

# **BURGLARY OF SINGLE-FAMILY HOUSES IN SAVANNAH, GEORGIA**

## **A Final Report to the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services on the Field Applications of the Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Project**

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### **SUMMARY**

This report describes an action research project undertaken by the Savannah Police Department (now the Savannah-Chatham Metropolitan Police Department) to examine, with assistance from a consultant, the problem of burglary of single-family houses.

Although, for a variety of reasons, few of the recommendations that emerged from this project were implemented, much was learned about the local problem and the limits of the community's current response to it.

Preliminary analysis led the project team to focus on burglaries of single-family houses in one sector of the city.

The major findings of the problem analysis were:

- Daytime burglary is closely associated with truancy.
- There is a high rate of repeat victimization, much of it under-reported.
- Burglary victims do appear to heed crime prevention advice from the police.

- Very little is known about the stolen property market in the area.
- There is little routine communication among CIB burglary detectives, the Pawn Shop Detail, and patrol officers.
- Better identification and control of repeat offenders will likely reduce burglary rates.

The major recommendations for improving the police and community response to the problem were:

- Improve truancy prevention and control.
- Improve the preliminary investigation process (to improve case clearance and discourage false or exaggerated reporting).
- Improve the burglary scene evidence collection process.
- Improve control of the stolen goods market.
- Develop a repeat offender initiative.
- Improve the crime prevention advice and assistance provided to burglary victims.
- Improve environmental design elements (e.g., more motion-sensitive lighting around houses and lanes, street redesign, lane closures and neighborhood markers).
- Improve the UCR classification process to reduce misclassified and duplicate burglary reports.

The problem-oriented, action research model was applied reasonably effectively and smoothly in this project. The POP Guide proved useful for guiding the problem analysis and the search for viable new responses. However, competing priorities for the time and attention of police department staff detracted attention from this project such that only a few of the recommendations were implemented. Consequently, it was not possible to measure the impact the project had on the burglary problem.

## THE PROJECT

### Background

Between September 2000 and January 2003 the Savannah, Ga. Police Department (SPD) participated in a project designed to apply information contained in selected *Problem Oriented Guides for Police* (POP guides) to two actual crime and disorder problems in that city. The project was funded by the Office of Community Oriented Policing Services in the U.S. Department of Justice, in the form of technical assistance from Mr. Michael Scott, one of the principal researchers on the POP guides project. This report assesses one of those two explorations—burglary of single-family houses in Savannah.

### Selecting the Problem

The SPD senior command staff chose to explore burglary of single-family houses after systematic deliberation. In September 2001 a survey instrument was administered to all patrol, investigations, and traffic

officers in the SPD (see Appendix A). In the survey officers were presented with a listing of the 19 POP guides that were then either in print or in production. They were asked to rate the level of concern about each of these problems in their community and to recommend to the command staff which problems they felt should be addressed in this project.

Mr. Scott drafted the survey which was reviewed, revised and administered by the SPD, and then tabulated the survey results and reviewed them with SPD senior command staff in October 2001. A total of 181 surveys was completed, representing nearly one-half of the operations staff of the department. The scores and rankings were cross-tabulated by levels of police experience, officer rank, and assignment<sup>1</sup>, and were generally found to be consistent across all categories with some variation according to assignment.

Mr. Scott briefed Chief Dan Flynn, patrol commander Deputy Chief Dan Reynolds, and the SPD planning and research coordinator, Mr. Brian Renner, on the survey results, and subsequently briefed the remainder of the senior command staff (bureau chiefs, and precinct, investigative, and special unit commanders) at the conclusion of a regularly scheduled Compstat meeting. (Chief Flynn and the investigations bureau commander were not present for the briefing at the Compstat meeting, so they did not participate in the final problem selection.) Mr. Scott briefed the command staff on the project objectives, described his credentials and role in the project, and outlined the basic project structure. He then invited the commanders to consider the following questions in making their selections:

- How necessary do you think it is to change the department's and

community's overall response to the problems under consideration?

- How likely do you think it is that conducting a problem-oriented policing study will bring about these changes? Are certain responses preordained or foreclosed by other considerations? Are decision-makers likely to be influenced by data and analysis? Do you think there will be sufficient public and political support for exploring the problems under consideration?
- What impact does the problem have on the community in terms of its scope and costs?
- Are there any life-threatening conditions at issue?
- Are there any threats to Constitutional rights at issue?
- Is there likely to be sufficient community interest and support for both the study and the subsequent recommendations?
- Is there evidence of interest and support of officers for addressing the problem?
- Does the problem adversely affect the relationship between the police and the community?
- How likely is it that studying the problem will lead to some progress in dealing with it?

The following problems were perceived to be of serious concern and recommended for exploration:

- burglary of single-family houses
- burglary of retail establishments
- thefts of and from cars in parking facilities
- drug dealing in privately owned apartment complexes.

The commanders gave serious consideration to thefts of and from cars in parking facilities, but concluded that much of the problem in the city occurred on public streets. Similarly, while the commanders agreed that drug dealing in privately owned apartment complexes was a significant problem, much of the drug dealing problem in the city took place in public housing complexes, on the street, and in smaller privately owned apartment buildings.

After discussing the survey findings, the various problems and the selection considerations, the command staff unanimously selected burglary of single-family houses and loud car stereos as the two they wanted to explore in this project (see the report on Loud Car Stereos for discussion of why that problem was selected). At the time, the citywide residential burglary rate was rising, having increased by 32% between 2000 and 2001. The commanders decided to address the burglary problem at the precinct level rather than citywide because they felt the data would be more manageable and because the problem varied geographically. As Precinct 3, one of the four SPD precincts, was largely residential and accordingly had a high proportion of the city's residential burglaries, the project was assigned to its commander, Captain Dean Fagerstrom, to manage.

The project got off to a slow start, partly because the burglary of single-family houses POP guide was still in draft form at the time the problem was selected. About a month after the project was assigned, however, Mr. Scott provided Capt. Fagerstrom and the then investigations unit commander, Lt. Gary Glemboski, with a near-final draft of the POP guide. He also met with Maj. Reynolds to discuss project management. They agreed that Maj.

Reynolds would have to play an active role to keep the project moving forward. As there were several other high-profile projects and issues demanding commanders' attention at that time, it was almost six weeks before the first project meeting took place.

## **STRUCTURING THE PROJECT**

At the initial project meeting, the participants decided there should be a core project team with other key individuals brought into the project as necessary. Capt. Fagerstrom assigned one of his patrol supervisors, Sergeant Greg Mitchell (soon to be promoted to Lieutenant and assigned as a patrol watch commander), to manage the project. Mr. Scott and the department's research and analysis coordinator, Mr. Renner, would also be part of the core project team. It was agreed that Mr. Scott's role would go beyond merely advising the core project team, and that he would conduct or assist with problem analysis tasks as needed. The precinct's crime prevention officer and a burglary detective were expected to be part of the core project team, but their roles eventually proved to be rather limited.

The team then turned to two other tasks: determining the scope of the project and designing a project analysis plan.

### **The Scope of the Project**

Consistent with the scope of the POP guide, the team decided to focus on single-family houses. Duplexes were not at first part of the analysis, but those which were more like detached houses than multi-unit apartment buildings were later included. Initially, the team planned to analyze the problem across the entire precinct, but a review of aggregate burglary data and maps led it to narrow the geographical scope of the project to the

northern half of the precinct where nearly two-thirds (62%) of the reported target offenses occurred (see Fig. 1 below). The plan was to analyze all incidents with the following report classifications—burglary, attempted burglary, trespass, unfounded burglary, filing false police reports, and greater included offenses such as sexual assault, homicide, and home invasion robbery. As burglary was a lesser-included offense in certain other crimes, non-burglary offenses were to be studied for what they might reveal about the core problem, rather than for what they revealed about those particular offenses. Because police believed that house burglars also tended to break into cars, analyzing thefts from vehicles was discussed but ultimately rejected. Houses which were burgled while under construction were excluded, as the offense was considered closer to construction-site theft than burglary. Burglary from vacant rental properties was also excluded, because it do not generate the same concern as burglary of an occupied house.

## **A Project Analysis Plan**

Problem analysis was organized along two major dimensions—first, according to categories of questions needing answers; and secondly, by major analysis tasks.

### **Categories of questions**

The following categories generally mirrored those in the Understanding Your Local Problem section of the POP guide:

- the scope of the problem
- burgled premises
- incidents
- burglary victims
- offenders
- locations and times

- current responses to the problem
- measures of effectiveness.

Mr. Scott drafted a set of analysis questions and assessment measures drawn largely from the POP guide, but included others not specifically mentioned in the guide.

### **Major analysis tasks**

The following analysis tasks were planned:

- reviewing case files
- conducting environmental surveys of burglary sites
- conducting environmental surveys of a random sample of houses in the target area
- reviewing aggregate incident data and maps
- interviewing police specialists
- interviewing offenders
- surveying victims
- tracking criminal cases through the legal system
- surveying citizens
- surveying crime victims.

This analysis structure guided both the substance and the methods of inquiry. (See Appendix B for the initial set of problem analysis and assessment questions, Appendix C for an additional set of analysis tasks, and Appendix D for a matrix describing the various analysis tasks to be completed to answer each question.) Responsibility for these analysis tasks was apportioned among the members of the core project team.

### **ANALYSIS TASKS, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The following section summarizes the major analysis tasks, findings and recommendations of the project.

## Major Analysis Tasks

**Several different methods were used to analyze the problem. The major analysis tasks are described in the table below.**

## Major Findings from the Analysis

While the long-term trend for residential burglary in Precinct 3 and citywide is relatively stable, there is room for significant improvement in the way in which this problem is addressed. It is difficult to determine with accuracy the real burglary rate—there is both over-reporting (fraud, error) and under-reporting (only about 50% of actual burglaries are reported to police)—but the team is confident that whatever the real burglary rate may be, improvements in investigation, reporting, punishment, and prevention can reduce it.

**Daytime burglary is closely associated with truancy.** Nearly three-fourths of target burglaries occurred during daylight hours. Few burglaries occurred on Saturdays. A high proportion of burglaries occurred near schools. Most juveniles arrested for burglary were truant at the time.

**There is a high rate of repeat victimization, much of it under-reported.** While the repeat victimization patterns have not been fully analyzed, the victim survey revealed a significant level of repeat victimization, which is consistent with research findings. Nearly half (44%) of victims surveyed said the house had been burgled either before or since the target burglary; some said as many as five times. Sometimes, the repeat victimization pattern is for the block rather than one house.

**Burglary victims do appear to heed crime prevention advice from the police.** Many burglary victims did not have effective prevention measures in place, but seemed receptive to advice provided by police. The best time to provide this advice is in the immediate aftermath of the burglary—ideally, the next day, but certainly within one week. Weak doors, door-frames, window-frames, and window locks contribute to forced-entry burglaries, but many victims (some home-owners, others tenants) lack the resources to improve these house features.

**Very little is known about the stolen property market in the area.** Despite this lack of knowledge, the team identified a number of measures that could be taken to improve understanding of the stolen property market and better control it.

Cash, jewelry, stereos, and VCRs were most commonly stolen, followed by clothing, video game systems, and guns. Most of these items are easily transported on foot and are readily converted to cash.

Police reports suggest there is some false reporting (e.g., missing rental property, supplementary missing property claims) by victims. Only about half of victims have property insurance, however, and only half of those that do file insurance claims.

**There is little routine communication among CIB burglary detectives, the Pawn Shop Detail, and patrol officers.** CIB detectives and patrol officers rarely exchange information—for example, the truancy patrol log maintained by Precinct 3 is not routinely checked by CIB detectives—and CIB detectives do not routinely work closely with the Pawn Shop Detail or the Forensic Unit.

**Better identification and control of repeat offenders will likely reduce burglary rates.** Official data on burglary suspects was hard to obtain because of deficiencies in the records management system, but investigators believed that a few high-rate offenders accounted for many burglaries as well as other property crimes such as thefts from vehicles. This belief is supported by research findings.

Criminal arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of residential burglars is only a small part of the response to residential burglary. Few burglary cases are cleared by arrest, and the sentences of those convicted tend to be less severe than what many people would expect from a burglary conviction.

### **Recommendations for Improved Responses to the Problem**

**Improve truancy prevention and control.** Savannah does not appear to run programs to address chronic truancy. The schools, police, juvenile court and juvenile agencies need to collaborate to control truancy, particularly among habitual truants.

The team recommended that truancy patrols be continued and made less predictable (i.e., the dates and times of the patrols should vary so habitual truants cannot predict when the patrols are active). Officers should continue to field interview truants and return them to school, home or youth authorities as appropriate. The field interview information should be cross-referenced with school attendance records to identify chronic truants so the school may intervene. Burglary detectives should be encouraged to use the truancy patrol log as an investigative tool.

Truancy patrol officers should target known truants who are also known criminals. Arrest and probation records

should be cross-checked against attendance records. Those found to be both frequently absent from school and involved in criminal activity should be targeted for extra attention from police. When these chronic offenders are absent from school, officers should actively search for them (both during school hours and in the evenings if needed).

Parents should be notified of all truancy information, in person, by a police officer. Officers should inform parents of their child's status as a truant (and possibly as a known delinquent) and their responsibilities as parents to ensure school attendance. Parents should also be reminded that they can be prosecuted for contributing to the delinquency of a minor or for violating the state's mandatory attendance laws.

The School Board should be strongly encouraged to take a more proactive approach to controlling truancy. A change in some school procedures may be required. School officials should consider taking more proactive steps to address truancy, such as taking attendance in each period and notifying campus police of truants, notifying parents immediately of their child's absence, screening students for intervention when arrested by police for truancy, and alternative suspensions.

**Improve the preliminary investigation process (to improve case clearance and discourage false or exaggerated reporting).** As many preliminary burglary investigations are substandard, stricter accountability for inadequate investigation and reporting is necessary. First responders and beat officers should become more involved in the investigation of most burglaries. They should actively search for witnesses at the scene both at the time of reporting and in a follow-up. Even if first responders are unable to do an extensive

canvass, a mini-canvass should be conducted. Beat officers would then do a much more extensive canvass as soon as possible (possibly at the same time as a crime prevention survey). This should be assigned with a suspense date to be tracked. SPD should consider formally assigning burglaries with lower loss amounts to beat officers for follow-up investigation. This would serve to improve preliminary investigations and improve patrol officers' investigative skills. Patrol officers and burglary detectives should be encouraged to exchange information routinely.

To discourage or uncover false or exaggerated reporting, officers should inquire if the property is either insured or is rent-to-own property. If it is rent-to-own property, police should contact the rental company to locate serial numbers and to determine if the account is in arrears or the property has been repossessed. The simple act of asking about insurance may discourage some home-owners from inflating insurance claims.

Officers should determine whether the victim is the home-owner or a tenant. If the victim is a tenant, the property owner should be contacted and offered burglary prevention advice, as many tenants are not authorized or lack the resources to install prevention measures.

Burglary detectives should be encouraged to apply for search warrants on burglary arrestees' homes. Doing so might lead to recovery of more stolen property.

The department's computer index of field interviews is not well known or widely used as an investigative tool in the department. It should be exploited more fully. Though the existing system is not user-friendly, the new field interview file in the records management system should be easier to use.

**Improve the burglary scene evidence collection process.** The Forensic Unit or the investigating patrol officer should take photographs at more burglary scenes. Photographs are useful for persuading juries of the impact burglary has on victims. The new records management system will allow digital photos to be electronically attached to the case file. A system should be developed for storing the photos as evidence.

New officers should be given more hands-on training in crime scene processing so they develop better skills at recognizing and collecting evidence at burglary scenes. Patrol officers should be encouraged to call for the Forensic Unit to process burglary scenes only in cases where there is a high probability of collecting useful physical evidence. Criteria for requesting Forensics should be established (e.g., whether the crime scene is likely to be productive, the value of items taken, if the burglary is part of a pattern of repeated crimes, if it is or is likely to be a repeat victim, if there is a known suspect, etc.) Victims should not be allowed to determine whether or not the crime scene is processed for evidence; this should be a professional judgment of investigating officers. Properly trained officers should be able to explain to victims why the Forensic Unit will or will not be requested. The reduction in overall calls for forensics processing should allow the Unit to do a more thorough job on the scenes they do process.

**Improve control of the stolen goods market.** The goal is to establish a level of enforcement sufficient to make pawn shop and second-hand dealers more careful about buying suspicious property and prevent thieves from selling stolen property. The following are some measures that might be taken to improve control of the stolen property market:



- Conduct test sales of property to pawn shops and second-hand dealers to see if identification and reporting requirements are met.
- Conduct spot inspections/audits of pawn shop inventory.
- Post signs in licensed shops discouraging sales of stolen property.
- Develop a publicity campaign to discourage buying stolen property.
- Get second-hand dealers to comply with city ordinance reporting and identification requirements.
- Program computer software to automatically alert for suspicious patterns of pawning activity (e.g., same person pawning a lot of property).
- Propose a county ordinance similar to the Savannah city ordinance to ensure uniform requirements across the county.
- Establish a regional stolen property information network.
- Require pawn shops to take digital photos of all pawned property and submit the photos with the pawn tickets.

At present, the Pawn Shop Detail detective's time is heavily consumed with data entry and computer file review. The detective must enter pawn shop data submitted on paper into the computer system without clerical assistance. S/he rarely has the opportunity to get into the field for more proactive tasks.

**Develop a repeat offender initiative.** There are various models for repeat offender programs, some more resource-intensive than others. The most practical approach to repeat burglary offenders is to develop a flagging system in the records management

system by which communications specialists could alert patrol officers and detectives to official contacts with repeat offenders. Flagging repeat offenders would also enable a list of burglars to be printed, which would include their most recent mug shot, known addresses, and criminal histories. This would give detectives, or patrol investigators, access to a list of potential suspects. The logic behind such a system is to give patrol officers and detectives more information about suspects to improve their investigation and enforcement decisions.

A more proactive approach—having prosecutors ask the court for enhanced sanctions against repeat offenders, and corrections officials impose stricter monitoring conditions—should be considered after this first step, though locating and monitoring repeaters might require an increase in police numbers. A more ambitious effort would require a commitment from senior police command staff as well as the district attorney and corrections supervisors.

**Improve the crime prevention advice and assistance provided to burglary victims.**

Police should provide burglary victims immediate (within 24 to 48 hours in most cases) practical advice to help them reduce their risk of repeat victimization. The burglary prevention advice should be tailored to the particular victim and house; for example, some victims might be advised to enhance exterior lighting of the premises in cases where nighttime burglary is likely.

New, high-quality information brochures should be developed to inform victims of what to expect in the criminal investigation process, how they can assist the investigation, how they can reduce their risk of repeat victimization, and how to contact key people in government (police, prosecutors, victim advocates, etc.) to assist

them. The information should discourage exaggerated or fraudulent reporting.

Police should visit neighbors of burglary victims to alert them to the crime and to enable them to better protect their homes and watch out for their victimized neighbor.

Beat officers and the precinct crime prevention officer should assume responsibility for victim follow-up. Patrol officers should receive additional training in burglary prevention. An in-service training course should be developed that would include the findings from this project, the content of the Burglary of Single-Family Houses POP guide, and burglary prevention. All patrol officers and burglary detectives should be given a copy of the Burglary of Single-Family Houses POP guide.

**Improve environmental design elements (e.g., more motion-sensitive lighting around houses and lanes, street redesign, lane closures and neighborhood markers).**

The team's analysis did not find that alleys and shrubbery had a significant on burglary. Lighting of the house appeared to be more important than street lighting. More ambitious environmental design changes to the neighborhoods (e.g., rerouting streets, creating more cul-de-sacs, erecting entryways to neighborhoods, upgrading street and residence lighting) might reduce burglary, but would require substantial community support and resources. There are limited opportunities to change the physical features of established residential neighborhoods to discourage burglary, but environmental changes should be recommended at particular houses as part of the overall burglary prevention advice provided to victims.

**Improve the UCR classification process to reduce misclassified and duplicate burglary reports.**

Many of last year's UCR misclassifications of burglary reports were attributable to the crash of the records management system. Those errors are less likely to be repeated when the new records management system becomes operational. A review of 2002 residential burglary reports in Precinct 3 found that far fewer classification errors were made in that year compared to 2001, perhaps because the large number of new officers who joined the force in 2001 had improved their skills. The new field training program has helped in this regard. As the classification problem appears to have been adequately addressed, this project need not devote any more effort to it.

**UNDERSTANDING THE LOCAL PROBLEM**

What follows is a summary of what was learned about the problem of burglary of single-family houses in the target area. It was not possible to gather information to answer every question posed in the original analysis plan; those questions for which information was available are presented below.

**The Scope of the Problem**

**What is the long-term trend for this problem in the target area?** The nine-year trend for all residential burglaries in the target area suggested that 2001 was a typical year for residential burglary. The median number of all residential burglaries in the target area for the nine-year period was 285 (see Figure 2 below).

This generally mirrored trends elsewhere in the precinct and across the city (see Figure 3

below). State, regional and national residential burglary rate trends have showed steady declines while the trend in Savannah as a whole, and the target area in particular, suggested that burglary rates were holding steady.

The complicating factor for this project was that 2000 was an abnormally low year for residential burglary both in the entire city and in the target area, and what appeared to be a dramatic spike in the rate in 2001 was probably only a return to the norm. Indeed, the residential burglary rate citywide rose a modest 2.3% from 2001 to 2002, well within the long-term norm. There is no simple explanation for the unusually low rate in 2000.

The long-term trend was discussed. An argument could be made that the problem did not merit special attention because it was not out of statistical control, but it was felt that the problem caused sufficient harm to victims to warrant an effort to improve responses.

It was not possible to calculate a useful rate for burglary of single-family houses that would allow for better comparisons across geographic areas.

## **Burgled Premises**

Much of what was learned about burgled premises in the target area was the result of three analyses: 1) a review of 162 case files that met the criteria for inclusion in the study, 2) environmental surveys of all houses burgled in these 162 cases, and 3) environmental surveys of a randomly selected sample of 41 houses in the target area. (See Appendix E for the Data Collection Instrument.) There were 282 residential burglaries in the target area in 2001, 57% of which were of single-family houses, the focus of the study. Some

duplexes, a few apartments and one condominium were included because of their similarity to single-family houses. This yielded a total of 162 cases that met the target criteria. A random sample environmental survey was conducted to determine if there were any environmental features of burgled houses that differed significantly from a typical house in the area.

**How accessible are burgled houses?** In the target area, rear alleys (lanes) are common, serving mainly to provide access for sanitation and utility work. Most are unpaved and unsecured at their intersections to adjacent streets. About half the target offenses (46%) occurred at properties with a rear lane or other rear vehicle access. In 21% of them, the rear access was used either for the burglar's approach or exit from the scene, but means of access was not known in the rest. Burglary detectives expressed the view that alleys (lanes) did contribute to residential burglary as most entries were from the rear of the house, but no significant difference in rear access was found between burgled houses and the randomly selected control group.

As it was not possible to conclude definitively if rear access to houses contributed significantly to burglary, the team decided, for the purposes of this study, not to pursue any special measures to control access through alleys.

**How visible are points of entry to burgled houses?** Many target burglaries occurred even though the point of entry was at least somewhat visible to neighbors and passersby. In fact, the burgled houses were more likely to have clear visibility than the random sample houses. In 53% of the cases the yard was open to surveillance. In 54% of cases, the point of entry could not be seen

from the street; in about 40% of the cases, the point of entry was at least partially obscured by trees or shrubs; in only about 14% of cases was the point of entry concealed by a fence or wall. In only 7% of cases was there a significant amount of trees or shrubs in the yard obstructing a view of the entrance. These findings are relative, however, as this area of Savannah is characterized by lush foliage, particularly by a creeping vine known as kudzu that can blanket an area in all but a few cold weather months (see Fig. 4 below).

While the general environment tended to provide a fair amount of concealment, the visibility of points of entry did not appear to be a significant factor in determining which houses in the area were burgled and which were not.

The lighting at the time of the burglary could be determined in only 38% of cases. In 44% of these, the street was adequately lit, but the residence was dark; in 38%, both the street and the residence were adequately lit, and in 18%, both the street and the residence were mostly in the dark. In none was the residence lit and the street dark. This may simply be because there are few unlit streets in the target area or it may point out the importance of having an adequately lit residence against a dark background.

**What types of security were in place at burgled houses?** The environmental survey of burgled houses revealed that only 12% had signs or decals indicating the presence of an alarm and only 7% actually had alarm systems. Where the house was protected by an alarm, it was activated in only 25% of cases. This means that alarms were rare in the target area and where they did exist, they often did not work as intended. There was an indication of a dog on the premises in only 10% of cases. The environmental

survey of the random sample of houses showed that burgled houses were more likely to have alarms and dogs as security measures than the random sample, while the random sample houses were more likely to have burglar bars on windows or doors. But because the survey was limited to observing the exterior of the house, it could have missed security measures not readily visible from the outside.

The victim survey data showed that 22% of victims' houses had burglar alarms when they were burgled, and 20% had dogs. Most victims (57%) had no burglary special prevention measures in place. Only one victim said motion-sensitive lights were in place and one said burglar bars were in place. After the 2000 burglary, 41% of victims installed better locks; 26% installed burglar alarms; 11% installed new lighting; 11% installed burglar bars; 7% got a dog; and one victim moved out of the house. 20% of victims reported taking no special preventive measures.

**What house features made burgled houses more vulnerable?** According to burglary detectives, much of the housing stock in the target area was made from cheap materials such as hollow core doors, which were often kicked in to gain entry. They believed that many property owners lacked the resources to install good burglary prevention measures. Analysis of case files confirmed that a significant percentage (35%) of entries were made by forcing open locked doors, either in the front, side or rear of houses, and an equal percentage (35%) by forcing open or breaking windows. Most of the remaining entries (30%) were through unsecured doors or windows. In 60% of cases, entry was made to the rear of the house; 18% to the front; and 21% to the side. Entry was about evenly made through doors (47%) and windows (52%).

**Conclusion:** It was likely that more secure doors, windows, and locks would likely help prevent burglary of single-family houses in this area.

## Incidents

**What type and value of property was stolen?** In 89% of cases it was possible to determine the property stolen (or reported stolen). The most commonly stolen types of property were, in declining order: TVs, cash, jewelry, stereos, and VCRs. The next cluster was clothing, video game systems, and guns<sup>2</sup>, followed by food, telephones, microwave ovens, tools, bicycles, DVD players, cameras/camcorders, air conditioners, compact discs, computer equipment, furniture, and checks. Other types of property were reported stolen in only a single case.

The mean value of property stolen in the target area was \$812; the median value was \$450. Nationally, the average loss in a residential burglary was \$1,381 in 2000. This suggests that target area houses contained less valuable property than the norm.

## Burglary Victims

### **What were the characteristics of victims?**

Burglary detectives believe that most residential burglary victims were wholly innocent and that few were also offenders or gang members, as most burglars did not want to risk retaliation by stealing from dangerous people.

**Were owner-occupants or renters more likely to be burglary victims?** The victim's home-owner status was determined from case files in 43% of cases.<sup>3</sup> Of those, 67% were renters and 33% were owners.<sup>4</sup> The median length of time renters had lived in

the house before it was burgled was 18 months; the median time of residence for owners was 12 years.

**Conclusion:** It is important to reach out to landlords and tenants with burglary prevention advice as well as to homeowners.

**How much revictimization of houses and persons occurs?** The victim survey revealed that 44% of victims said they had been burgled either before or after the 2000 burglary, some claiming as many as five times (11% said there had been unsuccessful attempts; 22% said the house had been burgled previously; 6% said the house had been burgled since the 2000 burglary; and another 6% said the house had been burgled both before and since the 2000 burglary). (See Appendix F for Victim Survey Data Collection Instrument.) This data suggested that repeat victimization was significant. Of special note was that four houses on one block (10 block of Hibiscus) were multiple burglary locations, suggesting that giving extra attention to entire blocks might reduce repeat victimization.

The team hoped to analyze SPD records to assess the level of repeat victimization in residential burglary, with the intention of determining which of the houses in the 2000 target sample had previously been burgled up to five years before the 2000 burglary, and which had been burgled subsequent to the 2000 burglary. Deficiencies in the records management system made it impossible to gather that data, however. For the same reason it was impossible to analyze the repeat victimization phenomenon at the individual level to see if certain individuals (as opposed to houses) were chronic victims of residential burglary. It would also have been instructive to analyze the repeat

victimization pattern of property owners (as opposed to houses or occupants) to see if certain landlords were chronic victims, but these data, too, were unavailable.

Burglary detectives did not believe there was a high level of repeat victimization in the target area, largely because most victims were not insured and could not therefore afford to replace stolen property.

**Conclusion:** The repeat victimization pattern was not widely recognized by SPD.

**Did victims have property insurance that covered their burglary losses?** Victim survey data revealed that 53% of victims said their property was insured; 47% said it was not. For those whose property was not insured, 29% said the cost of the insurance was not worth the probable loss, and 25% said property insurance was too expensive. (33% did not answer the question and 13% offered another reason.) Of those whose property was insured, 52% said they filed a claim for the loss; 48% did not.

**Did victims receive any crime prevention advice after the burglary, and if so, did they take any action based on that advice?** 48% of victims said they received some crime prevention advice, primarily from a police officer. A few received advice from neighbors, witnesses, an alarm company, an insurance company, or a family member. Of the 52% of victims who received no advice, the vast majority (82%) said they would have liked it. Of those who received advice, 68% said they acted on the advice, most within a couple of days or no more than a week. The most common burglary prevention measure taken after receiving advice was to install better locks. Other prevention measures mentioned were

installing an alarm, new lighting, or burglar bars, and getting a dog.

**Conclusion:** Burglary victims are receptive to burglary prevention advice and act on that advice reasonably quickly.

**How likely are victims to report their victimization to police?** Nationally, only about half (51%) of burglary victims report their victimization to the police. That percentage rises to 84% when the dollar loss exceeds \$1,000. According to a local crime victimization survey conducted a few years ago, only about half (47%) of property crime victims in Savannah reported the crime to police. Savannah residential burglary victims' reporting practices were therefore typical.

**Conclusion:** Given that the average dollar loss in burglaries of single-family houses in the target area was slightly less than \$1,000, the problem is significantly underreported.

## Offenders

It was not possible to gather much useful information about offenders, as efforts to interview convicted burglars were largely unsuccessful. Nearly all the offenders initially identified by probation and parole officials as suitable candidates were either returned to jail for violating conditions of their release or declined to be interviewed. The team succeeded in interviewing only one offender, but his circumstances were exceptional and not representative of local offenders. (See Appendix F for the Offender Interview Protocol). Efforts to map the home addresses of known residential burglars were also unsuccessful due to deficiencies in the records management system.

Burglary detectives believed that much of the problem was gang, drug and truancy-related and that the current responses to offenders, especially juveniles, were largely ineffective.

**What are the characteristics of offenders?**

From a small sample of persons arrested citywide for residential burglary, African-Americans were over-represented (68% compared to about 52% of city population). White offenders tended to be older than black offenders. Arrestees were overwhelmingly male (96%). The median age of residential burglars arrested in Savannah was just over 19 years with a significant portion of them under the age of 18. Detectives believed many offenders were juveniles who were savvy about police and the criminal justice system and did not fear its consequences. They believed many young burglars worked for drug dealers.

**Where do offenders live, work or hang out?** Forensics Unit investigators believed most offenders committed burglaries close to where they lived. Detectives believed many young offenders were chronic truants, many barely literate. Due to limitations of the department's records management system, residential burglars' addresses at the time of their arrest could not be analyzed.

**What is the repeat offending pattern?** Forensics Unit investigators believed many burglaries were committed by repeat offenders, and arrest records confirmed this. Burglary detectives believed house burglars also tended to break into vehicles.

**What, specifically, motivates burglars?** Detectives believed many residential burglaries in the target area were committed by youth gang members to finance gang activities. They also believed that some

offenders were drug addicts stealing to support their addictions. Some offenders apparently liked to hang out in houses they burgled—eating food, using the telephone, and watching television.

**How do burglars dispose of stolen property?** The team learned surprisingly little about how the stolen property market operated in the area. Burglary detectives and the pawn shop detective believed they understood some typical patterns, but all admitted they did not know as much as they would like. Detectives believed that some crack houses pawned stolen goods or accepted them as payment for drugs, and that crack house operators in turn pawned the property at pawn shops or package stores, some of which accepted stolen goods as payment for their products. Some offenders stashed their stolen property in or under houses in the area. The pawn shop detective believed that all 17 pawn shops in the city trafficked to some degree in stolen property and that certain pawn shops specialized in certain types of stolen goods. He said some burglars went directly from the crime scene to a pawn shop. He believed there were not many professional fences in the city, and that jewelry was commonly sold on the streets rather than pawned. Younger thieves—those under 18 who can't legally pawn property—tended to find someone older to pawn the property for them. Those with transportation would go all over town, while those on foot had to use a pawn shop in the immediate area.

Patrol officers believed that some stolen property was commonly stashed in storage rental units and fenced through barber shops/beauty parlors, second-hand and antique shops, and on the street. They said some stolen property was exchanged directly for drugs, and that some buyers of

stolen property would place orders for specific items to be stolen.

### **What is the relationship between truancy and burglary of single-family houses?**

Nearly three-fourths of target burglaries occurred during daylight hours, with few committed on Saturdays. A high proportion occur near schools. Video games, popular among school-aged youth, were stolen in 12% of cases. Over half (54%) of all burglars arrested in the target area in 2001 were juveniles. Most of them (83%) were truant at the time, and nearly all were arrested during school hours. Burglary detectives believed that many young offenders were chronic truants.

There is one regular high school (Savannah High School), one learning center for delinquent students (the Romana Riley Learning Center), and one middle school in the target area. Some years back the school board, juvenile court, and state department of family services ran a truancy control program out of the Riley Center, but the program no longer operates. Delinquent students are now sent to one of two learning centers: the Scott Learning Center for lower-level offending or the Riley Learning Center for serious offending. There were no other truancy control programs in the public school system. It did not keep daily records of truants, unless they were suspended or expelled, meaning that, on any given day, the schools could not produce a list of students who were believed to be truant. Truants returned to school were disciplined with penalties ranging from after-school detention to suspension. The SPD's Precinct 3 began a truancy patrol in 2001.

The team had hypothesized that goods that would appeal to youth, such as video games, would be more likely to be stolen from houses near schools, but could find no correlation between the types of property

reported stolen and the proximity of the house to a school.

### **Locations and Times**

**At what times of day did the burglaries occur?** The approximate time of the offense was known in 71% of cases. Most offenses (72%) in the target area occurred in the daytime, between 6:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m., compared to about 61% nationally. Only 5% of offenses for which the time of occurrence was known occurred between midnight and 6:00 a.m. Nearly all residential burglaries for which juveniles were arrested took place during school hours.

**What days of week and months of the year did the offenses occur?** The day of week on which the offense was committed was known in 91% of the cases. Relatively few burglaries (5%) occurred on Saturdays. Otherwise, the offenses were reasonably evenly distributed across the other six days of the week, with Sunday slightly lower and Thursday slightly higher than other days. Nationally, all burglaries are distributed reasonably evenly throughout the year, with relatively fewer in the colder months and relatively more in the warmer months.

**Where did burglaries occur geographically?** The target area comprises five police beats (beats 51-55). The highest percentage of offenses (36%) occurred in Beat 54; the fewest (9%) in Beat 51. The significance of this spatial pattern—that is, whether it was related to the density of housing in each beat—was not clear. Mapping revealed several apparent hot-spots, but the clustering was not subjected to more careful hot-spot analysis to see if the clusters were statistically significant (see Fig. 5 below).



84% of the cases occurred on residential connecting streets; only 8% on cul-de-sacs; 6% on major thoroughfares; and 3% on collector streets. 45% occurred no more than one block away from a major thoroughfare, and 36% took place two blocks away from a major thoroughfare. Relatively few burglaries (19%) were committed three or more blocks away from a major thoroughfare; given that most residences in the target area are close to major thoroughfares, this was not surprising. Detectives believed that houses near Waters Ave., a major thoroughfare on the edge of the target area, were more vulnerable to burglary because the amount of foot traffic on Waters Ave. created opportunities for offenders to spot suitable targets.

The overwhelming majority of cases (93%) occurred near bus stops, but given the high number of bus stops in the area and the fact that the random sample houses were about equally likely to be located near a bus stop, this was not significant. 36% of cases occurred near a school, 11% near a shopping center, and 9% near a park. The relatively high percentage occurring near schools offered partial confirmation of the suspected connection between truancy and daytime burglary of single-family houses. Burgled houses were slightly more likely to be near a school than were houses in the random sample (36% vs. 28%). They were more likely to be located on a residential street (84% vs. 73%), and less likely to be on a cul-de-sac (8% vs. 17%). Forensic Unit investigators believed that most offenders committed burglaries close to where they lived and, having identified an offender, looked for unsolved cases near the offender's residence.

**Were there significant seasonal variations?** There were no remarkable

seasonal variations from the norm; that is, somewhat higher rates during summer months and lower rates during the winter. However, the seasonal pattern was rather different in each of three years analyzed, 1999-2001 (see Figure 6 below).

**Conclusion:** The burglary rate in the target area is seasonal, tending to be higher when school was not in session, during hot weather when windows were more likely to be left open, and around the Christmas holiday when houses were most likely to contain new and valuable items.

## **Current Responses to the Problem**

### **Criminal investigation**

The investigation status of 83% of cases was determined, with 84% assigned for follow-up. The SPD clearance rate was somewhat higher—21% in 2001—than the national clearance rate for all burglaries, which was 13.4% in 2000 (12.8% in cities).

The team believed that the standard practice of asking victims to provide police with a list of stolen property after the initial report may have inadvertently contributed to false reporting. Checking pawn shop records had not been too productive because many victims failed to keep accurate property identification records. Detectives felt that laws restricting the ability of the police to collect and maintain fingerprints and photographs of juveniles hampered burglary investigations.

The SPD's sole pawn shop detail detective receives daily data from the 17 pawn shops in the city (electronically, by diskette, or on paper cards). Other second-hand shops should be reporting data by law, but most did not; and even if they did, there were not enough police to handle the

volume of data that would generate, given the high number of second-hand and antique shops in the city. Pawn shop data are entered into the SPD computer system to try to match them with reported stolen property. Sometimes other detectives make requests of the pawn shop detective to search for information to make a case. The pawn shop detective does visit pawn shops, but does not do much auditing of their property and records.

**Conclusion:** Overall, police take few measures to keep pawn shops in compliance with the law.

### **Patrol**

Patrol officers' actions could be determined in 81% of cases. Of those, only 4% resulted in an arrest. In most cases (77%) they requested the Forensic Unit to process the burglary scene. Detectives expressed the opinion that some patrol officers gave initial investigations and reports inadequate time and care. Precinct 3 began a truancy patrol in January 2001, which typically ran for two days a week (Mondays and Thursdays).

Georgia state law deems juvenile truants found on the streets to be "unruly" and authorizes police to arrest them without first obtaining a petition, but as the Juvenile Court discourages this practice, it is rarely enforced.

### **Forensic Unit**

The actions of the Forensic Unit, which responds to nearly every residential burglary, were determined in 76% of target cases. Forensic Unit investigators estimated that they lifted latent prints in about one-third of residential burglary calls. They appear to have collected latent prints in 58% of the cases in the target area, but did not

find any usable prints in 37% of them. They reported getting positive AFIS (Automated Fingerprint Information System) hits on about 16% of all latent prints submitted. A recent statewide policy of entering juvenile felons' prints into the AFIS system should continue to increase the hit rate and a new policy of entering some latent prints of unidentified suspects should improve the ability of police investigators to establish links between cases. Forensic Unit investigators would like to see burglary detectives work closely with them to try to link arrested persons with other unsolved cases. They recommended that they and investigating officers use photography more to document crime scenes. They believed, and prosecutors agreed, that photographs had a powerful impact on juries and helped investigators recall cases better. Crime scene photographs were taken in only one case in the target area. Detectives concurred that there were too few resources to give every scene full attention.

### **Crime prevention**

Burglary prevention advice appears to have been offered to victims in about one-half of cases. As noted above, more than two-thirds of victims heeded that advice in some respect, typically within one week of the burglary. The SPD Citizens Police Academy emphasizes property marking. An SPD crime prevention officer addresses the apartment complex burglary problem through of the Crime-Free Multi-Housing program.

### **Crime analysis**

Burglary detectives believed there were inadequate crime analysis resources at the precinct level to analyze the residential burglary problem properly. The crash of the

SPD records management system in 2000 and the slow installation of a new system have hampered all crime analysis efforts.

### **Prosecution**

From a sample of 56 burglary cases made by the SPD from August 2001 to February 2002, six cases could not be located by the prosecutor's office for unknown reasons. (See Appendix F for a summary report of this case tracking study.) About one-half of the cases resulted in an indictment at the time of the study. Of the 19 cases in which the defendant was found or pled guilty, sentences ranged from six months probation to 10 years in prison. Because some of these cases were fairly recent and the legal process had yet to run its course, few conclusions could be drawn from this sample of arrests. However, the general picture that emerged from this limited inquiry was consistent with widely observed trends regarding burglary; that is, few cases were cleared by arrest and the resulting sentences of those convicted tended to be less than what many people would expect to result from a burglary conviction. This observation is not intended as a criticism of either police investigative, prosecutorial, or court practices, but rather acknowledges that criminal arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of residential burglars play only a small part in the overall community response to residential burglary.

### **Corrections**

Forensic Unit investigators believed that increased emphasis on having violent offenders serve longer prison sentences has resulted in nonviolent property offenders, including burglars, being released from prison earlier. Consequently, chronic

burglars are coming back to the community sooner.

### **Community**

According to the 1998 Crime Victimization Survey<sup>5</sup>, citizens in Savannah reported having done the following things to protect themselves from crime in the home:

Attended watch meetings	16%
Watched out for others' safety	73%
Installed security system	19%
Requested police security check	10%
Owned guard dog	24%
Placed ID numbers on property	23%
Installed extra locks	43%
Kept self-defense weapon in home	34%
Added automatic lighting	44%
Took other precautions	17%

15% said they had heard about community meetings concerning crime taking place in their neighborhood in the past 12 months, but only 4% attended one.

### **Schools**

Students at the Riley Learning Center (for serious delinquent offenders) who are on court-ordered probation and who are picked up for truancy can have a truancy petition filed against them and their probation revoked, though to what extent this actually happens is not known.

## **IMPLEMENTING RESPONSES**

About midway through the project, new responses to the problem began to emerge in discussions among the participants. Initially, the following responses to investigating and reporting procedures, victims, offenders, and locations were considered:

## **Investigating and Reporting Procedures**

### **Reporting and UCR coding improvements**

- Eliminate duplicate counting of burglaries.
- Collect additional data on the police report to improve future problem analysis.

### **Improving burglary investigation**

- Refine the physical evidence collection process so as to use forensics resources more efficiently.
- Encourage and train officers and detectives to be alert to false and exaggerated reporting.

### **Victim-based strategies**

- Target repeat victims' houses for special protection.
- Provide immediate follow-up crime prevention advice to each victim and their immediate neighbors.
- Ask neighbors to keep a special watch on burgled houses.
- Loan alarms or subsidize the installation of alarms to victims.
- Improve lighting around burgled houses.
- Encourage victims to install better doors and locks.
- Install temporary surveillance cameras around burgled houses.

### **Offender-based strategies**

- Target repeat offenders.
- Improve truancy prevention and control.
- Tighten controls on the stolen goods market.
- Improve control of nearby drug markets.

### **Location-based strategies**

- Restrict alley access.
- Change street/traffic patterns.
- Improve neighborhood territoriality by signage and neighborhood markers.
- Educate rental property owners about effective burglary prevention.
- Develop a rating system for rental properties according to crime prevention standards.

### **Rejected Strategies**

The team did not give serious consideration to several of the following responses listed in the POP guide:

**Installing burglar alarms.** Analysis suggested that even where burglar alarms were in place, they were seldom effective, and promoting greater use of alarms would further exacerbate the city's false alarm problem.

**Installing closed-circuit television (CCTV).** Although the SPD did own a CCTV camera, it was thought impractical to try to identify burglary hot spots and position the camera to monitor one or several houses.

**Creating safe havens.** There are no existing gated communities in the target area, and it would have been cost-prohibitive to gate older, established neighborhoods retroactively.

**Implementing Neighborhood Watch.** A reading of the literature on Neighborhood Watch suggested it was difficult to sustain over the long-term. Asking residents to

watch out for their already burgled neighbors seemed a better way of reducing repeat victimization.

**Modifying building codes.** There is little new home construction in the target area. The team deemed it impractical to apply burglary prevention building codes to existing houses.

**Providing substance abuse treatment.** While a connection between local drug markets and residential burglary seemed likely, there was not sufficient information to suggest how improved substance abuse treatment would reduce burglary in the target area.

## **Final Objectives**

After presenting its analysis findings and the above response alternatives to several audiences, the team narrowed its focus to the following objectives, which seemed to generate the greatest support and had the highest likelihood of successful implementation:

- Improve the UCR classification process to reduce misclassified and duplicate burglary reports.
- Improve the burglary scene evidence collection process.
- Improve the preliminary investigation process to discourage false or exaggerated reporting (with the caution that care should be taken not to further traumatize victims by accusing them of fraud).
- Improve the burglary prevention advice and assistance to victims.
- Improve the identification and control of repeat offenders.
- Improve truancy prevention and control.

- Improve control of the stolen goods market.
- Improve certain environmental design elements.

The following describes the progress made, if any, toward these objectives.

## **Burglary report classification**

Corporal Avery took some preliminary steps to redesign the standard report form to better collect useful information about residential burglary, but was unable to secure sufficient interest and cooperation elsewhere in the department to bring this about.

## **Burglary evidence collection**

It was not possible to effect a formal change in the procedures by which preliminary investigating officers request the Forensics Unit to process residential burglary crime scenes for evidence. Precinct commanders were reluctant to change the procedures at the precinct level, preferring that a department-wide procedure first be established.

## **Preliminary burglary investigation**

Based on the project recommendations, it is now departmental policy for preliminary investigating officers to conduct a canvass of the immediate neighborhood around a burgled house to search for potential witnesses and to alert neighbors to the burglary. (See Appendix J for the revised SPD policy governing preliminary burglary investigations.) The team did not determine the level of compliance with this new department-wide directive, however. Chief Flynn emphasized the importance of conducting neighborhood canvasses as part of preliminary residential burglary

investigations on several occasions. Prior to this latest initiative, it is estimated that only about 10% of burglary reports mentioned that a neighborhood canvass had been conducted.

### **Burglary prevention advice**

Lt. Mitchell developed a procedure by which beat officers would be assigned to visit residential and commercial burglary victims. He also drafted a crime prevention visit form for officers to complete after conducting a victim or neighborhood visit, and is checking with crime prevention officers to see if they have some useful materials that can be given to burglary victims. A computerized database will be developed to track the victim visits. A precinct officer was tasked with coordinating the victim/home security visits.

### **Repeat offenders**

Some preliminary explorations were made about developing a repeat offender initiative. Given other competing priorities in the department, a proactive repeat offender initiative was unlikely to be staffed, however, and it was more realistic to consider developing a computerized system for identifying them and alerting patrol officers and detectives of their status. No significant action has been taken on this.

### **Truancy prevention and control**

The Precinct 3 truancy patrols continue to operate. Two patrol officers work overtime (funded by the department's regular overtime budget, not a grant) patrolling for four hours (from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.) on selected weekdays. As a result of this project, officers increased their workload from two to four weekdays per week. The

officers stop and question all young people on the streets who appear to be of school age. If they are discovered to be truant, the officers return them to the school or in some instances to their parents. The school then decides whether to suspend, detain, or send the student back to class.

The truancy patrol officers complete a short form which they turn in to Cpl. Avery, who in turn enters the data into a computer database. The database does not appear to be routinely reviewed or analyzed either for investigative purposes or to identify chronic truants, but the team advised property crime investigators of its existence and recommended that they make use of it for investigative purposes. At Cpl. Avery's recommendation, truancy patrol officers now compile a list of known juvenile property crime offenders who either live in or offend in Precinct 3 and target them for truancy enforcement. At present, there are about five offenders on the list. The team believes that this targeted approach to truancy enforcement is preferable to merely patrolling the streets looking for truants. It is too soon to tell what effect this initiative has had on residential burglary.

Captain Fagerstrom reported that some of the other three precincts had initiated truancy patrols after learning about this project. Lt. Mitchell and Cpl. Avery made several overtures to the Savannah-Chatham County School Police Department to encourage them to work more closely with the SPD on truancy control. The School Police have thus far expressed an interest in doing so, but no significant action had been taken at the time of this writing.

### **Stolen property market initiative**

Team members met with the pawn shop detective and discussed a range of measures to improve understanding and control of the

stolen goods market. The measures included:

- Conduct test sales of property to pawn shops and second-hand dealers to see if identification and reporting requirements are met.
- Conduct spot inspections/audits of pawn shop inventory.
- Encourage licensed buyers to demand proof of ownership.
- Post signs in licensed shops discouraging sales of stolen property.
- Give unclaimed stolen property to innocent, uninsured victims.
- Implement a publicity campaign to discourage buying stolen property.
- Promote legitimate markets for discount goods that buyers want.
- Give the pawn shop detective access to the computerized property sheets of crime reports.
- Force second-hand dealers to comply with city ordinance reporting and identification requirements.
- Program computer software to automatically alert for suspicious patterns of pawning activity (e.g., the same person pawning a lot of property).
- Enact a county ordinance regulating pawn shops similar to the city ordinance.
- Establish a regional stolen property information network.
- Improve descriptions of property on police reports and pawn shop tickets.
- Put photos of unclaimed recovered property on the police department's website to improve the return rate.

- Require pawn shops to take digital photos of all pawned property and submit the photos with the pawn tickets.

It was also recommended that burglary detectives routinely apply for search warrants on the homes of arrested burglars to search for stolen property. While the detective was receptive to many of the ideas, without additional staffing he was unable to implement any of them. Formal requests sent through the chain of command to add staffing to the Pawn Shop detail were not acted upon due to other higher-priority demands for staffing. The senior command staff suggested that these responses be pursued by existing precinct-based personnel. No further action has been taken.

### **Environmental design**

After some discussion about the prospects of securing the lanes (alleys) that run behind most residences in the target area, improving street lighting, trimming foliage, changing traffic patterns by restricting ingress and egress from residential neighborhoods, and better defining neighborhood boundaries, the team ultimately decided against pursuing any environmental design measures. As burgled houses were no more likely to have lane access than were randomly selected houses in the target area, it concluded that rear access to houses via lanes was not a particularly high-risk factor for residential burglary. Street lighting was generally judged to be adequate throughout the target area. Changing traffic patterns and defining neighborhood boundaries held potential, but there was not sufficient support within the SPD to advance these ideas to other city agencies.

**Conclusion:** For the purposes of this initiative, providing burglary victims with general advice about how to safeguard their house through environmental design was the most that could realistically be accomplished.

## MEASURING EFFECTIVENESS

At the outset of the project the following indicators were identified as useful for measuring the effectiveness of the team's responses to burglary of single-family houses:

- number of target offenses (i.e., burglaries of single-family houses that satisfied our definitional criteria) in the target area
- comparison of the above with other areas in the city and the city as a whole
- percentage of successful offenses vs. unsuccessful attempts
- percentage of forced entry vs. unforced entry
- number of houses burgled
- number and percentage of repeat victims (houses and individuals)
- value of property stolen
- citizen perceptions of their security from burglary.

The team discussed hiring another independent consultant to conduct a process and outcome project evaluation, but decided this would not be worthwhile because insufficient progress had been made in implementing the recommended responses.

## ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF THE POP GUIDE

The principal project participants from the SPD reported that they did read the POP guide, and all reported that they found it

generally useful (see Appendix I for the Police Participant Survey used to capture the final observations of project participants). The project was slightly handicapped from the start because not even a first draft of this particular POP guide was available when the project began. Over the course of the project, initial, subsequent, and eventually published drafts of the guide became available to the project team, however. On at least a couple of occasions, police participants made specific reference to information from the POP guide during discussions of how the project ought to proceed, but they rarely brought their copy of the guide to project meetings. The POP guide was probably used most extensively by the project consultant, Mr. Scott, who in turn used that information to recommend certain lines of inquiry or actions to the rest of the team. One police participant said he read the relevant portions of the guide at critical stages of the project: "in the beginning to get an overview of where we were going (scanning); at the beginning of data collection to provide a framework for what data to go after (analysis); and at the beginning of identifying strategies that may be appropriate (responses)." Another reported that he was guided less by the POP guide than by instructions from other project team members.

All the police participants expressed satisfaction with the content and format of the POP guide; none recommended any changes to it. Most found it most useful for guiding problem analysis and for formulating alternative responses to the problem. Predictably, they found it least useful for aiding problem assessment (the POP guides do not cover assessment at great length; a companion POP guide on assessment serves that function). From the consultant's perspective, the guide was particularly useful for helping to structure



the problem analysis, and its list of analysis questions served as the template for the local analysis. Similarly, the suggested responses described in the POP guide proved a useful starting point for considering responses that might apply to the local problem. All responses that were ultimately recommended for the local problem were adapted from the POP guide; the team did not conceive of any responses that were not generally covered in the POP guide, although the specifics of those responses were tailored to local conditions.

### **Comparing the Local Problem with the Typical Profile in the POP Guide**

For the most part, the local problem of burglary of single-family houses fit the typical profile described in the POP guide. Acknowledging some limitations to its analysis methods, the team did find a few factors in the local problem at variance with the typical profile. For instance:

- While the long-term national residential burglary trend has been one of decline, the local trend has been more stable.
- The local clearance rate appears higher than the national norm, but still relatively low compared with other offenses.
- A higher percentage of residential burglaries in the target area occurred in the daytime (72%) than the norm indicated in the POP guide (60%).
- It could not be established that visibility of the house was a significant risk factor; nor was access to houses via rear alleys seen as significant a risk factor

locally as it was in the typical profile.

- The presence of dogs was not found to be a significant protective factor (though the team was mindful of the limits of its analysis to determine this).
- Computers were not reported stolen as commonly as the POP guide suggested.
- The target area had a higher proportion of African-American offenders than the POP guide suggested, but that was to be expected given that the residents of the target area were predominantly African-American.

### **OBSERVATIONS ON THE PROBLEM ORIENTED / ACTION RESEARCH PROCESS**

Over the course of the project, the problem of residential burglary in general, and this project in particular, never generated a great deal of interest and attention in the SPD. The only exception was the few times when either media attention to residential burglary or spikes in residential burglary uncovered through the SPD's Compstat process generated some short-term interest in the problem. There are several possible explanations for this general disinterest.

The first possible explanation is that residential burglary was not as high a priority community problem as the SPD had first imagined. During the project period a number of other community concerns arose that outweighed it. Most obviously, soon after the project began, the terrorist attacks in New York and Washington and the nationwide anthrax scare consumed a great deal of public and police attention. As well, violent crime, always a major concern in

Savannah, became especially acute in 2002, putting the SPD under considerable pressure from the community to respond. As a result, it implemented a major crackdown in the latter part of 2002 and early part of 2003. In addition, a proposal to merge the SPD and the Chatham County Police Department became a top concern of SPD's police chief, demanding much of his attention and that of his senior command staff and research staff for most of the project period..

As noted earlier, because the residential burglary trend was merely returning to its long-range normal level, it was simply not among the SPD's top priorities during this period. That this was the case is partly a function of this project: the SPD did not select residential burglary from the full range of community problems it faced, but rather from the more limited set of problems addressed by the POP guides available at the time.

Another possible reason why this project did not generate a great deal of interest and attention is that, although the SPD had been engaged in various ways with the concept of problem-oriented policing for over a decade, by most accounts it had not previously undertaken a POP project of this scope and duration. The demands of the project may have overwhelmed current SPD capacity. Like nearly all police agencies, it operates in an environment in which many problems demand attention and the public pressures to deal with them immediately give police little opportunity or incentive to study problems patiently and systematically. The SPD's organizational structures, systems, and habits are better suited for responding immediately to many problems simultaneously than they are for addressing one problem for a longer period of time. The SPD's principal research analyst, Mr. Renner, whose assistance was so critical to a project of this sort, was constantly facing

competing demands for his time and attention.

Whatever the explanations, this project always seemed more like an outside project designed to serve the research needs of the funding agency than it did an internal project designed to reduce burglary in Savannah.

## Participation in the Project

Seven individuals were extensively involved in the project throughout most or much of the project period: six SPD members and the consultant, Mr. Scott. Those seven played the following roles:

**Major Dan Reynolds.** As the commander of the Patrol Bureau, Maj. Reynolds provided the senior-level authority and support for the project. He attended several meetings and briefings, frequently voicing his support for the project and demonstrating a keen interest in its progress, findings, and recommendations. When it seemed to lag, as all projects do from time to time, he was available to recharge the initiative. Maj. Reynolds also served as a key conduit to the chief of police.

**Captain Dean Fagerstrom.** As commander of the precinct in which the target area is located, Capt. Fagerstrom assumed an oversight role, assigning personnel to the project and authorizing their time and resources to work on it. He did not attend all the meetings, having delegated management of the project to one of his lieutenants.

**Lieutenant Greg Mitchell.** Lt. Mitchell, a patrol supervisor at the beginning of the project who was shortly thereafter promoted to watch commander, was the SPD's designated project manager. He attended nearly all meetings and briefings and

conducted a few analysis tasks himself. He participated fully in all significant discussions and decisions.

**Mr. Brian Renner.** As the SPD's Planning and Research Coordinator, Mr. Renner played a large role in compiling data, preparing it for analysis, creating data collection instruments, and producing graphic presentations for project briefings. As the SPD did not have a large research and analysis staff (usually no more than two or three individuals handle these functions), Mr. Renner's time was a precious commodity. Although he was usually working on several other higher-priority projects (including preparing presentations on agency consolidation and preparing for the reaccreditation of the agency), he made time to complete the many analysis tasks required. He participated in nearly all project meetings and briefings.

**Corporal Steve Avery.** Cpl. Avery, a uniformed investigator assigned to Precinct 3, joined the team some months after the project began. As several other officers who were supposed to assist turned out to be unavailable, Cpl. Avery wound up being perhaps the central figure in this project. In addition to his regular duties investigating crimes against persons, he assumed responsibility for significant analysis tasks. Cpl. Avery attended nearly all project meetings and conducted a large part of the several briefings. To all appearances, he enjoyed a good reputation in the SPD, both with management and line officers. His participation in the project, therefore, went a long way toward credentializing it within the agency.

**Corporal Patrick Goodberry.** Cpl. Goodberry, a patrol officer in Precinct 3, was temporarily assigned, while on light

duty, to assist on the project. While he played a smaller role than Cpl. Avery, his completion of the victim survey proved to be one of the more important analysis tasks. Several key recommendations emerged from that data collection effort and Cpl. Goodberry's interpretation it.

**Mr. Michael Scott.** Mr. Scott, as one of the consultants in the Field Applications project (and author of this report), played several roles. He assumed a number of project management duties—calling meetings, preparing meeting agendas, maintaining a project file, chronicling progress—as well as substantive duties such as summarizing information from the POP guide, recommending analysis tasks and suggesting response alternatives, presenting portions of briefings, and conducting a number of analysis tasks. He attended nearly all meetings and briefings and maintained contact with Maj. Reynolds about the project's progress and needs. Mr. Scott was the recipient of the funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, and consequently responsible for the successful completion of the terms of that award, including this burglary project. Owing largely to his obligations under that award agreement, his interest in the project was different from that of other team members. When interest in the project among SPD members seemed to wane, it was his job to move the project forward.

The members of the project team all appeared to work well together. There were no apparent conflicts. Of particular note was the respectful, professional working relationship between the sworn and non-sworn members of the team. Mr. Scott's prior experience in policing may have helped in this regard, but Mr. Renner, with no policing experience, also appeared to enjoy the full support and confidence of his

sworn colleagues. Mr. Scott had a longstanding professional association and friendship with Maj. Reynolds which probably made his working relationships within the SPD easier. If anything, that association could have inhibited any criticism of the project, but there was no evidence that was the case. Communication among all participants seemed smooth, and no excessive concern about rank, hierarchy and chain of command interfered with it.

Most decisions about the project were made by consensus, with no single person exercising supervisory authority. The participants did not feel any need for a formal written agreement specifying roles and responsibilities; for the most part, individuals volunteered to perform tasks without need of assignment.

The tone throughout the project was professional, though rather methodical. Few differences of opinion arose among the team members and there were few penetrating discussions about analysis methods or response alternatives. This might have been a testament to the soundness and logic of the POP guide—indeed there was little controversial information in the guide—or it could have been due to the nature of the burglary problem. Unlike some other problems with which the police must contend, burglary presents few moral and ethical dilemmas. There is a general consensus that offenders ought to be apprehended and punished, and victims should be given every opportunity, and some responsibility, to safeguard their property through sound burglary prevention measures.

The team met 18 times over the course of the project, excluding meetings with others to collect data. Five project briefings were conducted: one for the police chief, one for the Field Applications cluster meeting of all project sites, two for the SPD

command staff and affected agency representatives, and one for the annual POP Conference. Project briefings were an effective way to move the project ahead. Preparation for them gave team members extra motivation to complete various tasks and to consolidate and reflect upon information gathered to that point.

Especially in light of the busy and rotating work schedules of police officials, electronic mail proved an effective and efficient means of communication. For the most part, those project tasks that could be completed were completed in a timely fashion.

As a whole, the core project team possessed the requisite knowledge, skills and abilities to conduct a problem-oriented project of this sort. Each member, while not restricted to a narrow role, brought special resources to the project. Cpl. Avery brought an experienced and intimate knowledge of the community and its residential burglary problem, and an investigator's attention to detail and persistence, that he applied well to problem analysis tasks. Mr. Renner brought solid skills in crime analysis, knowledge of data systems, and data presentation skills. Lt. Mitchell and Capt. Fagerstrom brought the command authority necessary to enable the project to proceed. The consultant, Mr. Scott, brought familiarity with the POP guide, extensive knowledge about the problem-oriented research process, and the time and capacity to organize the project and help manage it over a long period of time.

The most notable dimension lacking in the project was a genuine sense of ownership of the project by the SPD, an ownership that ideally would have driven the project forward, made the inquiry into the problem more probing, and made implementation of responses a higher priority. This is not to say that the SPD commanders involved in the project made an

incorrect judgment about the importance of the project; given the larger context of issues and concerns facing the SPD during the project period, it is quite likely that this project got the interest and attention that it objectively warranted.

Perhaps most disappointing, competing priorities notwithstanding, was the general lack of interest and engagement in the project from the Criminal Investigations Bureau. Repeated efforts to engage burglary detectives and other property crime personnel were unsuccessful. They rarely accepted invitations to attend project briefings and when they did, did not actively participate. Neither the CIB bureau commander, nor the property crimes supervisor, nor burglary detectives became engaged in the project. With the exception of the pawn shop detective and the Forensics Unit supervisor, no CIB personnel demonstrated any real interest in the project at any time. This may simply reflect a larger schism between the patrol and investigation functions of the SPD, a phenomenon common in many police agencies, but it could also reflect a conventional case-driven mindset, common to many investigative units—that is, they may simply see longer-term crime reduction and prevention as being beyond their mandate. Some key project participants expressed the belief that this may have contributed to CIB's lack of engagement. Even though both Maj. Reynolds (the Patrol Bureau commander) and Capt. Fagerstrom (a former CIB supervisor) had strong backgrounds in CIB, their involvement in this project was not enough to bridge the gap. Chief Flynn showed genuine interest in the project on the occasions when he received project briefings, but this did not generate any interest among CIB personnel.

## Data

Throughout the project was hampered by deficiencies in the SPD records management system. The system suffered a significant crash and loss of data in 2001 and there were delays in getting a new system operating. Consequently, the team did not have access to some data it would have liked and other data were difficult to retrieve. Data relating to repeat offending and repeat victimization were especially missed.

The team also concluded that the standard police report did not capture certain information useful for understanding residential burglary patterns. For example, the report did not require officers to note whether the victims were owners or tenants of the house. An attachment to the standard offense report (known as Attachment 1) did require the investigating officer to capture a number of items of information that were useful to the problem analysis, but it did not appear that the data from those forms were then entered into the computerized records management system. As a result, retrieval of that data would have been time-consuming even if the SPD records management system had been fully functional. Initially, the team had some difficulty finding supplementary reports prepared by burglary detectives, but that problem was corrected by improved supervision in CIB.

The project did uncover a few interesting errors in the SPD's data collection procedures which the department was then able to rectify. Cpl. Avery discovered that several burglaries had two case numbers because two different patrol officers had been assigned to investigate the same crime. This finding pointed out weaknesses in the SPD's call assignment and report review procedures. Failures to detect this sort of case duplication implicated several police department

functions: dispatch, patrol supervisors, detective supervisors, detectives, UCR clerks, and crime analysts. Cpl. Avery also found that some cases had been incorrectly classified as burglaries when they should have been thefts (e.g., air conditioning unit pulled out of a window from the outside). Approximately 10% of the initial sample of cases were incorrectly classified. After bringing this duplicate classification problem to the attention of the project team, Capt. Fagerstrom tasked Cpl. Avery with reviewing all residential burglary files in the precinct for the previous year to correct duplicate coding of the same offense. Mr. Renner concluded that the crash of the records management system in the middle of the data collection effort contributed significantly to the error rate; fixing the computer problem may correct most of the duplicate reporting problem. In large part, because the SPD puts heavy emphasis on Part I UCR offenses in its Compstat accountability system (as does the media in its coverage and evaluation of the SPD), eliminating double counting of burglaries took on special significance. Though the ultimate objective of the project was to reduce actual burglaries, not merely to clear up recording errors, correcting the errors was nonetheless a welcome by-product of the effort.

Cpl. Avery also reported that from his reading of the cases that an unspecified portion of reports were likely to contain false or exaggerated claims, particularly cases involving personal property that was leased (from what are known as rent-to-own stores) and those in which the victim called detectives several days after the initial report to claim that additional large items such as appliances and electronic equipment had also been stolen. This suggested that the department's procedures for recording stolen

property and investigating fraudulent reporting might need to be revisited.

The team had some difficulty getting access to juvenile records maintained in the SPD, even when they were to be viewed only by sworn SPD officers. Eventually, Cpl. Avery was able to review the records he needed to correlate chronic truancy and delinquency.

During the case tracking study, the District Attorney's Office was unable to locate files on six burglary cases submitted by the SPD. They speculated that there may have been some clerical errors in the case filing numbers, but the team never did learn why those cases could not be found.

As noted earlier, it was also difficult to obtain reliable data on truancy from schools. As far as the team could determine, schools did not maintain a computerized database on the truancy status of their students.

It was hoped that the project would throw some light on the repeat victimization pattern of rented houses, but because the city did not require licenses or permits to rent houses and police reports did not routinely capture the name of the property owner, there was no easy way to identify the owners of houses that were repeatedly burgled. As identifying repeat victims by name and/or address is ordinarily within the capabilities of the SPD's records management system, this deficiency, too, was likely due to the crash of the system. The new records management system that should be fully functional sometime in 2003 will link to other city databases, such as the tax assessor's records, enabling police to identify repeat victimization patterns among property owners as well as occupants.

## **Working Arrangements**

Most project meetings were held at SPD headquarters in downtown Savannah.

Precinct 3 is in a separate building on the east side of town. As the consultant's office was only a few blocks from SPD headquarters, there was no need for Mr. Scott to use SPD office space. While not a major issue, this physical proximity made the working arrangement quite easy.

Project data were stored both at SPD on the respective personal computers and in the offices of police participants and on the consultant's computer and in his office. Data could be transmitted among the project participants relatively easily via computers, with one notable exception—the SPD, at the time of the project, used Corel office software for most of its computing needs, whereas the consultant used Microsoft products, meaning that some files, particularly slide presentations, would not properly convert from one program to the other. After many frustrating attempts at conversion, the consultant was eventually forced to purchase an entire Corel office software package, at a cost of several hundred dollars. Without that conversion, it would have been necessary to recreate the slide presentations, which would have been more time consuming and costly. These sorts of computer compatibility issues, while seemingly minor, can prove to be a significant inconvenience and obstacle to a smooth internal/external working relationship.

### **Impact of Project on the Department**

The total amount of police department resources devoted to this project was modest, despite its scope and duration. The key police participants probably spent no more than a couple of hours per week working on the project, whereas the consultant spent about four to five days per month on it. Other than personnel time, no significant other SPD resources were

expended. If the findings and recommendations that emerged from the project do ultimately result in tangible improvements to the SPD's responses to residential burglary, then the investment in this project will prove worthwhile.

It is doubtful that the SPD would undertake another project of this scope and duration without external assistance and impetus, and there is little about the experience to suggest that the department would devote more resources to a similar initiative, at least in the near future. This is not to say that the project will not have some beneficial impact on the department, but as is often the case in policing, that benefit will be more subtle than dramatic. Recently there have been discussions about increasing the number of analysts within the agency. As a result, Cpl. Avery was assigned to work as a crime analyst and sent for formal training, after which he will be expected to help other operations personnel become more proficient in crime and problem analysis. It can only be hoped that if this does occur, at least some of those extra analytic resources will be concentrated on community concerns similar to those addressed in this project. The experience of this team has confirmed that analytical resources can easily be consumed by administrative demands, to the exclusion of substantive ones.

### **CONCLUSION**

As with all federally funded projects, this project has an end date necessitated by the terms of the funding agreement, though in practice it continues on. The knowledge and experience SPD staff gained from participating in the project should carry forward; indeed, there is good reason to believe that will occur. Even as this final report was being prepared, the SPD continued to review the project findings and

to implement some of its recommendations as circumstances permitted. For example, the SPD intends to improve its overall response to truancy as one means of controlling daytime residential burglary. It plans to conduct quarterly intensive truancy patrols and to coordinate with the juvenile court by bringing truants directly to the court for adjudication. In this way, it is hoped that school officials, parents, and juvenile court officials will all come to appreciate that truancy has adverse effects not just on an individual's education but on the community at large.

In addition, the SPD plans to improve the quality of preliminary burglary investigations by assigning some burglary cases back to patrol corporals for follow-up investigation. Many of these cases get little follow-up attention by centralized burglary detectives, and it is to be hoped that patrol officers will give greater care to the

preliminary investigation, when the opportunities for a successful conclusion of the case are greatest. As well, enhanced training is being planned for burglary investigation procedures and techniques. The SPD is also developing a new information brochure for burglary victims to help them protect themselves from repeat victimization.

Problem-solving in police agencies may not always follow the ideal model envisioned by outside researchers or proceed along the timelines established by research funding, but they may nonetheless move the agency toward improved responses to the problems being studied. The POP guide, along with the data and findings of this local problem analysis, should leave the SPD in a better position to improve its response to burglary of single-family houses well into the future.



## APPENDIX A: PROBLEM SELECTION SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Problem Type	Questions			
	<p><b>How much of a concern is this problem in your community?</b></p> <p>(On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the lowest concern and 10 the highest concern.)</p>	<p><b>How necessary do you believe it is to change and improve the overall response to this problem in your community?</b></p> <p>(On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being least necessary and 10 the most necessary.)</p>	<p><b>How likely do you think it is that conducting a problem-oriented study of this problem can bring about these necessary changes and improvements?</b></p> <p>(On a scale of 1-10 with 1 being the least likely and 10 the most likely.)</p>	<p><b>Rank order the problems you recommend for this project.</b></p> <p>(1=highest rank, 19=lowest rank)</p>

## APPENDIX B: PROBLEM ANALYSIS AND ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

### Baseline data collection: outcome measures

number of target offenses in target area  
comparison with other areas  
percentage of successful offenses vs. unsuccessful attempts  
percentage of forced entry vs. unforced entry  
number of addresses victimized  
number/percentage of repeat victims  
value of stolen property  
citizen perceptions

### Problem identification and analysis questions

#### *Scope of the Problem*

How does the trend for this problem in our target area compare with:  
    other comparable areas  
    other precincts  
    citywide  
    state  
    nation

#### *Burglarized Premises*

What types of houses are burglarized? Single story, or two story? Large homes v. modest? Older homes or newly-constructed houses?  
How accessible are the properties burglarized? Is there rear access such as alleys or pedestrian pathways?  
What level of visibility characterizes burglarized houses? Are lots open and visible? Is lighting adequate? Are entrances visible? What type of fencing exists? What is the size of the lot, and distance from roadways and neighbors?  
What level of exposure characterizes the burglarized houses? What is the proximity to major thoroughfares, parks or public areas? What is the location within the neighborhood?  
What types of security were in place? What types of security were in use?  
What housing features contribute to burglaries, such as substandard doors, windows or locks?

### *Burglary Victims*

What are the characteristics of victims? Elderly and home during day; middle-aged and away at work, young families with changing schedules? Are victims new to area?  
What were the relevant victim behaviors — e.g., exposure of valued property, access to service providers, secured doors or windows, occupancy cues such as presence, alarms, or dogs?  
Are owner-occupants or renters more likely to be burglary victims?

### *Offenders*

How many burglars work alone? How many work with others? For burglars who work together, how or where do they get together? Why do they offend together? How do they offend together? (Arrested offenders are a good source of information about burglaries; but remember that arrested offenders may differ in important ways from active burglars. Even arrested burglars may be reticent to share information if concerned about three strikes.)  
What are the demographic characteristics of offenders, such as age or gender? What is the ethnicity of offenders, as this may relate to targeted victims?  
Where do offenders live, work or hang out?  
Are offenders known to victims?  
What is the repeat offending pattern?  
Who are the known residential burglars in the area?  
How active are burglars? Do they account for a few burglaries or many? Can sub-types of burglars be identified?  
What, specifically, motivates burglars? Do they need quick cash for partying or to maintain a family? Are they drug-addicted and, if so, to what types of drugs? Are they recently jobless or long-term offenders?  
Do offenders show evidence of planning burglaries, or take advantage of easy opportunities?  
How do offenders travel to and from the burglary scene?  
How do burglars dispose of property? Through fences, pawnshops or others?

### *Incidents*

What is the type of entry — forced?  
What is the method of entry? Doors or windows? What tools are used for entry?  
What side of the houses is entered?  
What features reduced visibility to the point of break-in?  
How long does the entry and the burglary take? Are burglars leisurely or in-and-out in a couple of minutes?  
How much revictimization occurs? Of houses? Of persons? Address-matching of offense reports will reveal addresses which account for a high proportion of offenses. Once repeat addresses are identified, what is the time period between initial and subsequent offenses?  
What is the type and value of property — if any — is stolen? How is the property taken away?  
How and where is stolen property liquidated?

fences  
pawn shops  
drug dealers

What is the experience with property recovery?

Where, within the target area, are offenses clustered? What might explain the clustering? What places, activities are nearby that might contribute to the offenses?

How many offenses occur while house is occupied? Unoccupied? If unoccupied, how long was occupant away?

### *Offense Reporting*

What percentage of target offenses are reported to police? Why are some not reported?

When are offenses reported?

What percentage are reported in progress?

### *Locations/Times*

What time of day are the offenses occurring? There may be several groups of offense types including afternoon burglaries committed by juveniles.

In what percentage of cases is the time of occurrence unknown?

What day of week — or what week or month — are the offenses occurring? Does time vary by day, week or month? Weekdays are likely to vary from weekend offense patterns; school days may vary from non-school days (including weekends, school holidays or teacher workdays).

Where are the burglaries occurring geographically? Are burglaries close to schools, stores, parks, athletic venues, drug markets, treatment centers, transit centers or major thoroughfares?

Are there significant seasonal variations? Is there seasonal variation, for example, of the proportion of offenses which are forced entry?

### *Current Responses*

What is the current response to the problem? (both policy/programs and individuals)

police  
criminal investigation  
patrol  
crime prevention  
prosecution  
community  
insurance industry

Is police response to in progress calls adequate?

What is the clearance rate? What is the clearance rate trend? How does it compare with:  
other precincts  
citywide  
nation  
other similar offenses

## APPENDIX C: ADDITIONAL ANALYSIS TASKS

Compare our data on houses that we know have been burglarized with a random sample of houses in the target area.

- Type of doors

- Type of door locks

- Type of windows

- Type of window locks

- Visibility of entry points from street and neighboring houses

  - Fences/walls

  - Shrubbery/trees

- Accessibility to house from a lane in the rear

- Lighting at night

  - Street area and residence are mostly dark

  - Street is lit; residence is dark

  - Residence is lit; street is dark

  - Both street and residence are adequately lit

- One-story vs. two-story house

- No. of blocks away from a major thoroughfare

- Type of road

  - Cul-de-sac or other dead end road

  - Residential street

  - Collector street

  - Major thoroughfare

- Proximity to

  - School

  - Shopping center

  - Park

  - Bus stop

  - Other

- Alarm system

  - Presence of a working alarm system

  - Signs indicating an alarm system is present

- Dogs

  - Presence of a dog

  - Signs indicating a dog is present

- Occupant status (owner vs. renter)

Compile a list of all named burglary suspects/arrestees from our target cases and gather information on them:

- Age

- Occupation (including student)

- Address (map their addresses)

- Truancy record (if a student)

Status in criminal justice system (on bail, on probation or parole, etc.)

Compile a list of known habitual residential burglars throughout the city and map their addresses.

Inquire whether prosecutors will prosecute residential burglary cases solely on the basis of suspects' fingerprints lifted from inside the residence. This will give us a better idea how crucial fingerprint evidence is to making a case.

Create a map that shows what type of property was stolen from which locations. (This might help establish a link with truancy if property stolen near schools is of the type that would appeal to students – e.g., video games)

## APPENDIX D: PROBLEM ANALYSIS MATRIX

ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FILE REVIEW	Environmental Survey	Incident Report Data/ Maps	CAD Data	Detective/Patrol/Forensics Interviews	Offender Interviews	Victim Interviews	Court Tracking	Citizen Survey	Insurance Company Survey	Crime Victim Survey (BJS)/UCR
<b>BASELINE DATA</b>											
How many target offenses occurred in the target area?			X								
How does this compare with other areas?			X		X						
What percentage of offenses were successful vs. unsuccessful attempts?			X								
What percentage of offenses were forced entry vs. unforced entry?	X		X		X						
How many addresses were victimized?			X								
What is the number/percentage of repeat victims?			X		X		X			X	
What is the total value of stolen property?	X		X								
How do citizens perceive the problem?							X		X		X
<b>SCOPE OF THE PROBLEM</b>											
How does the trend for this problem in our target area compare with other comparable areas, other precincts, citywide, state, nation?			X								X
<b>BURGLARIZED PREMISES</b>											
What types of houses are burglarized? Single story, or two story? Large homes v. modest? Older homes or newly-constructed houses?	X	X									
How accessible are the properties burglarized? Is there rear access such as alleys or pedestrian pathways?	X	X			X						



ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FILE REVIEW	Environmental Survey	Incident Report Data/ Maps	CAD Data	Detective/Patrol/Forensics Interviews	Offender Interviews	Victim Interviews	Court Tracking	Citizen Survey	Insurance Company Survey	Crime Victim Survey (BJS)/UCR
What level of visibility characterizes burglarized houses? Are lots open and visible? Is lighting adequate? Are entrances visible? What type of fencing exists? What is the size of the lot, and distance from roadways and neighbors?	X	X									
What level of exposure characterizes the burglarized houses? What is the proximity to major thoroughfares, parks or public areas? What is the location within the neighborhood?	X	X									
What types of security were in place? What types of security were in use?	X	X			X						X
What housing features contribute to burglaries, such as substandard doors, windows or locks?	X	X			X						

ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FILES REVIEW	Environment Survey	Incident Report Data/ Maps	CAD Data	Detective/ Patrol/ Forensics Interviews	Offender Interviews	Victim Interviews	Court Tracking	Citizen Survey	Insurance Company Survey	Crime Victim Survey (BJS)/ UCR
<i>Burglary Victims</i>											
<i>What are the characteristics of victims? Elderly and home during day; middle-aged and away at work, young families with changing schedules? Are victims new to area?</i>	X				X		X				
<i>What were the relevant victim behaviors — e.g., exposure of valued property, access to service providers, secured doors or windows, occupancy cues such as presence, alarms, or dogs?</i>	X						X				
<i>Are owner-occupants or renters more likely to be burglary victims?</i>	X				X		X				
<i>Do victims tend to have insurance that covers their losses?</i>	X				X		X			X	
<i>Offenders</i>											
<i>How many burglars work alone? How many work with others? For burglars who work together, how or where do they get together? Why do they offend together? How do they offend together?</i>					X	X					
<i>What are the demographic characteristics of offenders, such as age or gender? What is the ethnicity of offenders, as this may relate to targeted victims?</i>					X	X		X			
<i>Where do offenders live, work or hang out?</i>					X	X					
<i>Are offenders known to victims?</i>					X	X					
<i>What is the repeat offending pattern?</i>					X	X					
<i>Who are the known residential burglars in the area?</i>					X	X					
<i>How active are burglars? Do they account for a few burglaries or many? Can sub-types of burglars be identified?</i>					X	X					

ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FILES REVIEW	Environmental Survey	Incident Report Data/ Maps	CAD Data	Detective/ Patrol/ Forensics Interviews	Offender Interviews	Victim Interviews	Court Tracking	Citizen Survey	Insurance Company Survey	Crime Victim Survey (BJS)/ UCR
<i>What, specifically, motivates burglars? Do they need quick cash for partying or to maintain a family? Are they drug-addicted and, if so, to what types of drugs? Are they recently jobless or long-term offenders?</i>					X	X					
<i>Do offenders show evidence of planning burglaries, or take advantage of easy opportunities?</i>					X	X					
<i>How do offenders travel to and from the burglary scene?</i>					X	X					
<i>How do burglars dispose of property? Through fences, pawnshops or others?</i>					X	X					
<b>Incidents</b>											
<i>What is the type of entry — forced?</i>	X				X						
<i>What is the method of entry? Doors or windows? What tools are used for entry?</i>	X				X	X					
<i>What side of the houses is entered?</i>	X				X	X					
<i>What features reduced visibility to the point of break-in?</i>	X				X	X					
<i>How long does the entry and the burglary take? Are burglars leisurely or in-and-out in a couple of minutes?</i>					X	X					
<i>How much revictimization occurs? Of houses? Of persons? Once repeat addresses are identified, what is the time period between initial and subsequent offenses?</i>					X	X					
<i>What is the type and value of property — if any — is stolen? How is the property taken away?</i>	X		X		X	X					
<i>How and where is stolen property liquidated?</i>					X	X					
<i>What is the experience with property recovery?</i>					X						

ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FILE REVIEW VI EW	Environmenta Survey	Incident Report Data/ Maps	CAD Data	Detective/Patrol/Forensics Interviews	Offender Interviews	Victim Interviews	Court Tracking	Citizen Survey	Insurance Company Survey	Crime Victim Survey (BJS)/UCR
<i>Where, within the target area, are offenses clustered? What might explain the clustering? What places, activities are nearby that might contribute to the offenses?</i>			X		X	X					
<i>How many offenses occur while house is occupied? Unoccupied? If unoccupied, how long was occupant away?</i>	X				X	X					
<b>Offense Reporting</b>											
<i>What percentage of target offenses are reported to police? Why are some not reported?</i>					X		X		X		X
<i>When are offenses reported?</i>	X			X			X				
<i>What percentage are reported in progress?</i>	X		X	X							
<b>Locations/Times</b>											
<i>What time of day are the offenses occurring?</i>	X		X	X							
<i>In what percentage of cases is the time of occurrence unknown?</i>	X		X								
<i>What day of week — or what week or month — are the offenses occurring? Does time vary by day, week or month?</i>	X		X								
<i>Where are the burglaries occurring geographically? Are burglaries close to schools, stores, parks, athletic venues, drug markets, treatment centers, transit centers or major thoroughfares?</i>		X	X	X							
<i>Are there significant seasonal variations? Is there seasonal variation, for example, of the proportion of offenses which are forced entry?</i>			X	X							
<b>Current Responses</b>											

ANALYSIS QUESTION	CASE FI L E R E VI E W	E nviron- m ental Survey	In cident Report Data/ Maps	C AD Data	D etective /P atrol/ Forensics Interviews	O ffender Interviews	Vi ctim Interviews	C ourt Tracking	Ci tizen Survey	In surance Company Survey	C rime Victim Survey (BJS)/ UCR
What is the current response to the problem (both policy/programs and individuals) by police (criminal investigation, patrol, crime prevention), prosecution, community, <i>insurance industry</i> ?	X				X			X		X	
Is police response to in progress calls adequate?				X	X	X					
What is the clearance rate? What is the clearance rate trend? How does it compare with other precincts, citywide, nation, other similar offenses?	X		X		X						X

## APPENDIX E: DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

CRN \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

1. Was the burglar's entry forced or unforced?

Forced

Unforced (if unforced, skip to question #4)

2. Is there any evidence of the types of tools used for forced entry, and if so, what type of tool?

No

Yes, identify type \_\_\_\_\_

3. Describe the type of door, lock or window that was defeated and how

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4. What was the point of entry?

Door

Window

Other

Unknown (if unknown, skip to question #9)

5. What side of the building was the point of entry?

Front

Back

Side

6. Is the point of entry visible from the street?

Yes

No  
Somewhat

7. Are there trees or shrubs shielding visibility of the point of entry?

Yes  
Some  
No

8. Is there a wall or fence that conceals the point of entry?

Yes  
No  
Partially

9. Is the yard open or full of trees and/or shrubs?

Open  
Some trees and/or shrubbery  
Significant number of trees and/or shrubbery

10. Is there a lane or other rear access to the property?

Yes  
No (if no, skip to question #12)

11. Was the rear access used for the approach or exit from the area?

Yes  
No  
Unknown

12. Based on available information, what is the most likely time of occurrence?

Morning, 6 a.m. to 12 noon  
Afternoon, 12 noon to 6 p.m.  
Evening, 6 p.m. to midnight  
Night, midnight to 6 a.m.

OR

Daytime (6 a.m. to 6 p.m.)  
Nighttime (6 p.m. to 6 a.m.)

OR

Cannot be determined

(Note: If daytime, skip to question # 14)

13. If it was a nighttime offense, is there adequate lighting?

Both street area and residence are mostly dark

Street is lit; residence is dark  
Residence is lit; street is dark  
Both street and residence are adequately lit

14. Was the home successfully burglarized, or was it an attempt?  
Successful  
Unsuccessful attempt (if unsuccessful, skip to question #17)

15. What items were stolen from the residence?  
TV  
Stereo  
VCR  
Computer  
Camera/Camcorder  
Jewelry  
Cash  
Guns/Firearms  
Tools  
Clothing  
Furniture  
Other, specify \_\_\_\_\_

16. What was the total estimated value of stolen property?

\$ \_\_\_\_\_

17. What was the day of week of the offense?

Monday  
Tuesday  
Wednesday  
Thursday  
Friday  
Saturday  
Sunday  
Unknown

18. Is the residence a:  
Detached single family home  
Duplex  
Condominium  
Apartment



19. Is the home:  
One story  
Two story  
Other, describe \_\_\_\_\_

20. How many blocks is the home from a major thoroughfare?  
Less than one  
One  
Two  
Three  
Four  
Five or more

21. On what type of road is the home located?  
Cul-de-sac, or other dead end road  
Residential street  
Collector street (i.e., many or most residents of the neighborhood would use this road to enter and exit the neighborhood)  
Major thoroughfare

22. Is the home located within 3 blocks of a:  
School  
Shopping Center  
Park  
Bus stop  
Other \_\_\_\_\_

23. Are there any signs or window decals that indicate the presence of an alarm?  
Yes  
No

24. Does the home have an alarm system?  
Yes  
No (if no, skip to question #26)

25. Was the alarm tripped when burglarized?  
Yes  
No

26. Were there any indications of a dog on the premises at the time of the burglary?  
Yes  
No

27. Do the victims own or rent the home?

- Own
- Rent
- Don't Know

28. What actions were taken during the preliminary investigation by the patrol officer?

- Suspect arrested
- Forensics requested
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

30. If called to the scene, what did Forensics do?

- Collect latent prints
- Took photographs
- Collected other evidence (describe \_\_\_\_\_)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

31. Was evidence collected by Forensics used to secure a warrant?

- Yes
- No

32. Was the case assigned to a detective?

- Yes
- No (if no, skip #33)

33. What actions were taken during the follow up investigation by the detective?

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## APPENDIX G: BURGLARY OFFENDER INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

1. How do you pick the houses you are going to burglarize?
2. Do you like to return to houses you have burglarized before to burglarize them again? If yes, why?
3. How many burglaries do you estimate you commit in a year?
4. What do you do with the property you get from burglaries?
5. What do you do with money you get from burglaries or money you get from selling stolen property? [e.g., buy drugs, party, pay for necessities (food, rent, gas), support other people]
6. Do you also burglarize businesses, vehicles, or places other than houses?
7. Do you plan your burglaries carefully or do you act immediately when an opportunity presents itself?
8. What, if anything, discourages you from breaking into a particular house? (e.g., alarm, alarm sign, indications of dogs on premises, lighting, potential witnesses, indications of police patrols)
9. How do you get to and away from houses you burglarize? (e.g., drive, walk, driven by someone else, ride bicycle, public transportation)
10. Do you make enough money from committing burglaries to support yourself? If not, how else do you support yourself?
11. How did you first get started committing burglaries? How old were you?
12. How long have you been burglarizing houses?
13. Do you typically commit burglaries alone? If no, with how many partners do you usually work on each break-in?
14. How do you know your burglary partners?

# APPENDIX F: VICTIM SURVEY DATA COLLECTION INSTRUMENT

## Savannah Police Department Precinct 3 Residential Burglary POP Project

### Victim Survey

CRN \_\_\_\_\_

Location \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Person Interviewed \_\_\_\_\_

1. About how long had you lived in your home before it was burglarized?

\_\_\_\_\_ years    \_\_\_\_\_ months

1. Did you own or rent the home when it was burglarized?

own

rent

1. Has your home been burglarized again since you reported the burglary last year?

yes

no

a. If yes, how many times? \_\_\_\_\_ times

b. If no, had there ever been any attempts that you know of?

4. Had your home been burglarized before last year?

yes

no

a. If yes, how many times?

b. If no, had there ever been any attempts that you know of?

yes

no

1. What security measures were in place when your home was burglarized last year?  
 burglar alarm  
 dog  
 motion-sensitive lights  
 other \_\_\_\_\_
6. What, if anything, did you do to make your home more secure after last year's burglary?  
 installed different or better locks on doors or windows  
 got a dog  
 installed new lighting outside the home  
 installed a burglar alarm  
 other \_\_\_\_\_

7. Was the property stolen from your home insured?

- yes  
 no

a. If no, why not?

reason \_\_\_\_\_

b. If yes, did you file an insurance claim?

- yes  
 no

i. If yes, what insurance company did you use?

Name of company \_\_\_\_\_

ii. Was your claim paid?

- yes  
 no

3. After your home was burglarized, did you receive any advice on how to better protect your home against burglary?

- yes  
 no

a. If no, would you have liked to have received this advice?

- yes  
 no

b. If yes,

Who provided you this advice? \_\_\_\_\_

What advice did you receive? \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Did you take any action based on that advice?

yes  
no

- a. If yes, how quickly did you take those actions?  
within two days  
within a week  
within a month  
more than a month

## APPENDIX H: COURT TRACKING STUDY FINDINGS

### Savannah Police Department Precinct 3 Burglary of Single-Family Houses Project

#### Court Tracking Sample

A total of 56 arrests were made citywide by the Savannah Police Department for residential burglary-related offenses during the period from August 2001 to February 2002. (This sample of cases was drawn because data prior to August 2001 would have been difficult to retrieve owing to the crash of the RMS system.) The following information is known about these 56 cases:

The 56 arrests were of 50 different individuals (4 individuals were charged for two burglaries and 1 individual was charged for 3 burglaries).

34 of the 50 individuals (68%) arrested were listed as African-American; 15 were listed as white (30%) and 1 as unknown. 48 (96%) of the individuals are male; 2 are female. The median age of all arrestees was 25. Interestingly, the median age was 21 for African-American arrestees, but 35 for white arrestees.

The Chatham County District Attorney's Office provided information on the status of these 56 cases as of March 18, 2002.

In 6 cases, there was an indication that no charges were showing in the DA's records. According to the DA's Office, this might be due to an incorrect case identification number or some other clerical error. In 45 cases, the defendant was charged with burglary. The following cases showed other than burglary charges:

- Possession of alcohol by a minor and criminal attempt (presumably of attempted burglary) (1 case)
- Entering an auto, possession of burglary tools (2 cases)
- Criminal trespass and obstruction
- Theft by Receiving (1 case)

Other charges that were sometimes filed along with burglary charges included: possession of burglary tools, obstruction, criminal trespass, theft by taking (felony theft), robbery, simple battery, theft by receiving, criminal damage to property, and forgery.

Of the 56 cases:

- in 19 cases (34%) the defendant was indicted

- in 1 case an accusation was filed rather than an indictment (this is a formal charging document that did not involve the grand jury; it indicates that a plea to the charge is imminent)
- in 14 cases (25%) the defendant has not yet been indicted
- in 6 cases (11%) there was no record of charges having been filed (may be clerical error)
- in 5 cases the defendant was bound over to either Recorder's or State court
- in 3 cases, a preliminary hearing was set for later this year
- in 1 case, the defendant was transferred to Juvenile Court
- in 7 cases the defendant was either found or plead guilty to either burglary or lesser charges
- in the 7 cases in which the defendant was adjudged guilty, the following sentences were handed down:
  - 5 years prison (1 case)
  - 3 years prison, 2 years probation (1 case)
  - 12 months (time served) (1 case)
  - 180 days (time served) (1 case)
  - 90 days (time served), 9 months probation (1 case)
  - 6 months probation (2 cases involving the same defendant)

There were no indications of any revocation proceedings initiated against any defendants.

Conclusions:

Because some of these cases are fairly recent and the legal process has yet to run its course, we cannot draw many conclusions from this sample of arrests. The general picture that emerges from this limited inquiry is consistent with widely observed trends regarding burglary: Few cases are cleared by arrest and the resulting sentences of those convicted tend to be less than what many people probably believe would result from a burglary conviction. This observation is not intended as a criticism of either police investigative, prosecutorial, or court practices, but rather that criminal arrest, prosecution, and incarceration of residential burglars is a small part of the overall community response to residential burglary.



# APPENDIX I: POLICE PARTICIPANT SURVEY

## Field Applications of the Problem-Oriented Guides for Police Police Participant Survey

### The POP Guide

1. How would you describe your role in the project?
2. Did you read the POP Guide?
3. If so, did the guide improve your understanding of the problem type?
4. Are there any changes to the content of the guide that you would recommend?
5. Are there any changes to the format of the guide that you would recommend?
6. What, specifically, did you learn from the guide that influenced any action you took with respect to the problem?
7. Which stage of the problem-solving process do you think was most aided by the guide?
8. Which stage was least aided by the guide?
9. How, if at all, was your local problem different from the general description of that problem type in the guide?

### The Project

10. Did you find the project to be worthwhile? Why or why not?
11. What about this project differed from the routine way in which problems of this type have been addressed in your agency?
12. To your knowledge, were any of the project recommendations actually implemented? If so, what was implemented?
13. What aspects of the project do you think were most successful?
14. What aspects were least successful?
15. To the extent the project failed to meet any of your expectations, what do you think accounted for that?

16. Did lessons learned from the project result in any changes to the agency's practices?

# APPENDIX J: SAVANNAH POLICE DEPARTMENT PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS POLICY & PROCEDURE



<b>Number</b>	1- 42	<b>Topic</b>	<b>PRELIMINARY INVESTIGATIONS</b>
<b>Approved Date</b>	1-09-03	<b>CAL EA</b>	42.1.4, 42.2.2
<b>Supersedes</b>	12-02-02	<b>GSC</b>	5.20

- 1) **PURPOSE:** As in every investigative effort, the primary objective of the preliminary investigation is to determine who committed the crime and to apprehend the criminal. The primary officer collects evidence which solidly supports, the identification of the person responsible for the crime as well as the arrest and subsequent conviction of the criminal. This SOP will detail efforts toward that objective including the completion of the preliminary incident report.
  
- 2) **PROCEDURE**
  - A. The officer assigned to the original call will follow the SPD guidelines for Patrol and notification of Investigative personnel.
  - B. The framework of the preliminary investigation is based on the following major tasks:
    - i) Verification that an offense actually happened, including the location of the crime and the time the crime happened;
    2. Identification of the victim, the suspect(s) and any witnesses;
    3. An initial interview of the victim and witnesses, and accurately recording all statements made by them;
    4. Conducting a field interrogation of any suspects and accurately documenting all statements made by them;
    5. Maintaining the crime scene and protecting all evidence;
    6. Collecting or arranging for the collection of evidence;
    7. Effecting the arrest of the suspect if identified;
    8. Completion of a thorough preliminary investigation report.
  - C. A sound preliminary investigation is essential for the successful completion of a case. Therefore, the officer should include as much useful information as possible in the initial report in order for the investigator to begin a follow-up investigation. The below information should be included, if possible:
    1. Witnesses to the crime;
    2. Identification of the suspect;

3. Description of the suspect;
  4. Knowledge of the location of the suspect;
  5. All statements made by victims, witnesses or suspects.
  6. Description of stolen property and identifiable characteristics, marks or numbers;
  7. Existence of a significant MO;
  8. Presence of significant physical evidence;
  9. Description of any automobiles involved in the crime;
  10. Results from a crime scene evidence search;
  11. Belief that a crime may be solved with publicity and/or reasonable investigative effort;
  12. An opportunity for but one person to have committed the crime;
  13. Any other significant information;
- D. The primary officer will continue to have the responsibility to take the original report. However, the CIB investigator will take an original report when it is most practical and in the best interest of the department.

### III. REPORTING

- A. All incidents will be recorded on the appropriate department form.
- B. In order to preserve the integrity of information contained within certain preliminary investigative reports and to ensure that the follow-up investigation is not compromised; the following incidents will not be described in the summary narrative of a preliminary report but on the investigative report:
  1. Homicides
  2. Aggravated Assaults
  3. All Robberies
  4. Commercial Burglaries
  5. All sex related crimes
  6. Any incident that would reveal the existence of a significant MO (Method of Operation)

- 3) In order to comply with State law and prevent the untimely release of a victim=s name and pertinent information in the preliminary report, when completing a homicide or sex offense preliminary report, the reporting officer will not include the victim=s name and pertinent information in the report. It will be listed in the supplemental report.
- D. The supervisor's signature on an incident report will indicate the report has been checked for accuracy, completeness and to ensure that it is titled with the correct offense in accordance with AUCR@ guidelines.
- E. The primary officer will continue to have the responsibility to take the original report. However, the CIB investigator will take an original report when it is most practical and in the best interest of the department.

#### IV. BURGLARY INVESTIGATIONS

- a) When an officer investigates a residential burglary he will complete a neighborhood canvas that includes:
  - i) Attempting to contact the residents adjacent to the victim=s residence,
  - ii) The residents across the street from the victim=s residence, and
  - iii) The residents of homes behind the victim=s residence.
- B. The results of the canvas will be detailed in the investigative report.
  1. The name and address of each person contacted will be included.
  2. Also included will be the address of any residence where no contact was made so the officer may attempt to contact that residence later.

This policy supersedes all written directives issued prior to 1/9/03, pursuant to Preliminary Investigations.

By Order of:

on file  
Dan Flynn  
Chief of Police

## APPENDIX K : TABLES AND FIGURES

Figure 1 Target Area

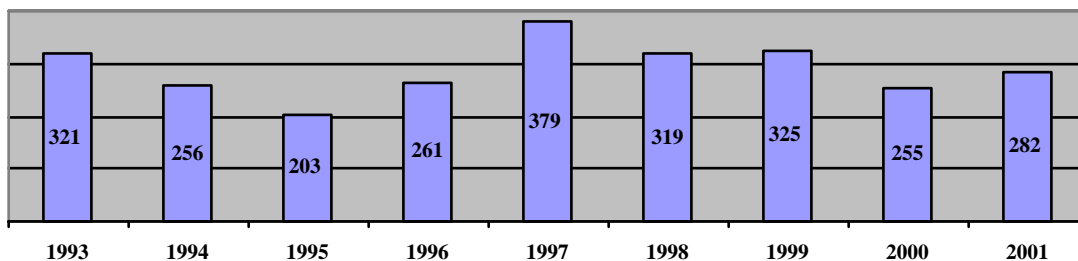
Analysis Task	Description	Persons Responsible	Related Appendices
Police case file analysis	The police case files for 162 burglary reports occurring in the target area in 2001 were analyzed. Approximately 300 cases met the initial criteria for inclusion in the sample. The data collection effort was piloted on a small sample of cases, then reviewed and modified by the project team before being completed.	Corporal Steve Avery Brian Renner	Appendix E
Court tracking analysis	The case dispositions for 56 burglary arrests made by the SPD in a six-month period were analyzed.	Michael Scott	Appendix G
Police investigator interviews	Interviews were conducted with the detectives assigned to Precinct 3 burglaries, the Forensic Unit supervisor, and the Pawn Shop detail detective. In addition, discussions were held with Precinct 3 patrol officers about their knowledge of stolen property markets.	Michael Scott Corporal Steve Avery	

<b>Analysis Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Related Appendices</b>
Offender interviews	Attempts were made to interview convicted burglars. However, most potential interview subjects were returned to prison prior to interview. Only one interview was conducted with little useful knowledge gained.	Michael Scott	Appendix F
Environmental survey of burgled/control group houses	All houses burgled in the target area during the study period were physically surveyed to identify environmental conditions that might have contributed to the burglaries. A random sample of houses in the target area was similarly surveyed to compare with the houses known to have been burgled.	Corporal Steve Avery Michael Scott	Appendix E
Repeat victimization analysis	An in-depth analysis of repeat victimization was not completed, partially due to deficiencies in the SPD Records Management System.	Brian Renner	
Spatial analysis (crime mapping)	A spatial analysis of burglary in the target area was conducted to determine hot spot areas.	Brian Renner	

<b>Analysis Task</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Persons Responsible</b>	<b>Related Appendices</b>
Burglary victim survey	Attempts were made to interview all victims from the 2001 sample of burglaries in the target area. 54 victims were located and interviewed.	Corporal Patrick Goodberry	Appendix H
Truancy control analysis	An effort was made to establish links between truancy and burglary of single-family houses and to ascertain the overall response to truancy	Corporal Steve Avery	
Project briefings	The chief of police and patrol commander were briefed on the project in May 2001; police officials and researchers from Newark, N.J.; Raleigh, N.C.; and Chula Vista, Calif. were briefed in June 2001; CIB, school, crime prevention, prosecution, and corrections officials were briefed in May 2002; one shift of Precinct 3 patrol officers was briefed on stolen property aspects of the project in September 2002; the project findings were presented at the International Problem-Oriented Policing Conference in San Diego in November 2002; and the Compstat meeting attendees were briefed in December 2002. Feedback from these six briefings informs this report.	Michael Scott Brian Renner Corporal Steve Avery	



**Figure 2: Target Area Residential Burglaries, 1993-2001**



**Figure 3: Citywide Residential Burglaries, 1994-2002**

**Citywide Residential Burglaries, 1994-2002**

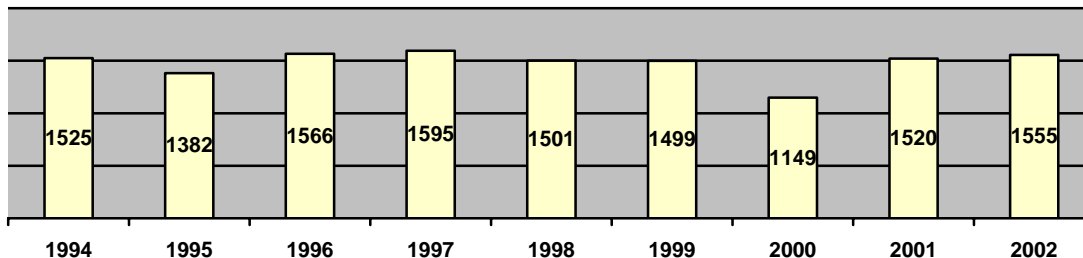


Figure 4: Foliage common to area

Figure 5: Clustering of Residential Burglaries in Target Area

Figure 6: Citywide Residential Burglary by Month, 1999-2001

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<sup>1</sup> Basic statistical analyses of the mean, median, mode, and standard deviations were conducted. Median scores were used as the best reflection of central tendencies.

<sup>2</sup> We had reason to believe that the number of guns reported stolen might be low. Victims who are convicted felons and those who are uncertain about gun registration laws (Georgia does not require guns kept in the home to be registered) might be reluctant to report them stolen. Detectives believed that a significant number of guns are stolen in residential burglaries and that this contributes to violent crime. Similarly, we do not know how commonly illegal drugs are stolen because that is not reported to police.

<sup>3</sup> The victim's property ownership status is not routinely determined in the burglary investigation.

<sup>4</sup> The victim survey was able to determine home-owner status in only 33% of cases and of those, 43% were renters and 57% owners. However, because renters are more likely to move than are owners and thus be unavailable to participate in a victim survey, it is probable that these percentages less accurately represent all victims than do the percentages derived from the case file analysis. This serves as an example of how the choice of analysis method can produce widely divergent results.

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<sup>5</sup> Savannah was one of 12 cities in which a local crime victimization survey was conducted by the Bureau of Justice Statistics and the COPS Office. See *Criminal Victimization and Perceptions of Community Safety in 12 Cities, 1998*. U.S. Department of Justice (1999).