CITY OF OAKLAND

AGENDA REPORT

TO:	Elizabeth Lake Interim City Administrator	**FROM:**	James Beere Chief of Police
SUBJECT:	OPD Informational Report on Human Trafficking	**DATE:**	July 27, 2026

City Administrator Approval Elizabeth Lake (Sep 3, 2026 10:41:50 PDT) Date: Sep 3, 2026

RECOMMENDATION

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report From The City Administration As Required In Section 5 Of Ordinance 13873 As It Applies To Law Enforcement Activity, Prosecutorial Outcomes, Fiscal Outcomes, And Community Impact & Equity Review.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is provided as a response to Council Member Charlene Wang's request for an informational report regarding human trafficking in Oakland. The Oakland Police Department culminates its response to human trafficking prevention through outreach, high visibility prevention through patrol, facilitation of specific operations, and with follow up investigations. The Bureau of Operations (i.e., Patrol) provides 24-hour policing and preventative efforts.

The department's Special Victims Section's (SVS) Vice and Child Exploitation Unit (CEU) coordinates operations that focuses on specific identified locations involving human trafficking. The CEU team is dedicated to addressing human trafficking through outreach and both long- and short-term investigations. which occurs regularly in Oakland. SVS/CEU focuses on rescuing the child victims of human trafficking and working with community partners to serve the victims eligible for services.

SVS trains its personnel, as well as regional partners, in how best to work together to help victims and expose the exploiters. SVS operations requires strong collaboration with other partners such as the Bureau of Field Operations, Community Based Organizations (CBOs) which includes advocates, the District Attorney's office, City Attorney's office, Department of Public Health, and other stakeholders in order to maximize resources to address the overwhelming challenges that come from human trafficking.

BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The primary mission of OPD's Special Victims Section and Child Exploitation Unit is to rescue juveniles from human trafficking and provide adult victims with resources to help them make significant life changes while finding a balance to address the quality-of-life issues related to prostitution that impacts neighborhoods, businesses, and the overall community. The CEU's objective is to rescue all sexually exploited minors while still:

- Arresting those responsible for exploiting the minors including pimps, adult sex workers and buyers.
- Addressing community concerns pertaining to the impact of prostitution throughout the city.
- Providing service opportunities for all victims of human trafficking and child exploitation.
- Addressing, communicating, and investigating all aspects of human trafficking in a trauma informed and sensitive manner.

OPD Human Trafficking subject matter experts and Family Violence Law Center (FVLC) advocates conduct initial officer training in the police academy and at patrol line up briefings. OPD training consists of awareness, what to look for, how to interact with minors suspected of being involved in human trafficking, do's & don'ts in a preliminary investigation, and the importance of patience and consideration of all parties (victims, exploiters and buyers). OPD's CEU train external agencies, promote human trafficking awareness, and develop operational procedures.

The City mandates city employees attend the Commercially Sexually Exploited Children (CSEC) training presented by Family Violence Law Center (FVLC), and the Alameda District Attorney's Office's Human Exploitation and Trafficking program (HEAT). CEU cross trains with several non-governmental organizations focused on fighting human trafficking: FVLC, Restorative Pathways, MISSSEY and other advocacy partners. These organizations share information and collaborate with each other.

On July 7, 2026, Council passed resolution CMS 91234 which was spearheaded by Councilmember Wang to temporarily close through traffic from 9th, 10th and 11th Ave between International Boulevard and E 15th St. for a period of six (6) months to disrupt persistent activity associated with sex trafficking. The purpose of these barriers is to improve visibility along International Boulevard by limiting opportunities for sex transactions to occur in the adjacent alleys. This environmental design change is intended to enhance officers' ability to observe and address "john" activity and utilize California Penal Code § 653.25 when violations occur in plain view.

This initiative follows a strategy modeled after a successful program implemented in Houston and was approved by both the Public Safety Committee and the City Council.

The program's effectiveness will be closely monitored throughout the six-month period. Upon completion, findings will be compiled and presented to the public, the Public Safety Committee,

and the City Council, consistent with the reporting methodology used in the Houston study. It is difficult to predict the precise impact on enforcement outcomes at this time. However, we are committed to providing a transparent and comprehensive assessment at the conclusion of the pilot program.Installation of the barriers is currently scheduled for September.

ANALYSIS / POLICY ALTERNATIVES

Oakland and other major cities are part of a mobile prostitution circuit; sex trafficking moves from city to city to reduce risk of incarceration, increase profits (supply and demand), and to avoid collaborative prosecution across multiple jurisdictions. To combat the multiple levels of human trafficking, OPD established policies and procedures to reduce risk and partnered with a multitude of local and federal entities to face this epidemic.

OPD CEU Procedures/Policies

Areas of operations are prioritized by citizen complaints and reports. The Vice/Child Exploitation Unit is a specialized unit with advanced training in human trafficking and trauma informed investigations. CEU partners with Family Violence Center and other victim advocacy groups such as MISSSEY as the first responder advocates during operations and juvenile interviews.

Officers work in undercover capacities during the operations under the guidelines of Departmental General Order K-10, Undercover Operations. Female adults arrested and rescued in a proactive operation are given resources and debriefed. They are encouraged to work with advocates to seek opportunities for a different lifestyle.

There are follow-up services and diversion programs for those charged. Juveniles rescued during pro-active operations are provided with an advocate. The follow-up investigations are specifically geared toward the needs of the individual child.

OPD Human Trafficking Enforcement Activity

The Oakland Police Department has two Bureaus that regularly engage in the enforcement of human trafficking. The Bureau of Investigations (BOI) has a team called the Vice and Child Exploitation (CEU) Unit. The CEU currently consists of one sergeant and four officer/investigator positions. The CEU unit is responsible for the several human trafficking-related functions. Firstly, CEU investigates all human trafficking crimes (both adults and juveniles) and rescues juveniles involved in human trafficking (on average about 30 juveniles are rescued annually during proactive unit operations; this activity does not include the rescues coming separately from police area patrol activity). Secondly, CEU also investigates all child exploitation crimes, primarily child pornography and internet crimes against children. Lastly, the Unit also investigates labor trafficking crimes.

The CEU Unit proactively generates and works cases via undercover prostitution operations, internet operations, tips, referrals, etc. (averaging over fifty (50) operations per year over the past four years). Currently YTD, CEU has completed 27 operations targeting human trafficking.

The second bureau that regularly engages in the enforcement of human trafficking is the Bureau of Field Operations (BFO) Patrol. Its units also provide the daily presence and enforcement when their calls for services or patrols are Human Trafficking related. For example, in May 2026, patrol units answered a call of a trafficked juvenile. After rescuing the child, CEU investigators took over the follow-up investigation, connected the juvenile with advocates, resources and transportation home to her family in Riverside. The CEU collaborated with the District Attorney's Office to interview the victim and prosecute the exploiters.

OPD Human Trafficking Training

All trainings are designed to aid employees in the recognition of the signs of human trafficking and to promote trauma informed response to such incidents, including dispatch calls for service (i.e., domestic violence and disputes). Specifically, OPD training incorporates situational awareness and signs of human trafficking, how to interact with minors involved in human trafficking and any recent changes in law (i.e., California Assembly Bill 379).

The Unit conducts and participates in human trafficking training for community advocates and OPD personnel - including POST-certified (California Commission on Peace Officer Standards and Training) OPD "Undercover Prostitution Course," annual OPD sworn personnel Continuing Professional Training (CPT), patrol lineup trainings, and training of local businesses to be aware of signs of human trafficking.

Community Partnerships

CEU personnel regularly engage the public through a variety of formats to promote the challenges of human trafficking. Personnel attend CSEC meetings with Oakland United Against Human Trafficking and various partners. Additionally, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office conducted CSEC training and awareness with hospitals and clinics. This has led to additional OPD trainings with clinics.

OPD's Prostitution tip line ((510) 238-2373) allows the community to anonymously report prostitution activity in their neighborhood. The public has also been offered digital options.

OPD partners with non-profit community-created website (www.reportjohn.org) which allows people to anonymously report the buyer's license plate number. In such cases, police then send a letter to the registered vehicle owners. The letter states that the vehicle was in an area where prostitution and other public nuisances are known to occur. The purpose of the letter is to let the buyer know they are not anonymous; people notice and there is a website for human trafficking awareness.

State and Federal Partnerships

Oakland and other major cities are part of a mobile prostitution circuit; the female and pimps move from city to city to reduce risk of incarceration, increase profits (supply and demand), and to avoid collaborative prosecution across multiple jurisdictions.

OPD CEU has continually partnered with FBI's Child Exploitation Task Force, California State Attorney's Office and Regional Partners to collaborate in combating Human Trafficking. For example, OPD CEU joined FBI's Human Trafficking Operations Center Operations during the Super Bowl and World Cup events with undercover operations in Oakland while other regional partners conducted operations to simultaneously arrest offenders and share gathered intelligence.

General Review of CEU Statistics

The following information provides a view into the level of activity (**Table 1**) and capacity of the Special Victims Section's Vice/CEU:

- CEU conducts approximately 2-4 proactive operations a month.
- Location of operations is determined by community complaints, tips, institutional knowledge of areas of prostitution and operation staffing.

Table 1: Statistical Data for 2026 (Jan – Sept)

VICE OPERATIONAL DATA

Vice Operations	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Operation: Trolling (Male UC)	0						
Operation: Human Trafficking Other	0	3	3	3	3	3	1
Operation: Decoy	6	1		1	1		1
Operation: ICAC	0		1				
Operation: Massage Parlor	0						
Operation: SOAP	0						
Online Operation: Motel	0						
Online Operation: Social Media	0						

Vice Operations	January	February	March	April	May	June	July
Adult Male Felony	0	0	1	2		1	1
Adult Male Misdemeanor (John)	37	23	18	7	4	7	7
Adult Male Misdemeanor (Non-john)	0					3	4
Adult Female Felony	0						1
Adult Female Misdemeanor	0	2			1	3	2
Juvenile Male Felony	0						
Juvenile Male Misdemeanor	1						
Juvenile Male Rescue (Non-arrest)	0						
Juvenile Female Felony	0						
Juvenile Female Misdemeanor	0						
Juvenile Female Rescue (Non-arrest)	0	1	4				
Internal Affairs Complainants	0						
Use of Force Incidents	1						

- Four (4) Pimps/Traffickers were arrested.
- One hundred and three (103) Johns/Buyers were arrested.

RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS

This agenda item is a routine item and does not relate to any Oakland strategic planning efforts.

FISCAL IMPACT

An average human trafficking operation costs between $5,000 to $10,000 dollars depending on level of operation. A major 30-Day operation costs approximately $25,000 to 40,000 in overtime for all staff. The recent 30-Day operation cost was approximately $27,000 as CEU deployed outreach events as well as proactive operations.

Proactive operations come out of the City Funds approved for Human Trafficking Operations and FBI Reimbursement fund. SVS operations are carried out by using overtime for personnel, due to the lack of assigned SVS personnel.

Due to our partnership with the FBI Child Exploitation Task Force, CEU will likely receive approximately $134,000 a year to fund the OPD Task Force Officers expenditures to offset the costs.

PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST

This item did not require additional public outreach other than posting on the City's website.

COORDINATION

This informational report did not require additional coordination.

RACE & EQUITY

Human trafficking and sexual exploitation often predominantly impact victims from low income and disadvantaged communities. Efforts to confront and combat this criminal activity help to restore greater levels of social equity in Oakland.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL

Staff Recommends That The City Council Receive An Informational Report From The City Administration As Required In Section 5 Of Ordinance 13873 As It Applies To Law Enforcement Activity, Prosecutorial Outcomes, Fiscal Outcomes, And Community Impact & Equity Review.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Special Victim Section Lieutenant Marcos Campos at (510) 238-3829.

Respectfully submitted,

James P. Beere, OPD
Chief of Police

Reviewed by:

Omar Daza-Quiroz, Acting Deputy Chief, BOI
Oakland Police Department

Jeffrey Smoak, Acting Captain of Police
Oakland Police Department

Dr. Tracey Jones, Legislative Services Manager
OPD, BRM, Research and Planning

Prepared by:
Marcos Campos, Lieutenant of Police
Oakland Police Department