

HOUSTON POLICE DEPARTMENT VICE DIVISION



Sgt. Mike Hill (Retired)
Crime Intelligence Analyst Michael Bruce

A Problem Oriented Policing Approach to Illegal Massage Establishments



Large Geographic Area & Population

1 Million Milestone

U.S. Cities With a Population of a Million or More as of July 1, 2014, and the Number and Percentage of People Added Since July 1, 2013



United States™
Census
Bureau

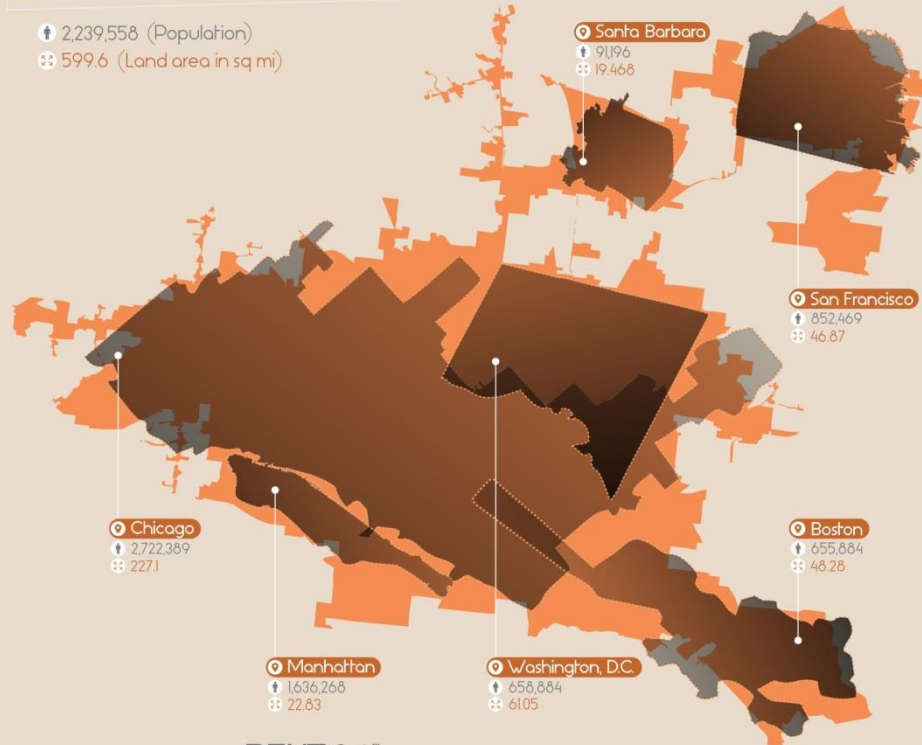
U.S. Department of Commerce
Economics and Statistics Administration
U.S. CENSUS BUREAU
census.gov

Source: 2014 Population Estimates

MAPPING HOUSTON

How many major U.S. cities can you fit inside?

👤 2,239,558 (Population)
📏 599.6 (Land area in sq mi)

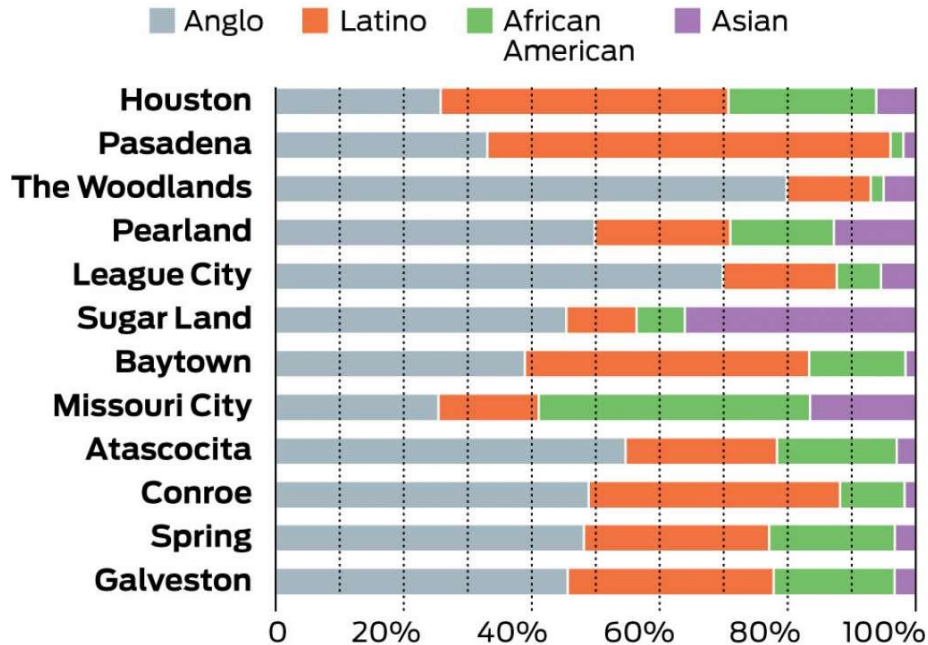


Brought to you by **RENTCafe™**

Demographic Diversity

Houston-area diversity

Racial/ethnic demographic breakdown for local cities and suburbs, listed in order of population size:



Sources: Kinder Institute for Urban Research;
Hobby Center for the Study of Texas

Houston Chronicle

- Houston is an international city, where roughly 30% of the population in Houston was not born in the U.S.
- Nearly every major language is represented in Houston, sometimes making communication with the police difficult.
- Some people from other cultures have different expectations of social norms and laws.
- A recent survey indicated up to 145 languages in use in Houston.

Houston is THE BEST!

HOUSTON IS THE NO. 1 RELOCATION DESTINATION IN THE U.S. 5 YEARS IN A ROW

HOUSTON

IS RATED AS THE BEST CITY IN THE U.S. FOR YOUNG COUPLES

BUSINESS INSIDER SAYS HOUSTON IS THE BEST CITY IN AMERICA

LIFE IN THE CITY WITH NO LIMITS

16 CRAFT BREWERIES	350+ MILES OF TRAILS	545 DEVELOPED PARKS	4 MAJOR LEAGUE SPORTS STADIUMS
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HOUSTON RANKS AS THE 4TH BEST CITY FOR TECH JOBS

HOUSTON'S COST OF LIVING IS 5.2% BELOW THE NATIONAL AVERAGE

HOUSTON RANKS NO. 3 ON 24/7 WALL ST.'S LIST OF AMERICAN CITIES WITH THE LOWEST TAXES

Texas Residents pay **NO INCOME TAX** to the city or state

HOUSTON IS ONE OF THE 10 GREENEST CITIES IN AMERICA

- <https://www.combinedarms.us/houston/>

BUT...

We are also one of the best in the nation at something else:

Houston called major hub for human trafficking

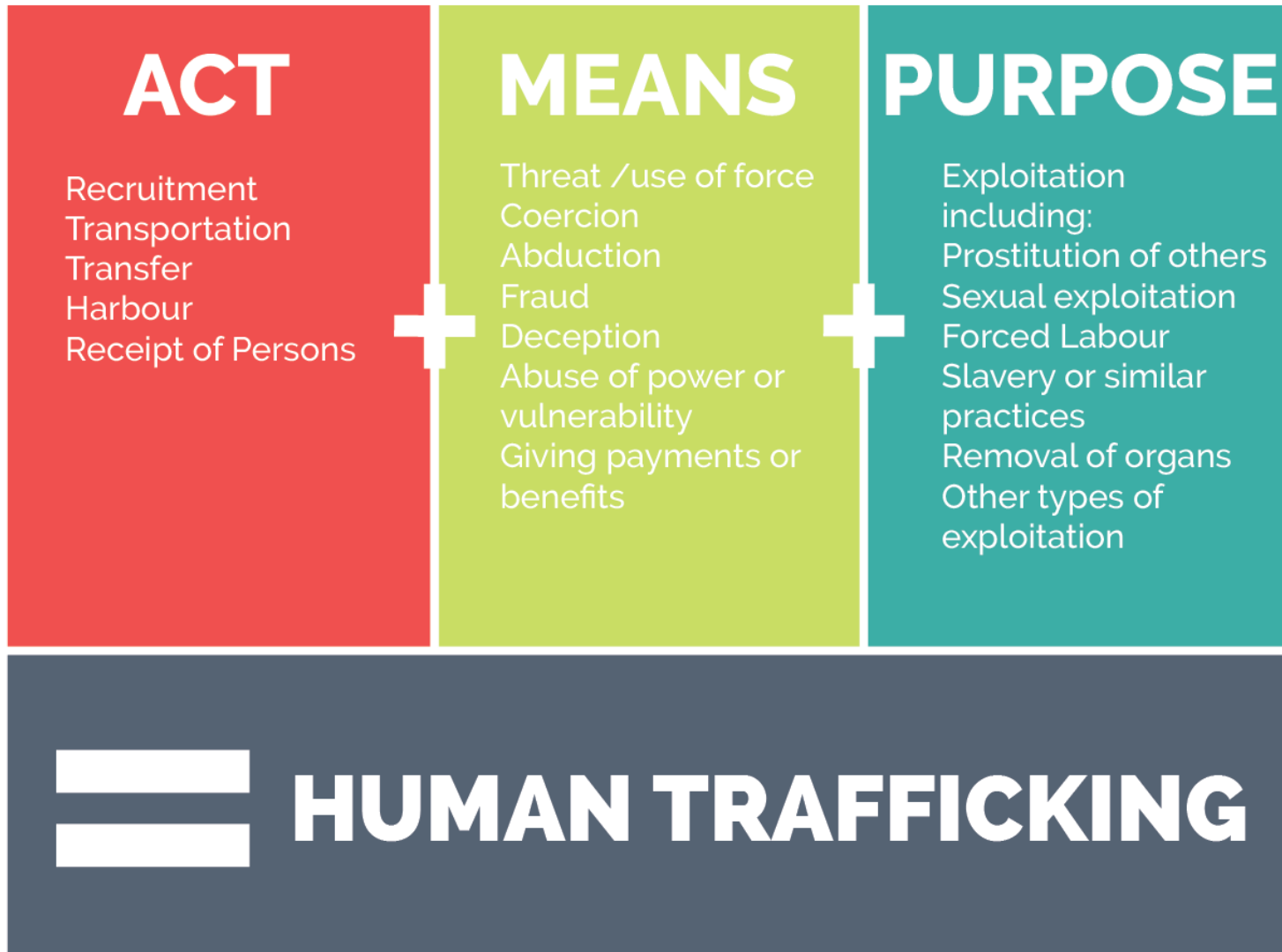
Houston major hub for human trafficking
Large ring kept up to 120 women in virtual slavery

By [Susan Carroll](#) Published 5:30 am, Sunday, October 28, 2007

Houston-area police bust dozens for prostitution during week of Super Bowl 51

By [Fernando Ramirez](#), Chron.com / Houston Chronicle Updated 10:21 pm, Wednesday, February 8, 2017

WAIT...WHAT IS HUMAN TRAFFICKING?



IS HOUSTON REALLY A HUB FOR HUMAN TRAFFICKING?

Image 1: Wikisexguide.com – Sex Tourism and Houston

The image is a screenshot of a webpage from Wikisexguide.com. The page title is "Sex and Prostitution in Houston". The navigation bar includes "Wikisexguide", "Regions", "Add Your Business", a search bar with the text "Search Location, Place or Business", an "Edit" button, and a "Login" button. The main content area contains several paragraphs of text. A red rectangular box highlights a specific paragraph: "You can also try massage parlours for getting streamy sex. These massage parlours are the safest way in terms of law." Below this highlighted text is a section titled "Red Light Districts" with two paragraphs of text. At the bottom of the page is a section titled "Prostitutes and Sex Workers" with one paragraph of text.

Wikisexguide Regions Add Your Business Search Location, Place or Business Q Edit Login

Sex and Prostitution in Houston

Houston has quite big street prostitution scene, there are also lots of escorts advertising online so you have good variety to choose what you want. If Houston is not enough for you, just rent a car and drive to [San Antonio](#) or [Dallas](#).

There are lots of street hookers that can be found in Houston. There are certain places where these hookers wait for clients to pick them up.

Apart from these street hookers there are escort agencies, and independent sex workers workers who post their ads online. You can get their phone numbers from websites like [BackPage](#) and [Craigslist](#).

You can also try massage parlours for getting streamy sex. These massage parlours are the safest way in terms of law.

Red Light Districts

There is no [Red-light district](#) in Houston like the ones in [Frankfurt](#) and [Amsterdam](#), but Bissonnet and Beltway 8, US 59S (Southwest Freeway at Hillcroft), Montrose are worth to visit.

Apart from dedicated Red light areas, you can find hotels where manager can arrange hookers for you. There are apartments and erotic massage parlours where you can get some action for \$50-\$100.

Prostitutes and Sex Workers

You can find prostitutes from the streets and internet.

backpage.com > Houston adult entertainment > Houston body rubs > spa

All | [Beaumont/Pt Arthur](#) | [College Station](#) | [Galveston](#) | [Houston](#) | [Huntsville](#)

All Houston | [Baytown](#) | [City of Houston](#) | [Conroe](#) | [Missouri City](#) | [Pasadena](#) | [Pearland](#) | [Sugar Land](#) | [The Woodlands](#)

spa body rubs search

top | [gallery](#) | [video](#) | [date](#)



YAYA Spa ●●●●● Houston WEST
●●●●● LOVELY FOUR HANDS
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 10:02 AM



Welcome To Q SPA Treat Yourself With Our HOT Asian
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:42 AM



👩👩👩👩👩 \$40 ONE HOUR!
👩👩👩 5 New Girls Just Arrive
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:42 AM



👩👩👩👩👩@** 5 BEAUTIFUL BABES! 5 pretty girls
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:39 AM



MANHATTAN SPA
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:37 AM



B-U-S-T-Y
B-E-A-U-T-Y
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:25 AM



Asian
Young
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:23 AM



FLUSHING SPA
NEW ASIAN GIRLS
100%
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:23 AM



NEW NEW HOT GIRLS
Nana SPA
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:23 AM



Hot
GIRLS
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:23 AM



Sun &
Moon Spa
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:20 AM



Relax - Spa
YOUNG LATINA
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:16 AM



100% Real - SEXY
ALL NEW MANAGEMENT
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 9:08 AM



OMG I 2 NEW GIRLS THIS WEEKEND! 5
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 7:27 AM



NEW SEXY
HOT Asian SPA
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 8:50 AM



4 NEW GIRLS
ALL U CAN PICK
Posted: Tue, Oct. 18, 4:12 AM

Citizen Complaints



Patrol Reports



HPD VICE DIVISION LEGAL MANDATE

- Identify locations that belong under the purview of the State Occupation Code and municipal ordinances concerning **licensed** massage establishments
- Conduct regulatory inspections of the locations and take action on observed violation of the laws concerning the operations of such locations
- Conduct undercover investigations to identify and arrest those individuals working at the locations who are engaged in criminal activity (prostitution, human trafficking, etc.)

ILLEGAL COMMERCIAL SEX DEMAND REDUCTION INITIATIVE

JANUARY 4 – FEBRUARY 26, 2016

- **Purpose:** Reducing human trafficking through commercial sex demand reduction strategies.

- **HCSO & HPD Combined – Conducted Over 70 operations (Street, Hotels/Motels, & Illegal Commercial Sex Focused Businesses)**

HCSO CHARGES (January 4 – February 4)			
Sex Buyer	Sex Seller	Drugs	Other
121	19	7	5
TOTAL ARRESTS: 144 TOTAL CHARGES: 152			

HPD CHARGES (January 4 – February 26)				
Trafficker	Sex Buyer	Sex Seller	Drugs	Other
6	135	99	10	18
TOTAL ARRESTS: 249 TOTAL CHARGES: 268				



Revolving Door?

03-07-2016, 11:53 PM

astroz4life
Gaining Momentum

Join Date: Nov 5, 2015
Location: bellaire
Posts: 32
Reviews: 4

Learned my SPA lesson at 7th Star

I've been hobbing for over 20 years; La Feeme, Execvtive XCT, Escapes 1-6, Westside Clinic, Native Tan, the list goes on and on. I decided to take the 7th Star plunge tonight. Five minutes in it was raided by the PoPo. Lucky for me, I was told that I could leave. I guess because there was no provider in the room with me. Happened 30 minutes ago and I'm still shook up. I'm back on the indy train. I know there are risks in the hobby, but I prefer to control the situation as much as possible. Can't do that in a SPA. Everyone stay safe.

Like | 3 users liked this post

QUOTE REPLY

A brush with police encourages this patron to swear off IMBs as the location is raided.

03-09-2016, 06:15 PM

azteclust
Premium Access

Join Date: Jul 17, 2011
Location: Houston
Posts: 581
Reviews: 17

I guess is back open their ad is back up on Bp

<http://houston.backpage.com/FemaleEs...r-spa/30633995>

Like | 1 user liked this post

QUOTE REPLY

However, a little more than 30 hours later, the spa is open and actively advertising again.

Lets look at what we're really doing.

- If you get an infection, do you treat the symptoms.....

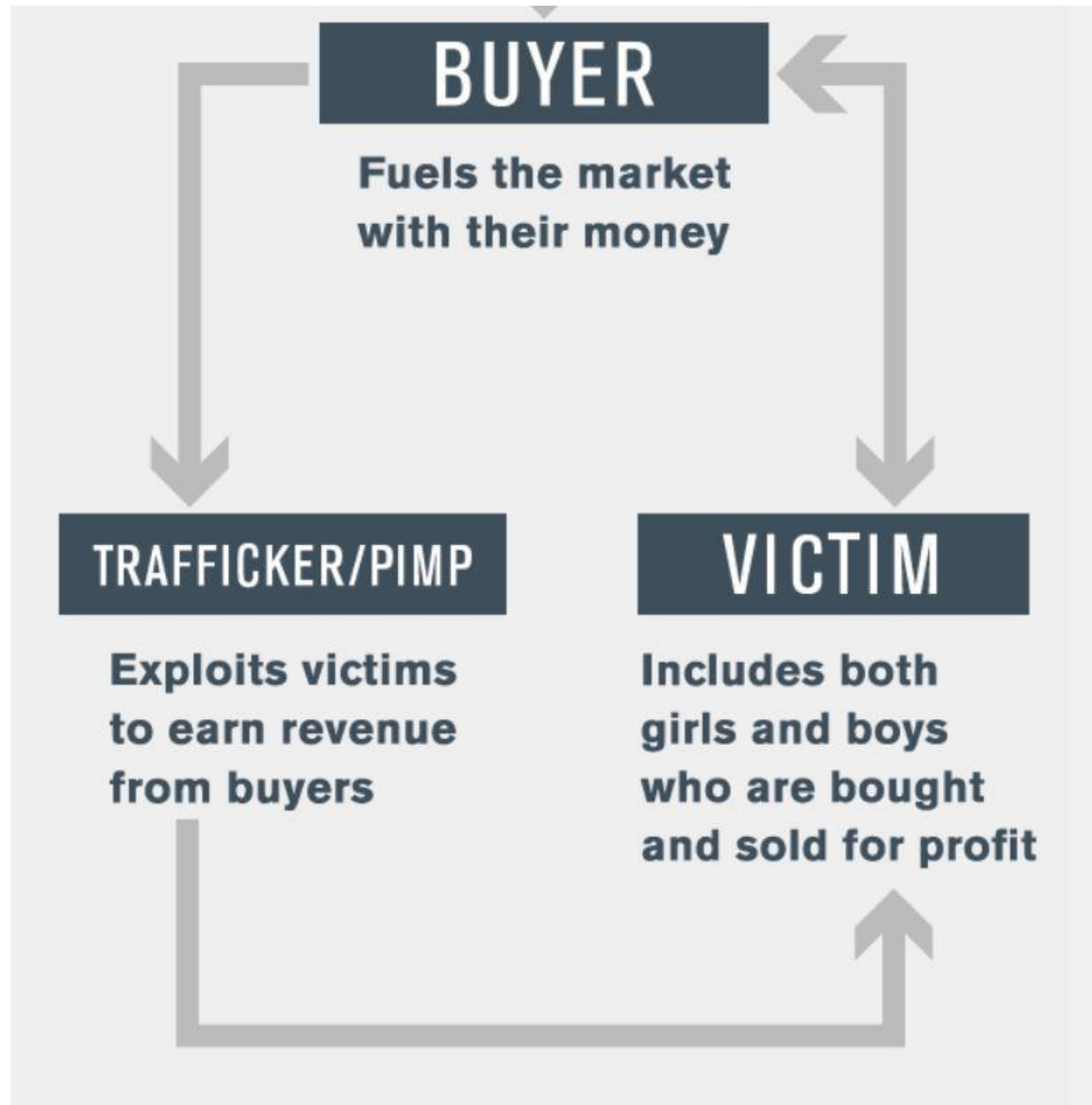


Or do you cure it?

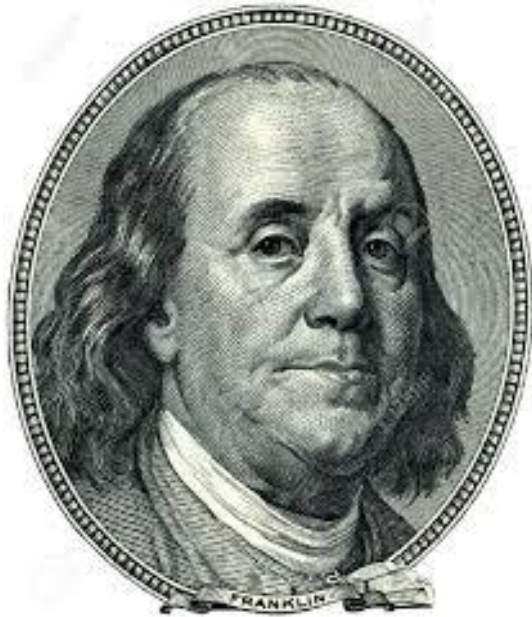


WHO IS TRAFFICKING ?

- HUMAN TRAFFICKING IS A CRIME MOTIVATED BY PROFIT
- ANYONE CAN BE A VICTIM OF TRAFFICKING
- ANYONE INTERESTED IN MAKING A PROFIT CAN BE A TRAFFICKER
- 77.8% OF TRAFFICKING CASES REPORTED TO THE NATIONAL TRAFFICKING HOTLINE WERE SEX-RELATED



THE WHY: MONEY TALKS



“ This year, the UN is putting the spotlight on human trafficking and modern slavery – a fundamental right and freedom denied.

Today, about 21 million women, men and children are forced to work under inhuman conditions on farms, in sweatshops, on board fishing vessels, in the sex industry or in private homes. Their sweat generates US\$ 150 billion in illegal profits annually. ”

- International Labor Organization, 2015

\$31.6 billion in profit in the US.
- Belser, ILO, 2005

* Note, per Forbes, the top 25 oil companies worldwide only made \$81 billion profit in 2016.

Crimes linked to illegal massage businesses:

- Human Trafficking/Prostitution Activity
- Narcotics Related Offenses
- Sexual Assault
- Assault-Aggravated Assaults (DW)
- Robbery-Aggravated Robbery (DW)
- Murder

LACK OF PUBLIC INTEREST

Upon hearing of prostitution arrests, the public responds with:

- “...Harris County must not have any real crime going on...”
- [Law Enforcement should]
 “...go after the crimes in which there are actual victims...”
- “...a waste of time.”

Relevant law enforcement theory #1

The Iron Law of Troublesome Places*

Frequency of
troublesome events



Facilities known to follow this law**

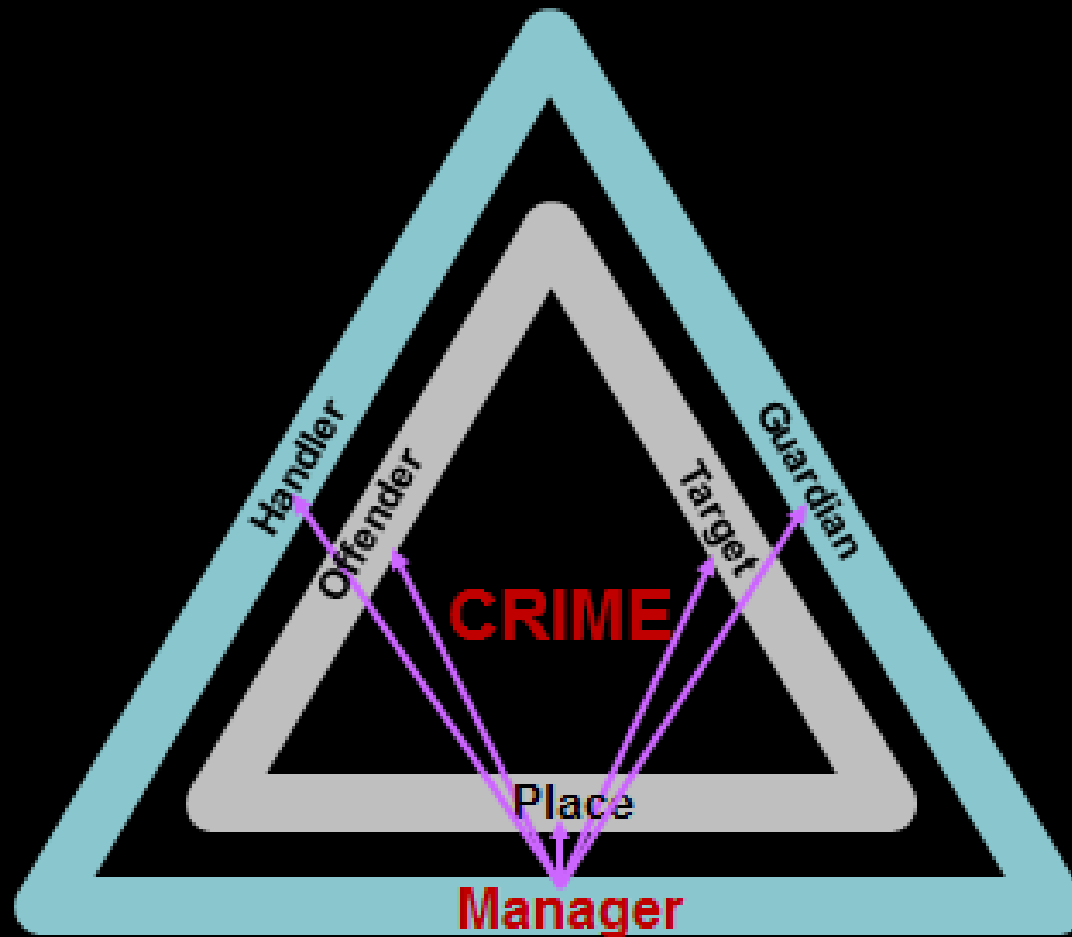
- Apartment complexes
- Banks
- Bars, pubs, and clubs
- Bus stop shelters
- Businesses (various)
- Coffee shops
- Construction sites
- Convenience stores
- Fast food restaurants
- Gas stations
- Health care facilities
- Hotels and motels
- Parking lots
- Places of worship
- Schools
- Sports facilities
- Telephone booths
- Young offender facilities

* Figure from Wilcox and Eck 2011. *The Criminology of the Unpopular. Criminology and Public Policy*

** All from Eck, Clarke and Guerette, 2008, except coffee shops and places of worship (Duro, 2010).

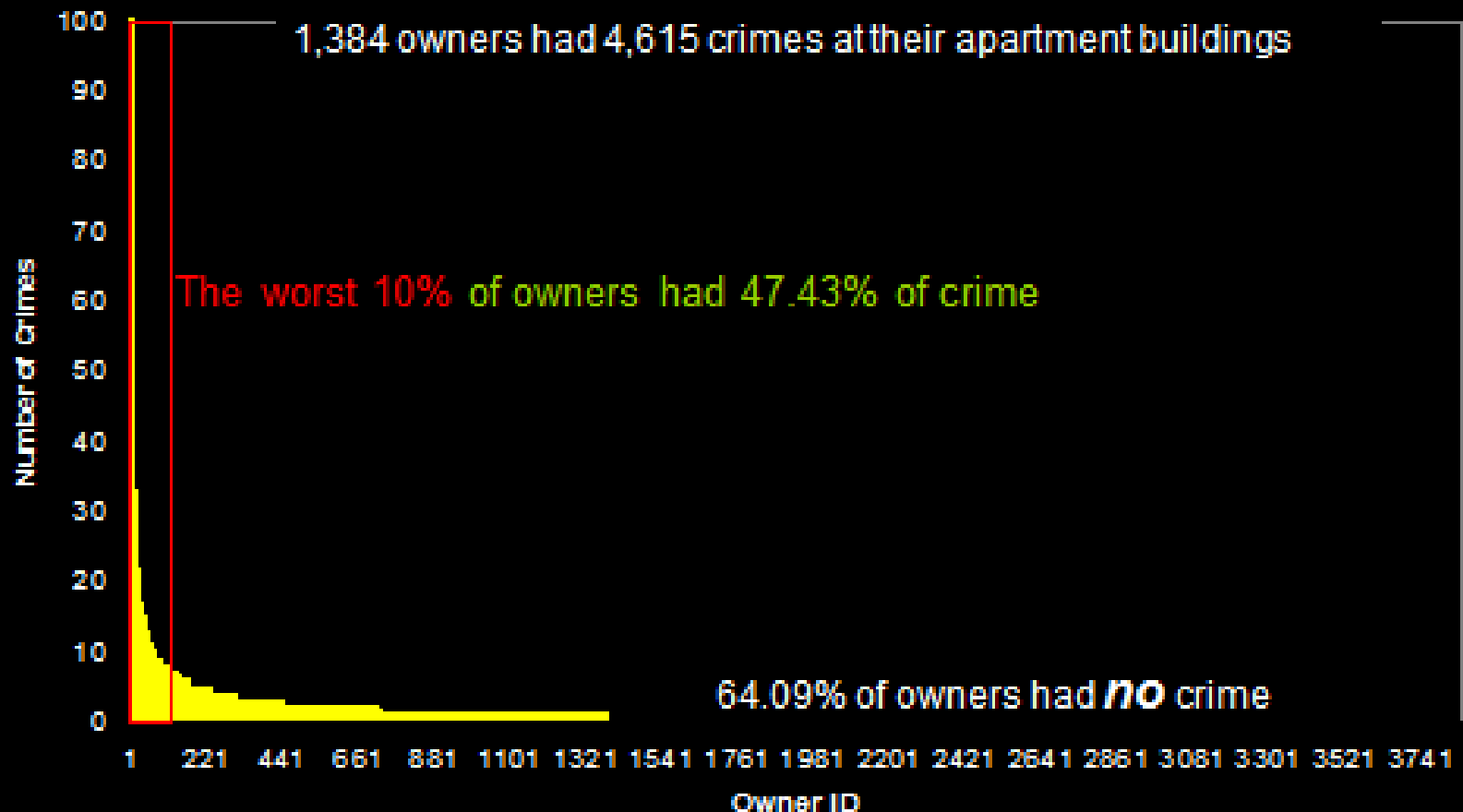
Relevant Law Enforcement Theory #2:

Place Managers Control Other Sides of Triangles



Relevant Law Enforcement Theory #3:

More Concentrated Among Owners than Crime Among Apt. Buildings



“Miyun Modeling Studio”: An Illicit Massage Business



<http://abc13.com/news/modeling-studio-shut-down-after-alleged-prostitution/1147550/>

Identifying IMB Locations

What is an IMB (ILICIT MASSAGE BUSINESS)?

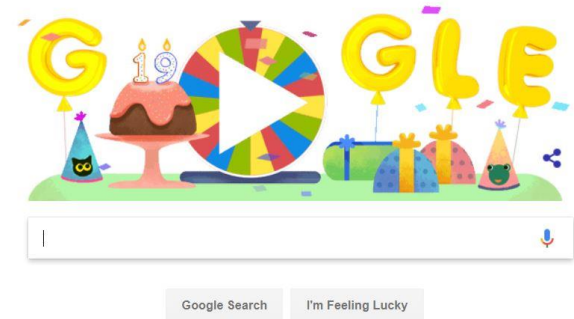
- Any place that offers or advertises MASSAGE
- Has one or more “therapists” available
- Is not in compliance with health law –OR- offers sex act for money transactions to patrons

Image 4: IMB Store Front



Identifying possible IMBs

- Internal Records
- External records
- Eyewitness reports
- Initial lists indicated 240+ possible IMBs in Houston



GOAL:

Increasing effectiveness of HPD Vice Division's enforcement of existing laws.

MEASURES OF SUCCESS

IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE IMBs

OF IMBs SUBMITTED FOR CIVIL ACTION

OF IMB CLOSURES

OF REGULATORY INVESTIGATIONS

OF CRIMINAL INVESTIGATIONS

OF ARRESTS MADE

Manpower: Community Involvement

Prostitution Diversion Program Protocols and Procedures

Made Possible through a Partnership between:



RESPONSE

Manpower: Victims Assistance Groups

- ❖ YMCA
- ❖ Rescue Houston
- ❖ Free The Captives
- ❖ Elijah Rising
- ❖ The Landing
- ❖ Freedom Church Alliance
- ❖ Redeemed Ministries
- ❖ Project Girls CIS



Manpower: Community Partners Management Districts



Manpower: Partnering with Inspections Officers

Illicit Massage Establishment Inspections

 Call the National Human Trafficking Resource Center (NHTRC): 1-888-373-7888 24 hr Confidential Helpline Help is available in 207 languages or text NHTRC to Safeline (232733) Speak to a Triage Specialist	 Línea al Centro Nacional de Recursos contra el Tráfico Humano (NHTRC): 1-888-373-7888 Línea de ayuda confidencial disponible las 24 horas Ayuda disponible en 207 idiomas	 Toll-free National Human Trafficking Resource Center (your general press contact with the NHTRC) is open 1-888-373-7888 available 24 hours 24-hour confidential helpline available in 207 languages	 請撥打國家打工人口販運資源中心 熱線 (NHTRC) : 1-888-373-7888 24小時保密熱線服務 為粵語及國語提供協助。 24小時免費專線服務	 免費打 (保證無償) 國家打工人口 熱線 (NHTRC) : 1-888-373-7888 24小時保密熱線服務 為國語及粵語提供協助。 24小時免費專線服務	 Hãy gọi cho Trung Tâm Trợ Giúp Chống lại Mã Hóa Nhân Quyền (NHTRC): 1-888-373-7888 Đường dây nóng giúp đỡ 24 giờ (cung cấp hỗ trợ bằng tiếng Anh) Đường dây nóng giúp đỡ 24 giờ (cung cấp hỗ trợ bằng tiếng Việt)
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- Engage City Council



- Engage the Press





TEXAS
 Department of
 State Health Services
Massage Therapy Licensing Program
Inspection Report for Massage Therapy Establishments
Houston Police Differential Response Team

Name of Massage Establishment _____ License# _____

Address _____ District/Beat _____ Date _____

HPD Incident No. _____

(C = Compliant - PD = Present but Deficient - D = Deficient - N/A= Not Applicable - R =Recurrent)

- | | | | | | |
|---|------|-------|------|--------|------|
| 1.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.361(d)
Current establishment license prominently displayed? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 2.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.303(p)
Complaint information available to public? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 3.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.307(b)
Massage therapists licensed/licenses prominently displayed? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 4.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.304
Initial Consultation Document? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 5.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.303(f)
Written consent for clients under the age of 17? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 6.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.361 (i)
Maintains employee/client records for 2 years? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 7.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.365
Has establishment ownership/mgmt. or location changed?
Lease document on site? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 8.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.360 (c) (9)
Meets state and local requirements for fire code? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 9.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.360 (c) (8)
Establishment floor plan on site? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 10.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.361 (e)
Residential/sleeping quarters separated? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 11.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.362
Meets state and local sanitary/health codes? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 12.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.306
Advertising in compliance? | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |
| 13.) Rule: 25 TAC §140.361(h) | C___ | PD___ | D___ | N/A___ | R___ |

Partnering with Inspections Officers: Training in things to look for

- Signs of Physical Abuse
- Appears fearful, anxious, tense, submissive, or nervous
- Signs of emotional anxiety or dependence on trafficker
- Lack apparent freedom of movement
- Lack of Knowledge of where he or she is
- Treated in a demeaning or aggressive manner
- Noticeably watched, followed by others

Partnering with Inspections Officers: Typical Living Quarters Inside IMB



Partnering with Inspections Officers: Facilitating Outreach

IV. City's Anti-Trafficking Strategic Plan – Associated Images – Outreach Cards



The code reads 101-1-2, which means this card (for food establishments) is being distributed within Harris County by the Houston Health Department.



- Interview possible human trafficking subjects and give pamphlets that are available in several languages, once identified call in task force personnel

UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS



TARGETED UNDERCOVER OPERATIONS BASED ON PRIOR HISTORIES AND INSPECTIONS RESULTS ALLOWING FOR BURDEN OF PROOF FOR CIVIL ACTIONS TO BE MET SOONER

FILING CIVIL ACTIONS:
Chapter 125s: Nuisance businesses

CIVIL PRACTICE AND REMEDIES CODE

TITLE 6. MISCELLANEOUS PROVISIONS

CHAPTER 125.

COMMON AND PUBLIC NUISANCES

Crimes Eligible for inclusion in a 125 Filing

- (1) discharge of a firearm in a public place
- (2) reckless discharge of a firearm
- (3) engaging in organized criminal activity as a member of a combination
- (4) delivery, possession, manufacture, or use of a controlled substance
- (5) gambling, gambling promotion, or communicating gambling information
- (6) prostitution, promotion of prostitution, or aggravated promotion of prostitution
- (7) compelling prostitution
- (8) commercial manufacture, commercial distribution, or commercial exhibition of obscene material
- (9) aggravated assault
- (10) sexual assault
- (11) aggravated sexual assault

Crimes Eligible for inclusion in a 125 Filing

- (12) robbery
- (13) aggravated robbery
- (14) unlawfully carrying a weapon
- (15) murder
- (16) capital murder
- (17) continuous sexual abuse of young child or children
- (18) massage therapy or other massage services in violation
- (19) employing a minor at a sexually oriented business
- (20) trafficking of persons
- (21) sexual conduct or performance by a child
- (22) employment harmful to a child

THE END GOAL

A successful filing will result in the issuing of a temporary restraining order or permanent injunction similar to the document on the right.

Our Official Governmental Use Only - Do Not Disseminate to the Public: 31582165 - Page 1 of 15

CAUSE NO. 2016-46478

THE STATE OF TEXAS
Plaintiff

VS.

"A" SPA, NEW HAVEN SPA,
ALEX C. LUK AND THE REAL
PROPERTY KNOWN AS
8320 GULF FWY,
HOUSTON, TX 77017, *IN REM*,
DAN MA INDIVIDUALLY AND D/B/A
OAK SPA, MAM SPA, 249 SPA, PARIS
SPA AND JC SPA, VO RICHMOND
PLAZA LLC AND THE REAL
PROPERTY KNOWN AS
9844 RICHMOND AVE,
HOUSTON, TEXAS *IN REM*, AMPEX
WESTHEIMER PLAZA LP AND
THE REAL PROPERTY KNOWN AS
13660 WESTHEIMER RD, HOUSTON,
TEXAS, *IN REM*, BLUE CREEK
HOLLISTER LLC AND THE REAL
PROPERTY KNOWN AS 14901
STATE HIGHWAY 249, HOUSTON,
TEXAS, *IN REM*, BEACON CAPITAL
INVESTMENTS LP AND THE REAL
PROPERTY KNOWN AS 2900
HILLCROFT AVE, HOUSTON, TX
77063, *IN REM*,

Defendants

IN THE DISTRICT COURT OF

HARRIS COUNTY, TEXAS

P-13
TRIX
STBNX
TRILY

FILED

Chris Daniel
District Clerk

AUG 22 2016

Time: 5:00 PM
By: Chris Daniel
Deputy

55th JUDICIAL DISTRICT

PARTIAL AGREED ORDER GRANTING TEMPORARY INJUNCTION

Came on for a hearing, August 22, 2016, the application of Plaintiff, the State of Texas, for a Temporary Injunction pursuant to Chapter 125 of the Texas Civil Practices & Remedies Code (Chapter 125) against Defendants "A" Spa and New Haven Spa located at 8320 Gulf Fwy, the Real Property known as 8320 Gulf Freeway, Houston, Texas, *In Rem*; Karl Todd Erickson,

Several Harris County spas accused of being involved in prostitution shut down

By **William Axford**, Chron.com / Houston Chronicle Updated 8:52 pm, Wednesday, August 24, 2016



<http://abc13.com/news/judge-closes-alleged-prostitution-spas-in-harris-co/1481135/>

Locations of interest tracking numbers

Table 1: Locations of Interest Tracking Numbers			
	# of locations	% of Total locations tracked	% of Spa locations tracked
Total # of Locations being tracked (for purposes of 125s)	478		
# of locations identified as spa/possible IMB	260	54.39%	
# of locations submitted for filing (both CAO and COH)	27	5.65%	10.38%

Table 3: Regulatory visits to massage parlors		
Agency: Houston Police Department, Differential Response Team		
Note: Numbers are Cumulative		
	October 10th, 2016	November 8th, 2016
Locations Visited	55	111
Citations Issued	91	147

Possible IMB Tracking

Table 2: Possible IMB Undercover Operations Summary

	Total # of undercover operations at unique locations	Expressed as a % of Total locations tracked	Expressed as a % of possible IMB locations tracked
2016	60	12.55%	23.08%
2015	39	8.16%	15.00%
2014 (Est.)	11	2.30%	4.23%

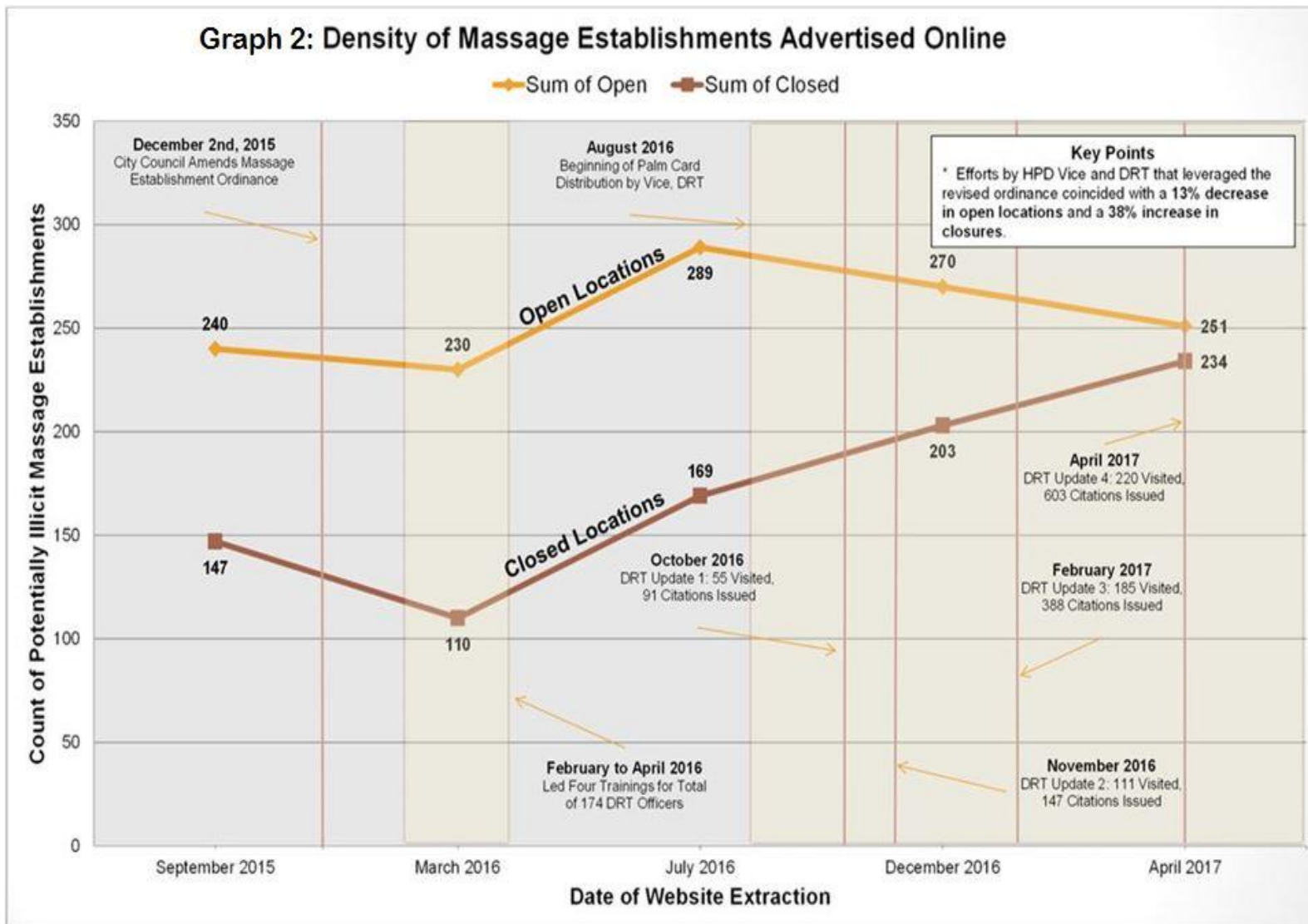
Table 5: Participation in Municipal Court Diversion Program

	Number Served	Number Declined Services	Number Appeared	Number Scheduled to Appear	% Served by Total Possible (Served / Scheduled)	% Seeking Services (Served / Appeared)
Grand Total	31	5	36	69	45%	86%

IMBs facing 125 charges

Table 4: IMBs facing Nuisance Business Civil Actions		
	# of locations	Closures
Submitted (by vice)	27	16
Filed	16	13
Resulting In:		
Temporary Restraining Orders	2	1
Temporary Injunctions	9	8
Permanent Injunctions	2	2

Displacement or lack thereof



Questions?

Sergeant Mike Hill (Retired)
Criminal Intelligence Analyst Michael Bruce

Houston (Texas) Police Department
(713) 308-8651 (BRUCE)
Michael.Bruce@houstonpolice.org