

# CITY OF OAKLAND

## AGENDA REPORT

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
2006 MAR 29 PM 7:00

TO: Office of the City Administrator  
ATTN: Deborah Edgerly  
FROM: Oakland Police Department  
DATE: April 11, 2006

RE: **A Report on 2005 Oakland Gang-Related Activity And Prevention and Intervention Activities Being Conducted To Address Gang-Related Criminal Activity In Oakland**

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### SUMMARY

This report advises the City Council on the status of the Oakland Police Department's Special Duty Unit II (Gang Enforcement Unit). The report also provides information on the Unit's enforcement strategies, statistics, and coordinated enforcement efforts within the Department's Special Operations Group (SOG).

### FISCAL IMPACT

Current Special Duty Unit II (Gang Enforcement) staffing consists of one sergeant of police position and six police officer positions. The annual labor cost excluding overtime is \$1,028,456.41. At present there are no additional O&M costs for the Unit with the exception of fuel and maintenance required for four police vehicles.

### BACKGROUND

#### 2000-2006

The City of Oakland often confronts extremely serious and seemingly intractable violent crime problems with static or diminishing law enforcement and social welfare resources. Due to personnel resource constraints, the Oakland Police Department has been unable to staff an operational Gang Enforcement Unit for approximately five years. During this period, gang activity in the City of Oakland has increased dramatically. The number of active, violent, Hispanic street gangs has increased from two to four, with member estimates of 1000-1500.

The increase in violent, Hispanic, street gangs has had a significant impact on violent crime in the City of Oakland. This year alone, there have been six homicides (38%) that are attributed to gang violence, in comparison to a total of nine in 2005. Additionally, last year there were approximately 75-100 gang-related shootings; whereas since January of this year there have

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already been 16 gang-related shootings, a pace that if continued will have the City of Oakland recording approximately 192 gang-related shootings in 2006.

While Asian gangs are virtually non-existent in Oakland, African American gangs do exist; however their activities are almost exclusively narcotics related and contribute to the sale and distribution of illegal drugs throughout the City.

## **KEY ISSUES AND IMPACTS**

In the fall of 2005, gang violence in the City of Oakland spiked so dramatically, that the Police Department was forced to re-create a Gang Enforcement Unit. The Department's Gang Unit currently consists of one sergeant and six officers. The Gang Unit was created within the structure of the Department's Special Operations Group (SOG) to augment the Unit's ability to coordinate and focus a variety of resources to address gang violence in the City. The combined resources of the Special Operations Group include:

**Targeted Enforcement Task Force** – Responsible for investigating violent narcotics trafficking groups, and known violent offenders.

**Special Duty Unit I** – Conducts parole and probation enforcement.

**Special Duty Unit II** - Conducts gang enforcement operations, and provides investigative assistance to other SOG special units as required.

**Intelligence Unit** - Gathers criminal intelligence, coordinates efforts with outside agencies, and provides operational support to special units.

Since fall 2005, the Oakland Police Department's Gang Unit has arrested eight gang-related homicide suspects, and recovered 55 firearms. The combined resource of the Gang Unit and the Special Operations Group has been extremely successful. Since March 8, 2005, SOG has recovered 251 firearms, arrested 53 homicide suspects, and has made 1,542 felony arrests.

## **PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The objective of the Special Operations Group and Gang Unit is to reduce the incidence of street-level violence in the City of Oakland. Through coordinated and sustained actions by the Department, and in conjunction with allied agencies and community resources, the SOG can achieve its strategic goals to: reduce injuries and deaths (especially from gun-related incidents); reduce the fear of violent crime throughout the community; prevent incidents that discourage the legitimate use of public places; improve the City's image as a safe and orderly place to conduct business, social, and recreational activities; and regain the public's trust and confidence in the Police Department.

The anti-gang strategy used by the Oakland Police Department's Gang Unit includes the following functions:

- Follow-Up Investigative Assistance on Gang-Related CID Cases
- Identification and Classification of Active Gang Members
- Surveillance and Enforcement at Active Gang Locations
- Probation and Parole Searches of Active Gang Members
- Intelligence Sharing with Neighboring Jurisdictions

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** Because many gang members are involved in criminal activity such as narcotics trafficking, the Special Operations Group initiates many criminal cases that result in asset forfeiture proceedings. Since March 8, 2005, the Special Operations Group has seized over \$218,000.

**Environmental:** Gangs create substantial problems with neighborhood blight, primarily in the form of graffiti to both public and private buildings. Reducing gang activity in the City should decrease the amount of graffiti as well as the burden of clean-up.

**Social Equity:** The existence of the Gang Enforcement Unit provides specialized attention to gang-related criminal activity within the City of Oakland and assists the Department to quickly identify active gang members, remove them from the community, and increase public safety.

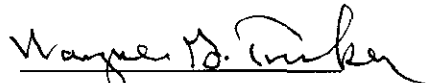
### **DISABILITY AND SENIOR CITIZEN ACCESS**

There are no American with Disabilities Act (ADA) or senior access issues contained in this report.

**RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE**

The increase in gang violence in the City of Oakland demands that the Oakland Police Department dedicate specialized enforcement officers to proactively conduct gang enforcement operations. Additionally, these specially trained officers provide valuable investigative assistance to Criminal Investigation Division personnel on a regular basis. I therefore recommend that City Council accept this report.

Respectfully submitted,

  
Wayne G. Tucker  
Chief of Police

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Special Operations Group  
Office of Chief of Police

**APPROVED AND FORWARDED TO  
THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMMITTEE**

  
Office of the City Administrator