



# The Research Bureau

**South Worcester Spring 2007 ComNET Review**

**Independent Research in the Public Interest  
[www.wrrb.org](http://www.wrrb.org)**

# What is ComNET?

## Computerized Neighborhood Environment Tracking

A systematic process to record the physical conditions in your neighborhood that may require attention.



# What's changed since ComNET began?

- ❖ **Citywide, more than 12,700 problem conditions documented since 2001**
  - 57 surveys in 13 neighborhoods
- ❖ **Seven out of 10 (69%) of previously documented problems have been resolved**
- ❖ **City and community use data to identify and quantify problems**
- ❖ **Developed proactive approaches to dealing with problems- something gets done**



# What Types of Conditions are Tracked?

Abandoned buildings

Boarded/broken windows

Clogged catchbasins

Faded crosswalk lines

Broken curbs

Overflowing dumpsters

Graffiti

Lampposts- bulb out

Litter

Illegal dumping

Crumbling sidewalks

Sidewalk trip hazards

Uneven/crumbling roads

Potholes

Street sign- missing

Street- patching uneven

Dead trees

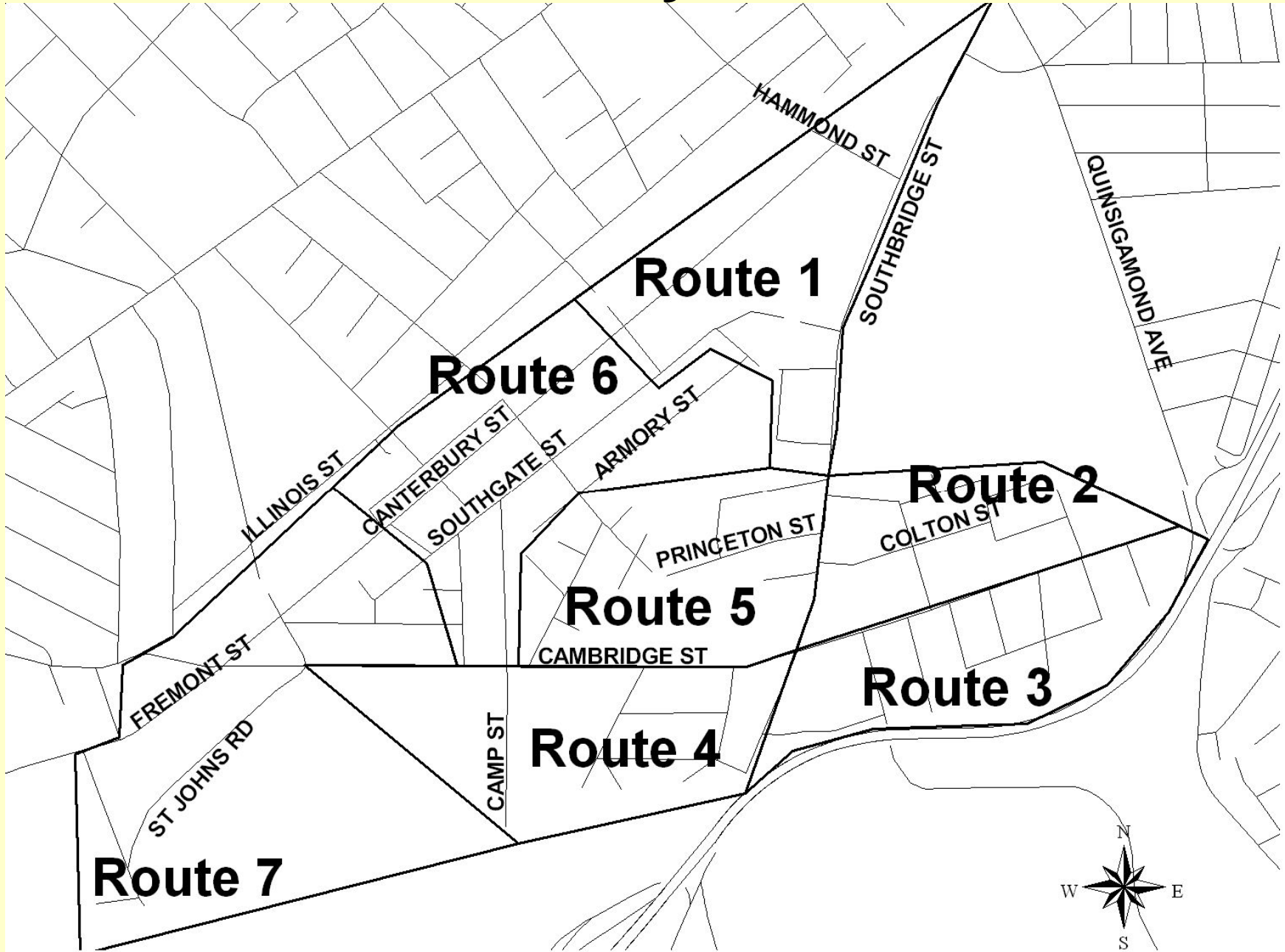
Utility covers missing

Overgrown vegetation

Abandoned & unregistered vehicles



# Survey Area



# ComNET Results: South Worcester

- ❖ **Initial survey conducted in 2003**
- ❖ **Follow-up surveys conducted in 2004, 2005, & 2007**
- ❖ **Surveys track status of previously identified problems as well as noting new problems**



## **South Worcester Results (Cont.)**

- ❖ 934 problem conditions have been identified since 2003**
- ❖ About half (49%) of all problems were street and sidewalk issues**
- ❖ Problems are grouped according to whose responsibility it is to address the issue**
  - 54% of the problems identified are the responsibility of the Department of Public Works**
  - 22% of problems are “community issues”**



# **The Good News: 54% of previously identified problems have been resolved**

**❖ Examples of the 387 problems that have been resolved:**

- 57 sites with litter**
- 14 sidewalk trip hazards**
- 29 locations where dumping occurred**
- 14 locations with potholes/uneven road**
- 26 abandoned vehicles**
- 84 locations where weeds/vegetation overgrown**





# 160 Problems Resolved Recently

## ❖ Examples of problems resolved since last survey in 2005:

- 12 locations with dumping
- 10 abandoned/unregistered vehicles
- 29 sites with litter
- 6 locations with potholes/ uneven road
- 7 sidewalk trip hazards
- 47 locations with overgrown weeds/vegetation

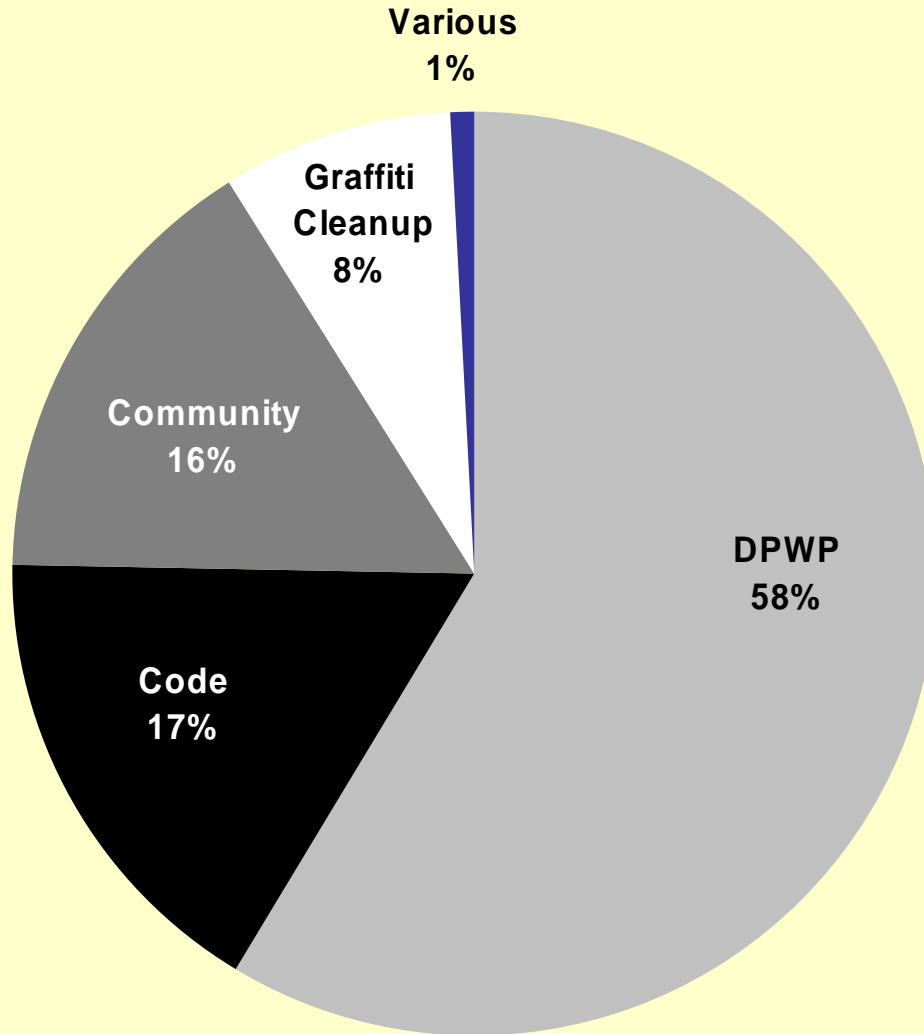


# **The Bad News: 547 Problems Remain**

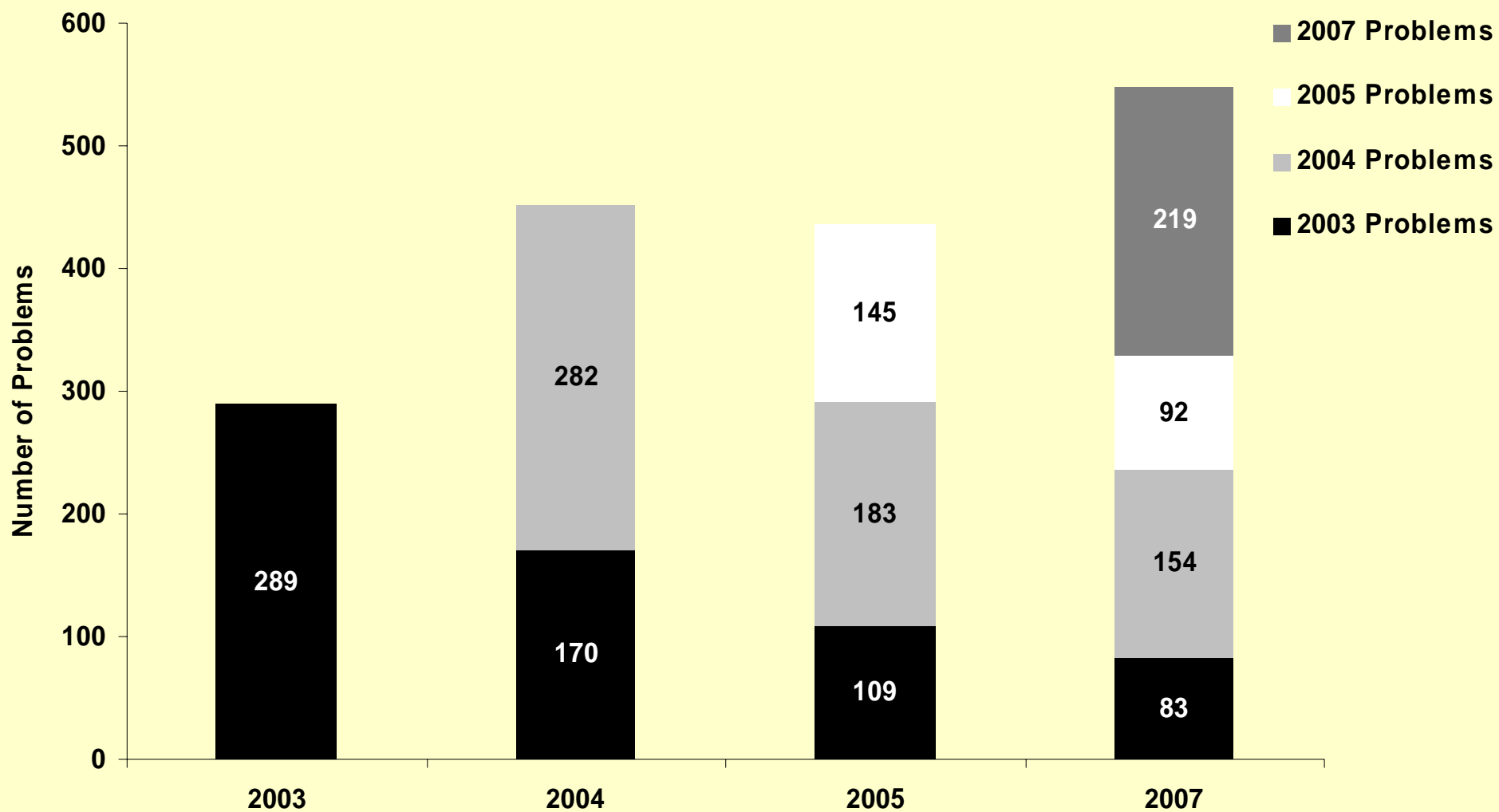
- ❖ 59 sidewalk trip hazards**
- ❖ 92 locations with litter**
- ❖ 37 dumping sites**
- ❖ 46 locations with potholes/road uneven**
- ❖ 70 sites with overgrown weeds/vegetation**



# 547 Remaining Problems: Who Is Responsible?



# Tracking Problems Over Time



# What Happens Next?

- ❖ **All of the problems recorded that are the responsibility of a City agency will be shared with the appropriate agency, including specific details about each problem and its location.**
- ❖ **The City then determines how the problems will be addressed. Some of these problems will be addressed more quickly than others.**



# **Addressing neighborhood problems: Where do we begin?**

- ❖ **Prioritize problems and be realistic – you won't solve everything at once!**
  - **What's most important to residents?**
  - **What resources are necessary to resolve problems?**
  - **Who else do you need to engage? How?**
  - **Map out a plan assigning roles, responsibilities, timeline, etc. and keep track of progress.**

