

Chapter 6. Managing Weed and Seed

Overview

This chapter focuses on successfully managing the Weed and Seed Steering Committee as it oversees implementation of the site strategy. The Steering Committee maintains operating policies and procedures for the Weed and Seed site. Each Weed and Seed site has unique characteristics that reflect local needs and resources, but all sites address similar issues at some point in their development. No single answer fits all situations; consequently, the ideas in this chapter may be used and adapted as needed.

Sustaining Positive and Permanent Changes

The chapter discusses policy-level decision-making responsibilities, day-to-day operational issues, and oversight and monitoring of site activities. These components are necessary not only to start up a Weed and Seed site but also to sustain its success and expand its reach. The goal of sustaining positive and permanent changes in the neighborhood can best be accomplished through strong collaborative arrangements, teamwork, and good management. Although no one model exists for managing a Weed and Seed Steering Committee, many successful sites offer solutions from which to draw. Weed and Seed emphasizes local control; therefore, management-level activities should maximize local resources and meet local needs.

Vision for the Community

The Weed and Seed Steering Committee makes decisions, develops policies, and guides implementation of the site strategy to establish a healthy, stable, and crime-free community.

The Steering Committee collaborates with law enforcement, social service agencies, community-based organizations, houses of worship, and local businesses to empower residents to effect and sustain positive changes in the neighborhood.

The Steering Committee should be the driving force in reaching the goals identified in the site strategy. The inclusive nature of Weed and Seed should result in a Steering Committee that represents all segments of the community. All committee members should share a vision for the community, despite differing approaches to solving problems.

Implementation Process

Step 1: Establish an Organizational Structure

Most Weed and Seed sites have found that using subcommittees is an effective means of distributing the workload. Each subcommittee should include community stakeholders, residents, and Steering Committee representatives. Steering Committee involvement helps ensure effective communication among the subcommittees. Subcommittees also provide an opportunity to broaden participation in the Weed and Seed process.

The subcommittee is a comfortable format in which to discuss critical and sometimes contentious issues. Because subcommittees are smaller than the Steering Committee, they are less intimidating and encourage discussion among members. Subcommittees help ensure that different voices are heard and various points of view are discussed.

Reports from subcommittee meetings should be presented to the Steering Committee with recommended action when appropriate. This will help keep Steering Committee meetings more focused and productive. However, this should not restrict discussion at Steering Committee meetings. It is still important that Steering Committee members understand the issues.

Step 2: Develop an Action Plan for Each Subcommittee

Identify specific tasks for each priority

A subcommittee is most effective when it concentrates on specific goals. With this approach, the subcommittee can accomplish interim tasks while working toward a major goal.

Example

Priority: Attract new businesses to the community.

Task: Make the community more attractive.

Activity: A series of neighborhood cleanups.

Identify available resources for accomplishing the goals

As part of the community assessment, resources were identified that can be used for activities related to each subcommittee's goals.

Example

Activities: Bring youth and adult residents together to work on the cleanup. That partnership will accomplish the immediate task while building stronger ties in the community. Bring other stakeholder agencies together to work on the cleanup.

Set a timetable for activities

Establish a schedule for the cleanup. Having a timeframe for activities energizes people. It is harder to maintain enthusiasm when activities

seem to go on endlessly. It is easier to sustain interest when work is broken into short periods.

Activity: Arrange for food, prizes, and media coverage.

It may be a long time before businesses start coming into the designated area, but interim activities can keep residents actively involved and feeling positive about the goals.

Step 3: Develop Open Communication Among All Parties

Open communication is important to the successful operation of the Weed and Seed site strategy. People like to feel they are on the "inside"; they do not like to be the last to know what is going on. You need to find a simple way to communicate with CCDO, Steering Committee members, other stakeholders, residents, and interested parties.

Identify how and when people want to receive information from the Weed and Seed site. This gives you ideas about what methods to use and ensures members' involvement in developing a communication network. Your community policing partners may be able to help with this task. If they have a standard method of communicating with residents, you could ask to be included in the arrangement.

Find out how other partner agencies reach their constituencies, and try to develop a way to share with them. Doing this also strengthens collaboration efforts with these agencies.

The CCDO Program Manager may be able to help devise a communication strategy and provide a schedule that describes what information is needed and when it should be submitted.

Identify ways to get information to the media, state or tribal and local officials, and U.S. representatives' and senators' offices.



1. Tell the local Weed and Seed story. You have things to be proud of, but no one will hear about them if the local site does not take responsibility for getting the word out.
2. Notify the media of events. In case the media are not available, have a camera handy, take pictures, and submit them along with a brief story to the local newspaper.
3. Invite local elected officials to events. Give them an opportunity to share credit for the success. Share the good news.
4. Send information (story and pictures) to the U.S. representative's office. Regular contact helps ensure a better reception when you call on the office for assistance.
5. Develop a short presentation about Weed and Seed to present at meetings of local service clubs, such as the Rotary Club, Lions Club, and Chamber of Commerce. These organizations meet often and are always looking for speakers. Use these opportunities to tell the Weed and Seed story.

Not everyone is proficient in these communication techniques, but it should be possible to identify a Steering Committee member to assume these responsibilities. This provides a great opportunity to expand the number of local

supporters by finding someone to assume this responsibility and train someone to assist.

Step 4: Establish a Consistent Procedure for Securing Weed and Seed Staff

Although volunteer members of the Steering Committee and subcommittees do most of the work at local Weed and Seed sites, paid staff are also important to the operation. The process for filling staff positions varies from one site to another. In some sites, the local grantee organization may assign the police department, another local government department, or a nonprofit agency to administer Weed and Seed operations. Under this arrangement, it is especially important to establish a clear line of reporting authority and responsibility. If a staff person is paid by the grantee organization and reports to both that organization and the Weed and Seed Steering Committee, he or she may feel torn between the two entities. Regardless of the hiring arrangement, the Steering Committee must approve the staff who will work with Weed and Seed. A job description must be developed with clearly defined duties, and it must be satisfactory to both the grantee organization and the Steering Committee.

The U.S. Attorney must be notified prior to the selection of the site coordinator. He or she has

the authority to approve or deny candidates for this position.

Background checks are required for coordinators who work with children in the Safe Haven.

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Step 5: Develop a Process for Steering Committee and Subcommittee Meetings

Much of the work of the Weed and Seed committees is done during meetings: policy decisions are made, oversight of the operation is reviewed, and stakeholders are informed of the issues. Good attendance at these meetings is essential to the continued success of Weed and Seed; therefore, careful attention should be given to the structure of the meetings. The following are components of a good meeting:

- Meetings are scheduled at a convenient time and location in the neighborhood.
- Meetings are open to the public unless sensitive matters, (e.g., personnel issues) are scheduled for discussion. Open meeting rules in each locality are followed.



- Methods of informing the public of the meetings are as broad as possible, using newspapers, bulletins of community organizations, and fliers. These media can also help let the community know about Weed and Seed.
- Meetings begin on time. If people have to wait each time they meet, more of them will arrive late or stop coming altogether.
- A quorum for the meeting is established at the start and enforced evenhandedly. A good reference for conducting meetings is *Robert's Rules of Order*.
- A prepared agenda, developed with input from members, is sent before the meeting, if possible. At the least, an agenda is ready at the beginning of the meeting.
- Subcommittee reports and timely program and financial information are presented to the Steering Committee regularly. Whatever format is selected for meetings, keep in mind that the meetings should be productive. If members feel they are wasting their time, they will stop attending. Once attendance falls, it is difficult to reenergize the group.

Step 6: Develop a Process for Team Building

Weed and Seed's success depends partly on bringing the Steering Committee together to work as a team with a shared vision for the community. Being a team means differences can be worked through. Mutual respect and a willingness to listen to other points of view are necessary for people to work together effectively.

The following are ways the Steering Committee can promote team building:

1. **A shared vision.** The Steering Committee has a sense of common purpose, is focused on the future, and sees change as an opportunity for growth.

2. **Strong bonds.** Steering Committee members have a strong sense of commitment to the Weed and Seed mission and vision.
 3. **Clearly defined roles and responsibilities.** Steering Committee members have a sense of ownership and feel responsible for the site's performance. Stakeholders are kept informed and involved.
 4. **Effective meetings.** Meetings focus on accomplishing tasks and achieving results.
 5. **Decisionmaking strategies.** The Steering Committee has an effective and inclusive decisionmaking strategy.
 6. **Effective communication.** A climate of openness and trust exists among Steering Committee members.
 7. **Appreciation for the synergy created by diversity.** Steering Committee members appreciate the effects of culture, ethnicity, gender, age, personality, and education on each member's views.
1. **Provide training on local resources.** Encourage partner social service agencies to make presentations about their services.
 2. **Define law enforcement's role.** Ask law enforcement officials to make a presentation about their role in Weed and Seed.
 3. **Use the training and technical assistance available from CCDO.** CCDO schedules training on various topics year round. A site may also request assistance tailored to its particular needs.
 4. **Build relationships with the Indian tribe, tribal communities, native villages, or urban Indian communities as appropriate.** Request a presentation from the tribal entity on the Indian tribe/tribal community and its life ways. Likewise, offer to provide an overview of your community to the tribal council. You may also request assistance from CCDO for training on working effectively with tribal government, tribal communities, or urban Indian communities. Formal introductions are essential in Indian county.

Step 7: Provide Training and Technical Assistance

People do not always come to their Steering Committee duties fully prepared to assume their responsibilities. Although they have the commitment and concern for the neighborhood, they may not have been asked to perform the policy-setting and decisionmaking responsibilities that they are now facing.

Training and technical assistance are most often delivered to staff who are responsible for day-to-day site operations. Providing assistance to Steering Committee members, stakeholders, and residents is equally important. These key decisionmakers are the most essential component in the Weed and Seed site. The following are recommendations about training and technical assistance:

Do not hesitate to seek help, especially during the startup phase of Weed and Seed. The training and technical assistance available from CCDO is an important advantage of becoming an Officially Recognized site.

Implementation Issues

Diversity, one of the strengths of the Steering Committee, may occasionally present challenges to a smooth working relationship. The different roles and responsibilities of volunteers and staff must be defined. Developing a good working relationship among the grantee, the Steering Committee, and the staff will help produce a successful Weed and Seed site.

Exhibit 6–I. Weed and Seed Management Plan

Committee/Person	Handles	Meets
Weed and Seed Executive Committee (with current membership of 7)	Policy, public relations, fundraising	Quarterly
Weed and Seed Steering Committee (with current membership of 47)	Protocol, program planning, administration	Quarterly
Weed and Seed Program Subcommittees Law Enforcement Subcommittee (expanded) Community Policing Subcommittee (expanded) Prevention/Intervention/Treatment Subcommittee (expanded) Neighborhood Revitalization Subcommittee (expanded)	Strategy implementation, procedures, program evaluation	Bimonthly
Weed and Seed Program Management Committee Law enforcement chair Community policing chair Prevention/intervention/treatment chair Neighborhood revitalization chair United Way assistant executive director	Day-to-day management, linkage of weeding and seeding activities	Monthly
Weed and Seed Coordinator <i>works with</i> Family center Community policing staff Safe Haven Weeding partners Seeding partners	Ongoing referrals, onsite supervision, and information management	As necessary

Exhibit 6–2. Program Coordinator Position Description

This is an example and can be modified to meet the needs of a particular site.

Position: Weed and Seed Program Coordinator

Location: This position will be housed at [location]. It is expected that the incumbent will work weekends and evenings during the operation of the Safe Haven Center.

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Position Summary:

This is a full-time position responsible for coordinating the [city] Weed and Seed strategy. This position will be responsible for coordinating the activities of organizations and agencies that have committed services, volunteers, and contributions to the operation of the Weed and Seed initiative. The coordinator will primarily report to the Weed and Seed Steering Committee, with direct supervision provided by [title].

Job Duties:

- Coordinate schedules of program volunteers.
- Recruit service providers and participants to the Weed and Seed initiative.
- Work with organizations on intake and assessment of program participants.
- Pursue additional sources of funding for the Weed and Seed strategy, including working with agency staff to pursue grant sources and grant writing.
- Collect data on program activities and participants.
- Report design and writing on program activities, accomplishments, and evaluation.
- Work evenings and weekends during the hours of program operation.
- Work with and at times represent agencies involved in program implementation, e.g., [provide examples].
- Draft policies and procedures for the operation of the Safe Haven Center for the Weed and Seed Steering Committee.
- Be knowledgeable of all levels of law enforcement, including local activities related to community-oriented policing activities.
- Help to develop a strategy to build and sustain relationships between entities (e.g., Indian tribes and the Weed and Seed Steering Committee) if appropriate.

Exhibit 6–3. Site Supervisor Position Description

This is an example and can be modified to meet the needs of a particular site.

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Position:	Site Supervisor
Status:	Full Time
Hours:	Daily: 3 to 11 p.m. Saturday: 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sunday: noon to 5 p.m.
Location:	Weed and Seed Office
Reports to:	Weed and Seed Program Manager
Basic Function:	To assist the [city] Weed and Seed initiative with the development of Safe Havens in target areas. This entails coordination, support, and program promotion in each building as well as the strategic planning and utilization of the Safe Havens by the residents in the target areas.

Specific Responsibilities:

1. Set up a system and manage the Neighborhood Center and Safe Havens.
 - Greet individuals, identifying their reason for coming and providing a welcoming and comfortable environment, and referring them to the appropriate service, person, or materials.
 - Develop spaces within each facility that will be a comfortable and inviting environment for the residents to access for peace, quiet, and comfort.
 - Foster community involvement in the targeted areas.
 - Coordinate projects with various agencies and the community education staff.
 - Recruit and market the Safe Haven concept; this includes marketing the Safe Haven to agencies and respective police departments.
 - Manage recruitment and staffing needs as they pertain to the Safe Haven operation.
 - Identify appropriate services to operate within the Safe Havens.
 - Publicize services of the Safe Havens to potential clients and residents.
 - Help to develop a strategy to build and sustain relationships between entities (e.g., Indian tribes and the Weed and Seed Steering Committee) if appropriate.
2. Broker clients to appropriate agencies and social service agencies.
3. Be responsible for various projects and identify sources to assist in project completion.
4. Serve as an advocate of the Weed and Seed strategy.
5. Interact and offer exchanges with other Weed and Seed sites.
6. Discern and evaluate various community interests.
7. Communicate data, activity reports, and attendance figures to the Weed and Seed Program Manager.