

CITY OF OAKLAND
AGENDA REPORT

To: Office of the City Manager
Attn: Robert C. Bobb
From: Police Department
Date: January 21, 2003

Re: A REPORT AND PROPOSED RESOLUTION AUTHORIZING THE CITY MANAGER TO ACCEPT AND APPROPRIATE UP TO TWO HUNDRED AND SEVENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS (\$270,000) FROM THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, OFFICE OF TRAFFIC SAFETY, FOR THE POLICE DEPARTMENT SIDESHOW ABATEMENT PROGRAM

SUMMARY

The Police Department applied for and was awarded a one-year grant in an amount not to exceed two hundred and seventy thousand dollars (\$270,000) from the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety. The funds will be used to support a Sideshow Abatement Program which is tasked with reducing incidents of reckless driving and exhibitions of speed perpetrated by unlicensed and impaired drivers through increased law enforcement and public education.

FISCAL IMPACT

The State of California, Office of Traffic Safety, approved the Police Department's Sideshow Abatement Program and granted the City of Oakland up to \$270,000 in state funds. The funds will be allocated in the State of California Grant Fund: 2999; Org.: 104811; in a Project Account to be determined, with expense allocations as follows:

Use of Funds	Amount
O/T for Lieutenant of Police	\$9,100
O/T for Sergeants of Police	\$21,260
O/T for Police Officers	\$180,500
O/T for Police Service Technicians	\$21,500
Travel Expense	\$2,000
Contractual Services	\$35,640
TOTAL	\$270,000

BACKGROUND

Since 1988, the City of Oakland has been plagued with a cruising problem widely referred to as the "Sideshow". The problem is characterized by numerous incidents of reckless driving, exhibitions of speed, Driving Under the Influence (DUI), and unlicensed driving. A collaborative effort between the community, police, city, state officials and the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety has been partially successful in addressing the problem.

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However, additional abatement efforts are needed to further reduce incidents of cruising activity in Oakland.

Sideshow activity usually occurs on weekend nights after bars have closed, but it also occurs on holiday weekends and warm summer evenings. The activity has occurred, to varying degrees, in all areas of the City, but is most prevalent in the neighborhoods of East Oakland. Demographics of Sideshow participants are as follows:

- Men and Women
- Average age of 26
- Participants are Employed
- 33% are Non-Oakland Residents
- 75% are Unlicensed Drivers
- An estimated 75% are driving under the influence of alcohol or other drugs

Sideshow participants generally take over arterial roadways, major intersections, and the parking lots of shopping malls, convenience stores and gas stations. Once gathered, vehicles will start to spin “donuts” and “burn rubber” within a circle formed by the crowd, with pedestrian spectators often no more than a few feet from the spinning vehicle. The traffic congestion associated with this activity prevents public transit from traveling along normal routes. Further, on several occasions during the last three years, traffic in and out of the Oakland International Airport was disrupted as Sideshow activity created gridlock on Hegenberger Road. Sideshows also slow and prevent citizens from free travel, and more importantly, slows or prevents the delivery of emergency services to local areas.

KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS

To date, the City of Oakland has exercised considerable effort to solve the Sideshow problem, inclusive of enacting three major procedural components: *Law Enforcement, Community Engagement and Legislative Engagement.*

Law Enforcement: Over the last calendar year, the Police Department’s Traffic Section has been tasked with overall responsibilities related to Sideshow abatement. Officers were assigned to mandatory overtime details, permitting the Department to regularly deploy officers under a centralized command structure. Further, nine multi-agency operations have been conducted within the Oakland area in an effort to control Sideshow activity and prevent its displacement and/or replication in other surrounding areas. To accomplish this, a reciprocal partnership exists between the following law enforcement agencies:

Oakland Police Department
Alameda Police Department

Fremont Police Department
Hayward Police Department

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Alameda County Sheriff
Berkeley Police Department
California Highway Patrol

Newark Police Department
San Leandro Police Department
Union City Police Department

Community Engagement: Since January 2001, volunteers from local Neighborhood Crime Prevention Councils have participated on the Sideshow Abatement Committee. The Committee has received additional participation and input from the following organizations:

- Las Palmas and Toler Heights Community Groups
- Public Works' Traffic Engineering and Street Maintenance Division
- Life Enrichment Agency's Parks and Recreation Department
- Office of the City Attorney
- City Council Staff
- Members of the Local Business Community
- Alameda County Office of the District Attorney
- Members of the Coliseum Area Business Community
- Members of the Oakland Metropolitan Chamber of Commerce

Legislative Engagement: The Police Department's Traffic Section drafted local legislation requiring businesses to secure their parking lots one hour after closing. The purpose of the legislation was to remove a popular venue for some of the most dangerous Sideshows. After passage of the legislation, the Department used the Parking Lot Closure Ordinance (Ordinance No. 12390 C.M.S.) to compel property owners of numerous lots to secure their property.

The second major component of the legislative agenda was state legislation (Senate Bill 1489), proposed by the City of Oakland and co-authored by State Senator Don Perata and Assembly Member Wilma Chan. The legislation was signed into law on September 7, 2002 and gives law enforcement the authority to impound for 30-days the cars of Sideshow participants that are involved in certain acts of reckless driving and exhibitions of speed on both public and private properties.

SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES

Economic All supplies and equipment used for the project will, whenever possible, be purchased locally.

Environmental Enactment of the Sideshow Abatement Program will greatly reduce the level of noise pollution throughout Oakland communities.

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Social Equity The services provided by the Police Department's Sideshow Abatement Program will assist the community through improved police services and enhanced police-community relations.

DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS

There are no ADA or senior citizen access issues contained in this report.

RECOMMENDATION

The Oakland Police Department recommends that the City Council authorize the City Manager to accept the grant of up to \$270,000 from the State of California, Office of Traffic Safety and appropriate said funds to the Police Department.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard L. Word
Chief of Police

Prepared by: Candice Jessie
Administrative and Technical Services Division
Bureau of Services

**APPROVED AND FORWARDED
TO THE CITY COUNCIL:**

Office of the City Manager

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