

**PROSECUTION IN THE COMMUNITY:
A STUDY OF EMERGENT STRATEGIES**

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

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Introduction

Public prosecutors, and the offices they lead, constitute an important part of society's efforts to control crime, enhance security, and assure justice. In the past, the contribution of prosecutors focused primarily on ensuring that criminal cases were effectively and justly prosecuted—that each case resulted in a tough but fair decision, and like cases were treated alike. By the mid-1990s, however, evidence from around the country suggested that some leading prosecutors were moving beyond the boundaries of this characterization. Many referred to their innovations with the term “community prosecution.” The study described here was designed to investigate the practices and approaches of a small number of county prosecutors/district attorneys recognized at the time by their peers, other researchers, and government officials as contributors to new developments in prosecution. Among the prosecutors studied, some worked closely with local police departments that employed community policing; all were committed to forging a new partnership with the local community and developing a broader capacity for solving problems related to public safety and quality of life.

Researchers collected data from late 1995 through early 1998 on prosecutors' offices and police departments in four cities—Austin, Texas; Boston, Massachusetts; Indianapolis, Indiana; and Kansas City, Missouri. Two meetings convened at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government with prosecutors, researchers, and government officials from around the country in attendance provided a second source of data. Data collection and analysis were designed to address and develop hypotheses pertaining to four questions: (1) What changes are occurring in prosecutorial strategies today, particularly in interaction with community policing? (2) In what form does community prosecution as an operational strategy exist? How is it implemented, either independently by prosecutors, or in response to community policing? (3) Are present and developing prosecutorial strategies congruent with community policing as it is implemented today? (4) How can we measure the effectiveness of community prosecution in dealing with specific problems?

The central finding of the study is that the prosecutors studied were contributing to the development of, and shaping, a new organizational strategy that redefines the basic function of district attorneys and county prosecutors. The principal elements characterizing this strategy—adopting crime prevention as a fundamental responsibility, working directly with members of the local community in setting priorities and crafting a strategy for reducing and preventing crime, developing a problem-solving capacity in collaboration with other justice agencies and private citizens—suggest that it may appropriately be labeled “community prosecution.” While prosecutors and police participating in the study were enthusiastic about achievements to date and the potential for even greater future progress with the new strategy, community prosecution as it is now developing nonetheless poses a number of challenges that will need to be addressed. These are presented briefly at the end of this summary.

Methodology

The analytical framework for this study rests upon the concept of a dominant organizational strategy that guides an institution or industry. The specific question to be addressed was whether recent changes in thinking and practice represented a change in the dominant organizational strategy of American prosecution. The research methodology involved several steps: beginning with a review of the literature on prosecution, we first constructed a model of the organizational strategy that had defined the institution for the last several decades. We then researched and wrote four case studies, exploring and describing the innovative strategies of prosecutors from across the country. At two large meetings, we presented findings from these cases for discussion and assessment within a broader context of thinking and practice in prosecution nationwide. Using data from the case studies and meetings, we then constructed a model representing the organizational strategy emerging in the innovative prosecutorial practices observed, and compared and contrasted this new strategy against the previous dominant model.

Gauging Change in Organizational Strategies

The dependent variables in the study are the nature and degree of change in the organizational strategies of prosecutors. In the sense used in the study, a “strategy” refers to an overall mode of operating that includes the: *mission* or definition of the business of prosecution, including goals and values that guide the organization; *source of authority* that provides the prosecutor with legal and moral legitimacy and power, public support, and resources necessary to carry out his/her objectives; *organizational structure and administrative processes*, involving both the formal structure of the organization, and administrative and personnel issues (such as leadership of the organization, recruitment, training, and promotion procedures, performance evaluation, and organizational culture); *tactics*, those core capacities, operations and activities by which the organization seeks to achieve its goals (such as case processing, or problem solving); *context*, consisting of the political/task environment within which the prosecutor and her office operate (focusing especially on interaction of the prosecutor with police, and private and public institutions and groups in the community), and the demand for what the prosecutor produces; and *outcomes*—what does an office seek to accomplish through its tactics and the organizational and administrative features that support them? Change in organizational strategies is assumed to be a function of these elements, which constitute independent variables.

The nature and degree of change in prosecution strategies are assessed by comparing the strategies of prosecutors in the study against a “traditional” prosecution strategy, and determining how far individual elements have diverged from the form these variables take in the traditional model. A baseline model for the traditional strategy of prosecution was constructed from the existing literature on prosecution that documents the activities of American prosecutors during much of this century, and reflects major issues of concern with respect to policy (such as their use of discretion). Our portrayal of the traditional model was tested for consistency with the views of other researchers and practitioners who participated in the meetings held at the Kennedy School of Government.

Case Studies

The primary focus of research was to compile an exploratory case study that offered a detailed description of each prosecutor’s organizational strategy, utilizing ethnographic and other methods of data collection to obtain information on each element of the strategy. Producing multiple cases made possible an examination of prosecution strategies across sites, using the comparative method. Researchers selected four sites in accord with principles of theoretical replication, seeking insight into similarities and contrasts in prosecution and an understanding of what might produce uniformity or differentiation. Based upon newly recognized practices around the country, we sought prosecutors who were adopting at least some of the following elements: reformulating a mission to include community-oriented problem solving; taking on a leadership role in gathering and directing local resources toward community empowerment and self-sufficiency; developing a partnership with law enforcement agencies, public and private organizations, and the community to improve public safety and the quality of life; adopting a variety of tactics in addition to formal prosecution; and taking a proactive stance toward crime that emphasized prevention and treatment as well as law enforcement. The sites selected represented a range of variation in that each prosecutor’s office exemplified a different approach to or weighting of these elements. In every site the local police department had some record of involvement in community policing.

The four prosecutors selected for intensive study were Travis County (Austin, TX) District Attorney Ronald Earle, Suffolk County (Boston, MA) District Attorney Ralph Martin, Jackson County (Kansas City, MO) Prosecutor Claire McCaskill, and Marion County (Indianapolis, IN) Prosecutor Scott Newman. District Attorney Earle was well-known for having moved his office and community into a program he called “community justice,” in which citizens and criminal justice officials joined together to address

public safety and anti-crime planning. District Attorney Martin founded several Safe Neighborhood Initiatives, assigning his attorneys to work in neighborhoods with citizens and police, and on inter-agency school-based panels to identify youth at risk and craft individualized plans for receipt of services or treatment. Prosecutor McCaskill led COMBAT, a comprehensive anti-drug program with law enforcement, prevention, and treatment components, funded by a countywide sales tax. County Prosecutor Newman's street-level advocates, a unit of prosecutors working in police district stations, collaborated in problem-solving efforts with police and citizens in local neighborhoods.

All four offices were situated in metropolitan centers. While not among the thirty-four largest in the U.S, they fell within the top one-fourth of offices based upon number of residents served. Using statistics provided in *Prosecutors in State Courts, 1996* (Bureau of Justice Statistics), the four offices would be described as located in medium jurisdictions, with a full-time chief prosecutor and population of 250,000 to 999,999 persons. Three out of our four prosecutors were relatively new to office: from two years (Newman in Indianapolis elected in 1994), to four years (McCaskill in Kansas City elected in 1992, and Martin appointed in Boston in 1992, and elected in 1994). District Attorney Earle (Austin) was clearly an "outlier," in office since 1976.

The case studies rely on multiple sources of data—written documentation (such as training documents, case processing figures and policy statements, performance assessment materials, guidelines for plea bargaining), interviews, and direct observations. Over the course of four visits at each site, researchers interviewed approximately 75-100 informants (many, more than once), including: the district attorney/county prosecutor, executive staff members in the office; heads of trial teams/special units; line prosecutors in every unit and most trial teams; individual attorneys with special responsibility for writing legislation, strategic planning, or serving as a liaison with police and collaboratives (such as child or family advocacy centers); and victim-witness advocates, investigators, and other non-lawyer staff in the prosecutor's office. Outside the prosecutor's office, researchers interviewed previous district attorneys, representatives of other prosecution and justice agencies and government offices, and private groups with whom the office interacted regularly. They included the corporation counsel and city attorney (and county prosecutor where the role was distinct from the district attorney), and their staff; the U.S. Attorney or an assistant U.S. Attorney; the mayor and selected heads of city agencies/departments; representatives of the public defender's office or the defense bar; municipal, state and juvenile court judges; members of citizen groups who worked with the prosecutor's office; social service agency heads and employees; and prosecutors' campaign staff. In police departments, interviews were conducted with chiefs, deputy chiefs, functional and district commanders, sergeants, line police officers and investigators, special unit officers, and civilian employees.

The Harvard Meetings

Two meetings convened at the Kennedy School of Government in April 1996 and May 1997 produced wide-ranging debates about what was happening in prosecution nationally. Prosecutors from the four sites discussed what they were doing in their offices with other prosecutors from around the country, a city attorney, representatives of police departments, and a group of researchers, scholars, and National Institute of Justice staff. Drafts of the cases were presented at the second meeting. The purpose was to obtain feedback, as well as to garner the insights of participants as to whether the prosecutorial strategies observed in the cases represented a fundamental change in prosecution, whether they constituted a new strategy of "community prosecution" or a set of categories representing various strategies, and what accounted for the changes observed.

The Four Cases

The four cases present detailed information on all aspects of the organizational strategy of the prosecutor's office, including the philosophy of the current prosecutor, and the local political environment within which the prosecutor operates. Extracting from the cases, a brief summary is presented here of special efforts that each prosecutor identified as representing an area in which s/he was consciously attempting to innovate.

Austin: District Attorney Ronald Earle was largely responsible for the creation of a number of county-wide structures bringing together representatives of justice agencies, local government, schools, social services, the business community, and victims' organizations for purposes of strategic planning to improve public safety and direct resources in a coordinated and targeted fashion. Earle refers to these programs and structures as "community justice in Austin." The approach seeks to prevent and reduce crime and victimization, as well as respond to it. A tangible outcome of the efforts of affiliated groups is the opening of a community justice center in Travis County aimed at working with offenders and their families in preparation for their re-entry into the local community and resumption of a productive life. In 1996 Earle joined city officials in setting up the first of several Neighborhood Conference Committees, in which adult volunteers in local neighborhoods serve on panels that hear cases diverted from Juvenile Court, devising individualized contracts with youthful offenders that include restitution, community service, counseling and/or treatment, mentoring from adults in the community, and support for the entire family. In the District Attorney's Office itself, functions associated with a community prosecution approach are part and parcel of the roles of various individuals at both the executive/supervisory level (including active participation on the county task forces and councils referred to above) and for line prosecutors. Executive staff both are involved in coordinated, collaborative problem-solving efforts throughout the community, and oversee the functioning of their respective divisions internally. Earle himself and directors of the family justice division, grand jury intake, special prosecution, and victim witness divisions were most active externally. A number of line attorneys also work in locations outside the office, such as at the Children's Advocacy Center and Child Protection Team; others work informally with youth organizations or in local schools.

Boston: From the time he took office, District Attorney Ralph Martin's goals were to leverage new resources, creating a critical mass of agencies and resources working together to address problems of crime and public safety, and to make his office more accessible and responsive to the needs of the community. One advantage for his efforts in community prosecution lay in the decentralized district courts (the lowest level trial courts) located in neighborhoods throughout Suffolk County, with offices for assistant district attorneys and police district stations nearby. In 1997, Martin merged the positions of community prosecution coordinator and chief of the district courts. The combined oversight brought community prosecution to the executive staff level and gave it more visible presence throughout the office. Special community prosecution efforts include the Safe Neighborhood Initiatives, in which assistant district attorneys work out of neighborhood offices in partnership with citizens, incorporating citizen-identified priorities into the prosecution agenda, and joining teams with police, probation, district courts, city agencies, and citizens to develop coordinated strategies for preventing and reducing crime and improving the quality of life. SNIs operate in East Boston, Chelsea, Dorchester, and Grove Hall-Roxbury. The PIPS (prosecutors in police stations) program involves two prosecutors who work directly with police in local district stations. The Community Based Juvenile Justice Program, attached to the juvenile unit, brings together prosecutors, school and school district officials, police, the Department of Youth Services, youth workers, and probation officers on roundtables that operate in several middle and secondary schools throughout the county. Participants devise individual strategies for reaching youth at risk or who pose a risk to the local community. Finally, the office administered the Franklin Hill Anti-Gang project, a comprehensive community prosecution and crime reduction/prevention effort targeting a

city housing project. Apart from these specific units and programs, Martin has initiated regular training within the office so that all staff are exposed to community prosecution perspectives and achievements.

Indianapolis: Scott Newman began formally exploring possibilities for community prosecution before taking office; then as Marion County Prosecutor, he expanded and further defined the functions of a community prosecution unit started by his predecessor. Now the office's Street Level Advocacy program is a model that has been replicated across the country. In Indianapolis, the street level advocacy section is part of the felony trial division. It includes five deputy prosecutors (four assigned to work out of police district stations, and the fifth with the Sheriff's Department) and two paralegals, all of whom focus on specific neighborhoods, working with officers and citizens to identify and address local crime problems. One non-lawyer investigator, working closely with the street level advocates, runs a nuisance abatement/narcotics eviction program. Deputy prosecutors from different locations in the office also participate in a number of problem-solving partnerships that the prosecutor has convened, bringing together other law enforcement agencies, governmental and civic organizations, and private interest groups. Among these are the Safe Parks Initiative, and a project to establish "Centers of Hope" sexual assault teams and centers. During the study, Prosecutor Newman also took the initiative in attempting to convene a formal countywide collaboration among justice agencies to address public safety problems, and worked with them to found a local community court.

Kansas City (MO): The COMBAT (Community Backed Anti-Drug Tax) program, headed by the county prosecutor, is a coordinated effort involving law enforcement, governmental and private agencies, and the public, aimed at solving problems related to crime and public safety, improving the quality of life, as well as preventing crime and treating substance abuse. Former Jackson County Prosecutor Albert Reiderer initiated the program following a community-wide debate and passage of a countywide sales tax. Reiderer's successor, Prosecutor Claire McCaskill, then developed and expanded the program considerably during the 1990s. Inside the prosecutor's office, COMBAT administrative staff (with training in public health, substance abuse treatment, community outreach, and marketing) work directly with prosecutors in carrying out routine activities. In the criminal drug prosecution division the Drug Abatement Response Team, headed by an assistant prosecutor, conducts proactive as well as responsive problem-solving activities. Through the Neighborhood Prosecutors Program, which began in the criminal drug prosecution division but continues to involve prosecutors who have moved out of that division and work in other locations office-wide, assistants serve as liaisons to particular neighborhoods around the city. Late in the study a new program was set up with full-time community prosecutors assigned by police sector to work with the community in addressing particular crime and safety problems. Other functions identified with community prosecution are dispersed among a number of different positions and roles in the office: for example, anti-drug tax administration division staff have convened and directed community-oriented problem-solving partnerships such as the Paseo Corridor Drug and Crime-Free Community Partnership, and citywide law enforcement collaboration programs.

Findings

The central finding of the study is that the prosecutors whose offices were observed appear to be moving toward a new organizational strategy that might appropriately be labeled "community prosecution." No office has achieved a complete transformation to the new prosecution strategy. The data show changes in the form of departures from the traditional model, referred to here as the "felony case processor," ranging from limited to moderate in the individual strategies of the four prosecutors. Nevertheless, current changes in prosecution are proceeding rapidly and occurring widely enough beyond the limited study sample to suggest that in some form a community prosecution strategy may become the dominant model for and institutionalized in many prosecutors' offices in the future.

Responses to the questions posed at the outset of the study are provided first in summary form, and then in as a discussion of change in the dominant organizational strategy in prosecution, characterizing it as a transformation from felony case processor model to community prosecution model.

Summary of Key Findings

Specific findings pertaining to the four questions posed at the outset, and discussed in greater detail in the full report, include the following:

1. *What changes are occurring in prosecutorial strategies?*
 - Prosecutors are redefining their mission—from reactively processing cases presented to them, to working in partnerships with other criminal justice agencies and the community to address the problems and priorities of citizens in their communities;
 - The new goals of prosecution include preventing and reducing disorder and crime, restoring victims and communities to more effective and healthier functioning, and empowering citizens.
2. *In what form does community prosecution exist as an operational strategy? How is it implemented?*
 - Prosecutors' offices are changing to include greater numbers of nonlawyers, even at the executive staff level;
 - Recruitment standards reflect a greater emphasis on commitment to and experience in working in community-oriented initiatives, and problem solving;
 - While prosecution remains the core capacity of prosecutors, it is increasingly becoming one tool that is used along with other tactics in prosecutors' broader attempts to solve problems within specific geographical areas or neighborhoods;
 - Prosecutors are developing and implementing a wide range of tactics that: refine their core capabilities so as to enhance the prosecution of violent and repeat offenders; involve setting standards for selective prosecution of offenders and offenses in line with neighborhood priorities; rely on civil law and the use of civil initiatives as well as criminal law and criminal sanctions; include diversion and alternatives to prosecution, sentencing, and incarceration such as mediation, treatment, community service, and restitution to victims;
 - In problem solving, and increasingly in case processing, prosecutors are developing accountability at the neighborhood level;
 - At first, prosecutors relied heavily on police for establishing relationships with community members, and groups, and for learning about and understanding citizens' concerns and priorities; however, as prosecutors move further into community prosecution, they establish their own direct linkages with citizens and the channel through the police is less necessary;
 - Prosecutors are assuming a leadership role in building coalitions and leading initiatives that bring together citizens, businesses, government agencies, and other criminal justice agencies within the local community for the purpose of reducing and preventing crime and increasing safety.
3. *Are these prosecutorial strategies congruent with community policing?*
 - To the extent that our sample is representative, police and prosecutors are structuring new patterns of relating to each other, and working together;
 - According to police and prosecutors alike, case processing in police departments seems to be substantially improved by the assignment of prosecutors to police patrol facilities. Particular elements from the traditional model, such as liaison officers and training of officers by prosecutors, seem to help as well, but they are most effective when inter-organizational (police-prosecutor) relationships are carefully tended to, especially by the district attorney/county prosecutor;

- Exposure to community and citizen groups has a powerful impact on prosecutors—one not dissimilar to that experienced by police. In all sites, prosecutors could see first hand what police had long known about public safety and crime issues on the streets. Prosecutors responded by joining police and moving to solve neighborhood and community problems, including disorder, bringing their own “tool kit” to the process;
 - Prosecutors assist police departments in a variety of ways: they provide “cover” on politically sensitive issues, they serve as “conveners,” and they can be supportive of attempts to shift to community policing. They are particularly effective in explaining to citizens what police can, and cannot, do in accord with constitutional principles and the law.
4. *How can we measure the effectiveness of community prosecution in dealing with specific problems?*
- Traditional measures of arrest and conviction, especially for selected crimes in selected neighborhoods, will continue to be used;
 - Outcomes of problem solving will be best measured through several different types of measures applied together, including the degree to which identified neighborhood social and physical problems are abated through traditional measures, civil sanctions, and negotiated agreements in lieu of prosecution;
 - Prosecutors in the study identified the following as possible additional measures:
 1. Improved perceptions of safety by citizens, indicated through their responses and their actions;
 2. Increased involvement of citizens in crime prevention and reduction activities;
 3. An improvement in case management procedures by police;
 4. An improvement in the ability of citizens and neighborhoods to problem solve.

From Felony Case Processing to Community Prosecution:
Comparing the Traditional Prosecution Strategy and the Emerging Strategy

The specific findings above support the conclusion that the organizational strategy dominant in prosecution for the last few decades is under assault and likely to be fundamentally altered, if not replaced. This transformation can be illustrated through a comparison, and contrasting, of models of the previous dominant strategy—the felony case processing strategy—and the community prosecution strategy.

First, however, it is important to recognize that a new strategy of prosecution is emerging not in isolation but against a backdrop of fundamental change affecting other criminal justice agencies. Furthermore, problem-solving elements of the strategy actually represent an evolution in aspects of prosecutors’ work long present. When this study began, many prosecutors in large urban offices were attempting to develop capacities for addressing specific crime problems having a grave impact on public safety and the quality of life—problems associated with crack cocaine, meth-amphetamine and gang-related violence—that took them into the realm of problem solving. While not well known, for different purposes and on a smaller scale prosecutors had engaged in problem solving on their own for decades, as the American Bar Foundation Survey documented. Subsequently, they expanded these efforts in coordinating more widely known problem-solving activities to address organized crime and racketeering. Beginning in the late 1980s and on into the 1990s, some prosecutors found that increased collaboration with police and other criminal justice agencies in a broader problem-oriented approach could enhance their work. The earlier development of problem-oriented policing offered an example of success that could be achieved with this strategy, and meant that police in locations such as Boston were immediately able to join prosecutors in productive problem-solving collaborations.

Close on the heels of pursuing a problem-solving approach, prosecutors also met up with the newly developing movement identified as “community justice,” which placed pressure on justice agencies to question their “professional” mode of operation and increase their responsiveness and accountability to citizens. Again, the first impetus came from community policing. But the addition of a small number of community courts, community-based probation, and tentative steps toward community corrections initiatives all provided encouragement for the growth of community prosecution.

The general contours and specific elements of the community prosecution strategy emerge clearly when contrasted and compared against the traditional felony case processing strategy.

Mission: In the felony case prosecutor strategy, the prosecutor’s business is to prosecute, or dispose of, cases presented by the police. Highest priority is given to violent crimes (felonies) and repeat and/or violent offenders. The operational goal is maximizing the felony conviction rate, although in some communities efforts at diversion may be expected. In the community prosecution strategy, this mission is broadened beyond felony case processing to include as well preventing, reducing, and managing crime and quality-of-life offenses. Felonies and low-level crimes and misdemeanors are prosecuted in accord with citizen priorities. Above all, the prosecutor seeks and actively pursues a new partnership with the community.

Source of Authority: The prosecutor’s authority in the felony case processor strategy rests upon the law and an electoral mandate. In addition, she is a professional, expected to carry out the duties of the office in accord with professional standards. In the community prosecution strategy, authority derives from these same bases, but the prosecutor’s direct linkages with specific local areas (as opposed to city or county-wide) provide another source.

Organization: Traditionally, prosecutors’ offices have generally been centralized, organized functionally, and relatively “flat” in hierarchical terms. Administratively, most staff are lawyers, with the culture of the office valuing successful litigation (and to some degree appellate) skills. Performance measures for individual prosecutors highlight case processing expertise and trial or plea negotiation outcomes. Accountability is generally inward to the organization. In community prosecution, decentralization is the goal, with a focus on working in local neighborhoods. Accountability for the prosecutor develops to citizens, local neighborhoods, and to non-prosecutor criminal justice, governmental and private citizen partners in problem-solving efforts, as well as to the prosecutor’s office itself. Non-lawyer specialists are hired, elevated to key positions in the office, and work closely with lawyers. Recruitment stresses the ability to problem solve, a community orientation and record of community service, as well as litigation skills. New career track and performance measures are developed that emphasize these diverse skills and achievements.

Tactics: At the core of the felony case processor model is the primary tactic of case preparation, for efficient and effective felony case prosecution or plea negotiations. In the community prosecution strategy, criminal law and prosecution remain at the core, but civil law and civil remedies, code enforcement, coordinating activities with the community, education, and other tactics are added. Many such tactics are required as part of new efforts to prevent and reduce crime and manage problems. These tactics are adopted and utilized not only by individuals specially designated as “community prosecutors,” but by prosecutors in units throughout the office—such as sex crimes, and domestic or child abuse. Above all, problem solving undertaken in collaboration with representatives of other justice agencies, government, and private citizens is the key.

Context: By and large, in the felony case processor strategy, prosecutors’ offices operate in relative isolation from other justice agencies. Demand comes primarily from the police through cases presented to the prosecutor’s office. The prosecutor markets herself as a felony case processor, professionally

equipped to hold offenders accountable by obtaining trial convictions or pleas that result in maximum penalties, particularly for violent, repeat offenders. In contrast, in the community prosecution strategy the prosecutor seeks a close working relationship with other justice agencies, local government, private citizens, health/service providers, and the business and faith communities. Demand comes from all these partners, including the community, and accountability develops outward to them. The prosecutor markets her office's ability to prevent crime and solve problems, as well as prosecute crimes committed.

Outcomes: The felony case processor strategy measures outcomes primarily in numbers of felony convictions, maximum sentences obtained, and dispositions through plea negotiations. In community prosecution, quantitative measures reflect cases screened, pled, tried, and dispositions; in addition, however, qualitative and quantitative indicators are needed to measure crime prevention/reduction, fear reduction, improved quality of life, and citizen satisfaction.

Risks and Liabilities in Adopting Community Prosecution

Many reasons for not adopting community prosecution were voiced by participants in our meetings at the Kennedy School of Government. Prosecutors included in the study grapple with most every day, more or less successfully, as described in the cases. The most significant of these risks or liabilities include the following:

- Due process and equal protection concerns with changes in prosecutorial roles and activities;
- Possible co-optation of prosecutors by police or citizens;
- Overreach of prosecutorial authority and function as their roles expand;
- Overreach of prosecutorial competence in problem solving and non-legal aspects of their new roles;
- Limitations in legal education in preparing students for the work of community prosecution;
- Control of prosecutors' enhanced discretion, and increased organizational workload;
- Prosecutorial co-optation of citizen movements;
- Raised public expectations leading to greater pressure on prosecutors;
- Lack of congruence between organization of the courts and organization of prosecutors' offices;
- Lack of existing outcome measures to determine what community prosecution actually accomplishes;
- Lack of standards for measuring the performance of assistants/deputies involved in community prosecution or problem solving;
- Political costs for prosecutors.

Other risks than these will no doubt be identified as the community prosecution strategy is explored more fully by practitioners. The ultimate questions are whether these risks can be managed, and whether the benefits obtained from community prosecution outweigh potential damage associated with the risks—questions that will be answered more fully as community prosecution itself develops as a strategy and outcomes ascertained.

Since the sample in this study is limited, considerably more experience than is portrayed in these four cases will be required to understand the full dimension of risks and the abilities of prosecutors to overcome them through leadership or administrative means. Nevertheless, the risks identified here suggest both a further research agenda and topics for ongoing exchange and sharing of information among prosecutors.