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Dear Judging Panel:

Thank you for providing the California Highway Patrol (CHP) with an opportunity to participate in the 2008 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem-Oriented Policing. The CHP is pleased to nominate the CHP's Operation IMPACT - this program exemplifies the positive results that can be achieved through an effective and cooperative problem-solving methodology, as the Goldstein Award and the SARA concept's advocate.

The enclosed application summarizes the serious traffic and public safety problems faced by the CHP's Oakland office. It also describes the steps taken to address these problems, along with the results that led to a dramatic turn-around within the program's run-time.

Thank you for considering this entry for this distinguished award. If you have any questions or need additional information, please contact Commander Bob Nannini, Special Projects Section, at (916) 657-7222.

Sincerely,

J. A. FARROW
Commissioner

Enclosures

2008 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem Oriented Policing

OPERATION IMPACT

Oakland, California was plagued with a cruising
problem widely referred to as the ...

SIDESHOW

J. A. Farrow
Commissioner
May, 2008 •

2008 Herman Goldstein Award for Excellence in Problem Oriented Policing

OPERATION Impact

California Highway Patrol

J. A. Farrow,
Commissioner

May, 2008

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OPERATION IMPACT

SCANNING

In November 2003, the California Highway Patrol (*CUP*) began a regional policing program, Operation Impact, with Oakland Police Department (*OPD*). The city of Oakland was experiencing increased vehicle sideshow activities (random gatherings of individuals in vehicles displaying lawless behavior) in various areas of the city. At a minimum, problems associated with the sideshows included noise, litter, and the defacement of city streets and off-street parking areas from black tire skid marks. This escalated to neighborhood residents also complaining of disorderly conduct, vandalism, litter, public intoxication, and public urination. Assaults, street-level narcotics, trafficking, and on-going vehicle code violations associated with sideshow activity plagued many Oakland neighborhoods.

ANALYSIS

Virtually every night, from midnight to dawn, hundreds of young people gathered at random locations throughout the city of Oakland to watch cars spin and swerve wildly, the drivers and passengers often dangling halfway out of open doors as the vehicles burned rubber. The people of Oakland faced an increasingly violent homegrown movement that had police chasing one spontaneous driving exhibition after another at a cost to tax payers of approximately \$500,000 a year.

OPD was severely understaffed, and due to the personnel shortage, officers had to do more with less, frequently working overtime to compensate for the lack of staffing. As personnel costs rose, *OPD*'s budget crisis became a high profile event in the local media. With the media attention drawn to the overtime expenditures, sideshow participants knew they outnumbered the police and began to aggressively challenge responding officers. It became a serious public and officer safety issue. This activity occurred, to a varying degree, in all areas of the city of Oakland, but was most prevalent in the neighborhoods of East Oakland.

RESPONSE

A thorough review of the factors contributing to the problem of sideshows led to the development and implementation of the Operation impact program. The CHP knew for this program to be effective, they would need to focus in three general areas:

Community Involvement

Positive community interactions were encouraged and part of the CHP's deployment plans.

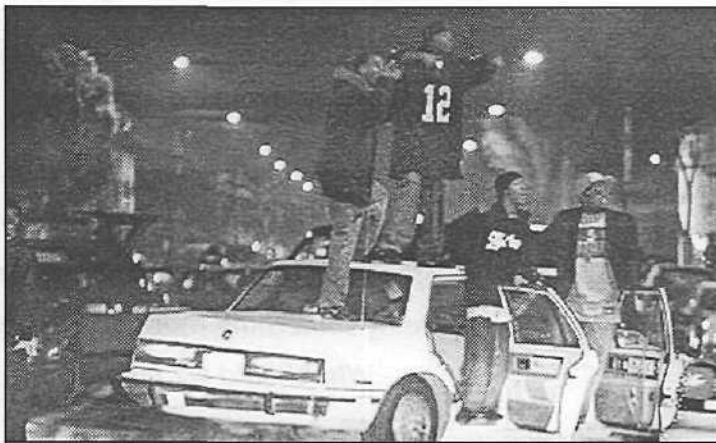
Local Legislation

An important tool for the CHP was the Parking Lot Closure Ordinance and Senate Bill 1489, a law that allowed officers to tow and impound cars cited for certain reckless driving and exhibition of speed violations for 30 days.

Law Enforcement

The CHP, in collaboration with OPD, went into the city of Oakland to augment OPD's efforts in regional policing. Problem Oriented Policing was the main theme in all briefings both at the CHP and OPD. It was CHP's policy to demonstrate zero tolerance for any violations of the California Vehicle Code that were observed within the target area. When appropriate, offenders were cited, arrested and their cars towed. When officers were not actively diverting heavy traffic from sideshow "hot spots," they conducted proactive, high profile enforcement.

This combination became a powerful deterrent that made sideshows rare occurrences and brought relief to the community.



Typical behavior at an Oakland sideshow 2004

ASSESSMENT

During the first 11 nights of this initiative, Oakland did not have a single homicide. Statistical data from specific Operation Impact nights just before and during this initiative revealed a criminal connection to sidseshows: 67 percent of the drivers contacted were unlicensed. The average age of the individuals stopped was 25, and 38 percent of all drivers were not from Oakland. Stolen vehicles, firearms, and illegal drugs were routinely recovered during sidseshow activities. Many participants of sidseshows had outstanding warrants for unrelated crimes for which the CHP made dozens of arrests. Operation Impact was effective in mitigating sidseshow activity, receiving fewer calls to 911 call centers for vandalism and noise abatement, and yielding successful enforcement results. Overtime expenditures for OPD were decreased, and hundreds of officer hours worked by the CHP contributed to addressing the the sidseshow problem. This program minimized direct costs to the city due to a joint grant with OPD which provided \$30,000 in overtime funding for OPD to support cruising abatement efforts (Resolution No. 78984 C.M.S.. December 21. 2004).

Sidseshows Infuriates 83-year Old Oakland Resident.

"The smoke of burning car tires fills my home and I'm routinely awakened by the crowds and the sound of drivers doing "donuts."

"Why do we have to live where we can't even sleep at night? It's just not fair." "When you get to a certain age... you want to relax and be comfortable in your own home and you can't because these youngsters are doing something that they're not supposed to be doing.

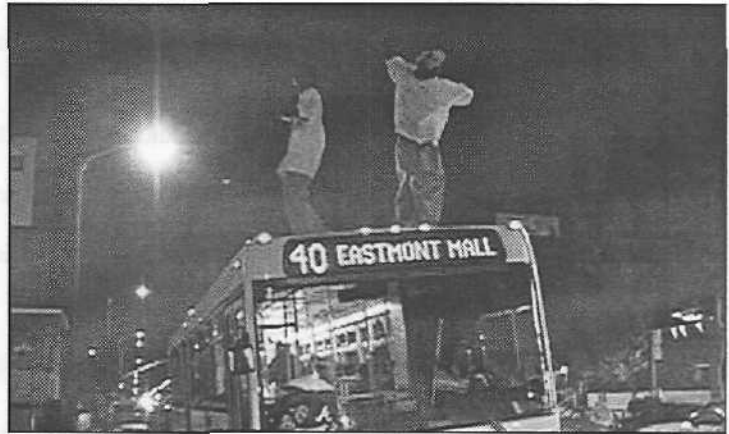
Why should we have to put up with that?"

— Gladys Green

SCANNING

Oakland, California has a population of just under 400,000, and is located on the east side of the San Francisco Bay. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 78.2 square miles: 56.1 square miles of it is land, and 22.1 square miles of it is water. The average household income is \$44,000 and the median price of a home is \$487,000. The city has an unemployment rate of 8.7 percent and over 18 percent of its population is living below the poverty line.

Summertime is sideshow season in Oakland. "Sideshows" are illegal street performances and stunts involving vehicles and people taking over public streets and placing participants, onlookers, the public, and police in danger. That means cruising car parties with anywhere from a dozen to hundreds of participants in the street — dancing, spinning donuts, street racing, and occasionally "ghost riding the whip." This term refers to all vehicle passengers — including drivers — hanging and dancing on the outside of slow-moving vehicles, which leaves no one behind the Steering wheel.



Sideshow attendees commandeer an Oakland bus.

Sideshows originated in Oakland, approximately 20 years ago, and for awhile, were mostly confined to Oakland and adjacent suburbs. Thanks in large part to the internet, videos, and the news media, "sideshows" became increasingly popular. In Oakland, where it all began, "sideshows" wreaked havoc, posing a significant challenge for police because sideshows often resulted in violence, injuries, and even deaths. Additionally a mob mentality commonly associated with these activities made responding to these incidents extremely dangerous to public safety and responding officer safety. Especially alarming was that Oakland Police were not only

the targets of repeated rock and bottle throwing, but also at times the targets of gunfire. As police problems go, sideshows were among the most difficult and potentially dangerous of all and for the following reasons:

1. They were clear acts of defiance of authority, with responding police *often* the targets of rocks, bottles, and even gunfire.
2. They were mobile and moved rapidly from location to location thanks to cell phone communication (including texting) that allowed participants to stay one step ahead of responding police.
3. They completely took over city streets and intersections - involving hundreds of often violent participants and onlookers. Sometimes these events escalated into full-fledged riots, as happened (twice) the year the Oakland Raiders made it to the Super Bowl.

In 2004, on a Saturday night in Oakland, a sideshow was never far away. OPD tried to keep them from happening through traffic stops, but there was a war going on. On one side, OPD said what started with a sideshow ended with serious criminal activity. On the other side,

Welcome to California, An Ohio Tourists' Opinion

The tourist had never heard of a sideshow. That all changed when he came upon about 100 people watching a sideshow at the intersection of Foothill and High streets in Oakland.

"I couldn't get through - everything was blocked," he said.

"They started to jump on my car, tried to drag me out of my car, punching me, breaking my window. I was so afraid for my life."

"At that point I'm thinking, I'm going to die, I'm not going to live. I've got to survive. I've got to get out of there. It's all I could do."

- Dave Kru\$

the drivers and crowds who cheered on the activity referred to the sideshows as "institutions" and "traditions." They were glamorized in the professional-style videos, "Oakland Gone Wild" and "Sydewayz", now famous on YouTube, and they were mentioned as "destinations" on some Bay Area radio stations.

Glamour had little to do with four young women in an Escalade one night when they were caught in the middle of a sideshow. With their sports utility vehicle unable to move, they were pulled from their car,

stripped, assaulted, and sent running down the street naked as sideshow participants turned over their automobile. Another victim who mistakenly got caught up in a sideshow was shot and killed after his car accidentally grazed a van.



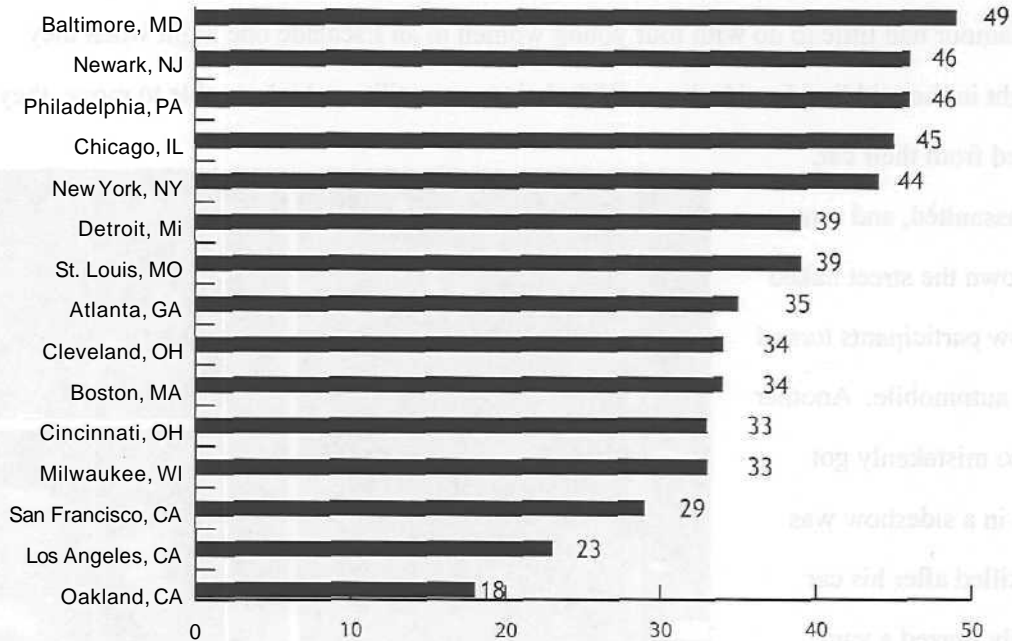
An Oakland Taxi driver finds himself the victim of a sideshow.

Sideshowes have been going on for years and have always been illegal, but they had become increasingly chaotic. OPD blamed this on people spilling out of clubs in the early morning hours, many of them high on ecstasy and other drugs. For people living in the midst of East Oakland, it added up to a loud, noisy problem. It was a problem that the CHP, the OPD, and the community had to address.

Economically, occurrences of sideshow activity in the Oakland area negatively impacted traffic particularly in the East Oakland area including the Oakland International Airport. It also had a negative impact on area businesses, some of which had been repeatedly victimized by looting, vandalism, or were forced to close early because of the raucous sideshow activity. The city was spending more than \$500,000 a year on ineffective efforts to handle the problem.

The OPD has an authorized strength of 803 sworn officers; however, it has been severely short of that goal for many years. In 2004, OPD officers per 10,000 residents fell considerably short when compared to similar sized cities (see chart).

Officers Per 10,000 Residents



Source for other cities: U.S. Dept. of Justice at www.ojp.usdoj.gov/bjs/abstract/cslliea04.htm, Oakland calculated from 740 officers for 410,000 residents. Figures are from 2004.

The OPD had officers who were responding to call after call with no time for proactive patrol, community interaction, or traffic law enforcement. Administrators in the department wrestled with how to maintain proactive traffic law enforcement when personnel resources were limited. Crime analysis directed deployment; however, effective deployment required more personnel. To compensate, mandatory overtime shifts were implemented to provide specialized enforcement operations (sideshow abatement). In spite of this effort, appropriate staffing levels were problematic. These factors created an environment where sideshows quickly became more frequent, and sideshow participants became more brazen. The sideshow participants knew they outnumbered police, and mobs frequently and aggressively challenged responding officers.

ANALYSIS

In May 2004, the city of Oakland was experiencing homicide events, violent crimes, and vehicle sideshow activities in various areas of East and West Oakland. The quality of life in many Oakland neighborhoods was impaired by assaults, street level narcotics trafficking, and on-going California Vehicle Code violations. OPD has the primary responsibility to enforce traffic laws and investigate traffic collisions within the city limits; however, OPD suffered severe shortages of officers and faced media scrutiny for their overtime budget.

They needed to deploy officers in problematic areas, but did not have enough resources to effectively cover deployment without overtime pay. OPD had to require mandatory overtime but still could not provide appropriate levels of police presence. A lack of police presence was a contributing factor to sideshow activity. No deterrent was in place when participants had no fear of getting caught.

Since 1988, activity associated with late-night cruising had been broadly referred to as the "sideshow." The term "sideshow" was widely applied to the activity engaged in by participants, officials tasked with dealing with the problem, and members of the media. Sideshow activity generally erupted on weekend nights after bars had closed, but it also occurred on holiday weekends and warm summer evenings. Sideshow activity began unusually early in 2004 and appeared to be escalating each week, resulting in violence, injuries, and even deaths.



Sideshow closes down Highway 880 (see annex for video link).

Vehicle collisions, shootings, stabbings, and mob mentality commonly accompanied sideshow activity. During one two-week period in February 2004, two women were seriously injured in a vehicle collision, one man was shot five times, and another woman was killed by a reckless and drunk sideshow driver. The demographics of the sideshow participants was fairly consistent:

- Men and women.
- Average age of 25 years.
- Employed.
- 34 percent were not Oakland residents.
- 75 percent were unlicensed drivers.

Sideshow participants generally invaded the parking lots of shopping malls, convenience stores, and gas stations, though they would also take over major intersections. Once gathered, a vehicle would start to spin donuts and burn rubber within a circle formed by the crowd. Usually, pedestrian spectators were no more than a few feet from the spinning vehicle. The traffic congestion associated with this activity prevented public transit from traveling along normal routes. On several occasions during 2004, traffic in and out of the Oakland International Airport was disrupted by sideshow activity creating gridlock on a major roadway. Sideshows were jamming crucial arteries, preventing the delivery of emergency services in the affected local areas. Many sideshow participants said sideshows exist because there was nothing for young people to do in Oakland at night.



The outcome of a Saturday night sideshow

RESPONSE

In November 2003, due to the ever increasing scrutiny of their overtime costs, the continued shortage of personnel to effectively deploy officers to problem areas, and the escalating violent response to OPD's presence from sideshow proponents and participants, CHP's Oakland Area started collaborating with OPD in the regional policing effort referred to as "Operation Impact."

CHP personnel, in collaboration with OPD personnel provided enhanced proactive traffic law enforcement services within the city of Oakland in order to reduce crimes impacting community welfare and quality of life. They conducted maximum enforcement of driving under the influence (DUI) laws, and worked closely together in areas identified by the OPD as severely impacted by crime. CHP conducted warrant checks on many suspects detained



Pedestrians are within feet of a spinning car

during enforcement actions, and debriefed suspects placed under arrest regarding criminal activity in the Oakland area. The CHP's Golden Gate Division and Oakland Area met with OPD management during all phases of Operation Impact regarding continued supplemental law enforcement assistance.

The CHP is known for its expertise and leadership in traffic safety enforcement. Specifically, CHP officers receive more than six times the California Peace Officer Standards and Training minimums for DUI enforcement and California Vehicle Code enforcement during their initial training at the Academy. Many CHP officers selected to represent the Department during these regional policing programs are selected due to additional specialized training they receive as drug recognition evaluators. Because of CHP's expertise and previous successes utilizing

the regional policing efforts OPD Chief Richard Word requested supplemental law enforcement assistance from CHP to help combat sideshow incidents, and to reduce crimes impacting community welfare and quality of life. The sideshows affected both Oakland surface streets and the freeway system. The CHP entered into a contract with OPD on a traffic enforcement initiative supported by a state of California, Office of Traffic Safety grant, for a term between January 1, 2005, and September 30, 2005. The grant was to help facilitate increased efforts to curb reckless driving, exhibitions of speed, unlicensed driving, DUL and exhibitions of speed (all of which were associated with sideshow activity) and was administered by the CHP. During the enforcement deployments, the CHP utilized its traffic safety expertise to provide law enforcement assistance and worked in collaboration with OPD to combat sideshow crimes through zero tolerance, proactive traffic enforcement, and arrest warrant operations directed in violent crime areas identified by OPD crime trend analysis.

A thorough review of the factors contributing to the problem of sideshows led to additional elements of the Operation Impact program. The CHP knew for an effective program to be established, they would need to focus in three general areas:

- Community involvement,
- Local legislation, and
- Law enforcement.

This combination had a powerful, effective response, clearly equal to the task of taking on sideshow activity and its associated violence. The response to each is described in the following paragraphs.

Community Involvement

Positive community interactions were encouraged and part of the CHP's deployment plans. CHP Oakland Area sergeants and managers assigned to "Operation Impact" attended OPD "Crime Stop" meetings in order to appropriately deploy and coordinate CHP resources

to problematic patrol areas and access critical officer safety and beat information. While proactive enforcement was also a component of the deployments, building community trust through positive, professional interactions with citizens was a top priority. CHP personnel took advantage of any opportunities to greet citizens and discuss crime/traffic issues within the communities. Media ride-a-longs were approved and scheduled by the incident commanders and media relations were coordinated through CHP public information officers.

Through cooperation with local businesses, the CHP and OPD were able to limit the access to areas that sideshow participants used. Business owners and merchants started locking up or chaining off parking lots during non-business hours.



Local Legislation

Sideshow crowd gather around a moving vehicle.

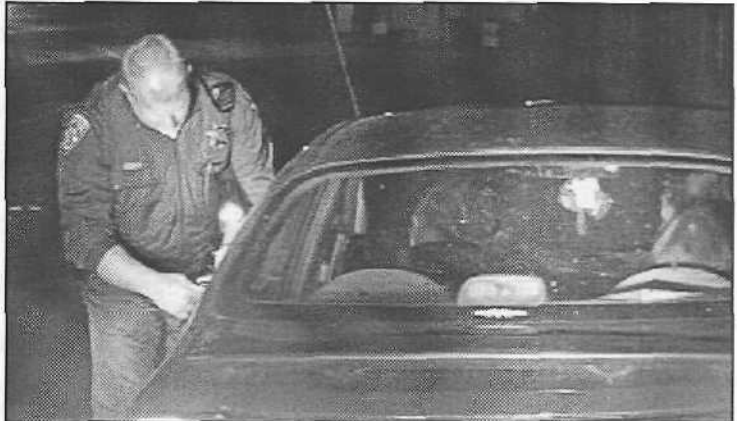
An important tool for the program was enforcing the Parking Lot Closure Ordinance (No. 12390 C.M.S.). It compelled commercial property owners to secure their lots after closing, thereby removing several popular sideshow venues. The second major component of the legislative agenda was state legislation (Senate Bill 1489), known as the "Ukendra Johnson Act of 2002," proposed by the city of Oakland and cosponsored by State Senator Don Perata and Assembly Member Wilma Chan. This law allowed officers to tow and impound cars cited for certain reckless driving and exhibition of speed violations for 30-days. The law had the desired deterrent effect on some of the most dangerous acts of reckless driving and exhibitions of speed associated with sideshows.

Law Enforcement

The CHP was tasked with the overall responsibility for traffic safety associated with sideshow activity. Problem Oriented Policing was the main theme in all briefings both at the

CHP and OPD. CHP focused on law enforcement responses to sideshow misbehavior, including strategic deployment of personnel to conduct high-profile traffic enforcement. It was CHP's policy to demonstrate zero tolerance for any violations of the California Vehicle Code that were observed within the target area. When appropriate, offenders were cited/arrested and the violators' cars were stored or impounded. When officers were not actively diverting heavy traffic from sideshow "hot spots," they conducted proactive, high profile enforcement. The CHP staffed every deployment in collaboration with an OPD manager with two Oakland sergeants and an on-call Oakland area manager to direct CHP squad operations based upon current operational needs, arrest trends, and crime trends. Also available from the CHP if needed were: canine operations, investigative/warrant service team assistance, and air support. Contingency plans were in place for potential civil disturbances. Each deployment commenced with a joint briefing with OPD and CHP participants. All mobilization efforts were coordinated utilizing the Incident Command System. Communication

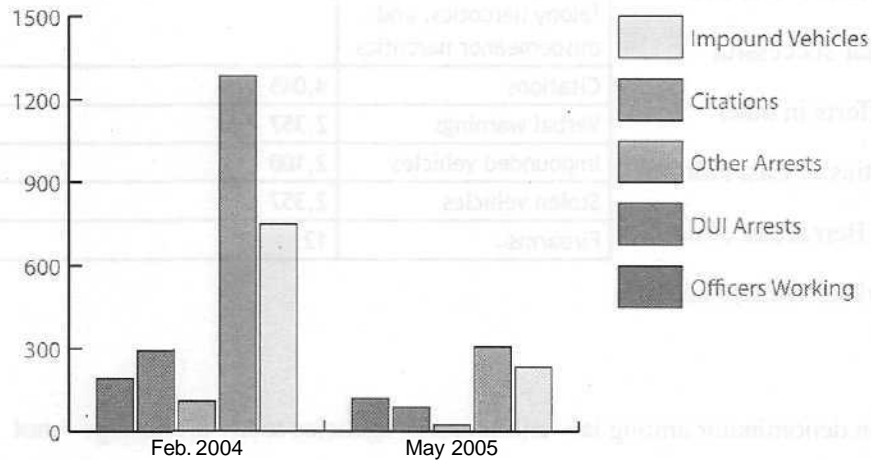
between OPD and CHP was accomplished through the sharing of resources such as handheld radios and nextel radio/phones.



A Late night stop

ASSESSMENT

The CHP's Operation Impact achieved great success. The statutory changes, community involvement, and enforcement of the California Vehicle Code worked to limit the number of sideshow events. Although few believe that sideshow activity can be eliminated completely, Operation Impact helped relieve a majority of the criminal elements involved with these events. From the beginning of the CHP's Operation Impact, spanning from November 2003 through September 2005, the city of Oakland saw a reduction during sideshow events in DUI arrests, a drop in traffic citations, and a reduction of impounded vehicles (see table below).



Operation Impact results show a steep decline in offenses as the program takes hold.

Stolen vehicles, firearms, and illegal drugs were routinely recovered during sideshow enforcement and vehicle pursuits of serious offenders did occur. CHP found an increased use of "club drugs" such as ecstasy by participants, and an increase in serious violent crime such as homicide and sexual assaults. Sideshow participants told investigators about the ties between drug use, and the increase in violent crime.

The CHP's efforts to reduce the number of sideshow events and the crime, vandalism, and violence associated with sideshows, continue with the ultimate desire to maintain order in

the streets of East Oakland - and bring an immediate improvement to the neighborhood's quality of life. A key measure of the success of this program is that the major sideshow gatherings have become rare. A maintenance plan is in place to sustain and build upon the success of the 2003-2005 Operation Impact program. To date, East Oakland has not seen the number of sideshows or the degree of their devastating effects that were evident prior to the implementation of the Problem Oriented Policing model. The CHP has conducted similar successful regional policing efforts in other cities such as the cities of East Palo Alto, Banning, San Bernardino, Isla Vista, Fresno, Clearlake, Vallejo and Stockton.

CHP Operation Impact Activity from November 2003 to September 2005	
Officers working	1 on-call manager 2 sergeants 14 officers per deployment 69 days
Driving under the influence arrests	916
Other arrests (includes Felony, misdemeanor, felony narcotics, and misdemeanor narcotics)	432
Citations	4,045
Verbal warnings	2,357
Impounded vehicles	2,100
Stolen vehicles	2,357
Firearms	12

The common denominator among law enforcement agencies today is shortage—not enough of anything required to get the job done effectively. While these shortages will probably be a constant for the foreseeable future, threats to public safety will likely continue to grow at alarming rates. Unless something is done, as populations increase, crime will continue to hold the public hostage in its fearful grip; and increasing police personnel to match crime levels will likely not be the answer.

Finding effective solutions to these problems without new dollars to pay for them may seem to be an insurmountable problem. One effective solution, however, may lie within reach of every local and state law enforcement agency. The success of regional policing programs (such as Operation Impact) that stress cooperation between state and local agencies demonstrates how

rising crime levels can be tackled and acceptable levels of public service can be maintained. It is a simple philosophy of neighbor helping neighbor by "painting the streets with black-and-whites." Otherwise, every law enforcement agency could be forced to confront its official responsibilities alone, always battling the reality of a world where criminals and criminal activities increase while resources do not.



Residual effects of sidseshows on city infrastructure

AGENCY INFORMATION

1. The CHP's Operation Impact Oakland was developed by Golden Gate Division's Oakland Area command. The concepts employed have been expanded to all of Golden Gate Division where sideshows might become part of their jurisdiction including; Dublin, Hayward, San Jose, and San Francisco. This program has been made available to other local law enforcement agencies including: Alameda Police Department, Fremont Police Department, Hayward Police Department and Alameda County Sheriff Department.
2. Problem Oriented Policing was the main theme in all briefings, both at the CHP level and while in briefings at OPD.
3. The opportunity to participate in a proactive traffic safety program in collaboration with OPD, makes the environment safer for the public and all law enforcement personnel in which to work and live. No additional incentives have or will be offered to CHP personnel to participate in problem solving activities.
4. The CHP faced the sideshow challenge head-on, focusing on the three principles of community involvement, legislation, and law enforcement. As the CHP began this program existing resources and additional training were useful in DUI detection and aggressive enforcement of the California Vehicle Code.
5. The main issue that arose was CHP officers encountering sideshows in unfamiliar areas of the city. CHP officers were deployed from the Oakland Area CHP office as well as several neighboring CHP area offices. Those from neighboring areas learned the Oakland area quickly and adapted to their surroundings by pairing these officers with Oakland Area CHP officers. Open communication was established between

agencies by utilizing the incident command system and sharing radio communication devices. Attendance at daily briefings that included all participants for every deployment was required. Current statistics, officer safety information, and crime analysis data was disseminated at each briefing.

6. Grant monies were received from the Office of Traffic Safety and managed by the CHP. CHP expenditures did not go beyond the grant budget.

7. Project Contact Information:

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ANNEX

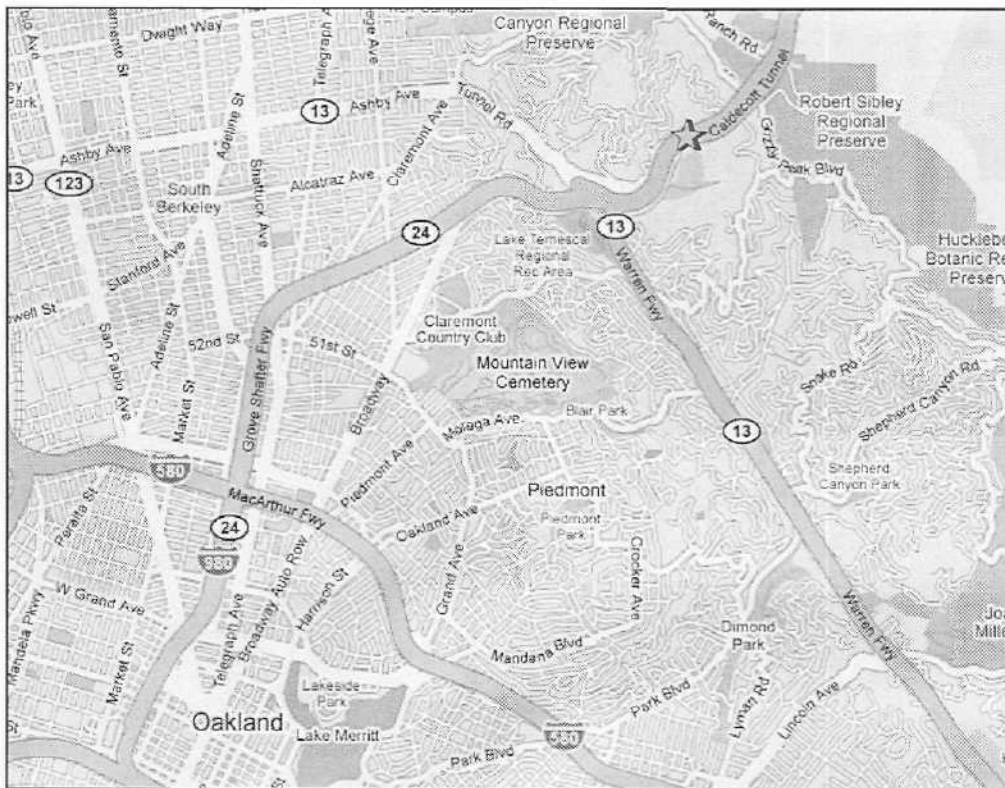
Oakland, California



In An Officers' Own Words...

*"One of the most significant and memorable incidents which pertained specifically to sideshows dealt with the Caldecott Tunnel. One night after a concert had let out at the Concord Pavilion dozens, of East Bay bound drivers decided through cell phones to stop all traffic inside the tunnel and have their own private party. They burned their tires, parked vehicles, and blasted music while fellow motorists were stranded inside the tunnel with no where to go. Dozens of people began climbing on top of cars (which did not belong to them) and dancing. A group of high and intoxicated men from the concert attempted to physically remove a motorist from her car and assault her. The window to her vehicle had been broken out, several men were in the process of removing her, **but** the men fled as CHP arrived on scene."*

California Highway Patrolman



Sideshow video displaying negative sideshow activity, photographed for bragging rights by the participants, and posted online.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=JS85iXrq-9w>

Oakland Taxi driver becomes the victim of a sideshow.

<http://youtube.com/watch?v=X5qGVE9EIsI>

Watch KTVU's coverage of the Ohio tourist caught up in an Oakland Sideshow.

<http://v\ www.ktvu.com/video/4280386/indx.fatml>

