

December 3, 1997

REPORT TO THE HONORABLE
MAYOR AND CITY COUNCIL

CRIMINAL DIVISION INITIATIVES - NEIGHBORHOOD PROSECUTION, CODE
ENFORCEMENT, AND EARLY INTERVENTION

Over the last three weeks, I have taken the opportunity on a number of occasions to educate and train outside of San Diego on a number of exciting law enforcement initiatives in the City. I wanted to take the opportunity to brief you on what I have been sharing with other jurisdictions and to offer specialized support in your districts as the need arises.

Neighborhood Prosecution

Last year, we began an effort in our office to get our prosecutors out into the community just as we have done with Code Enforcement and Domestic Violence over the last five years. Specifically, we identified Deputy City Attorney Carol Banks to work on a daily basis with neighborhood policing teams and community groups on problem oriented policing (POP) projects. We have, with your support, added a second prosecutor to this initiative this year with exciting results.

The Neighborhood Prosecution Unit has worked on: the San Diego riverbed cleanup, the recent drag racing concerns, the prostitution TROs, downtown transient issues, numerous loitering for drug activity areas of the city, and lewd activity in Marian Bear and Presidio Parks.

We are now providing civil advice and criminal prosecution support to officers and their supervisors directly. We believe this effort has played a role in reducing liability for police officer actions in the field. Chief Sanders and his staff have praised Carol's role in assisting the Police Department in their innovative neighborhood policing initiatives.

Gang and Nuisance Abatement

Over the last year, we have participated with the Police Department in over 30 properties where we have abated a nuisance and moved forward toward renovation or demolition of dilapidated properties where criminal activity has developed. This brings to over 100 the number of properties we have worked on in the last three years. By working in a cooperative

way with community groups and other interested parties, often it is not necessary for us to file a formal legal action. In addition, we continue to use the tool of civil injunctions against known gang members and other criminals when we identify them in proximity to properties where we are filing a formal action.

It is exciting to hear our approach modeled throughout the country. We look forward to continuing to work with you on properties and areas of the city where specific intervention is needed. Please do not hesitate to make us aware of properties where we can work with you, Code Enforcement, and the Police Department in a cooperative fashion.

Early Intervention

-STOP Program: We are working diligently on numerous fronts to aggressively pursue our early intervention approach to criminal prosecution. Recently, the STOP Program, a partnership between the City Attorney and the Police Department, has been hailed as the reason for significant drops in fatal collisions and traffic accidents in the City of San Diego. STOP is taking suspended license drivers off the street and selling their cars to fund the program. Already, we have forfeited nearly 100 cars of suspended license drivers who have refused to stop driving even though they have lost their licenses.

-Parenting Project: With your support, we have nearly 500 families now participating in the San Diego Parenting Project. The San Diego Police Department has been providing every juvenile contact report on every misdemeanor juvenile offense for kids age 14 and under to us for almost two years now. We have, in turn, been inviting the parent or parents into our office for an office hearing. We have then been referring the parents to three court approved parenting programs. The re-offense rate for kids in the Project is less than 5%.

The San Diego Union-Tribune recently chose the program as one of their model "Community Solutions." We are now looking for ways to develop a mentoring program for the kids as well as for their parents.

-Domestic Violence: We have continued to see strong results from our aggressive misdemeanor prosecution efforts in domestic violence. You may, however, have seen my recent editorial calling upon all of us to re-double our efforts.

A recent study by the Police Department found that in 75% of the cases where the police/prosecution intervention exists, the cases do not result in another reported incident in the subsequent two years. The more troubling fact is that 25% of the families are causing 50% of the domestic violence incidents or an average of three incidents in a two year period. Our focus now is shifting to these repeat offenders.

Your support for each of these innovative efforts has made a significance difference in the crime statistics in our city over the last few years. We believe there is far more to do but we know we are on the right track.

If you have particular needs or interest in any of these areas, please let me know. We

would be very interested in assisting you and your constituents in any specialized efforts that are necessary. Thank you for your partnership.

Respectfully submitted,

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