

Crime Observatory Newsletter

"No Violence - Jus' Bat for Peace"

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GIS Developments for the Crime Observatory/VPA Programmes

What is GIS and how can it be applied to crime prevention strategies? GIS is the acronym for Geographic Information System and it is a combination of computer hardware, software and procedures capable of assembling, storing, manipulating and displaying geographically referenced information (Ministry of Health GIS Unit). As mentioned by Dr. Parris Ayeé in a previous presentation, GIS is used for "post-event mapping (annually, monthly, weekly, daily), spatial and temporal analyses and comparisons, overlay with communities and community attributes (population income etc.), descriptive, derivative and spatial statistics, hot spots modeling and composite modeling."

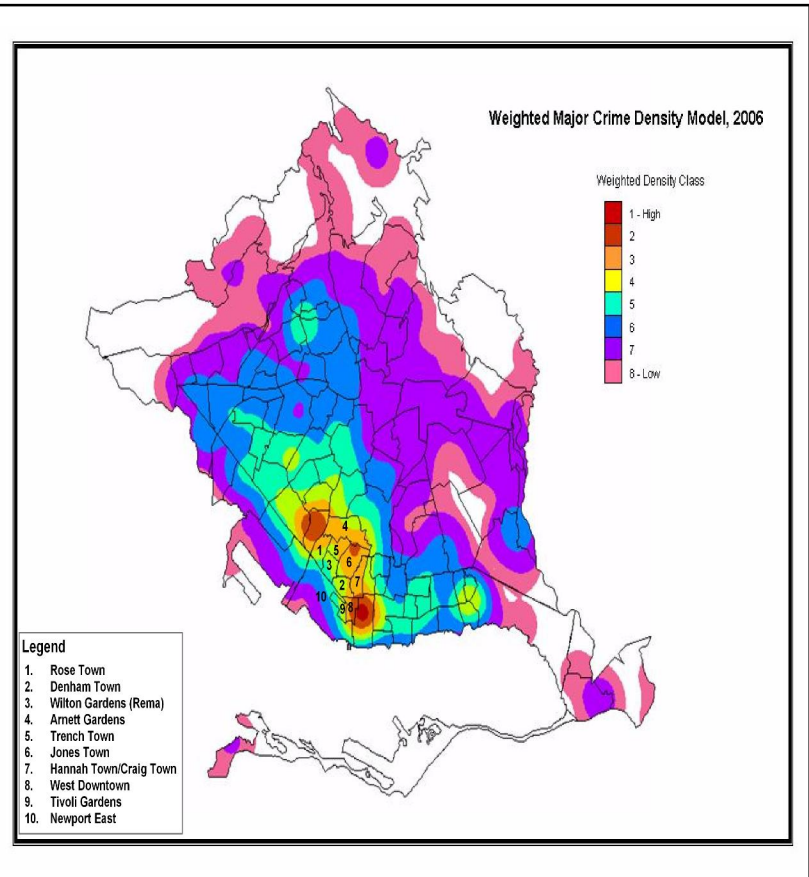
Ms. Lisa Webb and Ms. Suzanne Stanley of Mona Geoinformatics Institute spoke at the last Observatory meeting on *GIS Developments for the Crime Observatory/VPA Programmes*. They commenced the presentation by highlighting that crime data for 2006 had severe data entry problems such as locations being entered manually through a multi-step process where coordinates are transcribed into attribute table of major crime data and errors associated with numbers. Possible solution that were cited include direct mapping and tagging of crime location when identifying coordinates and subsequent data joining, re-verification of against loca-

tion and vice versa applied to the use of handheld GPS units. Mona Informatics Institute has developed normal and weighted density models for major crimes in 2006. Offenses were weighted based on severity e.g. murders being seen as more severe than robbery. It was noted that with the weighted model, concentrations of severe offenses are more apparent (see map to the right).

With regards to community asset mapping, three communities were examined: Rose Town, Jones Town and Federal Gardens. The assets include physical infrastructure of these communities

and are reclassified into broad groupings for modeling e.g. community centre and church/school are grouped under the class "community facility". In doing this type of modeling, errors in the data set are mainly GPS related accuracy errors.

In terms of number of assets, 207 were mapped for Rose Town (which does not include houses), 6393 mapped for Jones Town and 1275 mapped for Federal Gardens.



Weighted Major Crime Density Model for the Kingston Metropolitan Area, 2006 as presented by Ms. Webb and Stanley of the Mona Geoinformatics Institute.

Five points were mentioned for future implementation: 1) incorporate asset data from point mapping with building footprint and land parcel data e.g. include open lots 2) mapping of vegetation clusters and drains 3) expand mapping to other communities 4) perform regular asset updates manually and 5) use imagery to assist with non-specific assets such as houses etc.

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Learning for Life Literacy Programme

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"Learning for Life is mainly funded by Cable & Wireless Foundation along with the Healthy Lifestyle Project"

The Learning for Life Programme was launched at the Rose Town Community Centre on February 15, 2007. The launch, which was sponsored by the Cable & Wireless Foundation, had over 80 persons in attendance including Mr. Vince Lawrence from Autoskills Canada.

Learning for Life uses Autoskills, a computer software that provides an individualized and highly effective and scalable literacy intervention solution designed to help struggling students of all ages, skills and abilities master the fundamental skills of reading. The Autoskills products use a research approach that is proven to generate

significant and sustainable gains for at-risk students of all ages. Currently, there are 6 functional centres ; Rose Town which has 22 students enrolled, Kingston High School with 17 enrolments, Rema with 8 enrolments, Holy Network with 20, Mountain View with 6 and Flankers with 21.

Learning for Life is linked to the Ministry of Health/PMI job placement programme which affords persons enrolled the opportunity to be gainfully employed. Thus far, 14 persons from the programme have been interviewed for job placement and one has been successfully placed in a job. Additionally, 21 participants of the pro-

gramme were involved in a workshop held at Kingston High School on March 28, 2007 with Jamaica National Small Business Ltd. to explore possibilities for entrepreneurial opportunities.

HEART Foundation will be administering an exam participants of Learning for Life for entry in their skills training programme and Cable and Wireless Foundation will also be organizing a workshop where participants will be exposed to their Urban Man and Affiliates programme for employment opportunities.

Learning for Life is mainly funded by Cable & Wireless Foundation along with the Healthy Lifestyle Project.

Upcoming Events

- PMI's 1st Annual Congress for Peace and Justice on May 9, 2007 @ Jamaica Conference Centre
- Monthly Crime Observatory meeting - April 4, 2007 @ 9:30 am sharp

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Crime Statistics Update

According to data obtained from Supt. Delroy Hewitt of the Kingston Western Division, as of January to March 26, 2007 there has been 33 cases of homicides reported in the above mentioned police division, an increase of 65% (20 cases) compared to the same period in 2006. In terms of breakdown by communities, Admiral Town recorded 18

cases, Denham Town 7, Trench Town 8 whilst Hannah Town had none.

For other major crimes in the division within the same time period mentioned before, 32 shootings were recorded for 2007 (of which 14 were attacks on the Police) compared to 8 in 2006 which represents a 300% increase, 7 robberies in 2007 compared to 19 in 2006 representing a 63% decrease, 5

rape cases compared to 3 the previous year representing a 67% increase, 3 cases of carnal abuse in 2007 and none in the previous year, 5 cases of breakings compared to 6 in 2006 representing a 16% decrease and one case of larceny for both years.

Fourteen fire arms were recovered in the division along with 372 rounds and seven stolen motor vehicles.

Violence Prevention Alliance Peace Activities

During the period February 6-March 7, 2007 the VPA along with its affiliates launched peace month under the theme "No Violence-Jus' Bat for Peace". During the month, several activities were held at the community level including 10 by 10 cricket matches, football matches as well as Peace Explosions. The highlight was however the cricket matches where 16 teams were chosen from their respective communities, each being named after a team in the ICC Cricket World cup. On Peace Day, several activities occurred such as PALS peace concert at Vauxhall High School, which was followed by peace marches from three different routes culminating at UDC car park with a peace rally. Prior to the rally, a peace chain was formed where persons at the venue held hands in a moment of silence in remembrance of lives that are lost due to violence.

We're on the Web!
www.moh.gov.jm/vpa/index.htm