HALLANDALE BEACH WEED AND SEED

The Palms of Hallandale Beach is a one square mile area located in the North West section of Hallandale Beach. Although the population of the designated area represents only 8.8% of the population, 26% of all police calls for service are within the Palms area.

Drug related crimes constitute the largest problem in the designated area over the last four years. Drug related arrests over that period have averaged 50 per thousand residents, while the City average has been 7 per thousand residents. In 2003 a task force was developed by Hallandale Beach Police Department in coordination with the US Attorney's Office, the Drug Enforcement Agency and Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. As a result of the task force efforts, there were 76 drug-related arrests from 2003 to date.

In 2004 Police Chief Thomas Magill introduced Weed and Seed strategies to the Palms of Hallandale Beach residents as a way to combat the drug and violent crime problems in their neighborhood. This section of the City was selected because of the following unmet needs:

- The Palms of Hallandale Beach has the highest level of serious violent crime and illegal drug trafficking.
- A high number of rental properties (71% of housing units are rental properties).
- High unemployment rate (8.9%).
- High-school drop out rate (2.8%).
- 34.8% of its residents are less than 19 years of age and there is an increased gang presence contributing to an escalating juvenile crime rate.
- Lack of marketable job skills of area residents.

Numerous steering committee meetings with residents and stakeholders ultimately developed a strategic plan encompassing the following initiatives:

- Assigning a community police officer to the designated area.
- Increasing the number of Police Youth Initiatives.
- Increasing gang awareness education and prevention programs.
- Additional trash collection
- Additional tutorial programs for high school students.
- Additional job readiness training.
- Educational programs to meet the needs of the community.
- A substance abuse provider.

The City, along with the Weed & Seed Steering Committee and the Weed and Seed Site Coordinator, are all working for a brighter future for the children and residents of the Palms of Hallandale Beach.