

The Effect of Tourist Attractions on Crime Trends in the Growing Community of Shakopee, Minnesota

John Maurice Nichols ^{1,2,3}

¹*Department of Resource Analysis, Saint Mary's University of Minnesota, Winona, MN 55987;* ²*City of Shakopee, Shakopee, MN 55379;* ³*Tetra Tech EMI, Bloomington, MN 55431*

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Abstract

Shakopee, Minnesota has undergone a significant transformation since 2000 due to rapid population growth and increased population density. Due to this rapid change there are several challenges for the city to overcome. Some of these challenges include providing services for their community and adapting to an increase in demographic diversity. Another significant factor affecting the city of Shakopee is the number of tourist attractions located within the city limits. These attractions include Valleyfair Amusement Park and Canterbury Park. This project analyzes how the tourist attractions have impacted crime trends in this rapidly expanding Twin Cities suburb in the years of 2002 and 2007. In addition, it will detail the number and the character of these crimes specifically related to these two business ventures giving the Shakopee Police Department a useful tool in preparing for and averting crime in the future. Overall, GIS proved to be an important vehicle to analyze the crime trends from the years 2002 and 2007. The study provides a general insight of when and where crime has taken place in the past, which ideally will give an insight for future crime. With the population of Shakopee and the popularity of the local attractions both rising at a consistent rate, the determination and prevention of future crime is a necessary step the local government and businesses must take in order to provide a safe atmosphere for residents and visiting patrons.

Introduction

The Twin Cities suburb of Shakopee, Minnesota has faced dramatic changes over the past 8 years. The city is the county seat of Scott County, which is listed as the twenty-first fastest growing county in the United States (Minneapolis Regional Chamber Development Foundation, 2008). Shakopee's estimated population in 2002 was 25,395 (United States Census Bureau, 2002) while in 2007 it was 32,667 (McNeill, 2007); a five year population increase of 28.64%.

A common problem related with a population influx involves providing the expected public services in a community

that is experiencing growing pains associated with increased demographic diversity and population density. For example, law enforcement has set a standard of safety that established citizenship expect to be unaltered in spite of increased population growth. To help alleviate the increased stress on resources in areas of population growth many law enforcement agencies have begun to implement the use of GIS technology. According to one survey approximately 13% of law enforcement agencies use GIS (Mamalian and LaVigne, 1999). Law enforcement agencies which implement GIS traditionally use the software to examine crime data geographically allowing stakeholders

familiar with the area to examine where crime clusters are occurring in a specific time period (Bichler-Robertson and Johnson, 2001).

To compound the difficulty of dealing with the community growth, Shakopee is host to numerous seasonal and year-round attractions which normally attract a few hundred thousand visitors to the City annually. These attractions include Canterbury Park, The Landing Mystic Lake Casino, Raceway Park, the Renaissance Festival, and Valleyfair Amusement Park. This project analyzes how two specific attractions, Canterbury Park and Valleyfair Amusement Park, have impacted crime trends within the city.

Canterbury Park is unique in that in addition to live and simulcast horse racing it added the Card Club in 2000 (Minnesota Racing Commission, n.d.). The Canterbury Park Card Club is a 24-hour, year-round facility that offers card games such as Texas Hold-em, Omaha and Seven Card Stud in addition to many other gambling opportunities (Macpokeronline.com, n.d.). Canterbury Park has also had an increase in patrons visiting the park during live racing days. In 2002, Canterbury Park attracted 265,367 patrons (Business Editors, 2003) for live racing only. This number was significantly larger in 2007 drawing a total of 372,358 (Maday, 2008). Although these numbers do not include the number of people in attendance at the 24 hour card club, it still allows one to see the 40.32% increase in visitors between 2002 and 2007. Attendance data for Valleyfair Amusement Park was unavailable.

Although gambling has been linked to an increase in crime (Wheeler et al., 2008), it would be irrelevant to analyze since Canterbury Park and Mystic Lake Casino are the only two locations offering legalized gambling. Canterbury Park also offers different types of gambling opportunities such as horse racing in

addition to cards, which is dissimilar to the more common gambling opportunities offered by Mystic Lake Casino. Furthermore, Canterbury Park offers alcoholic beverages which have also been linked to an increase in crime rates (Gorman et al., 2005). The presence of alcohol on a property also cannot be analyzed since it is not a consistent attribute at all of the entertainment venues in the area and will keep the study non-biased.

To analyze the 2002 and 2007 crime data for Shakopee, MN, ESRI's ArcGIS 9.2 software, the Point Spreader extension, multi-ring buffers, and statistical analysis were used. These techniques allow one to determine the descriptors of crime in a specific location in relation to current crime trends over the last five years.

Methods

Database Development

Several steps were involved with the preparation of data for this study. A hard copy of crime data for the years 2002 and 2007 was received from the City of Shakopee Police Department records department. Data included the case number (CaseN), crime code (CrimeCod), the date the offense occurred (Date), the time of day (Time), the area (Area) and section of the crime, the address of the crime (Address), and finally a type of crime (CrimeC). This data was then entered into two Microsoft Office workbooks depending on the year of the specific crime (Table 1). Crimes without a house number were disregarded for data integrity. Within both the 2002 and 2007 workbooks the data was divided into twelve separate sheets for each of the months contained within the year. Each sheet was then saved as an individual comma delimited file (CSV) and were then imported into ArcMap 9.2 and placed in a data frame corresponding to the appropriate year.

Table 1. January, 2007 Crime Records for Shakopee.

CaseN	CrimeCod	Date	Time	Area	Section	Address	CrimeC
6	P3110	1/1/2007	4:30	27	111	1299 TAYLOR ST	Property Damage
14	P2110	1/1/2007	9:44	27	130	1093 PRIMROSE LN	Property Damage
21	J3901	1/1/2007	13:55	27	118	1100 S CANTERBURY RD	Traffic Accident
36	TR159	1/1/2007	21:44	27	116	SARAZIN ST	Theft
43	B3790	1/2/2007	7:30	27	135	8150 N OLD CARRIAGE CT	Burglary
44	B3764	1/2/2007	9:30	27	141	7556 EAGLE CREEK BLVD	Burglary
45	B3794	1/2/2007	10:03	27	120	5800 E 12 AVE	Burglary
49	U306D	1/2/2007	12:07	27	131	615 S MARSCHALL RD	Theft
56	TC111	1/2/2007	14:58	27	101	232 S MARSCHALL RD	Theft
60	AL354	1/2/2007	15:50	27	133	2063 ALDEN AVE	Assault
62	AL351	1/2/2007	16:04	27	113	1240 E 4 AVE	Assault
67	P3110	1/2/2007	17:12	27	126	534 THOMAS AVE	Property Damage
70	J3901	1/2/2007	18:03	27	118	1100 S CANTERBURY RD	Traffic Accident
77	VB111	1/2/2007	21:07	27	130	1198 E VIERLING DR	Vehicle Theft
84	JF501	1/2/2007	23:56	27	133	3901 EAGLE CREEK BLVD	Traffic Accident
86	JF501	1/3/2007	2:15	27	148	1244 S CANTERBURY DR	Traffic Accident
97	P3130	1/3/2007	13:40	27	130	1172 E VIERLING DR	Property Damage
103	I2060	1/3/2007	15:45	27	133	1455 ST FRANCIS AVE	Domestic Crime

Importing the Parcel Information

The Shakopee parcel data was extremely important for this study by allowing proper geocoding to take place. The parcel shapefiles were imported into ArcMap 9.2. From these shapefiles the data frame was set to the Dakota-Scott NAD 1983 projection. The metadata for the projection is the following:

Projected Coordinate System: Dakota-Scott NAD83

Projection: Lambert_Conformal_Conic

False_Easting: 499999.99999800
 False_Northing: 99999.9999960
 Central_Meridian: -93.31666667
 Standard_Parallel_1: 44.51666667
 Standard_Parallel_2: 44.91666667
 Latitude_Of_Origin: 44.47194444
 Linear Unit: Foot_US

Geographic Coordinate System:
 GCS_User_Defined
 Datum: D_User_Defined
 Prime Meridian: Greenwich
 Angular Unit: Degree

Creating an Address Locator

After importing the parcel data into ArcMap 9.2, ArcCatalog 9.2 was valuable in producing a new address locator. The address locator that was utilized was a single field locator which applied the “PROPA1” field from the Shakopee_Parcels shapefile as the address locator key field. Other adjustments were made to the matching options to increase the likelihood of a match without removing the element of accuracy. The spelling sensitivity was reduced from 80 to 60, while the minimum match score originally at 60, was set at 50.

Geocoding

The new address locator enabled one to geocode the City of Shakopee crime data for each month. Within the geocode window, the input keyfield used the “Address” field to geographically display where the crime occurred. After initially running the geocoding tool, the results needed to be reviewed. The unmatched and tied records were then matched interactively to increase the number of displayed records. Finally, the geocoded shapefile was then added to either the 2002 or 2007 data frame depending on which year they occurred.

Point Spreader

The point spreader extension created by Mr. Rob Chasan (ESRI, 2007) was necessary to help visually display the crime data in the various months. Point spreader allows the user to enter the minimum distance two points must be from each other, eliminating multiple unseen points that are layered on top of one another. With the utilization of this extension, points are spread out in a systematic approach which reduced the manual adjustments and possible unseen crimes so that one was able to identify the nature of the crime and the locations associated with a specific type of criminal

act (Figure 1).

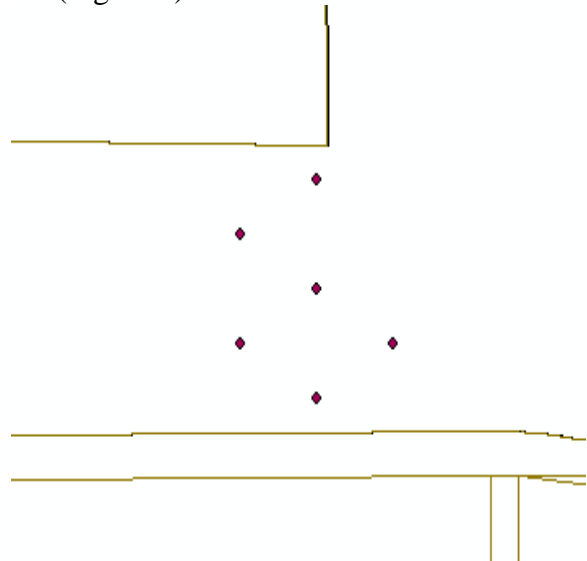


Figure 1. March 2002 Canterbury Park Crime Data after Point Spreader.

Create new Shapefiles for Valleyfair Amusement Park and Canterbury Park

In order to complete a ring analysis a center point was needed at Valleyfair Amusement Park as well as at Canterbury Park. These points were extracted from the City of Shakopee’s SH_ADDRESS_PT shapefile resulting in the most accurate center point available. The points for Valleyfair and Canterbury were each selected individually and exported using the export selected features tool resulting in two shapefiles individually representing the appropriate attraction. Both of the new point shapefiles were then added back into the data frame automatically with the Dakota-Scott NAD 1983 projection.

Multi-Ring Buffer

By using the individual point shapefiles for both Canterbury Park and Valleyfair, a multi-ring buffer was created with two rings, each representing a 2,640 foot (half a mile) radius as seen in Figure 2. With the use of a buffer the effect of the entertainment venues

on the area within close proximity to them was determined.

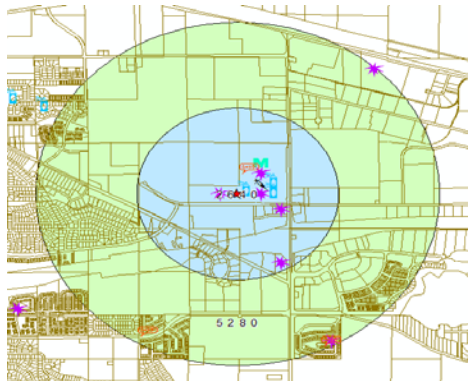


Figure 2. May 2007 Multi-Ring Buffer Around Canterbury Park. (Number located within the ring relates to the feet from the center of the parcel).

Results

Twenty-four multipoint shapefiles were created in order to complete ring and

statistical descriptive analysis to compare crimes in Shakopee, MN in the years of 2002 and 2007. The shapefiles contained the crime data received from the Shakopee Police Department. Each shapefile is a visual analysis of crime within the city. Due to some areas having a fairly high rate of crime in a specific month, it is difficult to actually analyze what types of crime are taking place at a specific location. Figures 3 and 4 are examples of crime with the address attributes defined as either Valleyfair Amusement Park or Canterbury Park. The type of crime corresponds with a visual symbol in order to easily analyze the density of crime for a specific parcel or area during the time period in question. For example, Figure 3 shows a large amount of theft and miscellaneous crimes occurring at Valleyfair Amusement Park in May of 2002.

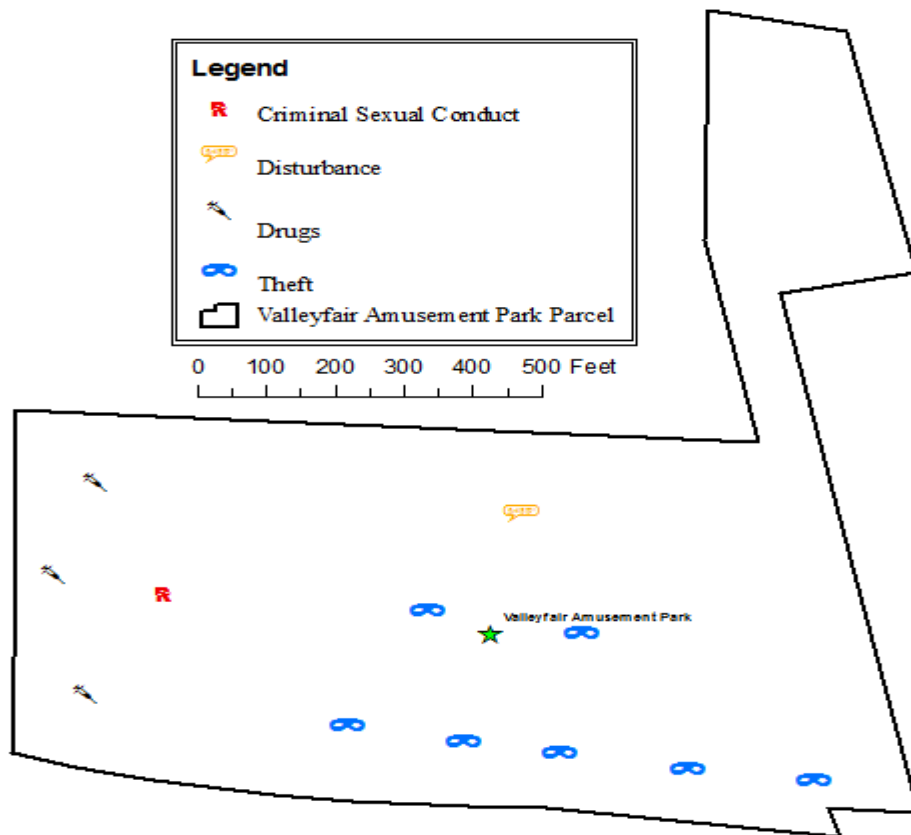


Figure 3. May 2002 Crime at Valleyfair Amusement Park.

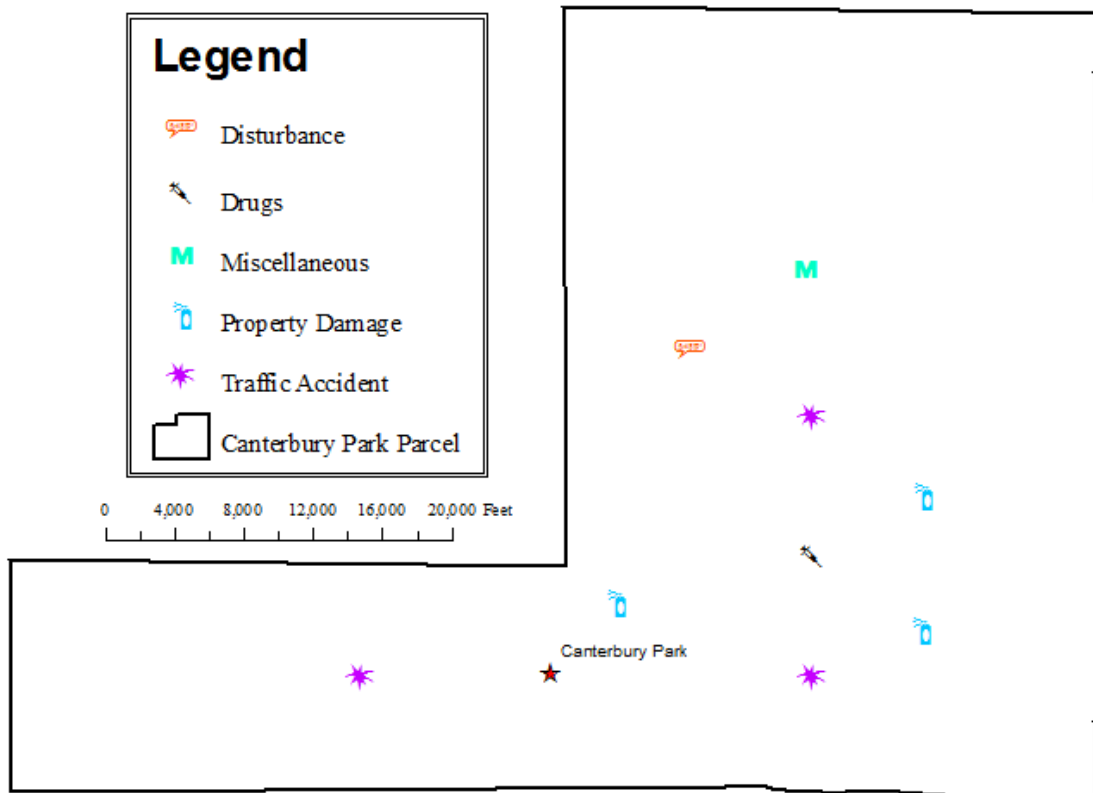


Figure 4. May 2007 Crime at Canterbury Park.

In addition to the visual analysis, tables were constructed to descriptively analyze the results from the multi-ring buffer (.5 mile and 1 mile) as well as the crime characteristics at both the Valleyfair Amusement Park and Canterbury Park parcels. Tables 2 and 3 show the crime contained within the multi-ring buffer at Valleyfair and Canterbury Park from the 2002 crime data, while tables 4 and 5 show the crimes corresponding to the multi-ring buffer for 2007. In 2002, 27 crimes occurred within one mile of Valleyfair Amusement Park while 61 crimes occurred within one mile of Canterbury Park. In addition, there were 215 crimes committed within one mile of Canterbury Park in 2007, while only 38 crimes occurred within one mile of Valleyfair.

Tables 6 and 7 show the percent breakdown for crime in comparison

to overall crime in Shakopee for the years 2002 and 2007. Crime at Valleyfair accounted for the same amount (4.43%) of the City of Shakopee's crime in 2002 and 2007. This stability was not shown at Canterbury Park. In 2002 Canterbury had 2.94% of the city's crimes on its grounds while the number increased to 5.14% in 2007.

Finally, tables 8 and 9 show the type of crime typically occurring at the two venues during the years analyzed. These tables also show the change occurring over the span. At both of the attractions miscellaneous crimes went up significantly. At Valleyfair there were noticeable decreases in criminal sexual conduct and theft over the five year span. Canterbury Park had slight decreases in assault and motor vehicle thefts when comparing the two years within the five year span.

Table 2. Crime at Valleyfair Amusement Park in 2002.

Month	Crimes at Valleyfair	Within .5 mile of Valleyfair	Within 1 mile of Valleyfair
January	0	0	2
February	0	1	4
March	0	1	2
April	0	1	2
May	17	1	2
June	26	0	4
July	32	0	1
August	16	0	2
September	7	2	6
October	0	0	1
November	0	1	1
December	0	0	2
Total for 2002	98	7	27

Table 3. Crime at Canterbury Park in 2002.

Month	Crimes at Canterbury Park	Within .5 mile of Canterbury Park	Within 1 mile of Canterbury Park
January	5	1	2
February	4	3	4
March	6	4	4
April	4	3	4
May	4	3	12
June	3	4	7
July	6	4	5
August	9	6	10
September	12	1	2
October	2	2	7
November	4	2	4
December	6	0	4
Total for 2002	65	33	61

Table 4. Crime at Valleyfair Amusement Park in 2007.

Month	Crimes at Valleyfair	Within .5 mile of Valleyfair	Within 1 mile of Valleyfair
January	0	1	2
February	0	0	1
March	1	0	2
April	0	1	3
May	13	1	5
June	43	1	1
July	38	0	2
August	21	0	3
September	3	7	13
October	18	2	5
November	0	0	0
December	0	0	1
Total for 2007	137	13	38

Table 5. Crime at Canterbury Park in 2007.

Month	Crimes at Canterbury Park	Within .5 mile of Canterbury Park	Within 1 mile of Canterbury Park
January	32	11	25
February	11	12	19
March	14	15	21
April	4	7	17
May	10	10	19
June	25	8	16
July	10	12	18
August	11	8	19
September	8	2	10
October	10	6	15
November	15	10	17
December	9	10	19
Total for 2007	159	111	215

Table 6. Percent Crime Comparison in 2002 for Shakopee, Minnesota.

Month	Percent of Crimes at Valleyfair	Percent of Crimes at Canterbury Park	Total Crimes in Shakopee
January	0.00%	4.07%	123
February	0.00%	2.74%	146
March	0.00%	3.33%	180
April	0.00%	2.30%	174
May	7.46%	1.75%	228
June	12.44%	1.44%	209
July	15.53%	2.91%	206
August	8.21%	4.62%	195
September	3.32%	5.69%	211
October	0.00%	1.02%	196
November	0.00%	2.19%	183
December	0.00%	3.77%	159
Total for 2002	4.43%	2.94%	2210

Table 7. Percent crime comparison in 2007 for Shakopee, Minnesota.

Month	Percent of Crimes at Valleyfair	Percent of Crimes at Canterbury Park	Total Crimes in Shakopee
January	0.00%	13.62%	235
February	0.00%	6.15%	179
March	0.40%	5.60%	250
April	0.00%	1.66%	241
May	4.15%	3.19%	313
June	13.15%	7.65%	327
July	11.34%	2.99%	335
August	6.71%	3.51%	313
September	1.35%	3.60%	222
October	7.38%	4.10%	244
November	0.00%	5.86%	256
December	0.00%	5.06%	178
Total for 2007	4.43%	5.14%	3093

Table 8. Five year crime type comparison at Valleyfair Amusement Park.

Type	2002 Crimes at Valleyfair	2007 Crimes at Valleyfair	2002-2007 Difference in Crime
Assault	2	4	2
Burglary	0	0	0
Crime Against Government	0	1	1
Criminal Sexual Conduct	4	0	-4
Disturbance	1	2	1
Domestic Crime	0	0	0
Drugs	14	35	21
Escape	0	0	0
Forgery	2	0	-2
Gambling	0	0	0
Miscellaneous	26	63	37
Obscenity	0	1	1
Property Damage	3	3	0
Robbery	0	0	0
Theft	40	15	-25
Traffic Accident	4	3	-1
Vehicle Theft	2	1	-1
Weapons	0	0	0
Total Change			30

Table 9. Five Year Crime Type Comparison at Canterbury Park.

Type	2002 Crimes at Canterbury Park	2007 Crimes at Canterbury Park	2002-2007 Difference in Crime
Assault	4	3	-1
Burglary	0	0	0
Crime Against Government	1	0	-1
Criminal Sexual Conduct	0	0	0
Disturbance	1	6	5
Domestic Crime	1	0	-1
Drugs	4	14	10
Escape	0	0	0
Forgery	0	41	41
Gambling	1	2	1
Miscellaneous	6	24	18
Obscenity	0	1	1
Property Damage	12	41	29
Robbery	0	1	1
Theft	14	14	0
Traffic Accident	19	21	2
Vehicle Theft	2	1	-1
Weapons	0	0	0
Total Change			104

Conclusion

It is apparent that there are many factors that contribute to the completion of a criminal act. As a result, to pin point all of these factors as a basis for drawing a specific criminal trend is a difficult task. These contributing factors can vary from individual to community issues. For example, one cannot predict the emotional and mental states which ultimately culminate in a crime. Driving forces are influenced by population diversity (Lane and Meeker, 2005) and housing density (Kuhns III et al., 2007). In combination, these elements all can contribute to the crime rate and activity.

Due to the large volume of visitors attending local attractions such as Valleyfair Amusement Park and Canterbury Park, a crime type trend has been consistent over the five year time frame. Due to these predictable criminal patterns, an analysis of the five year span between 2002 and 2007 can be a good indicator of the crime activity that one would prove to be a significant prognosticator of crime activity trends.

The ring analysis models for this study are designed to give a general estimate of crime in and within one mile of the venues. Figure 1 shows the May 2002 crime that is within 2640 and 5280 feet from Canterbury Park. There is greater amount of crime surrounding Canterbury Park than Valleyfair (Table 2). This finding could be most likely attributed to the higher population density surrounding Canterbury Park. Table 5 (Canterbury Park) shows an even more drastic difference in surrounding crime in 2007 when compared to Table 4 (Valleyfair Amusement Park). This is significant due to the population influx that increased at the highest rate between 2002 and 2007. When analyzing the percentage of overall crime for Shakopee, Minnesota (Tables 6 and 7), it is noticeable that the

crime at Valleyfair still constitutes for 4.43% of the overall crime in Shakopee, while Canterbury Park has increased from 2.94% to 5.14%. Possible causes of increase may be attributed to the increased popularity of the card club that is open 24-hours a day year round, while Valleyfair has kept fairly consistent operating hours when comparing 2002 and 2007.

The type of crimes occurring at the two venues is fairly similar even though they proved to have some differences. Table 8 shows the three most common types of crime in 2007 at Valleyfair Amusement Park were theft, drugs and miscellaneous offenses. At Canterbury Park (Table 9) miscellaneous offenses were also listed in the top three recorded crimes in addition to property damage and forgery.

Although the data retrieved does analyze the amount of crime within certain proximity of the attractions, it is unfair not to acknowledge the extreme differences between the area surrounding Valleyfair and Canterbury Park. Valleyfair is located next to a water treatment facility, national wetlands and a business district. This is different from the primarily residential surroundings of Canterbury Park. In addition to the dissimilar surroundings, hours of operation play a significant role in the differences of crime between the two venues. Canterbury Park not only offers a twenty-four hour card club as well as its simulcast and live racing (Canterbury Park, 2008). Valleyfair is typically open for 10-12 hours a day with a few exceptions during holidays and weekends when they stay open for 14 hours (Valleyfair Amusement Park, 2008).

Crime data was one area in which refinement would increase the analysis and prediction of crime at local attractions in Shakopee. Due to crimes taking place on a specific road or intersection without an address, numerous incidents were

unsuccessfully presented. Displaying these crimes would skew the results by placing a large amount of crimes at a non-specific location contained within a street.

Other elements that could be significant would include overall attendance for Canterbury Park, including days when live racing did not occur, and overall attendance for Valleyfair. This would enable one to determine the amount of patrons per crime to develop a specific rate at which a crime occurs in relation to the visitors on site.

In conclusion, GIS proved to be a valuable tool to analyze the crime trends from the years 2002 and 2007. The study provides a general insight of when and where crime has taken place in the past, which ideally will assist law enforcement in predicting future crime. With the population of Shakopee and the popularity of the local attractions both rising at a consistent rate, the determination and prevention of future crime is a necessary step the local government and businesses must take in order to provide a safe atmosphere for residents and visiting patrons.

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