluster includes a total of ten elementary and three

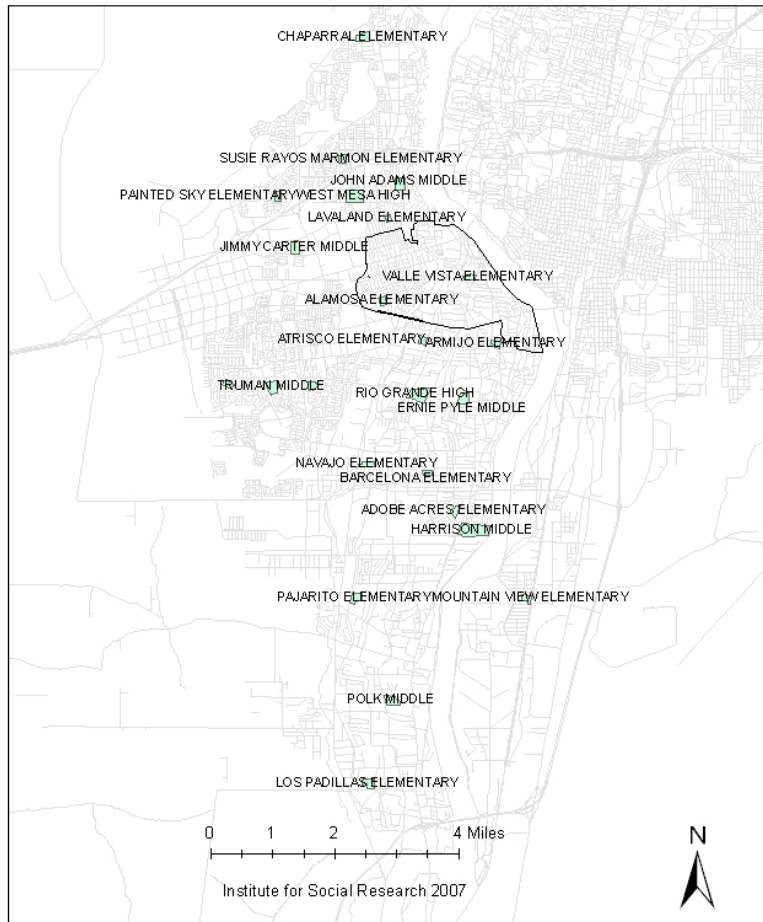
middle schools (Ernie Pyle MS, Harrison MS, and Polk MS). Valle Vista ES is the only elementary school from the Rio Grande cluster located within the Weed and Sees Site.

Elementary school students within the Weed and Seed site may attend one of four elementary schools.¹⁰ In addition to the two schools located within the site, two other elementary schools—Armijo and Lavaland—serve the students living within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site. The boundaries of three middle schools cut across the site. Those living within the boundaries of the West Mesa cluster may attend one of two middle schools: John Adams MS and Truman MS. Ernie Pyle MS from the Rio Grande cluster also draws students within the sites boundaries. Each of the clusters encompasses a large physical area. The distance between the two furthest schools in the West Mesa cluster is about six miles; for Rio Grande, the distance between the two furthest schools is about 8 miles.

¹⁰ This description of the schools serving Weed and Seed area students applies to those who attend school within their cluster boundaries. APS does allow transfers to other schools; therefore, not all students within the site may actually attend these schools.

MAP II.4

Schools in Rio Grande and West Mesa Clusters



Most children in the area are enrolled in a public school. Sample data from the U.S. census indicates that approximately 93% of children living in the Westside-South Valley site enrolled in grades kindergarten through 12th attend public school. In Bernalillo County as a whole, 88% of enrolled children attend a public school.

Head Start is a national program that serves children from birth to age 5. Its goal is to increase school readiness among children in low-income families.¹¹ There is one head start center (Rio Grande Head Start) near the boundaries of the W&S area.

The City of Albuquerque also maintains a Child and Family Development Center at the Alamosa Center facility that is among the largest of the four Safe Haven sites.

School enrollment, educational attainment and other issues related to crime and quality of life in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site are examined in greater depth in Chapters III and IV.

Environmental Concerns

There are many pollutants that can affect quality of life in any area. However, many of these cannot be measured within a small area. For example, air pollution is obviously not confined to a small geographic location, although the site coordinator has reported that there is an identified air quality problem within the site and stakeholders are developing a set of short long-term solutions. The quality of the water supply in Albuquerque, however, can be measured in relatively small locales. Water in Albuquerque is pumped from wells into storage tanks. Each well and system of storage tanks serves a different section in Albuquerque, referred to as a Water Zone. The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area falls into two water distribution zones: zone 16 and zone 17.

Table II.1 shows the average level of water contaminants detected in samples taken in Zone 16 and Zone 17 in 2002 and 2003, Table II.2 gives these levels as measured in 2004, while Table II.3 gives these figures in 2006.¹² None of the contaminants listed below exceeded the maximum contaminant level (MCL) currently allowed by the Environmental Protection Agency. Previously, we reported that the future MCL for arsenic was slated to change in December 2006. These levels did not change; they are now slated to change in 2008. The future MCL levels are not currently listed; however, previous reports published on the City website stated that the MCL for arsenic would be .01, a level significantly lower than the current allowable level of 50. Arsenic levels from these two distribution zones are substantially higher than the City's average

¹¹ <http://www2.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/hsb/about/index.htm>

¹² More detail is available at the City website (www.cabq.gov).

arsenic levels. It is noteworthy that the arsenic level in Zone 16 has decreased since 2002 from 35 to 20. Some of the problems associated with high arsenic levels include skin damage, problems with circulatory systems and possibly increased risk for cancer.

Table II.1
Water Contaminants¹³: Zones 16 and 17 and Citywide, 2002 and 2003

| CONTAMINANT | ZONE 16 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2002 and 2003 | ZONE 17 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2002 and 2003 | CITY-WIDE AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2002 and 2003 | MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL ALLOWED |
|----------------------------------|--|--|--|---|
| Arsenic | 35 | 21 | 13 | 50* |
| Barium | ND | ND | .1 | 2 |
| Chromium | 17 | 12 | 2 | 100 |
| Fluoride | 1.1 | .9 | .9 | 4 |
| Nitrate | 1.8 | 1 | .6 | 10 |
| Xylenes | ND | ND | ND | 10 |
| Di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate | ND | ND | ND | 6 |
| Gross Alpha Particle Activity | 4.4 | 5.2 | ND | 15 |
| Uranium | 5.6 | 6.5 | 3.9 | 30 |

*This value is in effect until 2008, changed from 2006

Table II.2
Water Contaminants¹⁴: Zones 16 and 17 and Citywide, 2004

| CONTAMINANT | ZONE 16 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2004 | ZONE 17 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2004 | CITY-WIDE AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED 2004 | MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL ALLOWED |
|------------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Arsenic | 19 | 17 | 12 | 50* |
| Barium | .03 | .04 | .1 | 2 |
| Chromium | 11 | 8 | 2 | 200 |
| Selenium | ND | ND | ND | 50 |
| Fluoride | .9 | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Nitrate+Nitrite | 1 | .9 | .5 | 10 |
| Iron | ND | ND | ND | .3 |
| Manganese | .001 | .002 | ND | .05 |
| Zinc | .012 | .009 | .015 | 5 |
| Chloride | 19 | 17 | 27 | 250 |
| Sulfate | 95 | 81 | 50 | 250 |
| Total dissolved solids | 344 | 322 | 270 | 500 |
| pH | 8.5 | 8.4 | 7.9 | 6.5-8.5 |

*This value is in effect until 2008, changed from 2006

¹³ Measured in parts per million.

¹⁴ Contaminants in darkened cells are those that are recommended levels by federal government, but not enforceable.

Table II.3
Water Contaminants¹⁵: Zones 16 and 17 and Citywide, 2006

| CONTAMINANT | ZONE 16 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED, 2006 | ZONE 17 AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED, 2006 | CITY-WIDE AVERAGE LEVEL DETECTED, 2006 | MAXIMUM CONTAMINANT LEVEL ALLOWED |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| Arsenic | 19 | 20 | 12 | 50* |
| Barium | .03 | .04 | .09 | 2 |
| Chromium | 10 | 6 | 2 | 100 |
| Selenium | ND | ND | .07 | 50 |
| Fluoride | .9 | .9 | .8 | 4 |
| Nitrate | 1 | .9 | .5 | 10 |
| Di (2-ethylhexyl) phthalate (2005 reading) | ND-5.3 | ND-5.3 | ND | 6 |
| Iron | .15 | .08 | .03 | .3 |
| Manganese | ND | ND | ND | .05 |
| Zinc | .01 | ND | .01 | 5 |
| Chloride | 18 | 15 | 26 | 250 |
| Sulfate | 83 | 71 | 50 | 250 |
| Total dissolved solids | 366 | 332 | 290 | 500 |
| PH | 8.5 | 8.4 | 7.9 | 6.5-8.5 |

*This value is in effect until 2008, changed from 2006

Ground seepage

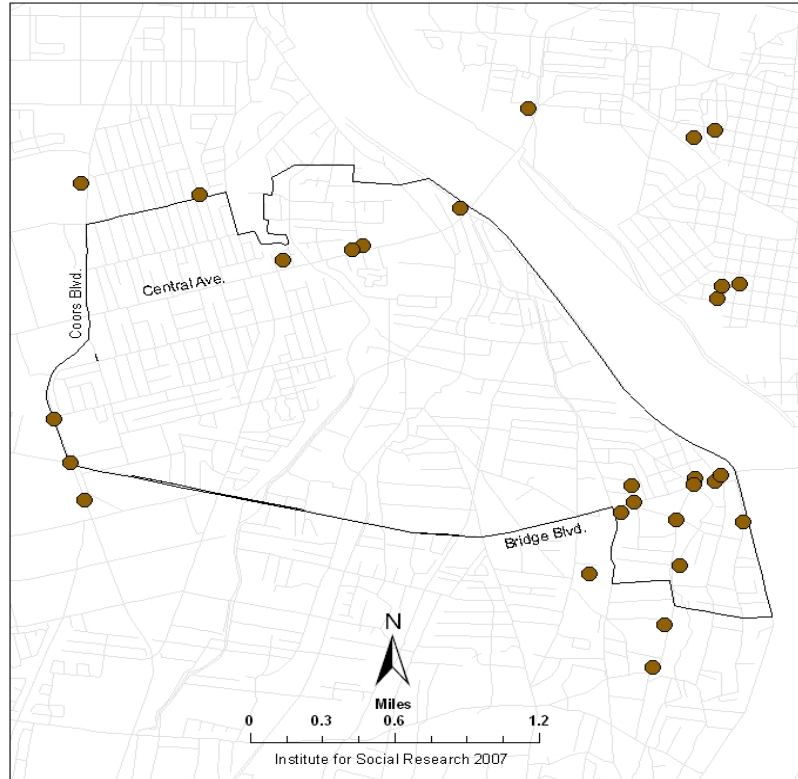
The City's Environmental Health Department has identified the locations of underground storage sites that are actively leaking throughout the City. These sites leak petroleum-based products into the ground that can adversely affect ground water. Of the 534 sites identified in the City, there are 14 located within the Westside-South Valley site.¹⁶ Their locations are illustrated in Map II.5.

¹⁵ Contaminants in darkened cells are those that are recommended levels by federal government, but not enforceable.

¹⁶ Data was generated from the "actulist" ESRI files available at <http://www.cabq.gov/gisshapes/>

MAP II.5

Active Leaking Underground Storage Sites in Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area



Summary

Overall, these data suggest that the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area does not have to contend with some of the structural disadvantages generally associated with inflated crime rates. For example, population turnover has been linked to high crime rates because it impedes the development of strong ties among neighbors and individual level investment in one's community. However, population turnover does not appear to be a notable problem in this area as evidenced by the fact that rates of renter occupied housing are actually lower in this area than city-wide and the percentage of multi-family housing units and vacant housing units is similar to that of the city as a whole. Moreover,

though the data cannot readily show this, it is reported that the area has a strong family tradition, with many residents having multi-generational ties to these communities.

At the same time, there are some structural disadvantages in this area that might help account for its high crime rate. For one, the area is more densely populated than the City as a whole. Additionally, there are some structural indications that the area has fewer economic resources than other areas of the city. For instance, the percentage of mobile-homes is twice that of the City, and the percentage of children utilizing public education is slightly higher within the Weed and Seed area than in the City overall. Such structural disadvantages might help explain the relatively high crime rates in the area and are among the criminogenic factors that the Weed and Seed model aims to counteract. The next chapter delves further into the potentially criminogenic social-structural dynamics of this area by examining educational attainment and achievement, unemployment, and income differentials.

CHAPTER III

RESIDENT AND HOUSEHOLD CHARACTERISTICS

This chapter presents information concerning the residents of the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site, at the individual and household levels. First, we describe individual demographic characteristics, employment and civic participation, followed by information concerning students attending schools in the site. The final section of this chapter concentrates on household composition and income information.

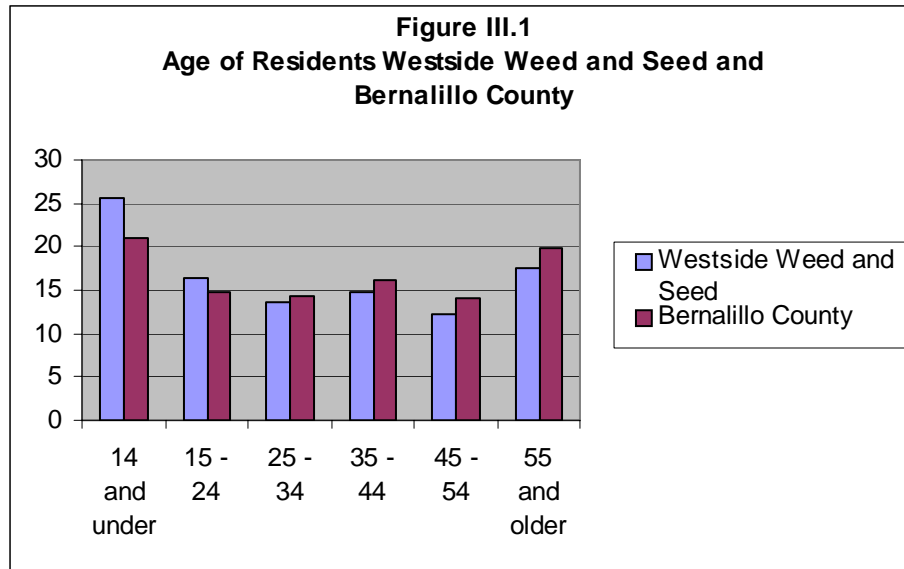
Resident Demographics

National origin and citizen status

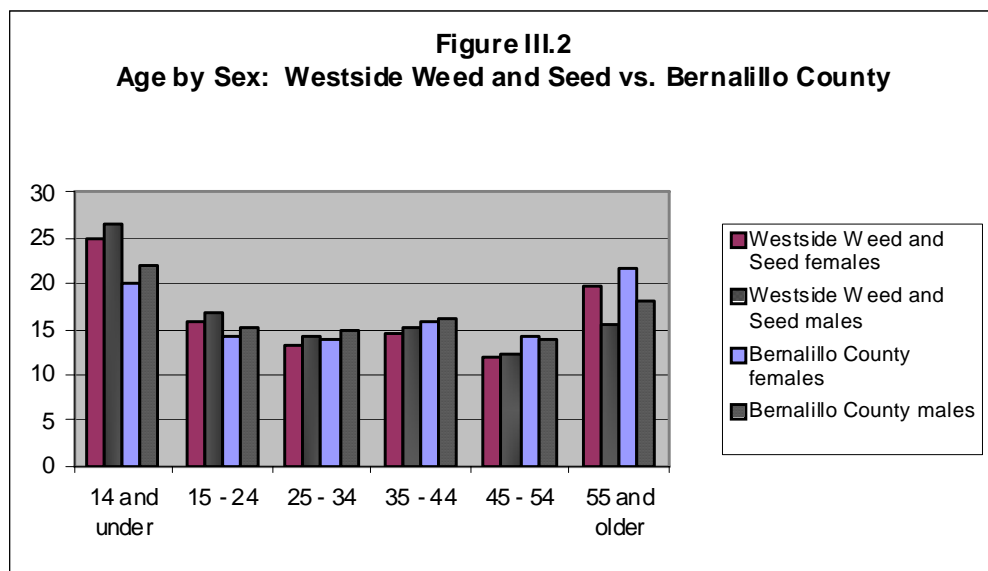
Approximately 15% of those living within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed boundaries are not originally from the United States. Among those, only 25% are naturalized citizens. Thus, slightly over 11% of the total population living in this area is comprised of individuals who are foreign-born, non-naturalized citizens. These numbers are significantly higher than those for Bernalillo County; slightly less than 9% of the County's residents are foreign-born and approximately 5.5% are non-naturalized citizens.

Age and gender

There are slightly fewer males in the Weed and Seed area, with 49.2% of the population being male. The median age of residents in the Weed and Seed area is 33.8. This is younger than the median age of people in Bernalillo County, which is 35 years old. Females in the area are slightly older on average (34.9 years old) as compared to males (32.1). The median age of females in the County is 36.2; for males it is 33.8. These data suggest that the residents of this community are younger than average when compared to the County. This is particularly notable given the overrepresentation of adolescents and young adults among active offenders.

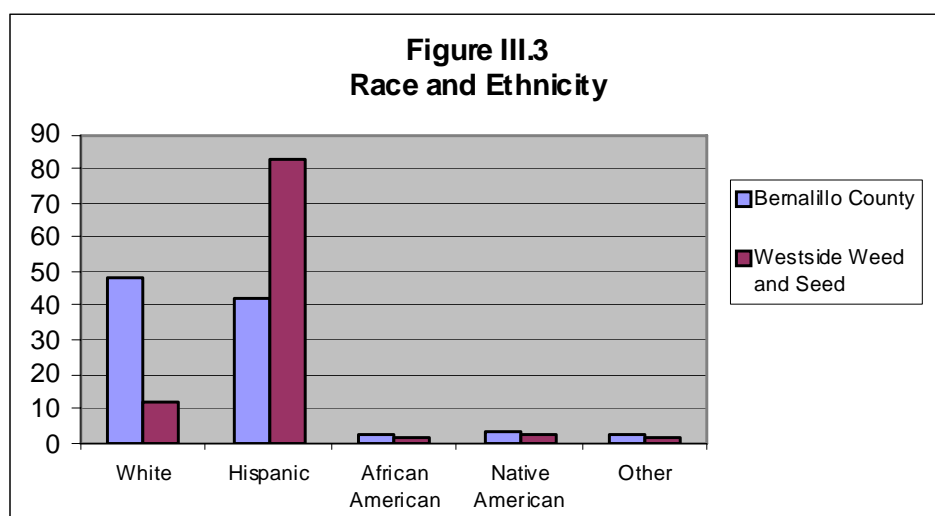


When we look at the age of residents in more detail, we find clear indications that the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area is comprised of younger individuals (Figure III.1). This trend is apparent regardless of gender. As shown in Figure III.2, both males and females in the area are over represented in the youngest age categories (34 and younger) compared to their county-wide counterparts.



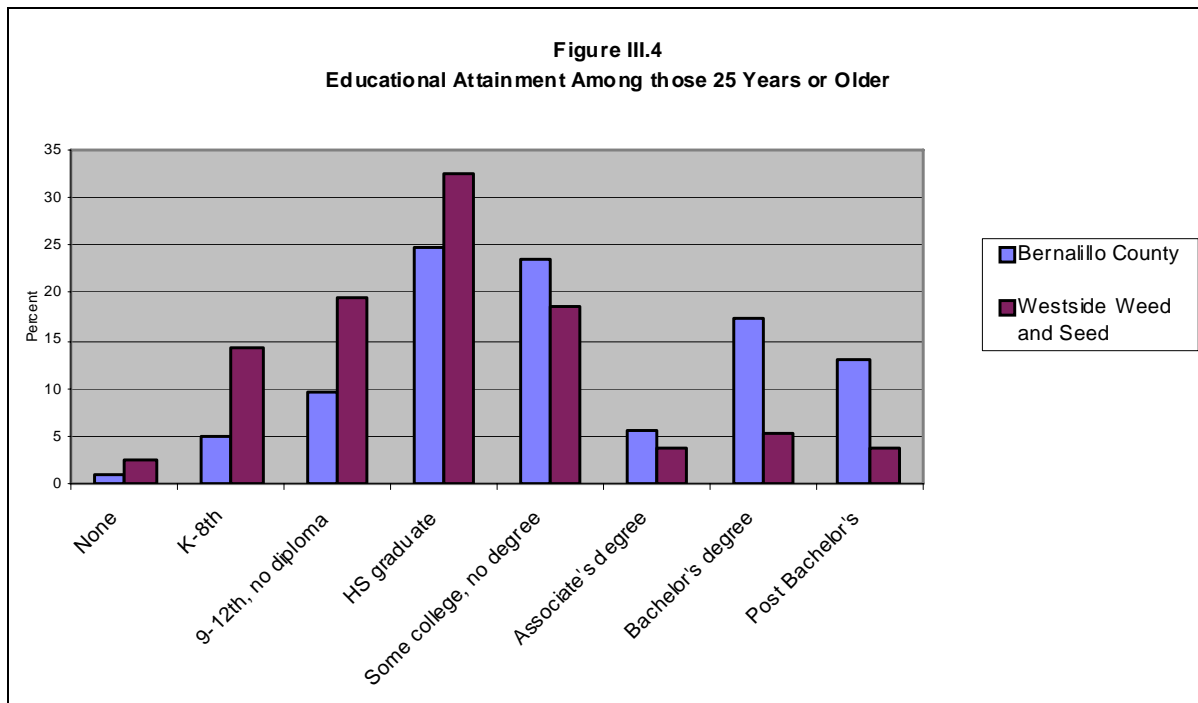
Race and ethnicity

The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area has a significantly lower percentage of white residents and a significantly higher percentage of Hispanic residents than does Bernalillo County. However, other minority groups are underrepresented in the Westside-South Valley site, relative to the County. Population distributions by ethnic group are presented in Figure III.3.



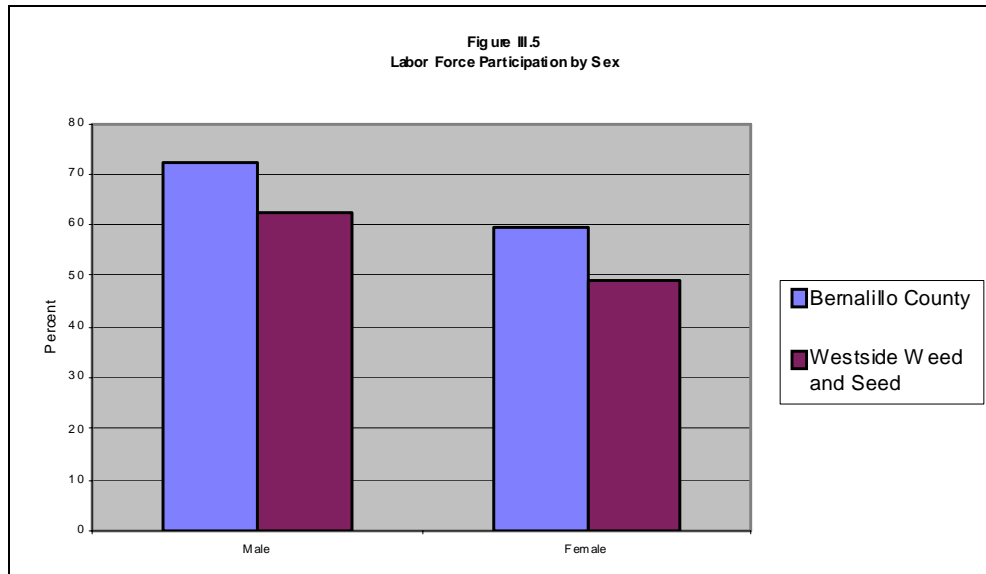
Resident Educational Attainment

Compared to residents of Bernalillo County, residents within the Weed and Seed area tend to have lower levels of educational attainment. Educational attainment is illustrated in Figure III.4. As noted there, approximately 2.5% of Weed and Seed residents have no formal education compared to 1% of County residents. Among those who have some formal education, about 35% of Weed and Seed residents have less than a high school education, while in Bernalillo County only 14.6% of the population has earned less than a high school diploma. Finally, while 60% of Bernalillo County residents' ages 25 and older have some college education, only 31% of residents within the Weed and Seed area have attended college. Still, 64% of residents have, at a minimum, completed high school.



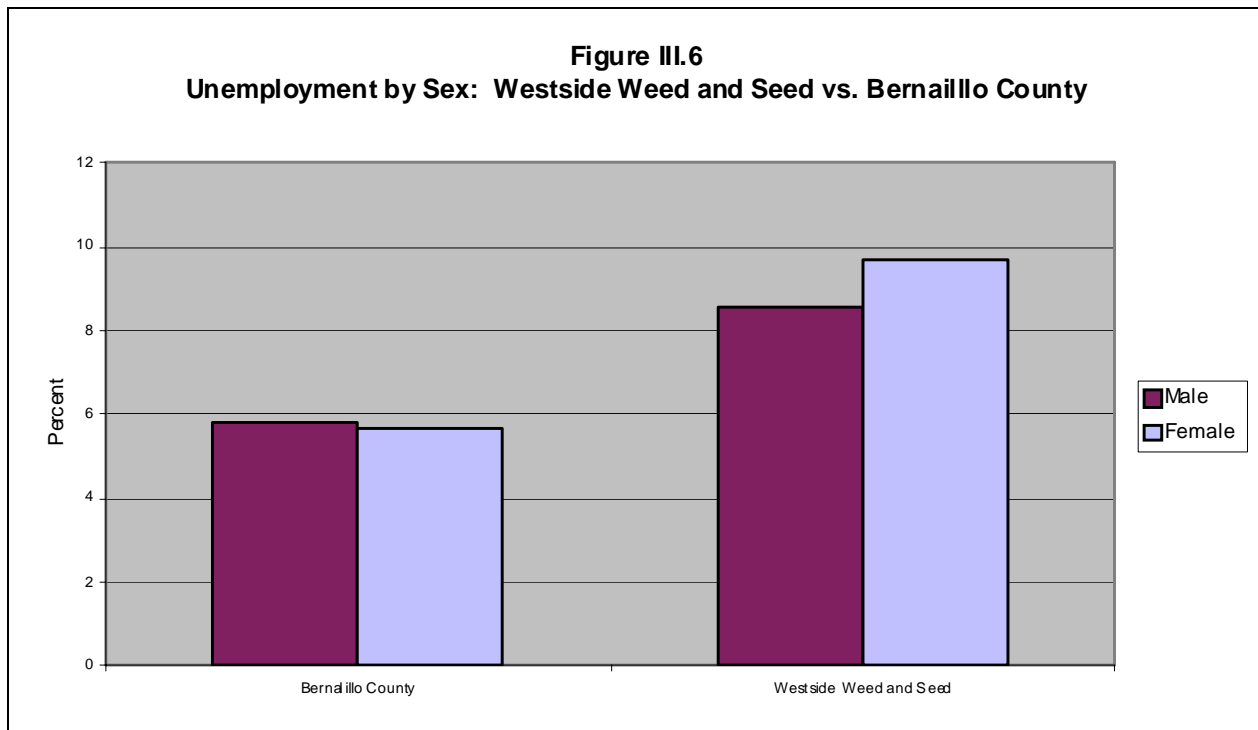
Labor Force Participation

Labor force participation is slightly lower among those living in the Westside-South Valley site, compared to Bernalillo County. While 65% of Bernalillo County residents aged sixteen and over identified themselves as labor force participants, slightly less than 62% of comparable Weed and Seed residents are in the labor force. Figure III.5 further distinguishes labor force participation by sex. As shown there, females residing within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site are less likely to be in the labor force compared to females residing throughout Bernalillo County. While males in the Westside-South Valley site are also less likely than their male Bernalillo County counterparts to be in the labor force, the difference for females is greater. The difference for female residents could be attributed to the fact that there is a greater concentration of young children in the area, requiring more women to be involved in childcare activities and not be in the labor force.



Unemployment among those in the labor force

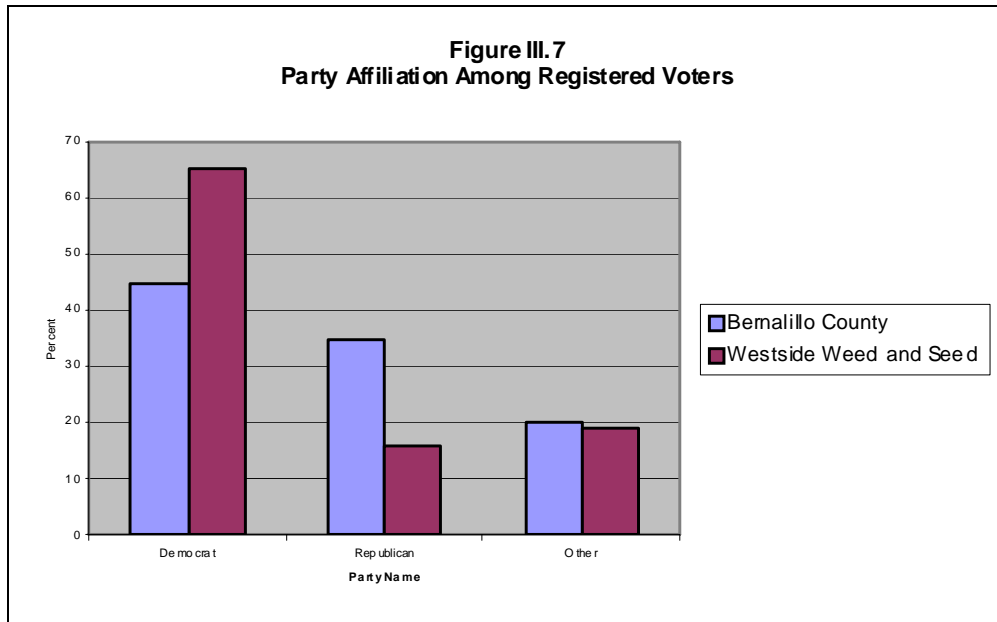
Among labor force participants, unemployment is greater in the Westside-South Valley site (9.1%) than in Bernalillo County as a whole (5.7%). Unemployment rates have been linked to offending rates, so this is another notable concern. This discrepancy is even greater for females (see Figure III.6). In Bernalillo County, the unemployment rate among females is lower than that for males: 5.65% versus 5.82%. The reverse is true in the Westside-South Valley site. Women in this area have an unemployment rate of 9.7%, while their male counterparts have a rate of 8.6%. By coupling higher female unemployment rates in the area with the relatively high number of children living there, a serious situation emerges: more children in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area are raised in poverty conditions.



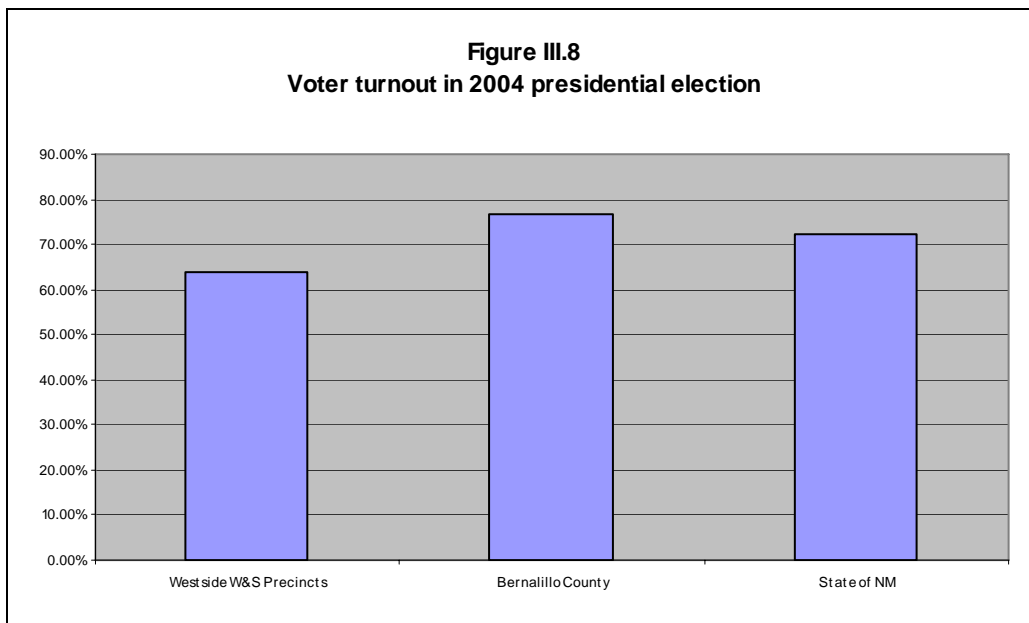
Civic participation

There are eleven voting precincts within the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area. According to data posted on the New Mexico Secretary of State website, most registered voters in this area are registered as belonging to the Democratic Party.¹⁷ On average, about 65% of registered voters in the area are Democrats; this is higher than the County average, which is 45% (see Figure III.7).

¹⁷ See <http://www.sos.state.nm.us/avrs/BERNINDEX.HTM>



Almost 64% of registered voters living within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site participated in the 2004 presidential election. As shown in Figure III.8, this percentage is lower than voter turnout for both the County and State.

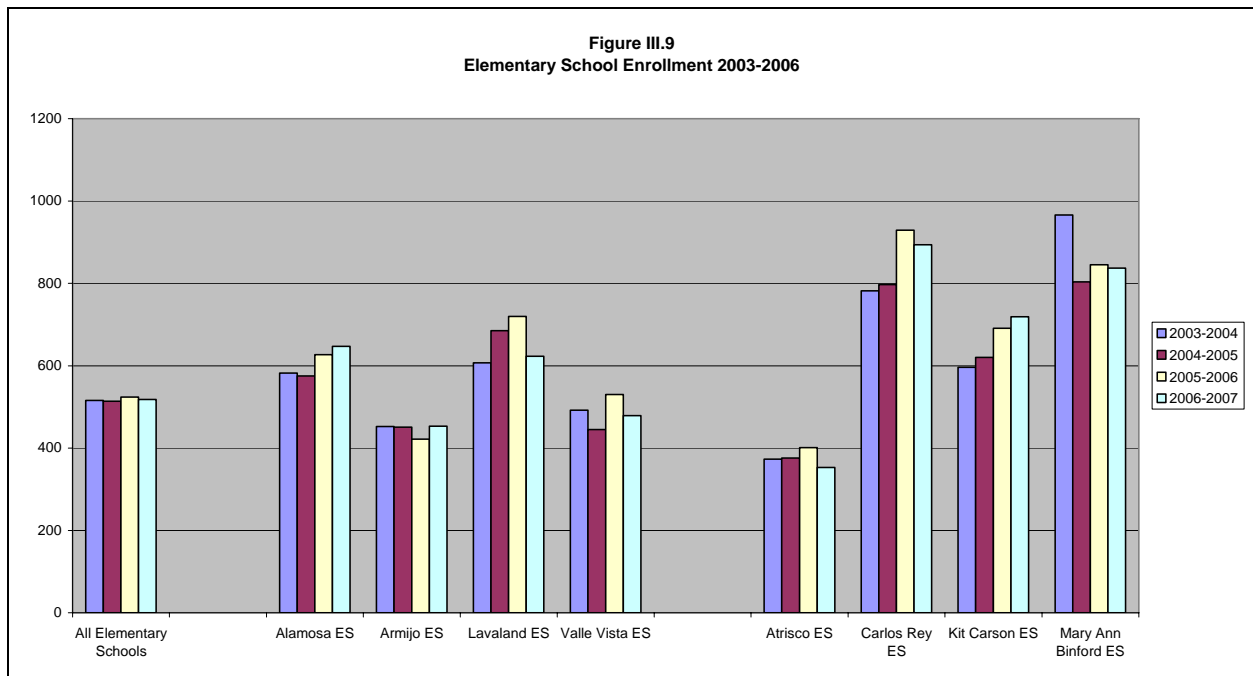


Characteristics of Students and their Academic Performance

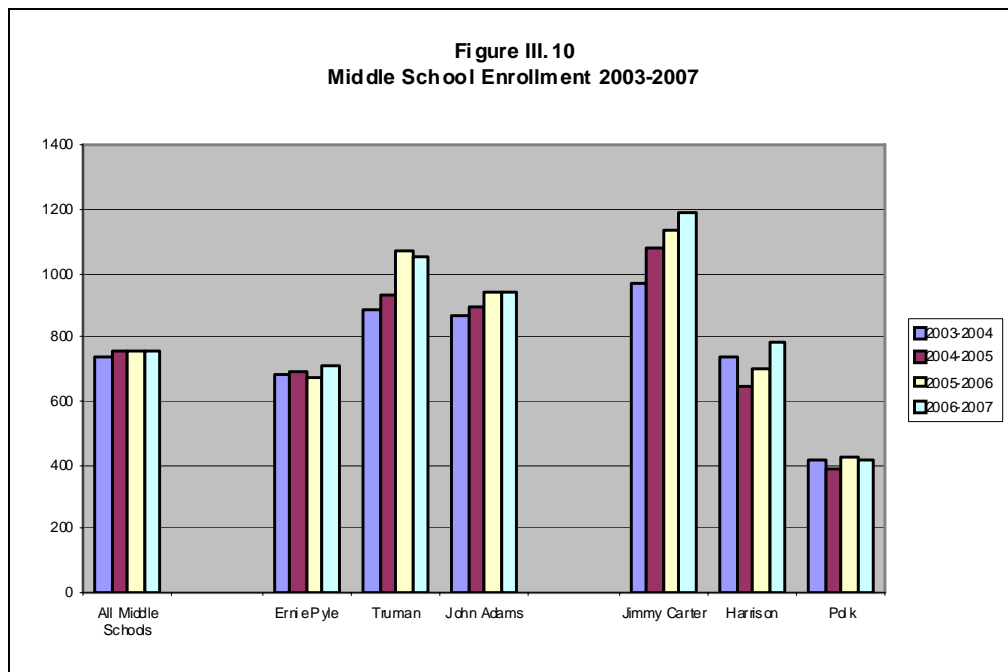
This section focuses on the public schools within the Weed and Seed area. Here we present school enrollment figures, subsidized lunch statistics and test scores. These are each compared with the district average, which includes all public schools in the Albuquerque area. These data are important since we know that school performance at the individual and community levels are correlated with criminal involvement and crime rates.

Student enrollment

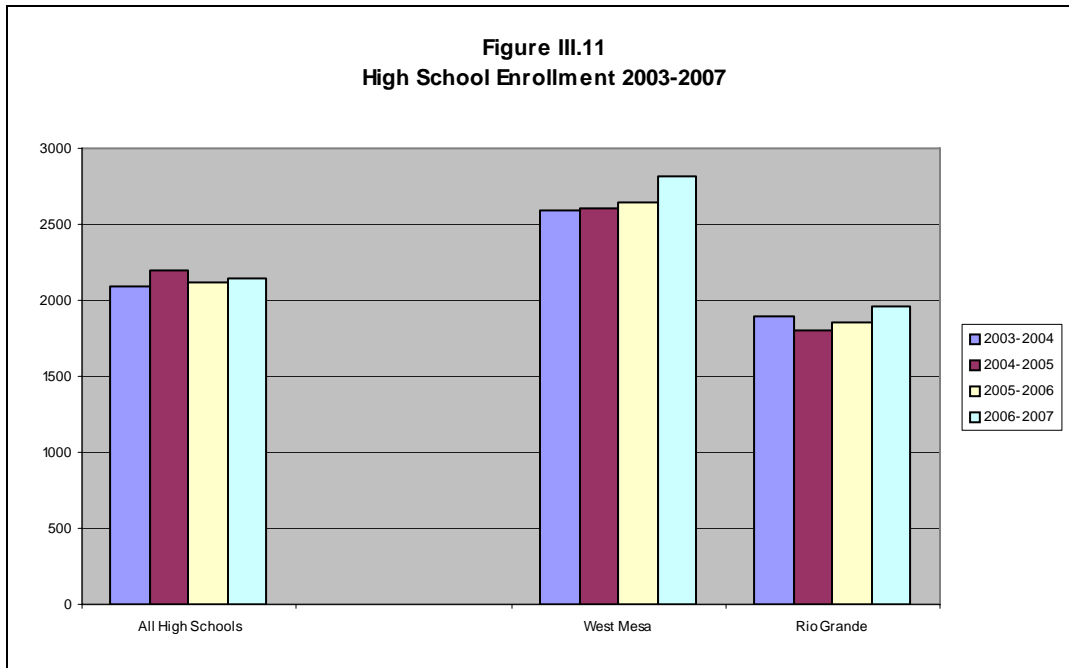
Elementary schools. For all elementary schools in the Albuquerque Public School (APS) District, the average number of students enrolled has varied from a low of 514 in 2004-2005 to a high of 524 in 2005-2006. The number of students enrolled in both elementary schools located within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site, and in schools near the site that serve Westside-South Valley residents is shown in Figure III.9. Two Westside-South Valley site schools, Alamosa and Lavaland, had higher than average enrollment figures for each of the years examined. Enrollment at Armijo ES and Valle Vista ES, however, were below APS averages. All other nearby elementary schools experienced greater average enrollment except Atrisco ES. Two schools had especially high enrollment numbers: Carlos Rey ES (ranging from 782 to 929) and Mary Ann Binford ES (ranging from 804 to 966). Enrollment is significant in that school enrollment, along with class, are both associated with student learning outcomes.



Middle schools. The average enrollment of the middle schools serving students from the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site was lower at one school (Ernie Pyle MS) than the District-wide average and higher at the other two schools (Truman and John Adams) (see Figure III.10). One other middle school servicing these clusters, Jimmy Carter MS, had enrollment figures that were much higher than either the district or enrollment at any of the other schools in the cluster. Harrison MS enrollment was similar to the district-wide average, and Polk MS had much fewer students annually than any of the other middle schools in the West Mesa and Rio Grande clusters.

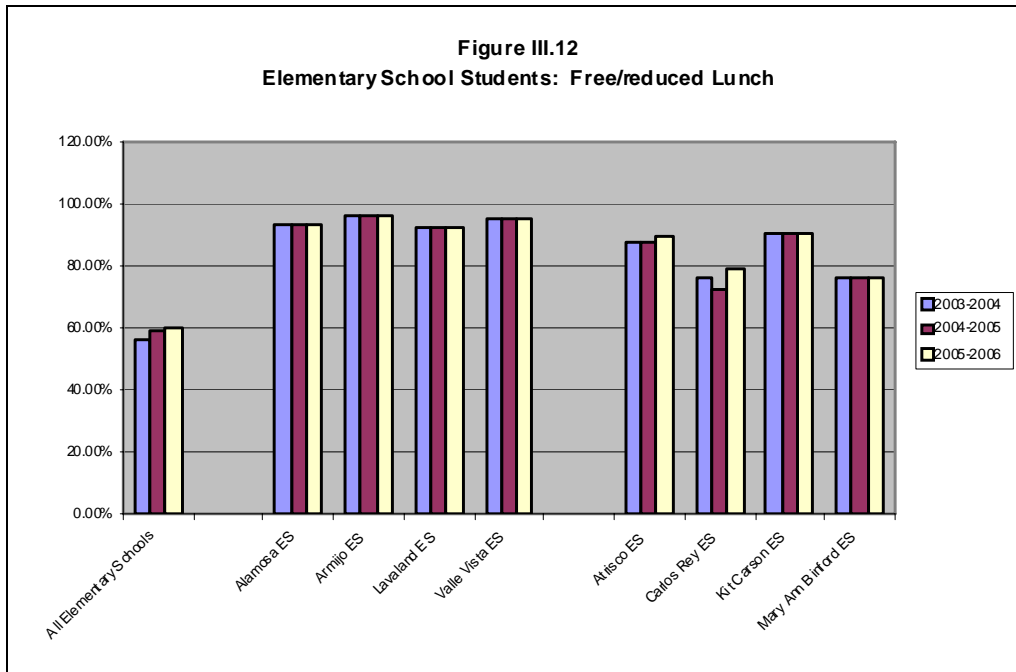


High school enrollment. A portion of students attending West Mesa and Rio Grande High Schools reside in the neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley site. Annually, Rio Grande's enrollment was less than the District average, while West Mesa's was consistently higher and increased each year.

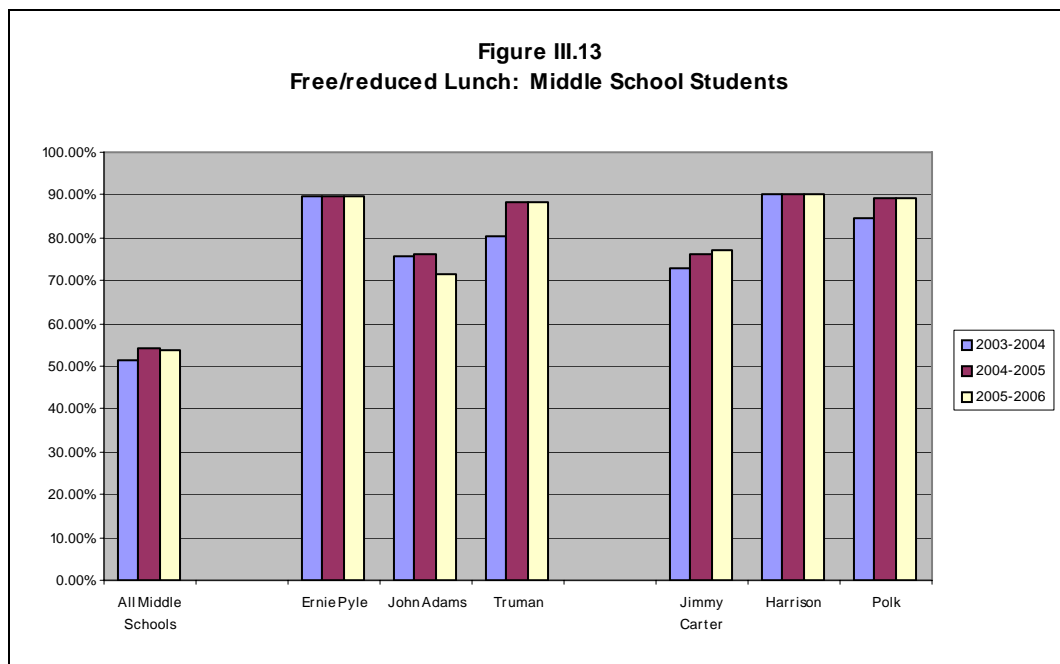


Subsidized lunch program

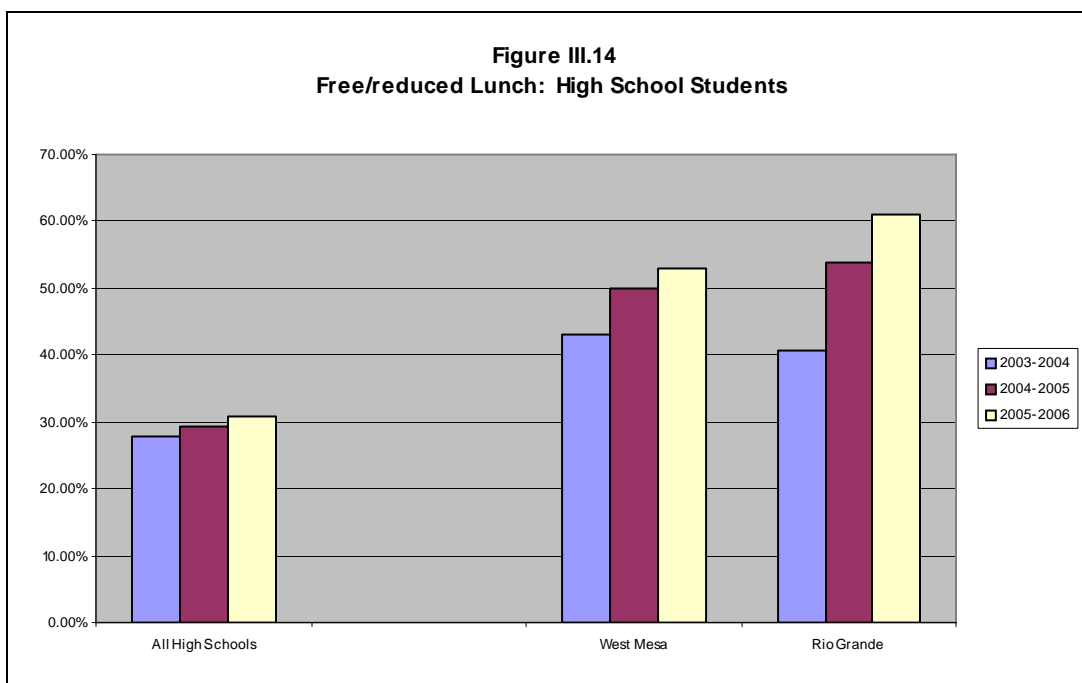
The free/reduced lunch program is designed to assist students whose household income is low. The percentage of elementary school students receiving free/reduced lunch at schools located within the boundaries of, or serving students from, the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area is higher than the average in APS overall (see Figure III.12). Further, a slightly greater percentage of these students receive free/reduced lunch relative to other elementary schools in the cluster.



In all instances, middle schools serving children residing in the Westside-South Valley site provided free/reduced lunch to a larger proportion of their students than in APS as a whole (Figure III.13). Rates were particularly high for Ernie Pyle MS, Harrison MS, Polk MS and Truman MS. Recall that Ernie Pyle MS, Truman MS and John Adams MS serve Weed and Seed area residents.



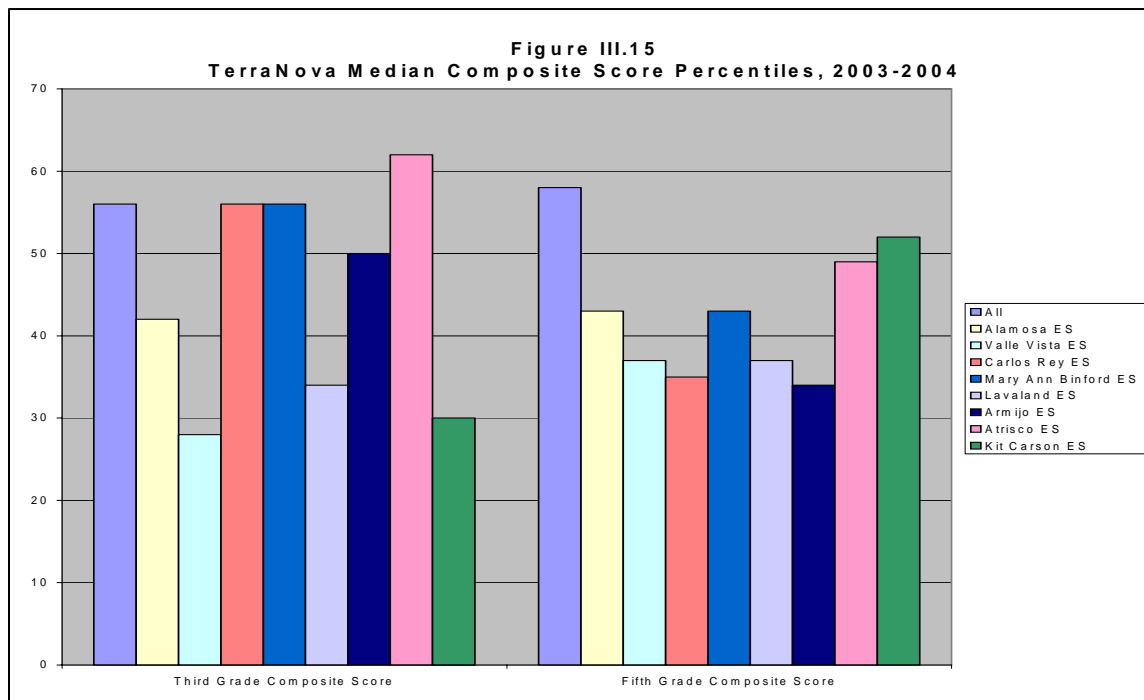
Finally, a much greater percentage of students at Rio Grande and West Mesa High Schools received free/reduced lunches, when compared to the average in APS high schools (see Figure III.14). The number of students receiving a free or reduced lunch has increased over time both district-wide and within each of the schools serving the Weed and Seed area. Rio Grande High School has experienced a 20% increase between 2003 and 2006.



Academic attainment

Elementary School Students. Students enrolled in both the third and fifth grades at the elementary schools that service the Westside-South Valley site (Alamosa ES, Armijo ES, Lavaland ES, and Valle Vista ES) performed below APS Terra Nova test averages for the 2003-2004 academic year. Other nearby elementary schools also performed below average, with the exception of Atrisco ES. As illustrated in Figure III.15, Atrisco ES's scores were above APS averages for the third grade, while both Carlos Rey ES and Mary Ann Binford scores were the same as APS during the same time period. However, by the fifth grade, scores in all Westside-South Valley site schools were below APS means. While scores at Valle Vista and Lavaland improved relative to APS averages between the third and fifth grades, those for other elementary

schools decreased. These scores are not available for subsequent years since a new test has been implemented.



Rather than the Terra Nova, APS now employs the New Mexico Standard Based Assessment. This test can be given in both English and Spanish and the results are tallied separately. Three subject areas are assessed: Reading, Math and Science. Results for Grade 3 for the 2005-2006 school year indicate that for the English test, student scores from Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed schools were lower in every subject area than the district wide average. However, the Spanish test scores were higher at Alamosa ES and Armijo ES in all subject areas. Those at Lavaland and Valle Vista were below average in all areas. Scores at nearby elementary schools varied. However, scores at Mary Ann Binford exceeded the districtwide average in all areas.

Table III.1 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 3 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Elementary Schools | 55 | 35 | 47 | 55 | 83 | 28 |
| | | | | | | |
| Alamosa ES | 38 | 50 | 34 | 80 | 56 | 50 |
| Armijo ES | 34 | 44 | 38 | 58 | 84 | 32 |
| Lavaland ES | 34 | 0 | 17 | 9 | 51 | 0 |
| Valle Vista ES | 29 | 25 | 14 | 52 | 67 | 14 |
| | | | | | | |
| Atrisco ES | 49 | 100 | 47 | 94 | 93 | 71 |
| Carlos Rey ES | 36 | 31 | 25 | 31 | 82 | 15 |
| Kit Carson ES | 24 | 8 | 19 | 25 | 59 | 0 |
| Mary Ann Binford ES | 70 | | 57 | | 87 | |

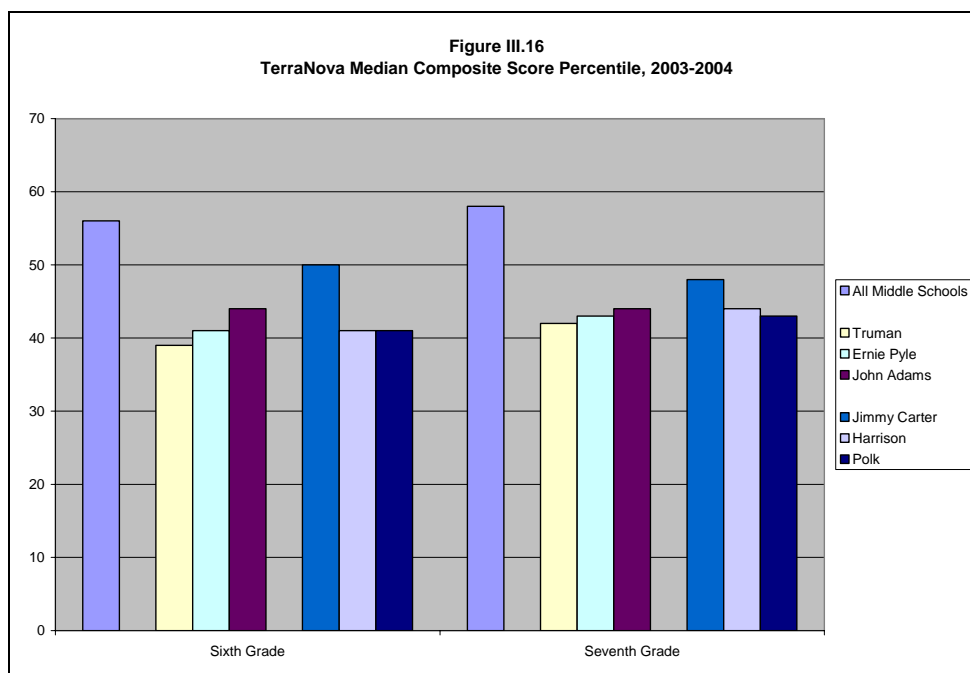
Table III.2 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 4 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Elementary Schools | 58 | 32 | 43 | 27 | 57 | 27 |
| | | | | | | |
| Alamosa ES | 47 | | 42 | | 26 | |
| Armijo ES | 50 | 58 | 35 | 63 | 50 | 37 |
| Lavaland ES | 27 | 0 | 12 | 0 | 20 | 9 |
| Valle Vista ES | 27 | 18 | 11 | 0 | 18 | 8 |
| | | | | | | |
| Atrisco ES | 52 | 45 | 28 | 27 | 42 | 18 |
| Carlos Rey ES | 41 | 46 | 31 | 23 | 38 | 15 |
| Kit Carson ES | 29 | | 16 | | 19 | |
| Mary Ann Binford ES | 72 | | 60 | | 63 | |

Table III.3 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 5 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|------------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Elementary Schools | 61 | 29 | 40 | 16 | 46 | 27 |
| | | | | | | |
| Alamosa ES | 59 | | 36 | | 32 | |
| Armijo ES | 47 | 25 | 42 | 23 | 36 | 31 |
| Lavaland ES | 29 | 30 | 8 | 0 | 11 | 10 |
| Valle Vista ES | 23 | | 12 | | 11 | |
| | | | | | | |
| Atrisco ES | 49 | 45 | 33 | 27 | 27 | 18 |
| Carlos Rey ES | 50 | 45 | 21 | 18 | 28 | 27 |
| Kit Carson ES | 28 | | 16 | | 16 | |
| Mary Ann Binford ES | 72 | | 42 | | 44 | |

Middle School Students. Terra Nova scores for students enrolled in the APS middle schools improved considerably between the sixth and seventh grades. However, scores for students enrolled in middle schools located within the Westside-South Valley site (Ernie Pyle MS, John Adams MS and Truman MS) did not improve uniformly, and no school enjoyed as much improvement as the district (see Figure III.16). Jimmy Carter MS experienced a real decline in scores, while middle schools in the Westside-South Valley site enjoyed only modest improvements between the sixth and seventh grades.



For the 2005-2006 school year, Standards Based Assessment scores for Weed and Seed area schools' sixth, seventh and eighth graders taking the English language version were lower in all subject areas than the district-wide average. Scores from students at nearby middle schools followed similar patterns. Sixth graders from Kit Carson ES performed the best in reading compared to other nearby area schools taking the English language version.

Scores of those taking the Spanish language version sometimes exceeded the district-wide average. This varied by subject and grade. For example, sixth graders at Truman MS exceeded their district-wide counterparts in both math and science, but scored lower in reading. Their seventh-graders exceed the average in all three subject areas, while their eighth graders exceeded the average in reading. Ernie Pyle MS sixth graders had higher scores than their

district-wide Spanish language version counterparts in science, slightly lower scores in reading, and much lower scores in math. Seventh graders scores exceeded APS average scores in math. However, scores from sixth grade students attending John Adams MS fell below the district average in all three subject areas for those taking the Spanish version of the test. But, John Adams seventh graders scored near the district average in science and the eighth graders exceeded the district average in reading.

Table III.4 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 6 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Middle Schools | 39 | 40 | 22 | 9 | 30 | 18 |
| Truman MS | 15 | 28 | 10 | 16 | 10 | 32 |
| Ernie Pyle MS | 14 | 38 | 5 | 5 | 5 | 19 |
| John Adams | 20 | 33 | 4 | 0 | 13 | 11 |
| Jimmy Carter | 30 | | 12 | | 16 | |
| Harrison | 19 | 42 | 7 | 13 | 13 | 21 |
| Polk | 14 | | 3 | | 11 | |
| Kit Carson ES | 37 | | 11 | | 22 | |

Table III.5 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 7 2005-2006

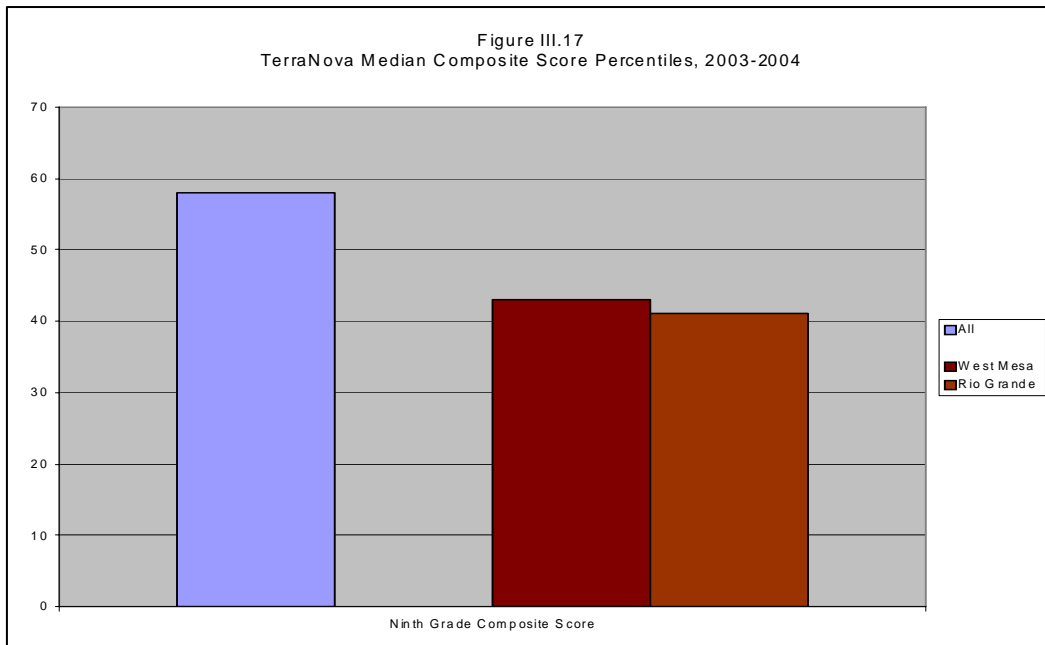
| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Middle Schools | 49 | 68 | 24 | 8 | 25 | 14 |
| Truman MS | 24 | 69 | 9 | 17 | 5 | 17 |
| Ernie Pyle MS | 32 | 59 | 17 | 0 | 6 | 7 |
| John Adams | 30 | 60 | 7 | 0 | 6 | 13 |
| Jimmy Carter | 41 | 74 | 12 | 4 | 9 | 13 |
| Harrison | 32 | 73 | 15 | 14 | 11 | 9 |
| Polk | 23 | | 9 | | 10 | |

Table III.6 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 8 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|--------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All Middle Schools | 52 | 52 | 30 | 11 | 27 | 5 |
| Truman MS | 24 | 56 | 9 | 6 | 4 | 0 |
| Ernie Pyle MS | 36 | 38 | 27 | 16 | 8 | 3 |
| John Adams | 31 | 56 | 12 | 7 | 9 | 4 |
| Jimmy Carter | 36 | 50 | 14 | 0 | 18 | 10 |
| Harrison | 23 | 62 | 8 | 4 | 7 | 4 |
| Polk | 29 | | 11 | | 13 | |

High School Students. Rio Grande's graduation rate in 2002-2003 (the most recent year for which this data was available) was 82.5%, while that for West Mesa HS was 90.2%. Comparable rates for the district were not available. Between 1998-1999 and 2001-2002, the drop out rate for Rio Grande HS was well above district averages, but in 2002-2003 plummeted to 2.2%; well below the district-wide drop out rate of 3.3%. For West Mesa, drop out rates have run consistently higher than those for the district, and were 5.2% for the 2002-2003 academic year.

Scores on the Terra Nova test for ninth grade students are shown in Figure III.17. Students from both West Mesa HS and Rio Grande HS achieved lower scores than their counterparts from throughout the APS system.



West Mesa and Rio Grande High Schools' Standards Based Assessment scores for English speaking test takers were lower in all three subject areas compared to the district-wide average. Spanish speakers from West Mesa High School performed better than their district-wide counterparts in both math and science, and scores were just slightly below average in reading. Rio Grande students taking the Spanish version performed the same or better in math and science and just slightly lower in reading.

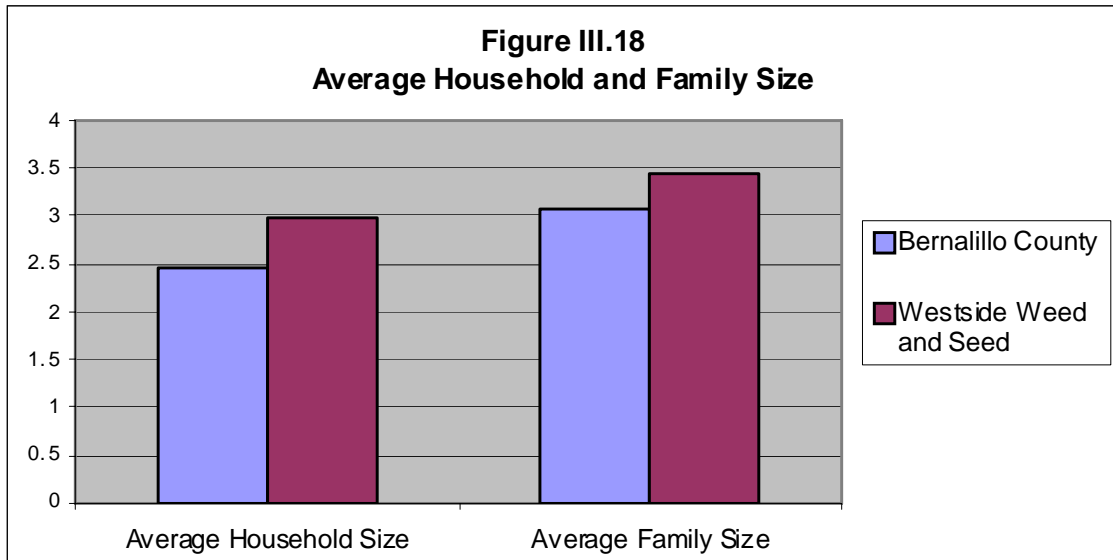
Table III.7 NM Standard Based Assessment Results- Grade 9 2005-2006

| | Reading | | Math | | Science | |
|------------------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| | English | Spanish | English | Spanish | English | Spanish |
| All High Schools | 46 | 34 | 39 | 16 | 41 | 11 |
| West Mesa | 24 | 32 | 15 | 22 | 22 | 24 |
| Rio Grande | 20 | 26 | 19 | 17 | 20 | 11 |

Household Composition

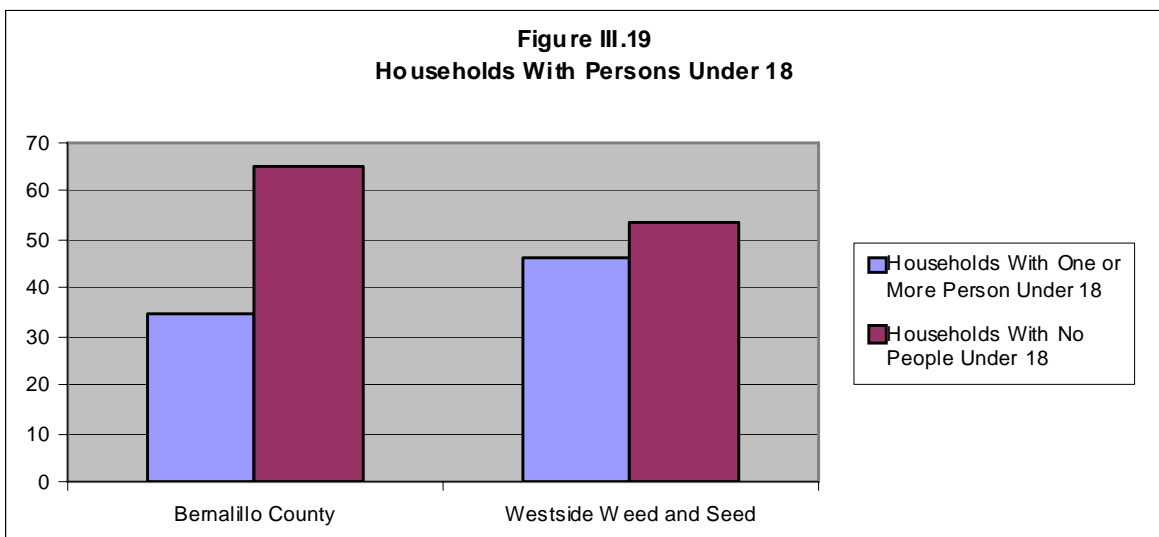
Household and family size

As shown in Figure III.18, the average number of people in the Westside-South Valley household was larger than in Bernalillo County households as a whole (2.97 compared to 2.57 residents). Also, the average size of families in the Westside-South Valley site was greater than that for the County as a whole (3.51 compared to 3.06 family members).



Children in the home

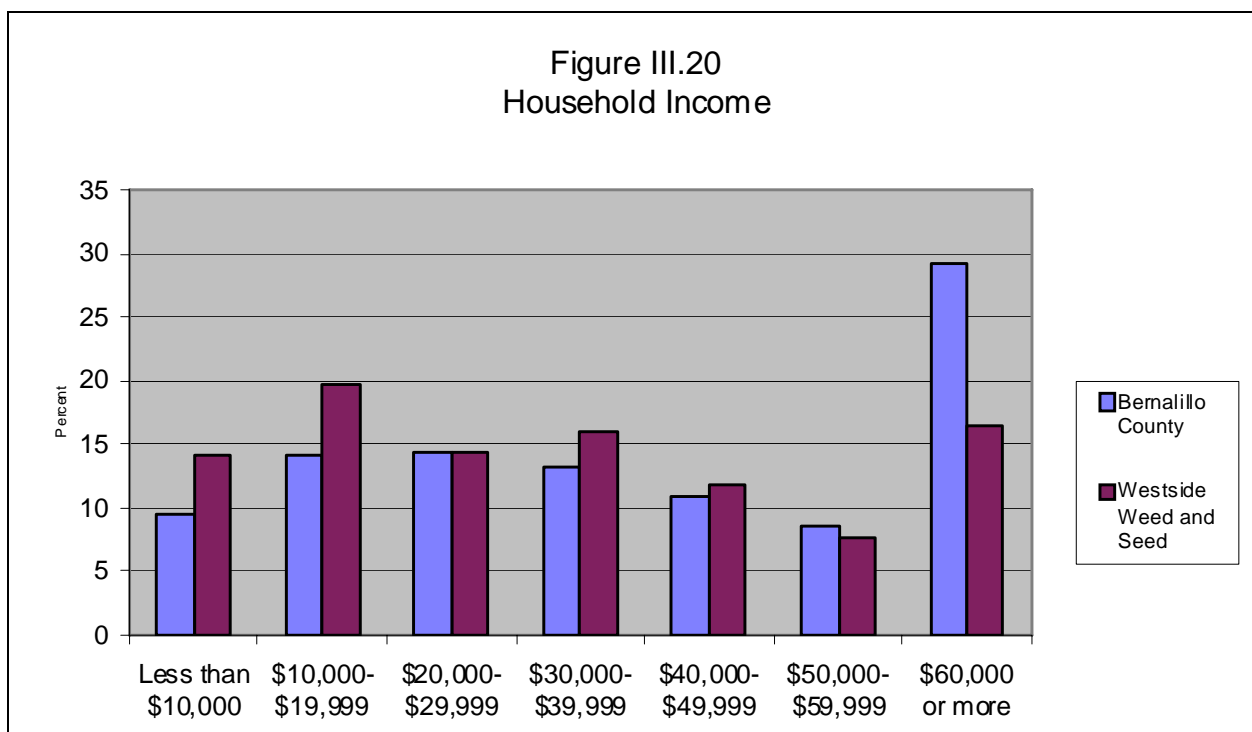
Approximately 35% the households in Bernalillo County have children under the age of 18. The Westside-South Valley site, however, has a greater percentage of children-occupied households within the site compared to the County, roughly 46% (see Figure III.19).



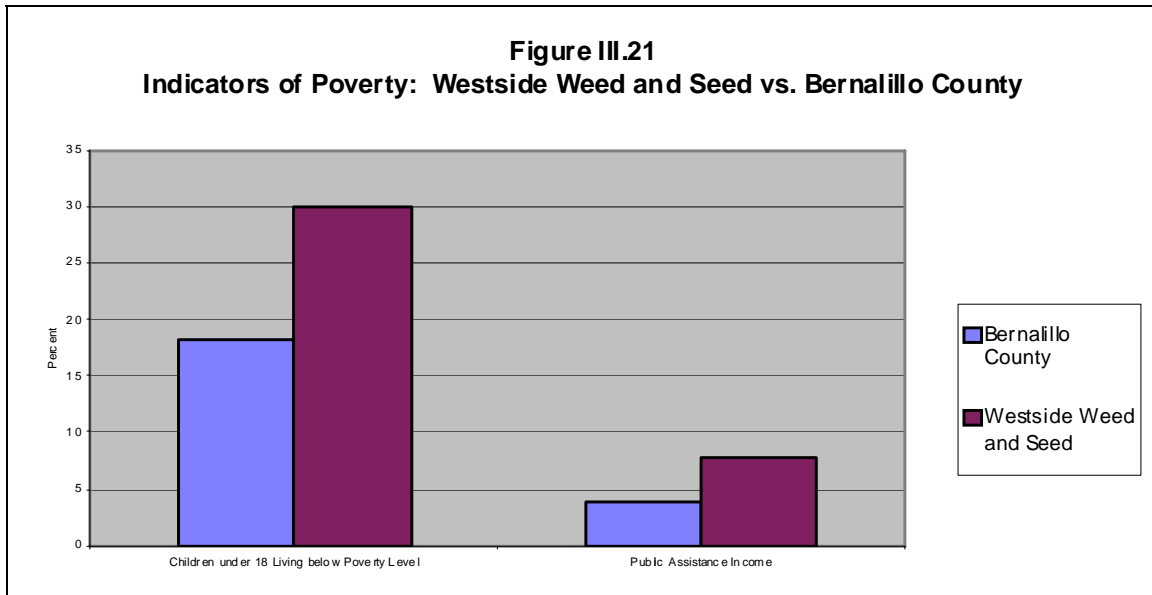
Household Income

Westside-South Valley households averaged a considerably lower level of income than households throughout Bernalillo County. The average per capita income of Westside-South

Valley site residents in the year 2000 was \$13,116; considerably lower than that for Bernalillo County as a whole, where the average the per capita income was \$20,790. As illustrated in Figure III.20, households in the Westside-South Valley site most commonly earned between \$10,000 and \$19,999. Indeed, almost fifty percent more households in the area earned incomes less than \$20,000 compared to Bernalillo County households as a whole (34% compared to 24%).



The proportion of children under 18 living in poverty was much higher in the area than in Bernalillo County: over 30% of children under 18 live in poverty in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area while slightly over 18% of children in Bernalillo County live below the poverty level (see Figure III.21). Not surprisingly, reliance on public assistance income was significantly greater in this area. Slightly over 8% of households received public assistance while not quite 4% of households in the County overall received public assistance.



Summary

The neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed exhibit a significant disadvantage compared to Bernalillo County as a whole. In particular, the census data indicates that residents of this area have lower levels of educational attainment, higher rates of unemployment and higher rates of poverty relative to residents of Bernalillo County as a whole. Further, Albuquerque Public School data suggest that, on average, students within this area are less successful in meeting their educational goals as measured by standardized tests. Overall, these findings suggest that these neighborhoods will face higher than average crime rates as these measures of disadvantage are associated with crime. However, much literature suggests that there are ways in which disadvantage communities can offset the criminogenic forces of structural disadvantage, particularly by building community cohesion and collective efficacy, which is precisely what constitutes the focus of the Weed and Seed strategy.

CHAPTER IV

CRIME PATTERNS IN THE WESTSIDE-SOUTH VALLEY SITE

For many years, the neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site have been portrayed by City residents, government officials, and the local media as a relatively unsafe, depressed, and crime-ridden part of the metropolitan area. Despite the success of programs and the human and capital investments residents have made in improving public safety and quality of life in the Westside-South Valley site, current and recent historical area crime rates¹⁸ tend to support this perception. The Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site has experienced high crime rates, relative to the City of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.¹⁹

This chapter describes patterns of serious criminal offending, focusing on Uniform Crime Report Part One Violent crimes utilized by the U.S. Department of Justice. Part I Violent Crimes consist of homicide, rape, robbery, and aggravated assault. In addition, we focus on two of the Part I Property Crimes to which residents are particularly vulnerable: burglary and motor vehicle theft. Given the Westside-South Valley site's crime prevention and intervention goals, special attention is also directed later in this Chapter to narcotics and weapons offenses, firearm-related crimes, and offenses committed by gang members known to law enforcement. We also examine the spatial distribution of crime in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site throughout the chapter. The multi-jurisdictional collaboration of law enforcement is met by the Albuquerque Police Department and Bernalillo County Sheriffs Department who support the site.

Violent Crime

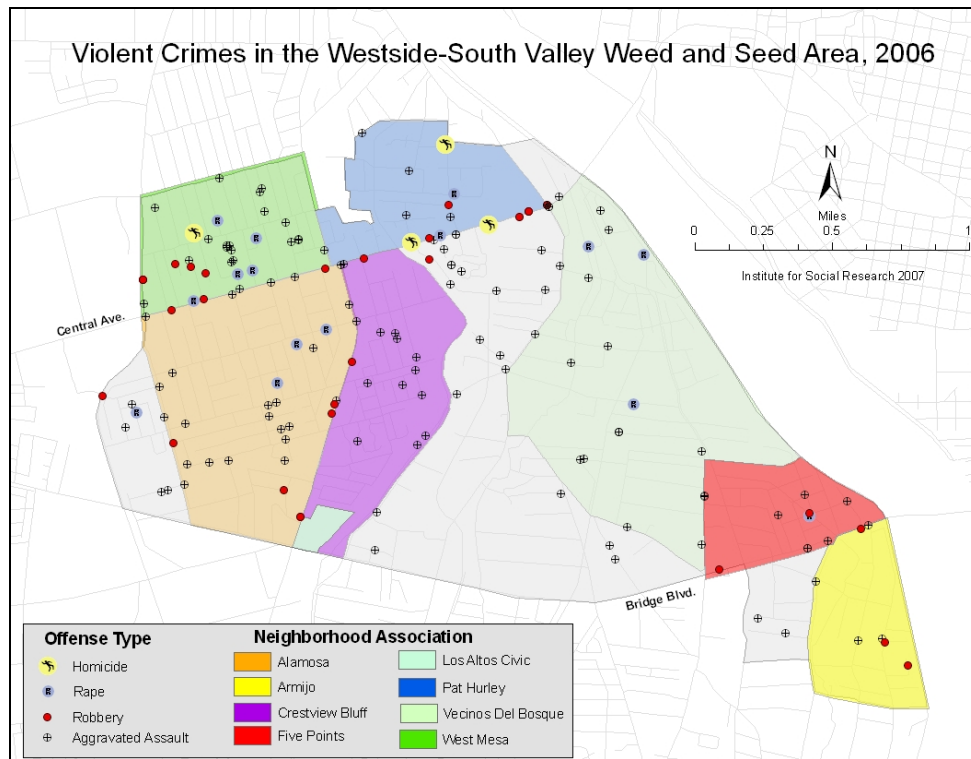
The spatial distribution of violent crimes in 2006 occurring in the Westside-South Valley site is illustrated in Map IV.1 below. Aggravated assaults are distributed throughout the site. Homicides were relatively rare and were confined to the northern portion of the site. Rapes in 2006 were experienced throughout the area, but did not occur in the middle portion of the site, south of Central Avenue. Rapes, as probably would be expected, and were more prevalent in

¹⁸ Following the federal standard, crime rates in this report are expressed as the number of crimes per 100,000 residents in an area, within one year's time.

¹⁹ Previously, we compared the Westside-South Valley rates to those of the State and nation. Due to differences in reporting and definitions, we have decided only to make comparisons with Albuquerque and Bernalillo County to ensure an accurate representation of the differences between the Weed and Seed site with other geographic areas.

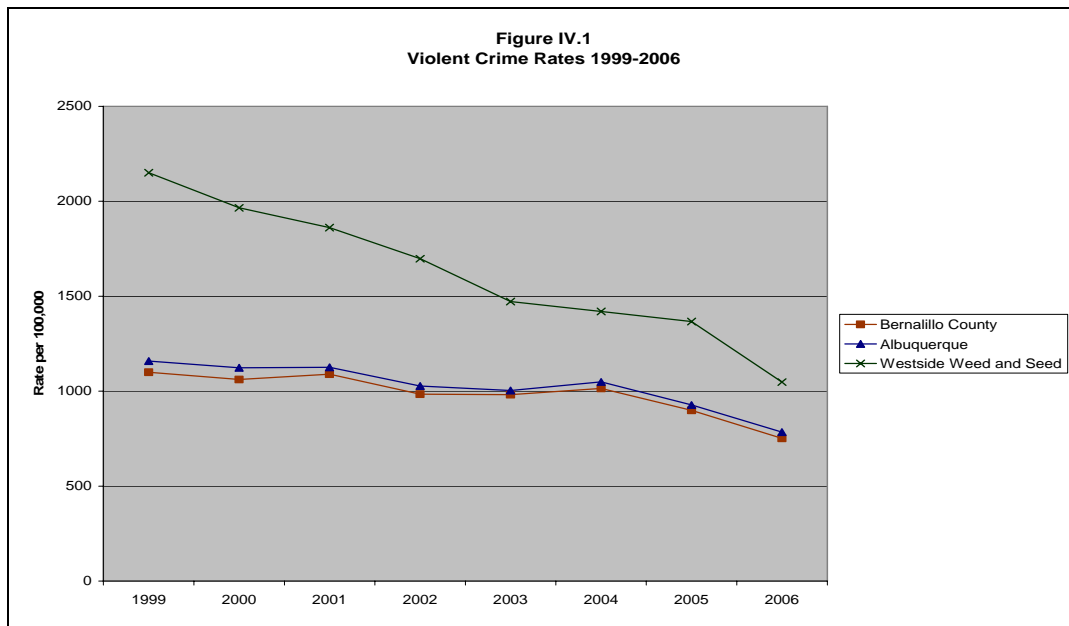
residential areas. Robberies occurred primarily along commercial streets, such as Central Avenue, Atrisco and some along Bridge Blvd.

MAP IV.1



Violent Crime Rates: Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed versus Albuquerque and Bernalillo County

The neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site have experienced a reduction in violent crime rates over time. In 1999, the violent crime rate in this area was 1.9 times greater than the Bernalillo County area. While the violent crime rate is still higher than Bernalillo County, it is now 1.4 times greater than the metropolitan area. These trends are illustrated graphically in Figure IV.1.



From a geographical perspective, the Westside-South Valley site is a relatively dense violent crime area. As a point of reference, in 2006, Bernalillo County experienced 3.94 violent crimes per square mile; the City of Albuquerque 21.86 had violent crimes per square mile. The Westside-South Valley site had 52.91 violent crimes per square mile for this same time period. This finding seems to confirm public perceptions that the area is not a particularly safe part of town.

However, the implications of this finding for law enforcement professionals and community policy makers are open to interpretation. In other research²⁰ we found that a disproportionately high number of serious violent criminal offenders live within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site. However, the rates mentioned above do not consider the proportion of offenses committed by residents compared to non-residents of the area. Some neighborhoods might be considered “magnet areas,” in that offenders are more likely to travel there to engage in criminal activity. We have found that criminal offenders are highly mobile in Albuquerque, and that a relatively high proportion of homicides occurring in the Westside-South Valley site were committed by non-residents of the area, relative to the rest of

²⁰ See Paul D. Steele, et al., *The Strategic Approaches to Community Safety Initiative In Albuquerque: Project Activities and Research Results*, 2005.

Albuquerque.²¹ Residents and law enforcement professionals have consistently described neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley site as a magnet area, particularly for drug transactions and gang-related crime. Serious violent criminal offenses (aggravated assault, homicide, rape, and robbery) occur throughout the Westside-South Valley site.

Violent crimes by neighborhood

Table IV.1 shows how the rate of serious violent crime varies within and across each of the neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site. Since experiencing a high in the number of violent crimes in 1999, the Alamosa and Pat Hurley neighborhoods have enjoyed a decrease in violent crime rates. The rate of violent crime has fluctuated greatly in the Armijo and Crestview neighborhoods. In recent years, the rate of offending in the West Mesa neighborhood has generally declined. Relative to other neighborhood associations, the Five Points area has experienced an increased crime rate in recent years. Perhaps this area would benefit from a revival of the neighborhood association. No clear patterns have emerged in those areas without a neighborhood association. This may be due to the number of discontinuous areas comprising this artificial grouping.

Table IV.1 Rates of Violent Crime in Weed and Seed Area 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods | | | | | | | | |
| Alamosa | 2423 | 1277 | 1327 | 1130 | 1374 | 1315 | 1091 | 897 |
| Armijo | 2899 | 779 | 2664 | 2434 | 1213 | 1427 | 1314 | 655 |
| Crestview | 1775 | 2190 | 1092 | 2010 | 1419 | 749 | 1492 | 1240 |
| Five Points | 1498 | 1587 | 2049 | 1670 | 1943 | 2214 | 1748 | 1376 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 2469 | 3704 | 0 | 1220 | 1220 | 1220 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 4649 | 3902 | 3404 | 1696 | 1934 | 1605 | 1680 | 1196 |
| Los Vecinos | 1105 | 897 | 1179 | 1215 | 1009 | 886 | 963 | 760 |
| West Mesa | 2327 | 2232 | 2269 | 1827 | 1344 | 2030 | 1206 | 1459 |
| No Association | 1785 | 2922 | 2043 | 1748 | 1396 | 1423 | 1801 | 1044 |
| Total Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 2150 | 1965 | 1862 | 1580 | 1393 | 1419 | 1367 | 1048 |
| Albuquerque | 1159 | 1124 | 1126 | 1027 | 1003 | 1049 | 927 | 784 |
| Bernalillo County | 1100 | 1061 | 1089 | 984 | 982 | 1015 | 899 | 752 |

²¹ Ibid.

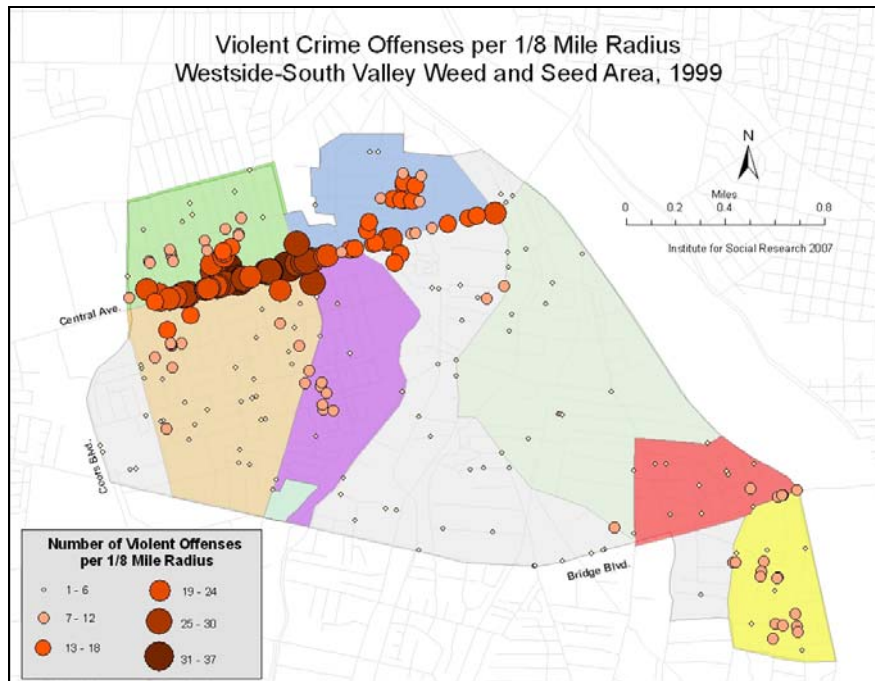
Spatial Density of Violent Crime over Time

The series of maps below illustrate the density of violent crime in the Weed and Seed area between 1999 and 2006. It is interesting to look at each map individually and to compare them over time. The maps depict the number of violent crimes within one-eighth of a mile radius. Larger circles represent a greater number of crimes within that eighth of a mile.

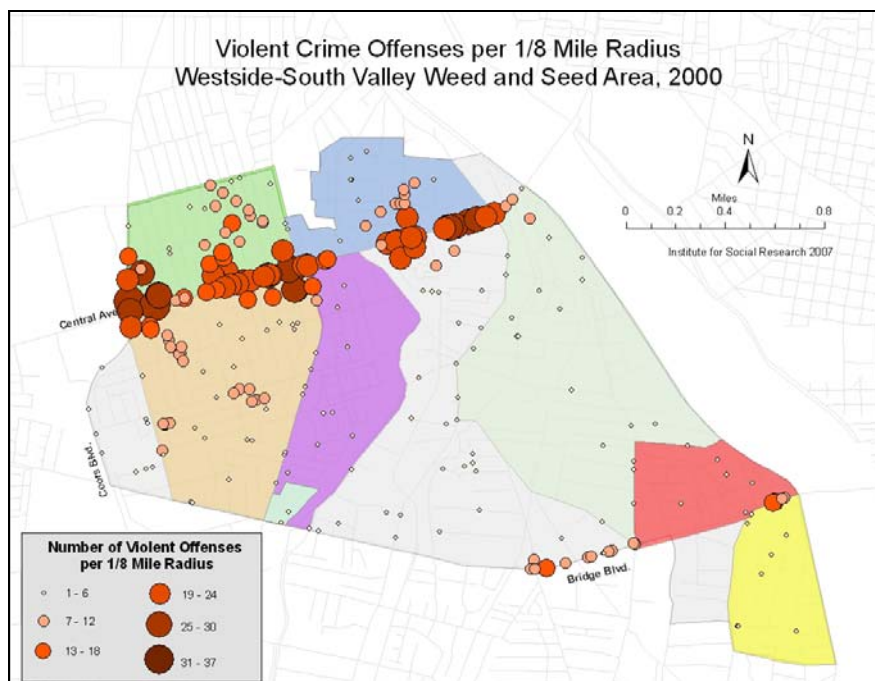
The first map depicts violent crime in 1999 (Map IV.2). While violent crime occurs throughout the area, it is heavily concentrated along the Central Avenue corridor. Concentrated pockets of violent crime occur in the Pat Hurley neighborhood in the northeast portion of the Weed and Seed area. Additionally, the Armijo neighborhood area in the southeast portion of the Weed and Seed site, and several points south of Central Avenue experienced a great deal of violent crime per one-eighth mile radius.

Subsequent years are illustrated in Maps IV.3 to IV.9. It is interesting to note that the number of crimes per one-eighth mile radius decrease over time; up to 37 acts of violence per 1/8 mile is reported in 1999. By 2002, this number is down to 18 and does not exceed this in subsequent years. Further, it is noteworthy that the density of violent crime along Central Avenue in particular has changed over time. Clearly, this area is still the densest area for violent crime and crime occurs along the entire strip. However, the areas of the densest crime appear to be primarily along the eastern and western sections of the street. Moreover, note that along Bridge Boulevard, particularly the northeast section and into the Armijo neighborhood is a second area of dense violent crime. This area has varied annually in the number of offenses per one-eighth mile radius, with a clear decrease seen in 2006. While areas of dense violent crime occurred throughout most of the neighborhoods over this eight-year time frame, the West Mesa neighborhood stands out as one that consistently experiences dense areas of violent crime. Part of the reason for this is that it borders Central Avenue. However, the violence extends beyond the Central Avenue corridor and into the neighborhood itself. The Pat Hurley neighborhood also experienced a great deal of densely occurring violent offenses. However, beginning in 2002, these became less concentrated. Throughout the eight years examined here, there were pockets of dense violent crime that occurred in other locales throughout the area, but no clear patterns emerged beyond those already discussed.

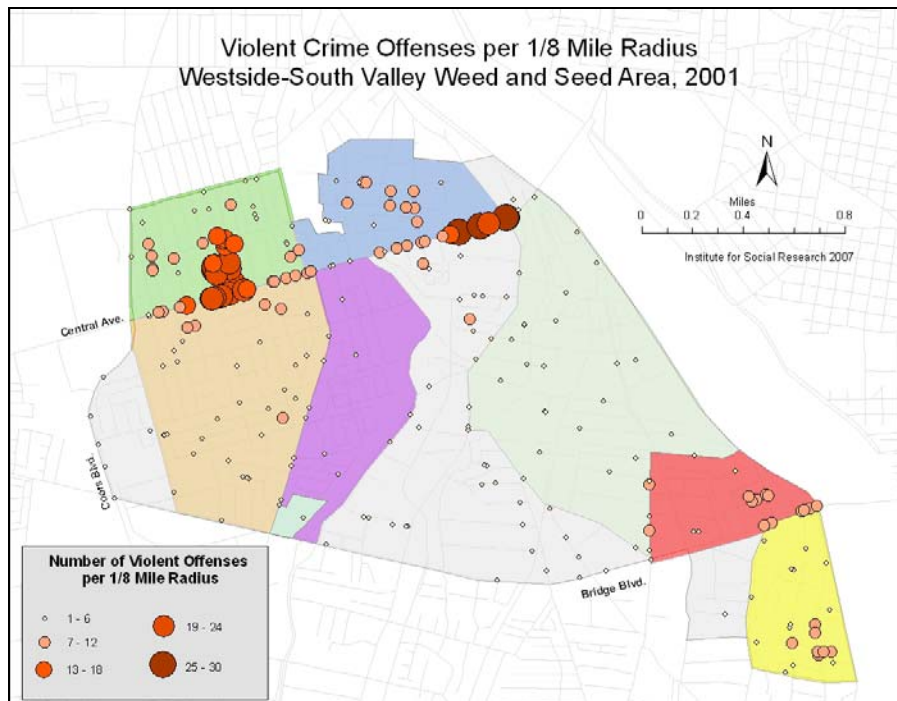
MAP IV.2



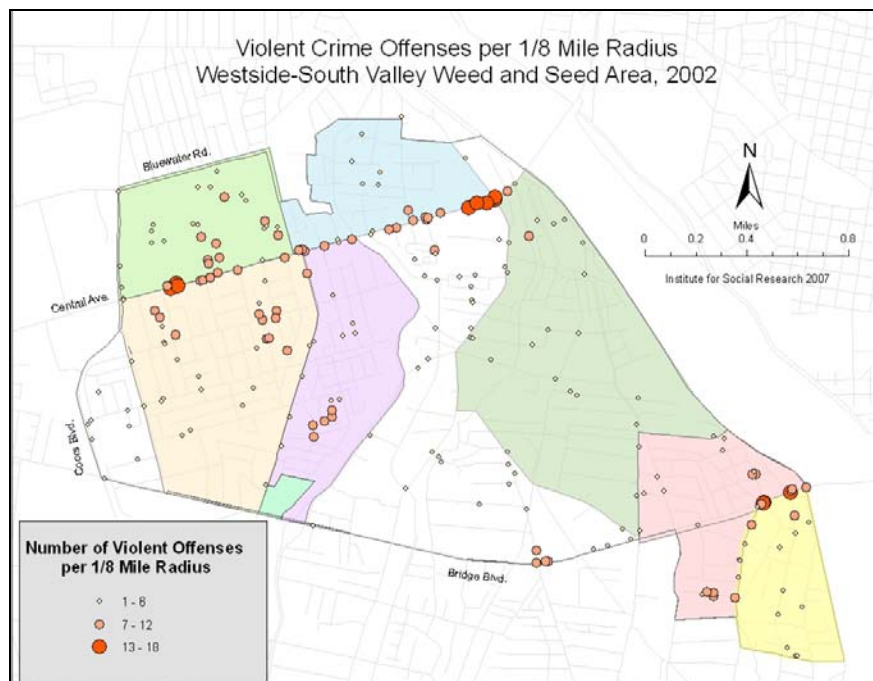
MAP IV.3



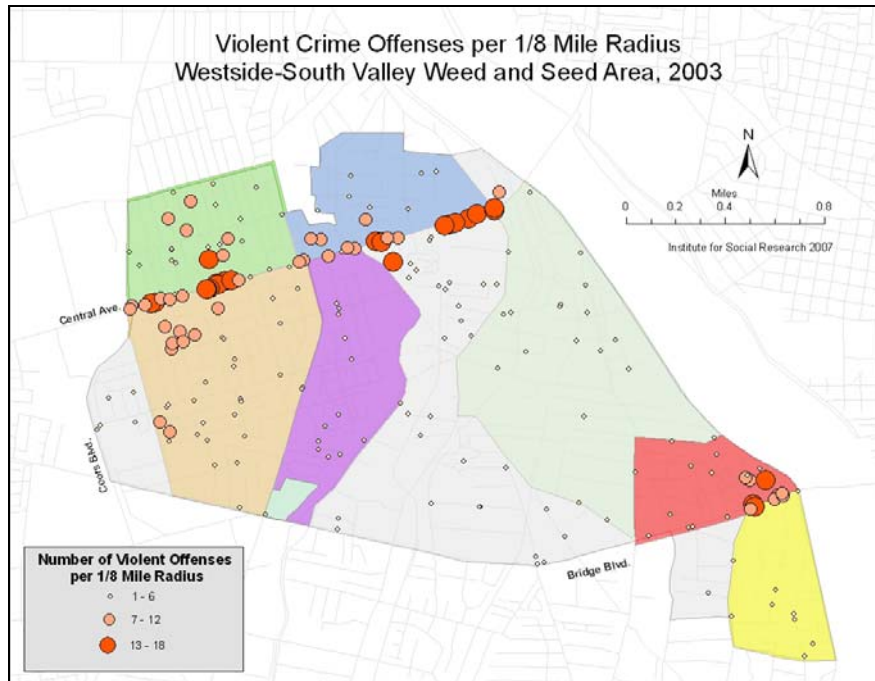
MAP IV.4



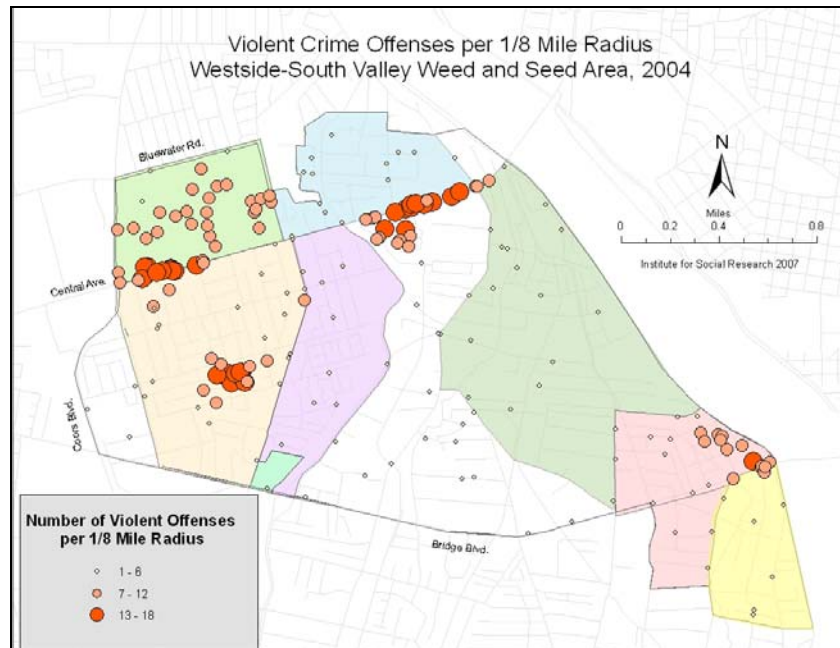
MAP IV.5



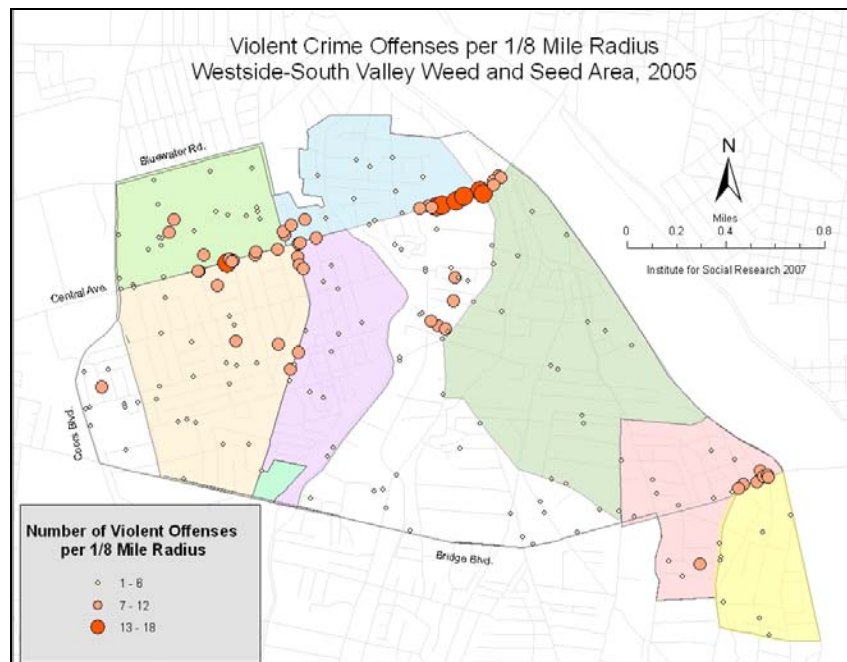
MAP IV.6



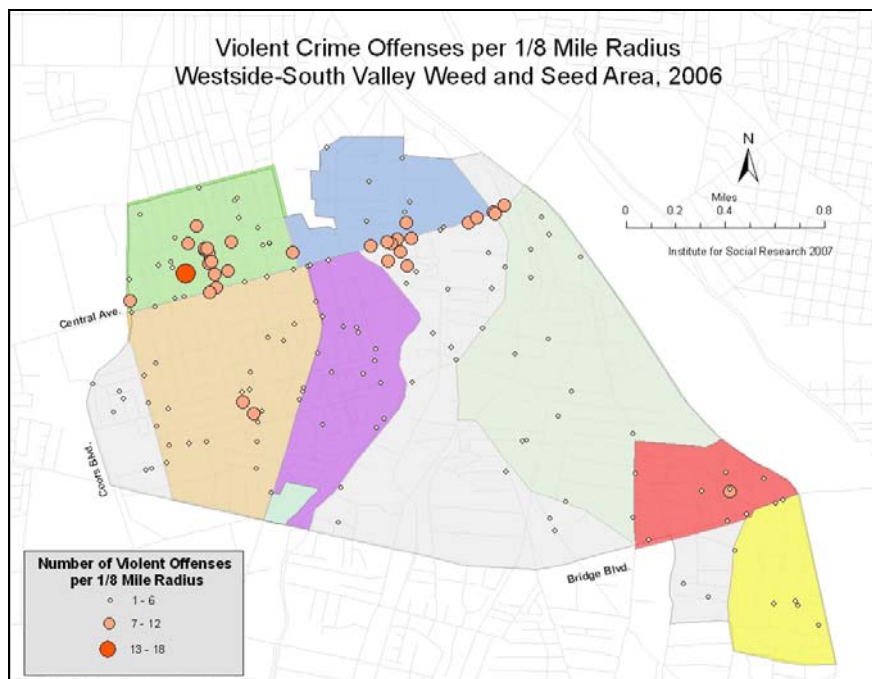
MAP IV.7



MAP IV.8

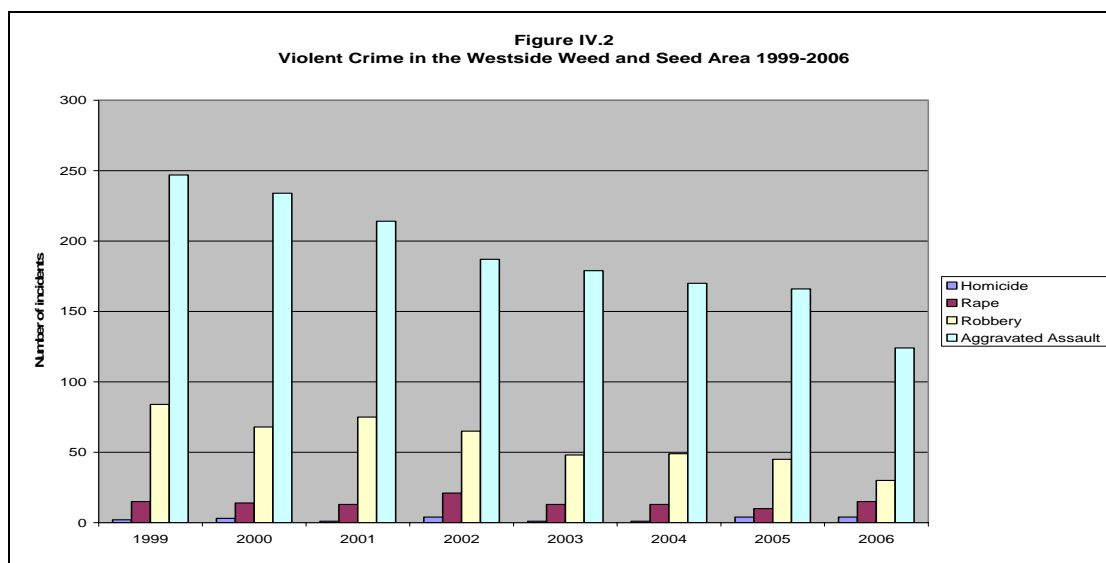


MAP IV.9



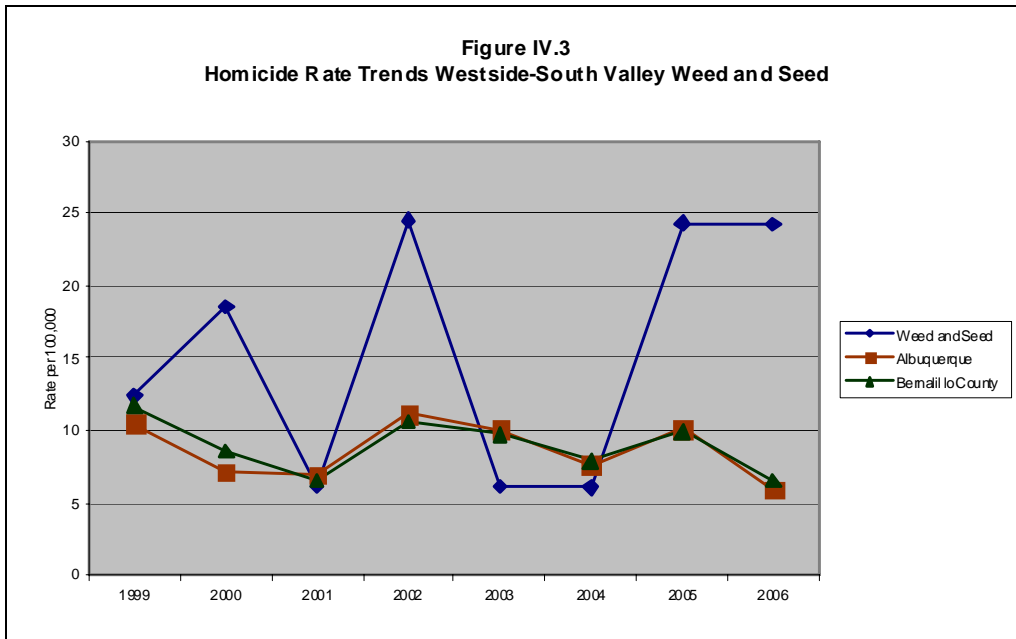
Violent crime trends by offense category

The number of serious violent crime incidents reported between 1999 and 2006 in the Westside-South Valley site is shown by crime category in Figure IV.2 below. Aggravated assault is the most prevalent offense type for each year, followed by robbery, rape, and homicide, respectively. The total number of violent crimes decreased between 1999 and 2006.²²

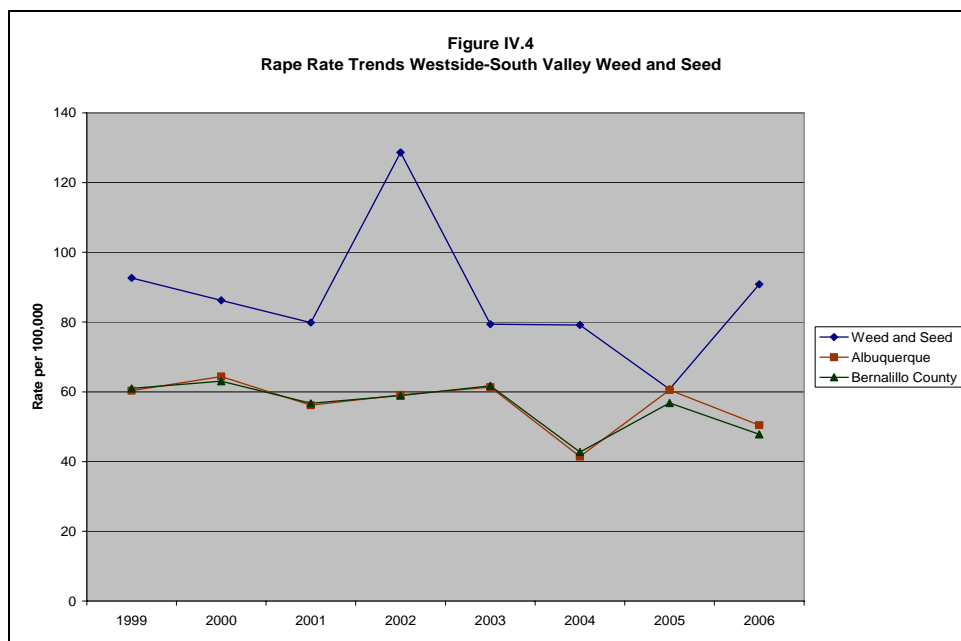


The series of charts below show the rate of each violent crime by offense type in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area compared to the City and County. Homicide, the most serious offense, is presented first. Since these offenses are relatively rare, small changes in numbers generate large changes in rates. This is reflected in the wide variation from year to year in the Westside-South Valley homicide rates. Nonetheless, the rate of homicide offenses in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area is higher than that of the City or County in many years. Some years- 2000, 2002, 2005 and 2006- had very high rates of homicide in the Weed and Seed area compared to the City or County. Over the eight-year period, homicides in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed accounted for approximately 6% of those occurring within the City boundaries and 4.6% within the County.

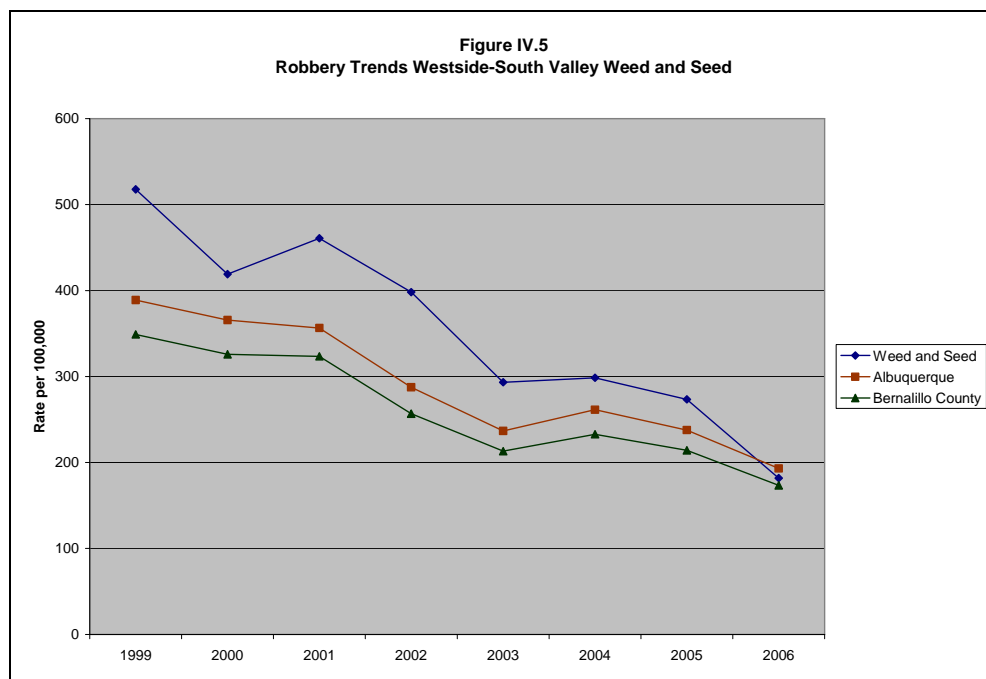
²² Note that we received the 2006 data in January 2007; it is possible that there are other incidents that were not yet entered into their data system. Thus, this 2006 figure should be considered preliminary and subject to change.



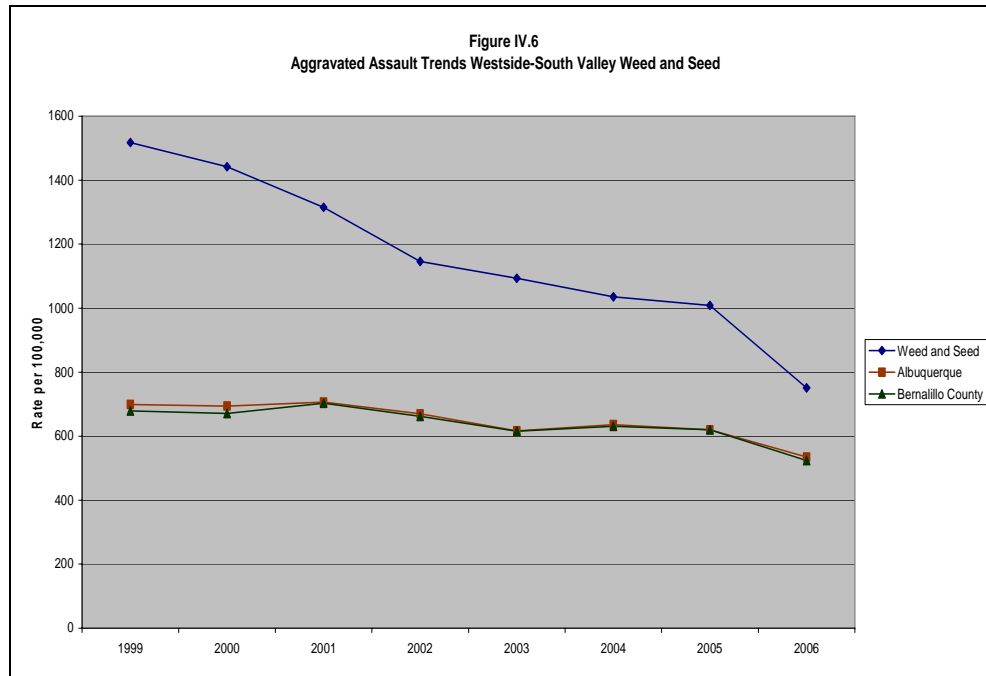
Rape trends in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site are depicted in Figure IV.4 below. Rates are higher in this area compared to both Albuquerque and Bernalillo County. There was a spike in rates of rape in 2002. Rapes occurring within the Weed and Seed area over this eight-year period accounted for 5% of all reported incidents within the Albuquerque area and 4% within Bernalillo County.



Trends in robbery rates are presented in Figure IV.5 below. In most years, the rate of robbery offending is slightly higher in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site than in either the Albuquerque area or the entire County. However, in 2006, the robbery rates were actually lower than those found in the metropolitan area and were just slightly higher than those in the County. Further, robbery rates are decreasing over time in the Weed and Seed area, similar to the pattern found in the rest of Albuquerque and Bernalillo County.



Not only are aggravated assaults the most common type of violent crime committed, the rates are much higher within the Westside-South Valley area than those in the Albuquerque or the County (see Figure IV.6 below). Recently, however, that disparity has begun to diminish. While aggravated assault rates were over twice those found in the city or county in 1999, rates decreased to 1.4 times higher in 2006. Five percent of aggravated assaults reported in Bernalillo County occurred in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area during the eight years examined here.



Violent crimes in neighborhoods by category

Homicides. Table IV.2 indicates the distribution of homicide incidents within the neighborhoods comprising the Westside-South Valley site. While relatively rare, homicides were recorded in West Mesa (6), Alamosa (3) Crest View Bluff (2), Pat Hurley (2) Armijo (1), Five Points (1) and two in the areas without a neighborhood association between 1999 and 2006.

Table IV.2
Homicides in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999 – 2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|--|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
| Alamosa | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 |
| Armijo | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Crestview | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Five Points | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Vecinos | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| West Mesa | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| No Association | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Entire Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 2 | 3 | 1 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 4 |

Rapes. The number of rapes occurring in specific Westside-South Valley neighborhoods between 1999 and 2006 is presented in Table IV.3. Proportionately, these crimes were most prevalent in Alamosa, West Mesa and the areas without a neighborhood association. Rapes were relatively rare in a number of neighborhoods in the site.

Table IV.3
Rapes in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Alamosa | 5 | 2 | 2 | 4 | 5 | 2 | 3 | 3 |
| Armijo | 1 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 0 |
| Crestview | 1 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 |
| Five Points | 2 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 3 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Vecinos | 0 | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| West Mesa | 3 | 4 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| No Association | 0 | 3 | 3 | 9 | 3 | 6 | 2 | 1 |
| Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 15 | 14 | 13 | 21 | 13 | 13 | 10 | 15 |

Robbery. The number of robberies between 1999 and 2006 declined dramatically in the Alamosa and Pat Hurley neighborhoods, as shown in Table IV.4. The number of robbery incidents has varied over time in the other neighborhoods, but generally shows a decline. The areas designated as not having a neighborhood association (past or present), has varied in the number of robberies, with a peak in 2005.

Table IV.4
Robberies in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Alamosa | 20 | 6 | 7 | 11 | 8 | 12 | 11 | 8 |
| Armijo | 6 | 0 | 5 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 2 | 3 |
| Crestview | 3 | 8 | 2 | 6 | 3 | 1 | 6 | 2 |
| Five Points | 0 | 6 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 3 | 3 | 2 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 25 | 13 | 14 | 9 | 5 | 7 | 5 | 4 |
| Vecinos | 8 | 3 | 7 | 3 | 4 | 1 | 3 | 0 |
| West Mesa | 9 | 8 | 11 | 6 | 6 | 8 | 4 | 7 |
| No Association | 13 | 24 | 23 | 16 | 14 | 13 | 10 | 4 |
| Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 84 | 68 | 75 | 65 | 48 | 49 | 45 | 30 |

Aggravated Assault. Table IV.5 shows the number of aggravated assault incidents by neighborhood between 1999 and 2006. Over time, the number of aggravated assaults has decreased substantially in Alamosa neighborhood. Other neighborhoods have also experienced a decline, including Armijo and West Mesa. Counts of aggravated assaults in Five Points, Vecinos del Bosque, and Los Altos Civic have varied, but generally remains the same. It should be noted, though, that Los Altos Civic has experienced almost no aggravated assault incidents probably because it is such a small area.

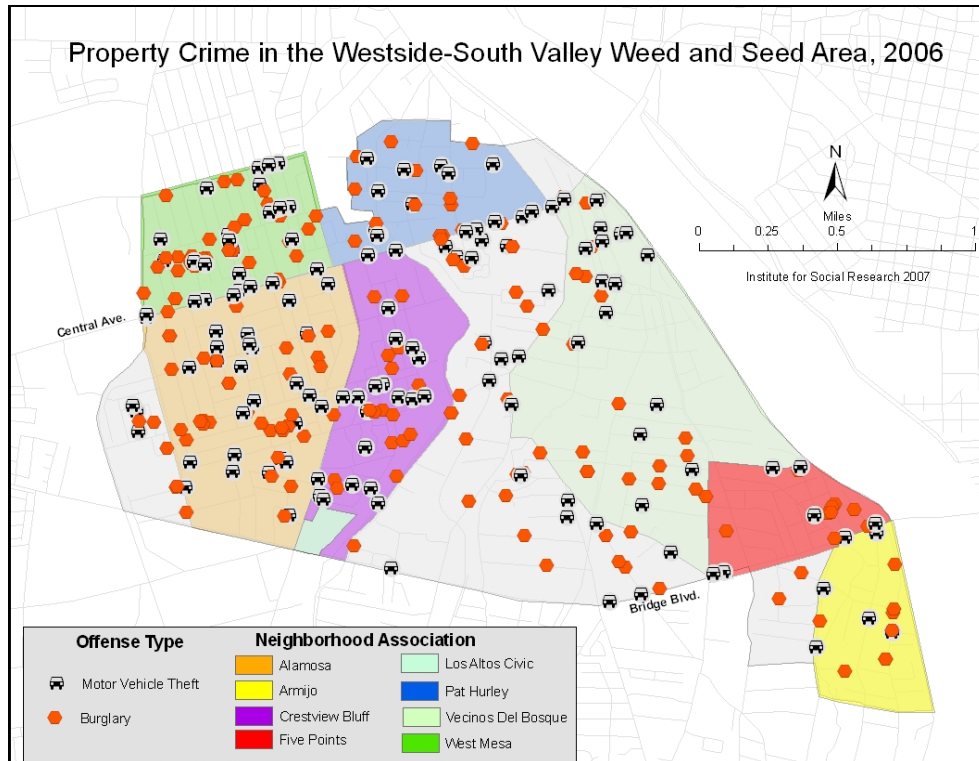
Table IV.5
Aggravated Assaults in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Alamosa | 62 | 37 | 39 | 25 | 37 | 33 | 26 | 22 |
| Armijo | 19 | 7 | 15 | 14 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 3 |
| Crestview | 17 | 15 | 11 | 16 | 11 | 8 | 11 | 13 |
| Five Points | 14 | 11 | 17 | 11 | 15 | 21 | 14 | 12 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 29 | 33 | 26 | 11 | 19 | 13 | 16 | 7 |
| Vecinos | 19 | 18 | 20 | 24 | 20 | 20 | 18 | 16 |
| West Mesa | 40 | 38 | 41 | 32 | 25 | 37 | 23 | 21 |
| No Association | 47 | 73 | 44 | 54 | 44 | 30 | 49 | 30 |
| Total Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 247 | 234 | 14 | 187 | 179 | 170 | 166 | 124 |

Property Crime

Illustrated in Map IV.10 is the distribution of burglaries and motor vehicle theft in 2006. Both crime types are distributed throughout the area, with no neighborhood immune from these forms of property crime.

MAP IV.10



As shown in Table IV.6, property crime rates involving burglary and motor vehicle theft have declined over time in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area. Rates in 2006 were lower in the site compared to Albuquerque, and just slightly above that in the County. This is a decrease from the peak in 1999, when the Westside-South Valley experienced rates that were 1.4 times that of the City and 1.5 times that of the County. Rates of these types of property offending have decreased in the Weed and Seed area over time, consistent with the decreases seen in both the City and County.

When we compared rates across neighborhoods, we found that in most years, the Pat Hurley Neighborhood experienced the greatest rate of burglary and motor vehicle thefts. During 2004 and 2006, the Crestview Neighborhood experienced the highest rate of burglary and motor

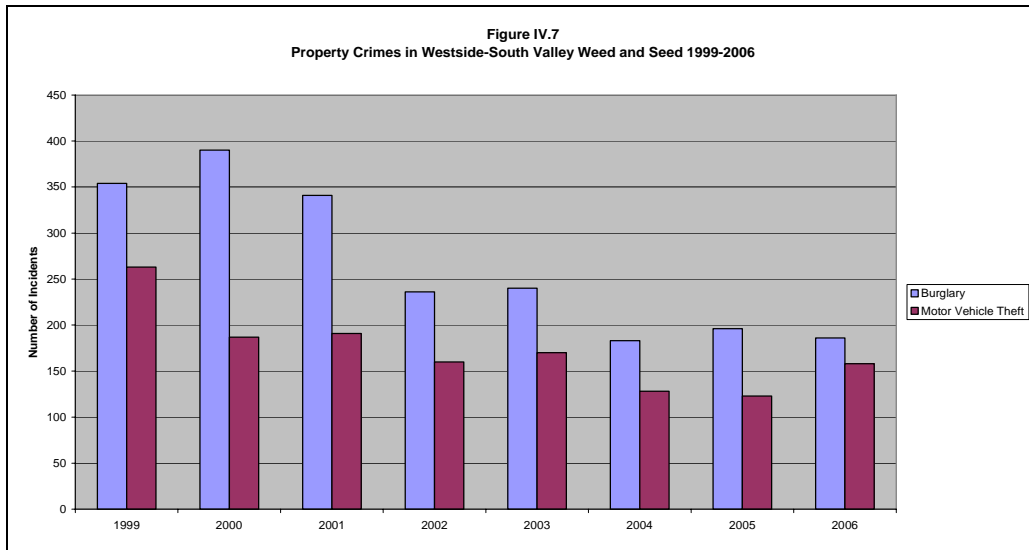
vehicle thefts as compared to the other areas. Los Altos Civic Association experienced a higher rate of property crimes in 2000, 2003 and 2005 than the other neighborhoods. However, since it has such a small population, the rates can spike with relatively few actual offenses.

Table IV.6
Burglary and Motor Vehicle Theft Offense Rates 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|--|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Alamosa | 3677 | 2581 | 2517 | 1929 | 2088 | 2356 | 1609 | 1875 |
| Armijo | 4125 | 2447 | 1887 | 2323 | 1544 | 1427 | 2519 | 1638 |
| Crestview | 4565 | 4044 | 3359 | 1591 | 2838 | 2912 | 3234 | 3140 |
| Five Points | 4682 | 2801 | 2328 | 2319 | 2220 | 1937 | 1840 | 1560 |
| Los Altos Civic | 1250 | 7407 | 1235 | 0 | 3659 | 2439 | 3659 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 4486 | 6504 | 4457 | 3716 | 3465 | 2006 | 2880 | 2951 |
| Vecinos | 3028 | 2773 | 2073 | 2147 | 2261 | 1369 | 1284 | 1839 |
| West Mesa | 3775 | 3020 | 4407 | 2262 | 2949 | 2030 | 1680 | 2661 |
| No Association | 3745 | 4705 | 4406 | 2262 | 2675 | 1394 | 1975 | 1741 |
| Entire Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 3812 | 3555 | 3269 | 3205 | 2505 | 1894 | 1938 | 2083 |
| Albuquerque | 2773 | 2719 | 2488 | 2169 | 2149 | 1999 | 2034 | 2238 |
| Bernalillo County | 2619 | 2510 | 2309 | 1985 | 1993 | 1844 | 1888 | 2028 |

Property crimes by category of offense

Illustrated in Figure IV.7 is the number of burglary and motor vehicle theft incidents in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area over time. A decrease in burglaries is especially notable over this time frame. The number of motor vehicle thefts has certainly decreased from its peak in 1999; however, recent years have shown some fluctuation in the number of incidents.



Burglary by neighborhood

Table IV.7 presents the number of burglaries experienced in each neighborhood over time. The number of burglaries has decreased overall. The areas with no neighborhood association have experienced the greatest decrease over time. While lower than in 1999, burglaries in the Armijo and Crestview Bluff neighborhoods have varied, not showing a clear pattern of decline over time. The Los Altos Civic Neighborhood has been subject to few burglaries over time, with the exception of several in 2000. Burglaries in the other neighborhoods are decreasing over time.

Table IV.7
Burglaries in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods | | | | | | | | |
| Alamosa | 61 | 59 | 63 | 44 | 48 | 46 | 34 | 41 |
| Armijo | 26 | 14 | 11 | 14 | 13 | 7 | 15 | 8 |
| Crestview | 37 | 25 | 25 | 10 | 14 | 22 | 25 | 17 |
| Five Points | 28 | 21 | 14 | 15 | 13 | 11 | 10 | 11 |
| Los Altos Civic | 1 | 4 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 31 | 54 | 38 | 26 | 29 | 16 | 24 | 19 |
| Vecinos | 49 | 49 | 31 | 39 | 34 | 21 | 17 | 21 |
| West Mesa | 45 | 47 | 62 | 26 | 34 | 28 | 26 | 34 |
| No Association | 76 | 117 | 96 | 62 | 54 | 31 | 43 | 35 |
| Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 354 | 390 | 341 | 236 | 240 | 183 | 196 | 186 |

Motor Vehicle Theft by neighborhood

Many of the neighborhoods have shown a great deal of fluctuation in the number of motor vehicle thefts over time, but the numbers generally indicate some tendency towards decreasing thefts over time. Neighborhoods included in this category are West Mesa, Pat Hurley (although the numbers have increased in the last two years), Five Points, and the areas with no neighborhood association. After experiencing a huge decrease in motor vehicle thefts from 1999 to 2000, the number of thefts in this area has fluctuated, without indicating a clear trend toward decreasing at this point. Several neighborhoods have experienced variation from year to year without any clear trends. These neighborhoods include Armijo, Crestview Bluff and Vecinos del Bosque.

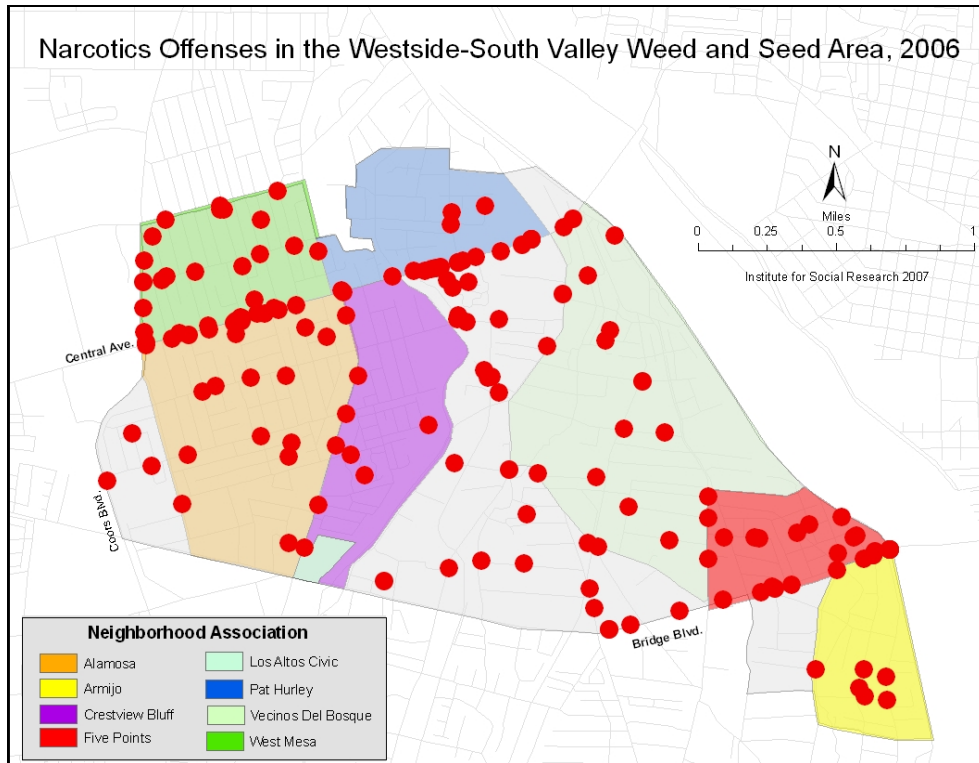
Table IV.8
Motor Vehicle Theft in Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods: 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|---|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Westside-South Valley Neighborhoods | | | | | | | | |
| Alamosa | 71 | 34 | 28 | 26 | 28 | 40 | 25 | 28 |
| Armijo | 11 | 8 | 6 | 7 | 1 | 6 | 8 | 7 |
| Crestview | 17 | 23 | 15 | 9 | 20 | 13 | 14 | 21 |
| Five Points | 22 | 9 | 11 | 10 | 11 | 10 | 10 | 6 |
| Los Altos Civic | 0 | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Pat Hurley | 24 | 26 | 17 | 20 | 14 | 9 | 12 | 18 |
| Vecinos | 25 | 19 | 20 | 14 | 22 | 13 | 15 | 25 |
| West Mesa | 41 | 22 | 39 | 26 | 34 | 19 | 13 | 28 |
| No Association | 52 | 44 | 55 | 48 | 38 | 17 | 25 | 25 |
| Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed Area | 263 | 187 | 191 | 160 | 170 | 128 | 123 | 158 |

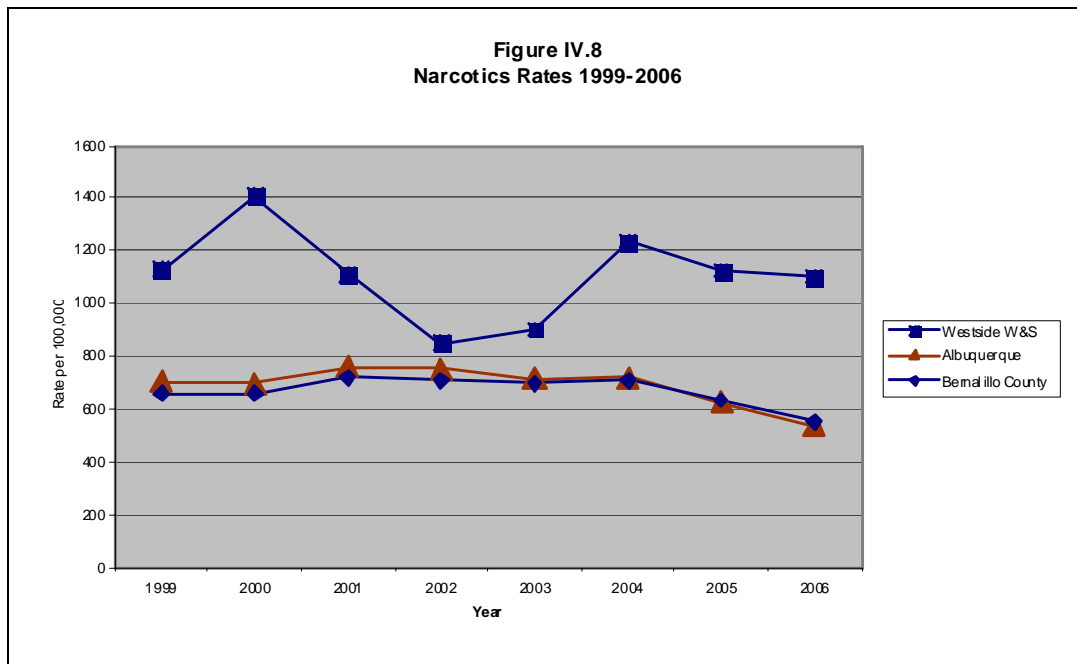
Narcotics Offenses

Narcotics offenses (which include possession of both drug equipment as well illegal substances and the distribution of drugs) were recorded throughout the Westside-South Valley weed and seed site in 2006. The spatial distribution of narcotics offenses reported in 2006 is shown in Map IV.11. Note that narcotics offenses in that year occur throughout the site, but are particularly dense along Central Avenue, the northern portion of Coors Boulevard and the eastern portion of Bridge Boulevard. It could that reports of narcotics offenses on these thoroughfares were the result of attempts at open-air drug marketeering, or a consequence of police stops for other suspicious behaviors demonstrated by offenders in which drugs were discovered.

MAP IV.11



Trends for drug offenses in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site, relative to Albuquerque and Bernalillo County as a whole, are presented in Figure IV.8. These rates decreased from 1999 to 2003 in the Westside-South Valley area. However, recent years, the rate of narcotics incidents has increased. In contrast, the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County areas have experienced a decrease in recent years. The rate of narcotics incidents in the Westside-South Valley area in 2006 was over twice as high as that in the Albuquerque area and 1.99 times as high as that in the County.



Narcotics offenses by neighborhood

Many neighborhoods have experienced fluctuations in the number of incidents over time, but with no clear trends deciphered (see Table IV.9 below). These neighborhoods, including Alamosa, Crestview Bluff, West Mesa and the areas without any neighborhood association, have seen a general increase in the number of incidents over time. Some areas are showing a general trend towards increasing numbers of narcotics incidents, such as the Vecinos del Bosque neighborhood. Armijo has experienced a decrease in narcotics incidents from its peak in 1999. This number, though, has begun to slowly creep up over time. Note that increases in narcotics offenses may be a reflection of increased detection and arrest of these activities.

Table IV.9

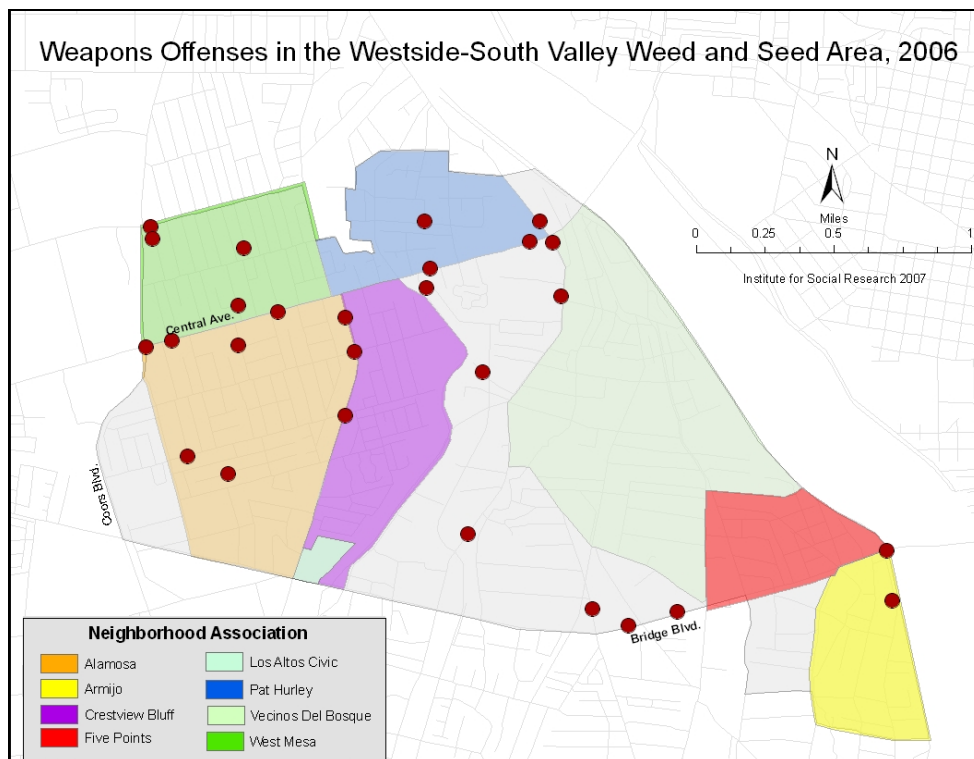
Narcotics offenses in Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed 1999-2006

| | 1999 | 2000 | 2001 | 2002 | 2003 | 2004 | 2005 | 2006 |
|----------------------------------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Alamosa | 32 | 27 | 38 | 16 | 25 | 45 | 28 | 28 |
| Armijo | 46 | 8 | 8 | 9 | 15 | 16 | 18 | 19 |
| Crestview Bluff | 9 | 19 | 9 | 7 | 7 | 13 | 10 | 8 |
| Five Points | 15 | 14 | 16 | 15 | 13 | 7 | 8 | 21 |
| Los Altos | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 1 |
| Pat Hurley | 29 | 36 | 26 | 18 | 11 | 20 | 27 | 12 |
| Vecinos | 6 | 5 | 9 | 12 | 10 | 17 | 14 | 15 |
| West Mesa | 21 | 56 | 34 | 15 | 15 | 38 | 20 | 28 |
| No Neighborhood Association | 25 | 64 | 41 | 47 | 52 | 47 | 34 | 50 |
| All Westside-South Valley | 183 | 229 | 181 | 139 | 148 | 203 | 161 | 182 |

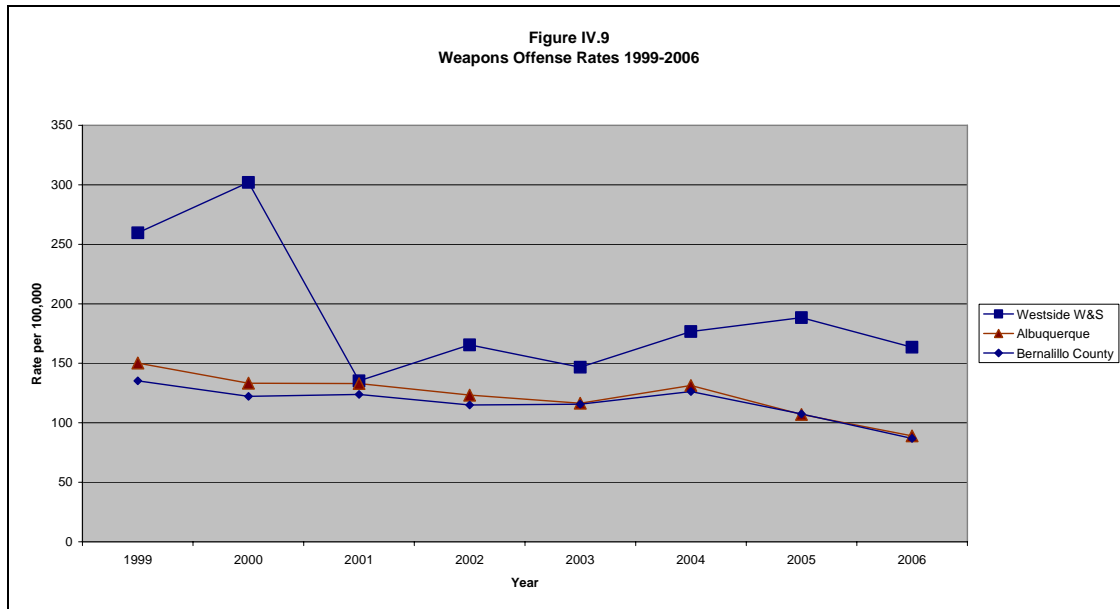
Weapons Offenses and Firearm Related Offending

Weapons offenses (i.e., the negligent use of a deadly weapon and unlawful carrying or possession of a weapon) in 2006 are shown in Map IV.12 below. Weapons offenses occurred primarily in and around thoroughfares, especially Central Avenue. There were incidents in other areas as well. Overall, the number of weapons offenses is relatively low.

MAP IV.12



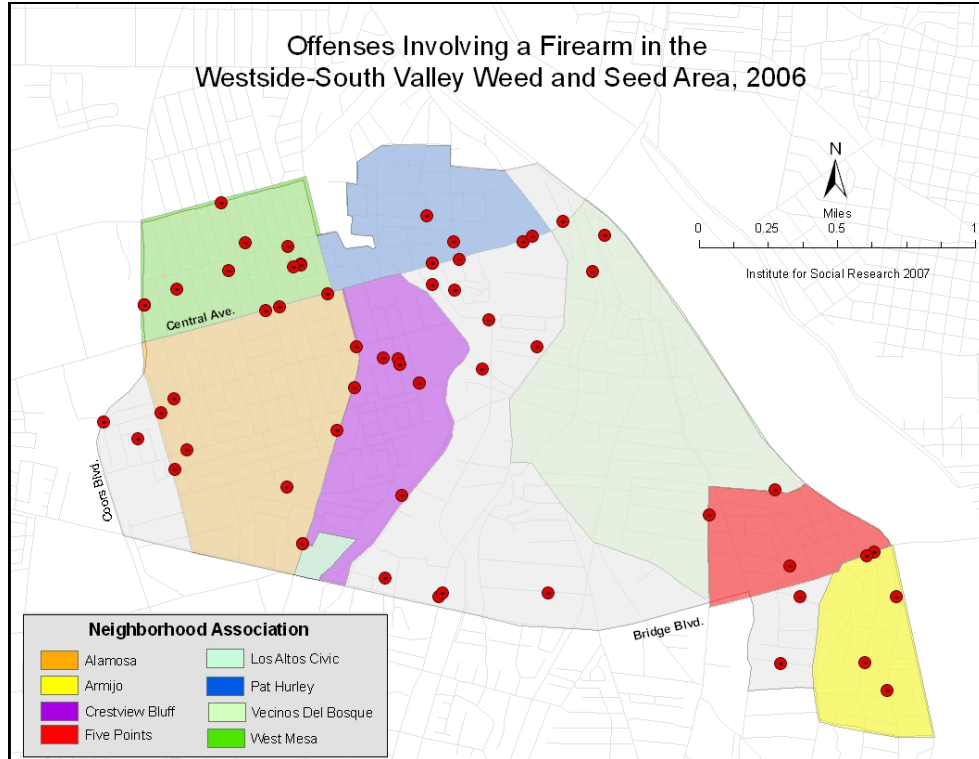
As shown in Figure IV.9, despite having a relatively low number of weapons offenses, the rate is higher in the Westside-South Valley compared to the Albuquerque and Bernalillo County for most years. Further, as shown in Figure IV.9, while the rate of weapons offending in the site became similar to the City and County in 2001, it has become increasingly disparate and higher in recent years.



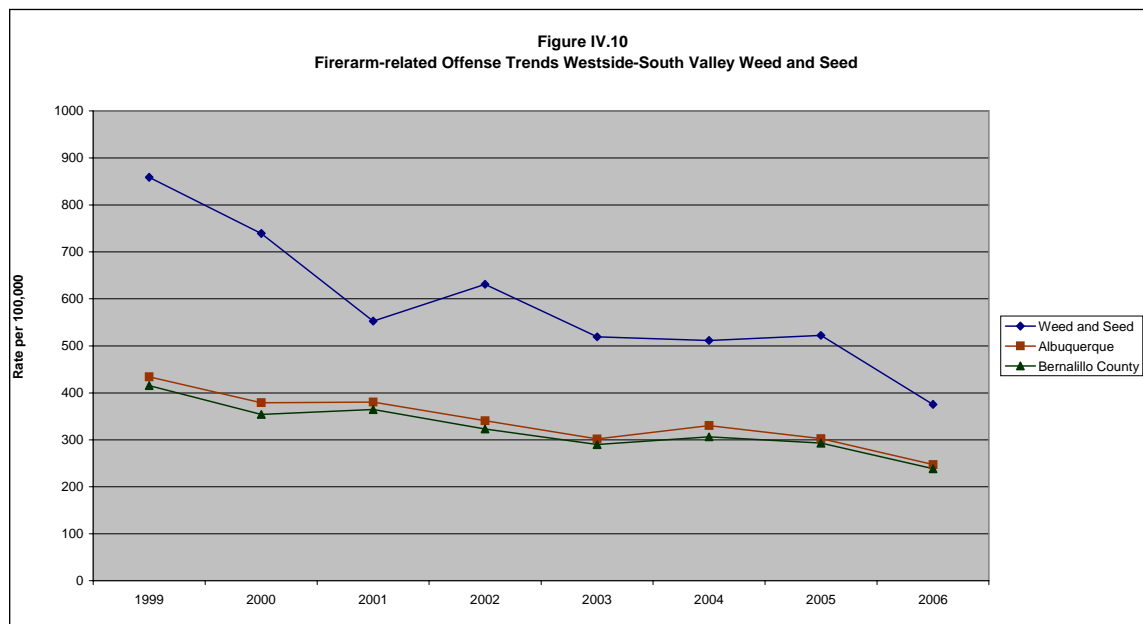
Offenses utilizing a firearm by location in 2006

Firearm-related incidents are illustrated in Map IV.13 below. These incidents differ from weapons offenses; rather, they include only those incidents in which a firearm was used. It is interesting to note that the location of weapons offenses often does not co-occur with firearm related incidents, indicating that these are primarily independent events. In other words, weapons violations are not likely to be due to the use, misuse or illegal possession of a firearm. Indeed, only 22% of weapons incidents in 2006 were documented as firearm-related. Alamosa, West Mesa, Crestview Bluff and the areas with no neighborhood association experienced more incidents involving a firearm than other neighborhoods in 2006.

MAP IV.13



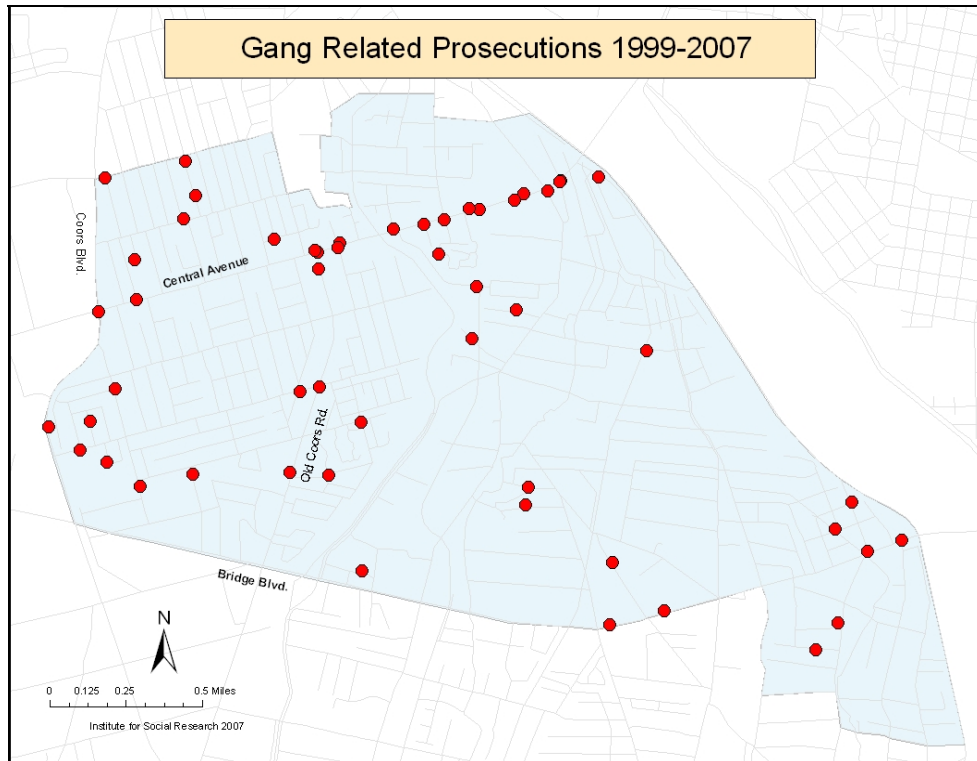
Firearm related offending has decreased over time in the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed area. However, as can be seen in Figure IV.10 below, the rates are higher than those seen in either the Albuquerque area or in Bernalillo County as a whole. These rates are both decreasing and becoming more similar to the greater metropolitan area over time.



Offenses involving Gang Members

The Second Judicial District Attorney's Office has a specialized unit that prosecutes gang related offenses. The D.A.'s Office uses an interagency approach and collaborates with all levels of law enforcement. They maintain and disseminate statistical data to community stakeholders through the *Narcotic Court Watch Database* and the *Court Watch Database* systems. They prosecute offenses in which a gang member was involved, regardless of whether the offense was related specifically to gang activities such as drug distribution or conflict with other gangs. Using data provided by the District Attorney's Office, we were able to map the location of these incidents and determine which offenses were committed within the Westside site. Data spanned the period of January 1999 to the first few months of 2007. Approximately 7% of all gang-related cases stem from offenses occurring in the Westside area. As can be seen in Map IV.14 below, many follow major thoroughfares such as Central Avenue and Coors Boulevard. However, many gang-related offenses occur in the residential neighborhoods as well.

MAP IV.14



CHAPTER V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

Summary

The Albuquerque neighborhoods that comprise the Westside-South Valley Weed and Seed site have been known as a magnet for criminality and other socially unacceptable behavior for several decades. Residents, elected officials and other interested stakeholders of the various neighborhoods in the site have joined with law enforcement professionals and local government agencies in the Weed and Seed strategy, to combat crime and improve public safety in the area.

Social conditions

Their responses to crime are influenced by important social conditions in the area itself. The level of social disadvantage within a community is closely associated with criminal behavior: the Westside-South Valley site experiences a higher degree of social disadvantage than other portions of the metropolitan area. While some neighborhoods are relatively well off, there are several indications of disadvantaged conditions in the Westside-South Valley site as a whole.

The population in the Westside-South Valley site is relatively young, compared to the Albuquerque metropolitan area. A youthful residential population produces two kinds of risk for criminality. First, youthful individuals are at higher risk for criminal involvement than older people. As people age they establish families and permanent work situations, and most tend age out of criminal behavior. Second, younger people tend to earn less, have less stable employment histories, and are less likely to purchase their own home. All of these conditions promote geographical mobility. They may have weaker social connections with their neighbors and commitment to their community, and are less likely to maintain their residence and the immediate neighborhood. At the same time, we know that these communities are home to families that have lived there for multiple generations, and these ties may counteract some of these criminogenic social conditions. In the Westside-South Valley site, labor force participation (particularly for women) is lower than that for Albuquerque as a whole. When employment is found, it is likely to be at levels that do not provide sufficient income to meet family needs. Several new businesses are locating within the vicinity of the Weed and Seed geographical area. Families tend to be larger in the Westside-South Valley site, but family income is significantly

lower than for the Albuquerque metropolitan area. Indicators of poverty such as percentage of youth living below the poverty line, receiving public assistance, and participating in free lunch programs are more prevalent in the site. Given the deterioration of government-subsidized social services and employer contributions to health insurance, families on in the Westside-South Valley site are vulnerable to illness, accidents and other crises that have a dramatic effect on quality of family life.

Educational attainment for adults is relatively low, compared to the rest of the Albuquerque area. This affects income and employment, and is perpetuated in the performance of the school-age children residing in the area. Their academic performance and graduation rates are also lower than that of children from throughout the school district.

Many families live in less desirable housing arrangements. Of course the quality of housing varies considerably throughout the site, but in areas with a concentration of low-income housing, dwellings are less well maintained and do not support as desirable a quality of life that residents might prefer. Neighborhood quality and civic pride are inversely associated crime rates, so it is no surprise that Westside-South Valley neighborhoods with a more low-cost housing experience the highest rates of serious criminal behavior.

Finally, conditions along major thoroughfares such as Central and Bridge Avenues also reflect the economic disadvantage of the area. Businesses are catering to the needs and pocketbooks of local residents, but are not economic anchors for the community. The Westside-South Valley site is populated by fast food restaurants, low-cost motels, budget-minded retail outlets, bars and small cafes, and similar businesses that neither provide high-income employment opportunities for residents nor draw economic resources into the area. Rather, the major commercial arteries are places where crimes are most likely to occur and be detected.

Crime patterns

Official statistics indicate that the Westside-South Valley site enjoyed reductions in crime from 1999 through 2006. However, criminal behaviors remain more prevalent in the Westside-South Valley site than in the Albuquerque metropolitan area and the County for many crime types.

The most prevalent category of serious violent crime in the area is aggravated assault, followed by robbery, rape and homicide, respectively. Rates of violent offending have decreased over time. Density maps indicate that areas that had previously experienced a large number of

violent crimes within a relatively small area have begun to see decreases in the number of offenses over time. This is especially noticeable for the Central Avenue corridor. While sections of this main artery still experience a greater density of crime relative to other areas, the intensity of violent crimes has clearly diminished.

Burglary and motor vehicle theft rates have declined between 1996 and 2006 in the Westside-South Valley site and throughout the city. In the last few years in particular, the Westside-South Valley site has experienced rates that are below, or close to, those of the city and the County.

Between 1996 and 2006 narcotics offense rates declined in the Albuquerque, but they increased in the Westside-South Valley site, where narcotics offense rates are twice those of the metropolitan area. These offenses were most prevalent in the Alamosa, West Mesa and Five Points neighborhoods in 2006, and least prevalent in the Los Altos and Crestview neighborhoods. Reported offenses often occur along commercial streets, likely due to traffic and pedestrian stops in which drug law violations are detected.

Rates of weapon offending in the Westside-South Valley site were well above city rates. Of particular interest for the Weed and Seed initiative is the use of firearms. In the Westside-South Valley site, firearms were identified as being used in crimes or being possessed illegally most often on commercial streets.

Gang-involved criminal offending resulting in prosecutions was also prevalent in the Westside-South Valley site. Based on data collected for prosecutions between 1999 and 2007, roughly 7% of all gang-involved prosecutions involved criminal activity that occurred within the boundaries of the Westside-South Valley site.

Conclusions and Future Directions

The relationship between social conditions and crime in the Westside-South Valley site is striking. While traditional law enforcement tactics are necessary to maintain public safety in the short-term, the neighborhoods comprising the site will likely continue to have above-average rates of serious crime until socioeconomic conditions improve, and/or the demographic profile of the area changes to one less strongly associated with criminal offending and victimization. Therefore, systematic community-based planning and other efforts to improve the quality of life for adults and especially children in the area, including the Seeding activities of this initiative, are critical for the long-term reduction of crime in the area. Mounting evidence suggests that in

disadvantaged neighborhoods, collective efficacy (or the degree to which residents communicate with one another and are invested in the community) can reduce crime. Collaboration should continue with activities that bring neighbors together and help to generate a sense of collective ownership and responsibility for the direction of the community are therefore important.

The current report provides information for an on-going assessment of Weed and Seed activities in the Westside-South Valley site in Albuquerque. Crime and social indicators should be monitored on an annual basis. In addition, efforts should be directed at understanding the impact of the initiative itself in producing these changes, within the scope of available resources.

This report is intended to function as a tool to meaningfully inform residents and other stakeholders of conditions in the site. It is our hope that stakeholders will utilize this report as a tool to engage in thoughtful discussion of the findings and implement specific Weed and Seed efforts and plans to reduce criminal behavior and improve the quality of life within the Westside-South Valley site.