A National Study of Community Justice

by

Todd R. Clear
John Jay College

David R. Karp
Skidmore College

Joanna Bruni
Cynthia Joiner
Florida State University

with contributions by

Ronald Corbett
Jodi Lane
Teri Martin
Susan Turner
Evelyn Zellerer

December 4, 1999

This project was supported by a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation to Florida State University
Writing Credits

The following are the authors of the sections of this report

Chapter 1: *The Project and its Results* is by Todd Clear & Joanna Bruni

Chapter 2: *An Integrity Model of Community Justice* is by David Karp

Chapter 3: *The Vermont Reparative Boards* is by David Karp

Chapter 4: *Neighborhood Probation Offices in Maricopa* is by Joanna Bruni & Todd Clear

Chapter 5: *The South Oxnard Challenge Project* is by Jodi Lane & Susan Turner

Chapter 6: *The Neighborhood Justice Center, Tallahassee Florida* is by Evelyn Zellerer

Chapter 7: *Deschutes County, Oregon, Community Justice Department* is by Teri Martin

Chapter 8: *Nightlight: Middlesex County, Massachusetts Probation* is by Ron Corbett

Chapter 9: *A Summary of Lessons Learned* is by Todd Clear

Appendix: *Database Summary* was prepared by Joanna Bruni and Cynthia Joiner
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>The Project and its Results</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>An Integrity Model of Community Justice</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>The Vermont Reparative Boards</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Neighborhood Probation Offices in Maricopa County</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>The South Oxnard Challenge Project</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>The Neighborhood Justice Center, Tallahassee Florida</td>
<td>152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Deschutes County, Oregon, Community Justice Department</td>
<td>189</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Nightlight: Middlesex County, Massachusetts Probation</td>
<td>213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>A Summary of Lessons Learned</td>
<td>237</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Appendix: Database summary</td>
<td>247</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Chapter 1

The Project and its Results

This is a report of a national assessment of community justice initiatives. The purpose of this assessment was to develop an understanding of the current status of community justice in the United States. Our approach encompassed three objectives:

• to document the extent of community justice activity,
• to develop a overarching perception of what this activity entails, and
• to provide illustrative descriptions of selected community justice initiatives

Through these tasks, we hoped to compile a grounded understanding of the “community justice movement” including information regarding the extent of knowledge about community justice and descriptions of particular programs emerging from this new conceptualization. Our approach involved three steps.

First, we conducted a national canvassing of justice officials to identify community justice programs in their jurisdictions. Because there are thousands of jurisdictions in the United States, ranging in size from states to unincorporated towns, we decided to canvass the 208 largest standard metropolitan statistical areas (SMSAs). These are the most populated urban areas in the United States, and so they form the richest potential sites for community justice activity. Our hope was to build a census of community justice programs, but for reasons we explain below, this was not possible.

Second, we spoke to numerous justice leaders around the country about our project and about the concept of community justice. These conversations helped us to develop a language about community justice and informed our understanding of current community justice initiatives. Our
contacts with justice officials led to develop an “integrity model” of community justice. This model, which we present as chapter 2 of this report, is a process model of community justice programs—a description of the common elements each community justice initiative addresses in one form or another.

Our third step was to select illustrative projects from among those we encountered for detailed descriptions of their community justice activity. We chose sites for detailed study based on the way their projects illustrated certain points we had gleaned from the national canvassing and from various conversations in the field, central points described in the integrity model. To construct these case studies, we used a combination of site visits from our own research team and site papers from experts familiar with those projects. The case studies serve to illustrate, for those interested in community justice, some of the range of concepts and strategies now underway.

Our ultimate goal has been to learn how broadly community justice approaches have taken root in justice agencies around the country. We also wanted to better understand the principles that seem to undergird community justice efforts. By doing so, we hoped to write about the nascent community justice movement in a way that would enrich the sharing of information concerning community justice concepts and initiatives.

Toward a working definition of “community justice”

As we began our work at identifying community justice initiatives around the country, we realized that there are many forms of community justice. Strategies as diverse as New York’s zero-tolerance policing and Vermont’s reparative justice boards can lay claim to being a community justice approach, but almost any strategy now designated as community justice could be (and has been) adopted within a framework that lacks what we think of as a community justice focus. Our interest
in the community justice movement goes beyond a set of narrow, though interesting, innovations in justice processing. We are interested in how the community justice movement has changed in more fundamental ways the way justice agencies go about doing their work and seeing their tasks. Thus, our first need was to clarify the kind of community justice initiatives in which we were interested. How could we distinguish “interesting programs” from fundamental changes implied by the term, “community justice?”

In *The Community Justice Ideal: Reducing Crime and Achieving Justice* (Westview, Boulder, 1999) we argued that

The community justice ideal is for the agents of criminal justice to tailor their work so as to enhance community living by reducing the damaging effects of social inequality, the indignities of disorder, the agony of criminal victimization, and the paralysis of fear.

Even this definition encompasses an impressive range of contemporary programs, just to illustrate:

- community-oriented policing
- problem-oriented policing
- situational crime prevention
- restorative justice
- victim offender mediation
- early-childhood prevention
- neighborhood prosecution
- circle-sentencing
- mentor programs
Obviously, a large number of these initiatives exist, and many of them were developed independently of the emerging emphasis on community justice. Our interest is not in myriad programs generally, but in particular efforts to rework the tasks of justice with the needs of specific local communities in mind. To be of interest to us, we felt, a community justice initiative should have as its target the quality of life in a particular community area. Thus, we needed some way to identify community justice that would not automatically call to mind these programs, but would also not exclude them if they were being sought within a community justice conceptual framework. Our concern was that numerous programs might claim the label, “community justice,” perhaps in part because it is currently a popular idea, but we were interested in determining how much activity really existed beneath the “talk.” Indeed, and early round of pre-test phone calls uncovered that without some specificity about the term “community justice,” we were liable to be referred to all manner of programs, from neighborhood watch to store front police, and that some version of this type of program existed just about everywhere we called. We felt that by establishing criteria for inclusion as a community justice initiative, we would be better able to assess a location’s commitment to community justice ideals, rather than merely asking, “Do you have any community justice projects currently going on in your jurisdiction?”

In choosing criteria for our community justice assessment, we were assisted by our interest in several distinct aspects of the community justice movement: the emphasis on embracing ex-offenders into neighborhood life. Because our approach gives central concern to problems of community safety, we were also interested in adult offenders. Finally, the idea of community justice connotes citizen involvement in practices of the justice system. With these interests in mind, we settled on four criteria for community justice initiatives to fall into our assessment:
1. The initiative involves community/neighborhood based activity rather than jurisdiction wide effort. Most of the interesting programs referred to above are operated in jurisdictional settings. What sets community justice initiatives apart from these other programs is that they are targeted toward a specific neighborhood, with the intention of improving the quality of life in that particular neighborhood. These targeted programs are more likely to be tailored to the particular needs of the local area, and thus more likely to have community-level impacts rather than simple justice outcomes.

2. The program’s focus is on reintegration of convicted offenders, from prison or directly from court. The key issue facing community justice is to repair the rift that occurs between a community and the offender who lives there. This rift owes most of its existence to the effects of the offender’s crime, but it also raises public safety concerns because of the potential for future criminal behavior. Programs that seek to overcome the problems between offenders and their communities have the reparative focus that is central to the community justice ideal that all citizens, not just some, be restored.

3. Citizens are involved in the initiative. Community justice gets its special energy from the partnerships it pursues with private citizens and citizen groups. Citizen involvement decreases the alienation between remote justice practices and everyday needs of community members. Many interesting programs are run by professionals with a focus on clients without an interest in the perspectives of everyday citizens. To open the program doors to citizen participation is a strategic difference between community justice and traditional criminal justice.

4. The initiative is concerned with adult offenders. In juvenile justice, the importance of the family and the traditional emphasis of the juvenile court on rehabilitation of young offenders often
means that a far broader readiness exists there for community justice activity. A good example is provided by restorative justice programs that tap into family systems. Many of these programs are quite well established, and their invention predates the contemporary community justice movement. By contrast, most of the recent talk about community justice has embraced the problem of adult crime, not just juvenile delinquency. Because we were interested in initiatives emanating from the community justice movement, we simplify our search by targeting adult-oriented innovation.

For the most part, our criteria had the effect of excluding two common types of community justice initiatives: community-oriented policing and restorative justice. Excluding these programs greatly simplified our task. It has been estimated that the vast majority of the police departments in the United States claim a community-oriented policing philosophy. A search to find these seems hardly necessary, nor likely productive. Our exclusion of restorative justice programs seemed reasonable in light of the fact that a federal grant has already funded a national census of them (Bazemore, 199x). We did not purposefully exclude all these projects, of course. If a community policing or restorative justice project met all our criteria, we were interested in including it in our census.

We did not include prison-based programs. Although many prison-based programs emphasize teaching rehabilitative skills and life skills which could help offenders to lead to a non-criminal lifestyle out of prison, these programs lack the methods and goals of achieving community support within a particular community or neighborhood. This study is specifically directed towards programs that address individual and community needs when offenders are community residents.

Nor did we include a wide variety of community-based crime prevention programs, both those autonomously organized by community organizations and those organized in partnership with the criminal justice agencies. Like juvenile programs and community policing, most such programs are
legitimately conceptualized within a community justice model. Such programs might include a range of activities from situational crime prevention to citizen patrols to economic development activities to school anti-violence programs, any of which may directly or indirectly address local crime concerns. Our reasons for not including these programs were pragmatic. One issue concerned the ubiquity of relevant programs, exceeding our capacity for tabulating them—we could not imagine an advantage to documenting every neighborhood watch program and every public housing crime prevention project, for example. A second issue concerned the problem of distinguishing programs designed with multiple purposes, such as a park beautification project (such as is common within Weed & Seed projects) where crime was only one variable considered. Estimating the prominence of the crime concern was beyond our reach in this project. For the sake of clarity, we settled on a search for programs that specifically targeted criminal offenders.

Finally, our criteria did not easily make room for the growing interest in community courts. These have three of our criteria: neighborhood focus, adult offenders, and a focus on reintegration. But the community court movement has been lukewarm toward citizen involvement. In community courts, the law is taken as a framework for action, and legal enforcement is accepted as the central strategy. It is assumed that citizens desire the court model, and professionals (in the roles of lawyers and treatment personnel) dominate the decision-making environment. While the community court model is arguably a valuable innovation, it does not present the kind of sea-change challenge to traditional criminal justice that we were interested in uncovering.

Thus, our criteria led us to an interest in neighborhood-based justice action that focused on offenders in the context of broader community life. It was with the purpose of uncovering programs of this type that we undertook the first stage of our work: the census.
The census sample: finding jurisdictions with community justice programs

We started our study at the state sampling level. In a pre-test conducted during the months of February and March, 1998, we contacted persons in departments of probation and parole and departments of corrections in a half-dozen state agencies. We thought these state executives would be good sources for locating innovative local community justice programs, but we learned that they were unable to tell us about programs in their jurisdiction. The conclusion we drew from the pretest was that because the type of programs we were looking for were community-based and local-level programs, contact persons working in state-level agencies seemed generally unaware of community-specific activities in particular cities. We concluded that we were not speaking with the people most knowledgeable of local community justice initiatives by speaking with people at the state level.

We instead decided to conduct a census of the 209 largest cities in the U.S. (Statistical Abstract of the United States, 1997). We recognize there were both advantages and disadvantages to using cities as a census frame. By using only cities, it is possible that we have overlooked some of the community justice in practice outside these areas. Many people think that rural areas have traditionally used a community justice ideal, but on an informal basis. It is entirely plausible that in a rural town with a smaller population, less formal organization is needed to mobilize citizen activity in support of the justice system's work with reintegration of offenders. Even so, while these communities may be practicing interesting versions of community justice, their work is not so much a part of the new community justice new movement as it is a carrying out of traditional rural strategies of justice.

Our decision to focus on urban areas was advantageous for several reasons. Many urban areas have higher crime rates, thus providing the necessary motivation for considering alternatives to the traditional methods for addressing the crime problem. Inner city urban areas also tend to suffer from
high unemployment and inadequate housing, making the problem of social inequality a powerful background for community justice. In addition, the broken windows hypothesis (Wilson and Kelling, 19xx) has suggested that social disorder within urban areas can lead to increased crime rates, and the urban density makes it logistically easier for people to organize themselves for strategic change in these dynamics of their lives. But the most significant reason for a focus on urban neighborhoods is that it is in these locations that traditional criminal justice activity, to which community justice is offered as an alternative, has had a strong and entrenched role. Our interest is, ultimately, in changes in these locations. For all of these reasons, it was decided that by using populous, urban areas, an interesting measure of organized community justice activity could be developed.

The census procedure:

In each city in our sample, we began our canvassing procedure with a call to the local district attorney (DA). It was our view that as the primary local criminal justice policy-maker, the DA would be the most likely official to know of innovative justice programming, the way we defined the topic. We also thought this would increase our efficiency and minimize the likelihood of overlooking many programs by raising our chances of locating the people who were most aware of our subject area in the local departments of probation and parole, other local agencies, and other local individuals. Finally, we felt that a consistent sampling of DAs would avoid the problems of bias that might occur if we adopted a method of pursuing only national experts or community justice advocates. We wanted to hear about anything that was going on in these cities.

To obtain the most current and most thorough information, we contacted the district attorney’s offices, or their equivalents, for the county of each of our cities. After these interviews, we also called local criminal justice officials as back-up interviews in each of our cities, typically the director of the
adult probation function and the criminal justice director in the mayor's office. We made program phone calls to each of the innovative projects falling within our criteria and identified by any of these calls. In all, we made well over a thousand phone calls to our 209 sites, and interviewed at least 600 local officials. We began our phoning in April of 1998, and completed the majority of the phoning by August of 1998. Clean-up phone calls to hard-to-contact sources were fully completed by October of 1998. Because of the high ranking of the officials we talked with, it was usually the case that multiple attempts at contact preceded a completed interview.

The typical procedure was to speak with the elected DA and describe the purpose of our study. The following illustrates an example of our typical opening statement:

Hello. My name is ________. I am a researcher working with Dr. Todd Clear at Florida State University and Dr. David Karp at Skidmore College on a grant from the Edna McConnell Clark Foundation. We are conducting a review of community justice initiatives in over 200 cities, including your city/county. By community justice programs, we mean programs designed to facilitate the reintegration of adult, offenders into their particular community or neighborhood. In addition, the programs we are interested in are community or citizen guided. By this, we mean to include programs in which citizens participate, whether it be as volunteers serving as mentors, identifying methods for reparation and restoration for a crime to be made in a community rather than traditional sentences, facilitating community acceptance of the offender, identifying employment opportunities, assisting with housing, or, at a minimal level, serving on citizen advisory boards. Do you know of any programs in your city that might meet this description?
The intent of this protocol was to provide an explanation to the contact person which clearly illustrated the three aspects we considered as the most crucial components of community justice: 1) community or neighborhood specificity, 2) a goal of successful reintegration, and 3) citizen involvement in the planning, guiding, or functioning of the program in some manner besides as a form of employment. If the contact person did not know of any activity fitting our criteria, we moved on. If the contact person did know of activity fitting our description, we asked for a referral or contact person working with the Community Justice activity and called this person. If the activity did appear to meet our criteria after follow-up contact was made, it was considered a site for possible detailed case study.

When speaking with directors of potential community justice locations, we used the same protocol. Generally, a conversation ensued with the individual elaborating on his/her location’s goals and methods of achieving these goals. In addition, we would ask the following questions:

1. Program name, address, director.
2. Program’s target population.
3. Program’s start date.
4. Programs’ budget and funding sources.
5. Number of staff and description of their roles.
6. Any past evaluations.
7. Further details on program’s goals and methods.

The number of persons we talked to varied greatly from city to city. Often we found we were speaking with individuals who were unfamiliar with the term “community justice” and were unaware of any activity meeting our description of community justice, in their city. When this happened, we
continued to contact others in the justice system in that jurisdiction. We estimate that in each city we
surveyed, we talked to at least three individuals (and typically more) involved in the criminal justice
system, including the district attorney (or equivalent), though the actual number varied from one
location to another. In many cities, respondents expressed no awareness of the term “community
justice” or expressed confusion about what community justice entailed. Often we were immediately
“transferred” to another department or referred to another department, often a department such as a
community corrections department.

As we discuss below, our interviews typically did not alert us to any community justice activity
in a particular location. However, in a small group of cities, the respondents were aware of the type
of activity we were searching for. An example of the most elaborate interview process is provided by
the steps we followed in Phoenix, Arizona.

Phoenix, Arizona, an illustration

An illustration of the progression of identifying knowledgeable contact persons, locating
interviews, and recording results, is provided by a detailed account of our search process in the city
of Phoenix, Arizona. Phoenix is a good illustration of a complete “trail” of leads and the ultimate
identification of community justice initiatives. It is also one of the sites for which we have developed
detailed case study. It will be evident from this account that frequently contact persons and/or
agencies were likely to be referred by multiple sources, which we considered a validation that the
methodology was successful in locating the programs of interest in this city.

In Phoenix, the contact process began by with the Maricopa County Attorney’s Office, the
elected prosecutor serving Phoenix. The district attorney responded to our message and provided two
references: a Deputy Chief in Maricopa County Adult Probation and the City of Phoenix Prosecutor.
In the Phoenix City Prosecutor’s Office, we were referred to the person in charge of a pilot program called the “Community Prosecution Model”. This person referred us to a supervisor in the City of Phoenix Neighborhood Services Office who referred us to two supervisors in Maricopa County Adult Probation. These individuals provided us with information regarding six neighborhood supervision projects which appeared to meet our criteria. These projects were located in the following neighborhoods: Coronado, Garfield, Westwood, Simpson, Granada, and Cordoba. The supervisors of two of these neighborhood projects, the Coronado and the Garfield projects, were referred to us by another source as well, described below.

The Deputy Chief in Maricopa County Adult Probation, who was referred to us by the Maricopa County Attorney’s assistant, described two neighborhood community justice programs (the Coronado and the Garfield programs) and provided us with a contact person for each, both of whom were supervisors in the Maricopa County Adult Probation office. In addition to these two contacts, the Deputy Chief referred us to a person in Maricopa County Adult Probation who was working on a Weed & Seed grant and to the Director of Community Service, Maricopa County Adult Probation Department. These sources did not provide us with further information regarding programs useful for our census based on our criteria.

In addition to these respondents, we also spoke with a lieutenant in the Phoenix Police Department who did not think any of the community policing activity in Phoenix fit the “offender reintegration” criteria established as necessary community justice components for programs to be included in this study.

At the completion of the search of Phoenix, the following community justice programs were identified as meeting at least some of our criteria: the Garfield Community Probation Center, the
Coronado Neighborhood Supervision Project, and the Community Prosecution Model, the Westwood Neighborhood Project, the Simpson Neighborhood Project, the Granada Neighborhood Project, and the Cordoba Neighborhood Project. Ultimately, site visits were made to the initiatives in the Coronado neighborhood and in the Garfield neighborhood.

**Exploring community justice in action: talking to the experts**

A second step of our work involved a series of conversations with national experts in the community justice area. Most of these conversations took place in convenient field locations: at national conferences and in selected site visits. Specifically, we gave community justice presentations at the following events:

- The annual meetings of the American Probation and Parole Association in Norfolk, Virginia
- The Winter meetings of the American Probation and Parole Association in Phoenix, Arizona
- The Training Institute of the American Probation and Parole Association in New York City
- The National Evaluation Conference of the National Institutes of Justice
- Statewide correctional conferences of Florida, Colorado, New York, and Oregon.

We also scheduled visits to meet with professionals involved in community justice in San Diego, California; Deschutes County, Oregon; Burlington and Waterbury, Vermont; Boston, Massachusetts; and New York City. We also met with the Community Justice Task Force of the Communitarian Forum.

These contacts took several forms. In some of them, we presented the basic elements of our community justice ideal, and asked for feedback. In others we developed a conversation about the particular community justice processes their agencies had implemented. The purpose of our conversations was to gain a broader understanding of the meaning of community justice in the field,
where community justice activities were underway.

Results of the first two steps

The national survey provided a very different picture of community justice than did the expert interviews. We therefore discuss the survey results separately from the interview processes.

The survey. The description above of the survey process in Phoenix, Arizona, represents something of an ideal process. However, in most cases, the ideal is not what we found. Rarely did we speak with respondents who had a clear understanding of what community justice was and whether or not community justice initiatives existed in their community. Most often, we found respondents were unaware of any activity meeting the criteria we had outlined for community justice. Many respondents stated that they had never heard of community justice and expressed confusion about what community justice entailed. For example, respondents questioned how the community could play a role in successfully reintegrating the offender (rather than “leaving it to the criminal justice system”). Other respondents stated that they were unaware of initiatives for adult offenders but were aware of some examples aimed at juvenile offenders. We were frequently directed to faith-based initiatives which were usually small-scale “programs” providing money and other services for ex-offenders, but with limited community involvement or very small numbers of offenders. Typically, these programs also had uncertain neighborhood identities.

Other respondents told us about community justice projects, referring to Weed and Seed or traditional half-way houses located in certain neighborhoods. We excluded both of these kinds of responses, for different reasons. Weed and Seed projects were, for the most part, federally sponsored initiatives with a law enforcement focus and little interest in reintegration. By contrast, our interest was in more indigenous programs that emerged from a local interest in community justice. Halfway houses,
while they may have been based in a neighborhood and are addressing reintegration issues, typically had little community involvement and usually were not targeting former residents of the community. We felt these projects did not really represent the community justice philosophy and concepts we were interested in studying.

Thus we found many respondents who had never heard of community justice and many others who used the label “community justice” to refer to programs which did not fit our criteria or bore little relation to the version of community justice we sought. In the end, our several hundred phone calls over a six-month period turned up barely a dozen programs of interest. We discuss some of these programs below, but it is worthwhile to consider why there were so few projects turned up by our exhaustive canvassing.

In hindsight, we recognize the irony that we may not have been contacting the people most knowledgeable of community justice. We assumed that District Attorneys and staff in departments of corrections and probation and parole would likely be aware of extensive community justice activity in their areas. It is possible, though, that these persons are unaware of newly developing initiatives run outside the traditional justice apparatus. It is also possible that, if the individuals we contacted happened to oppose the ideals of community justice, they simply did not provide us with accurate information about interesting community justice activity in that location. However, our conversations with “experts” (see below) provided no greater number of community justice programs, from which to draw our data. We have, in our sample, an unbiased indication of how knowledgeable the typical key players in the criminal justice system are of community justice: not much. It seems likely, from our many calls to many places, that community justice is still new and developing philosophy, concepts of community justice are still relatively unknown or even resisted by many of those working in the
criminal justice system.

Yet we cannot avoid the fact that we had expected our census to find literally dozens of community justice initiatives across the nation, and found instead very few. The rhetoric in behalf of community justice is spirited, and the many conferences giving prominence to the phrase hint that many locations are involved in community justice philosophies. But our census of 209 cities leads us to but a handful of locations doing community justice in which citizens are involved in programs having a neighborhood focus for reintegrating adult offenders.

Early on in our canvassing, it became apparent that we would find few programs meeting all these criteria, and so we often followed up on interesting programs that met only some of the criteria. A count of the programs entered in our books as a result of the census would number between 10 and 15, depending on how strictly the criteria are followed. (A slightly expanded list of programs for which we did some follow-up calls is provided as an appendix.) This is a startlingly small number of programs, given the strength of the community justice rhetoric and the size and breadth of our sample.

It would be misleading for us to list the programs we uncovered as representing anything approaching a comprehensive list of community justice initiatives. We know that we must have missed some very interesting illustrations—two of the programs we describe as case studies were not turned up by our phone canvassing, for example. Because we know of the programs from other sources and knew they were interesting, we have included detailed descriptions of them in this report. That they ably illustrate some of the best of community justice, yet were not “found” in our census, gives us confidence that there are other programs also worthy of our attention that we did not find through our thousands of calls. But it remains remarkable that our informants, the most prominent and active members of criminal justice profession at the local level, not only seemed to have missed some
important programs, but also collectively reported so little in the way of community justice activity, as we have defined it.

To obtain an understanding of what our census found to be the state of the community justice world, it would be helpful for us to provide summaries of three cities as illustrations of the general patterns we observed: Phoenix, Arizona, where we found a great deal of community justice activity; Kansas City, Kansas, where we found no community justice activity; and, Memphis, Tennessee, where we found glimpses of community justice activity.

In Phoenix, we found individuals who were knowledgeable about the term “community justice,” and they also knew about community justice activity occurring in their city. By contrast, in Kansas City, we found no community justice activity in our census. We contacted the District Attorney’s office and were put in contact by them with the Assistant District Attorney. This individual was not aware of any community justice activity in Kansas City, but referred us to Director of Community Corrections for the county. He was not aware of any activity meeting our criteria. This was typical of our survey activity: a total of three interviews, none of which reported community justice activity afoot.

A different illustration is provided by our interviews in Memphis, Tennessee. We contacted the elected District Attorney who referred us to the Special Projects Coordinator for the District Attorney’s Office who faxed us the following programs: The Domestic Violence Court, a Part-time Drug Court, and the Drug Dealer Eviction Program. This memorandum also indicated that discussion were being held regarding future plans in Memphis for an additional General Sessions Criminal Court, plans to make the Drug Court a full-time treatment court, and plans for developing a community court pilot project which would handle misdemeanor arrests in a specific precinct area. This pilot project
would initially be run as a part-time court and would attempt to create citizen advisory panels and 
would attempt to recruit citizens to participate in various capacities in the justice process. This would 
likely have been the type of program we would have followed up on if it had been implemented and 
was currently functioning.

Across our sample, certain commonalities were found. Many locations had programs with the 
offender reintegration component, but without a community focus or involved citizens. For example, 
we identified church-based programs attempting to assist in offender reintegration on a very small 
scale in several location. In general, respondents were more familiar with the term “restorative 
justice” than the term “community justice,” and in several cities restorative justice initiatives were 
being to be discussed or in the preliminary phases of planning. The example of Memphis, Tennessee 
is an example. The components of community justice which seemed most difficult to find were 
community specificity and citizen involvement. The idea that justice would be achieved at the specific 
neighborhood level and that citizens of that neighborhood could and would play a key role offered a 
profound challenge to the locations we canvassed; indeed, more than a few of the people we talked 
to questioned the wisdom or feasibility of such a strategy. Community specificity also seemed to 
confuse our respondent, as did the concept that citizens would play a role in the justice process and 
what that role might entail.

Finally, most of the programs which respondents immediately mentioned were programs 
targeting juvenile offenders. The fact that many community justice programs seemed target juvenile 
offenders is not surprising, in light of the growing popularity of restorative justice with juvenile 
offenders. There is considerable overlap in these terms, and, in fact, they are often used 
interchangeably.
Therefore, our phone census led us to many programs which only very partially met our criteria or definition of community justice. We include a list of some of these programs as an Appendix, but strongly suspect that there is a great deal more activity similar to these programs, and meeting *some* of the criteria we have outlined as necessary for a program to be community justice, than our census produced. We suspect that at least some programs were missed by our census because many people are unfamiliar with the term community justice and with what the concept involves, and because we outlined specific criteria for community justice for the purposes of our census.

**The interviews.** Our interaction with leaders in the field of community justice proved much more satisfying as a source of data about the community justice movement, even though this part of our work did not turn up appreciably more programs for us to study. Our purpose in talking to experts was to get a feel for the kinds of issues they held as important in performing the work of community justice. We were interested in understanding the sources of their commitment to community justice, and how that commitment was expressed as a new set of values.

To inform this conversation, we developed a working model of community justice, flowing from *The Community Justice Ideal* (1999). In several public settings involving professionals, we presented the working model and asked for feedback about its elements. Likewise in conversations with community justice leaders, we explored the components of the model. Unlike our experience from canvassing jurisdictions, we learned from this step of our work that a vibrant community justice model was being worked out by a handful of visionaries in the field. Our attendance at various conferences and interviews around the country makes us aware that community justice is a popular new concept and is very appealing to the various individuals, including some of those we interviewed.

Why is this so? We believe the popularity of community justice has to do with some of the
ways that it offers a contrasting set of activities and outcomes to traditional justice approaches. These are the elements of the community justice ideal we have described earlier in this report, and they are the well-appreciated aspects of some of the more prominent community justice initiatives around the nation. As the final stage in our census, we sought to describe some of these aspects of community justice by providing detailed reports about selected sites.

Step three: site studies

On the basis of the results of the survey and the expert interviews, we selected a series of sites for site studies. We selected these sites because they illustrate different applications of the community justice principles as they are emerging across the country. Our study sites are not presented as the most elaborate or certainly not the most true-to-form of the core values of community justice. Instead, we offer them as providing something of a range of the kind of work now underway.

Because community justice has different meanings to different people, site descriptions are important as ways of illustrating the range of community justice initiatives. If community justice concepts are to be replicated in different locations based on the principles we have proposed for a community justice model, apt examples of the way justice is done across different locations is an important tool in understanding the potential for community justice strategies. Even though different versions of the same idea might appear quite different from one community to another, the potential of community justice concepts may be very similar across communities. Particular programs, particular partnerships formed, particular issues of importance may differ based on the specific needs and characteristics of a given community, but the values underlying those program elements and the processes used to build them will likely be similar.

The succeeding six chapters offer detailed site studies of six interesting community justice
projects. Three of these chapters are written by members of the research team, and are based upon a series of site visits to the location and interviews and observations in those locations. Four site reports are written by local consultants who have extensive familiarity with the sites and were provided with a copy of chapter 2 of this report as a stimulus to their contribution. (We also append a site report we commissioned describing neighborhood prosecution in Portland, Oregon; a chapter we did not include in the main body of the report because as a project it does not meet all our program selection criteria.) We could have selected a number of sites, of course, but we decided on these six for a combination of ease and importance. Each site demonstrates an interesting and important aspect of the community justice movement, and each site was available either to our team or to a consultant, so that an original contribution could be provided. Below is a brief statement of the reason for the selection of each site and how the site report was prepared.

- **Vermont Reparative Justice Boards** shows the results of a state-wide initiative undertaken by a Department of Corrections. This ambitious project has won a number of governmental innovation awards, and is a model of citizen participation in offender reintegration at the community level.

- **Maricopa County Neighborhood Probation Offices** demonstrates how a county-wide probation office can reorganize itself to become programatically relevant to differences in local neighborhoods within the county. This site is an example of the way community justice focuses on citizen-based offender reintegration within particular places within larger jurisdictions.

- **Oxnard, California Challenge Project** is a neighborhood-based citizen-led probation project for high risk youth. It shows the problems encountered when a local probation agency attempts
to make the community a partner in supervision of offenders.

- **Leon County Restorative Justice Project** illustrates the implementation of place-specific restorative justice principles, with an eye to citizen involvement. As a newly developing project, this site's issues may be seen as emblematic of emerging issues when community justice is designed with a concern for restorative principles.

- **Deschutes County Community Justice Project** exemplifies a legislative-based strategy for implementation of community justice in a non-urban setting. This is a comprehension change in a justice agencies vision, and it is linked to a funding strategy for community justice.

- **Middlesex County, Massachusetts Night Light Project** is a police-probation partnership with powerful results. Developed as a response to gang violence, this initiative has been credited with a remarkable impact on juvenile homicides in a very brief period of time.

Together, these six sites provide a description of the range of strategies in a community justice model. We offer them as an illustration of the important innovations now underway in the community justice movement.

We begin our report with an "Integrity Model" of community justice. The elements of this model were derived from our census, and from the many conversations we had with community justice professionals throughout the duration of this project. We used the integrity model as a conceptual structure for the development of the site studies which are presented in subsequent chapters.