

City of Tacoma Safe and Clean Work Plan Update

(Due to Tansy Hayward and Team Liaison the Fourth Wednesday of Every Month)

Team Name:	Citizens Against Prostitution
Prepared by:	Dan Hensley
Date:	March 24, 2010

A. Project Summary

This team will target street level prostitution by working to reduce prostitution related crime within Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) zones. Its goal is to create a disincentive for prostitutes and their johns to operate in Tacoma, thereby improving the quality of life for residents and businesses.

B. Update of what has happened since last month including actions already completed or currently underway

July 22 Summary of Action

The team has put up a Web site shell. It is indexed within the main Safe and Clean landing page and can be found at: <http://www.cityoftacoma.org/Page.aspx?cid=12845>

At its July 9 meeting, there was a general consensus that this team hopes to impact positive changes in the realm of enforcement as well as prevention, and that these positive changes – which would encompass changes made to our physical environment as well as cultural shifts – must be sustainable from a community perspective.

The team is now working on forging connections with key stakeholders in the community, like Bob McCutcheon and Pacific Avenue Business District. It is also working on gathering data, such as statistics outlining the correlation between prostitution and the spread of disease, best practices from other municipalities on what it takes to make prostitution less profitable, and gathering current prostitution data for benchmarking purposes. And, it is working on getting pricing and funding sources for signage.

Aug. 26 Summary of Action

The team is continuing its research on best practices. While researching what other municipalities around the country are doing to combat street prostitution, the team has taken a keen interest in observing what Kent, Wash. is doing with their enforcement of the new state law, HB 1362.

It is also continuing to strategize on ways to generate funding to create various types of

signs and outdoor advertising.

Jean Hayes is looking into revamping the city's ordinances of all crimes related to prostitution activity. She has noted that the ordinances need modernizing and one law relating to transportation has recently been found unconstitutional.

Jean Hayes and Dan Hensley are preparing to make a presentation to the City's Public Safety Committee on the new state vehicle impound law related to prostitution activity. A sample city warning sign and the Safe Streets community sign will be displayed.

Sept. 23 Summary of Action

John O'Loughlin authored a comprehensive research report detailing the health and safety implications of street prostitution, which has been posted on the team's Web site.

As a part of the build-up to the unveiling of the anti-prostitution community signs, team members have made presentations on TV Tacoma's "CityLine", at the latest Tacoma Police Department staff meeting and the Sept. 24 meeting of the Tacoma City Council Subcommittee on Public Safety. These presentations have been well received and have motivated City officials to focus resources on the problems of street prostitution.

During a Safe Streets sponsored "March Against Crime" rally scheduled on Friday, Sept 25, the anti-prostitution community signs will be unveiled to the public. Guest speakers at the event will include many City, county and state elected officials and representatives of City departments including Tacoma Chief of Police Don Ramsdell. Members of the print and broadcast media have also been invited to the event.

The *News Tribune* recently wrote an article announcing the "March Against Crime" event. Crime reporter Stacy Mulick has requested to interview members of several "Safe and Clean II" teams about their efforts to reduce crime in the city.

The team has begun looking into the possibility of having public service announcements on local radio stations warning of increased prostitution enforcement on the streets of the city. It would also announce enforcement of the new state law involving the impoundment of vehicles used by "johns" and the \$500 fee that must be paid to recover the vehicle.

Oct. 28 Summary of Action

Charles Meinema provided the team with detailed approaches to strategies he has developed to involve residents and businesses in the team's prostitution reduction efforts. It is important, he said, to encourage and train people to accurately report what they see and explain what basic concepts like "loitering with intent" mean. He added that It would be good to have citizen group alert officers who happen to be working a particular detail. He also suggested that, if we could find a sponsor to print up t-shirts and baseball caps, they could walk around with that logo and serve as a visible deterrent.

During the Oct. 15 meeting, Matt Peelen's wife, who is a social worker, presented some of the strategies and techniques that different cities use to help juvenile prostitutes in

leaving their abuser and fleeing their life of prostitution.

Tory Green reported that, at the team lead meetings, each team will be presenting more information about what they're doing so we may be looking at ways that we can collaborate with other groups and learn from each other. After each team presentation, other group leaders will provide constructive criticism to help broaden the viewpoint and gain insight.

The team has successfully reached out to local media to draw attention to its efforts to reduce street prostitution. An important part of the team's strategy is to send a public message that street prostitution will not be tolerated by residents and businesses within the City of Tacoma. The following print and television media provided coverage:

Tacoma Weekly
The News-Tribune
KOMO News
Associated Press
La Raza del Noroeste
La Raza del Noroeste (Editorial)
City Line

Based on research completed by the team relating to street prostitution and the direct link between street prostitution and violent crime, the Tacoma Police Department (TPD) responded by increasing enforcement in areas throughout Tacoma that were most affected. From Sept. 21 to Oct. 22, a total of 34 prostitutes were arrested and booked into jail. These cases were monitored closely for action through the court system. A high percentage of those arrested pled guilty and received a Stay out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) court order. Of the 34 prostitutes arrested, only one subject was arrested twice. This seems to indicate that many prostitutes have either moved to another part of the city or left the area completely.

Residents and businesses have begun displaying the anti-prostitution warning signs sponsored by the Safe Streets Campaign. As of Oct. 31, there were 23 businesses on Pacific Avenue displaying 37 of these signs. Community groups and business district groups have conveyed their appreciation of the effort. They have provided positive feedback and reported a noticeable decrease in street prostitution activity. One community member remarked that she has noticed more elderly residents going out for walks as their sense of safety has increased.

The team has sought to reach out to Spanish speaking members of the community to ensure that they are aware of increased enforcement efforts. Plans are being made with Centro Latino to spread the message ever further.

The team is putting together a group of prospective resource partners to help recovering prostitutes. A meeting is being planned between the Metropolitan Development Council (MDC) and a faith-based organization to begin an outreach effort that includes treatment and counseling.

The team is still working on its possible strategy of exposing the names of those arrested for prostitution related crimes. A local media partner has expressed an interest in publishing names, but public disclosure details and other legalities are being explored.

The city continues to explore adopting the prostitution vehicle impound law, HB 1362. TPD's administration and legal advisors are, in part, using information provided by the team as they evaluate HB 1362.

A special request was forwarded to the TPD to conduct more missions to arrest "johns". The team believes that this strategy is more effective than arresting prostitutes, but understands that both are important to the overall strategy.

Nov. 25 Summary of Action

The Tacoma Police Department (TPD) announced the assignment of a replacement lieutenant and sergeant in the Special Investigations Division. The newly assigned supervisors have vast experience in anti-prostitution enforcement, as well as the "John School" and PROMISE Program. A long-term strategy is being developed to conduct regular prostitution enforcement missions and re-start the "John School". Two officers will also be assigned to the prostitution and street drug enforcement. These assignments are, in part, due to the presentations and efforts made by the Citizens Against Prostitution (CAP) team.

On Nov. 13, 2009, members of the TPD conducted a prostitution sting operation that netted five arrests and two contacts in designated Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) zones targeted by the CAP Team.

In a continuing effort to reach out to the Spanish speaking members of the community for the purpose of providing a warning of increased prostitution enforcement, a meeting has been scheduled with the Centro Latino organization in mid-December.

On Nov. 18, 2009, members of the CAP Team (Michelle Roose, Barry Kaperick, Dan Hensley) arranged and attended a meeting between the Metropolitan Development Council and the director of a program called ESTEEM. The ESTEEM Program is administered through the Life Center and has an outreach component to seek street prostitutes and help them leave the lifestyle. The director, Tiffany Bluhm, gave a detailed presentation of the program and explained that it provides services at no cost through donations and professional volunteer help.

It is estimated that over 100 anti-prostitution signs are now being displayed along Pacific Avenue, between S. 64th and S. 99th Streets. Most are being displayed by businesses and residents most affected by the scourge of street prostitution and drugs.

A business district in South Tacoma has complained of increased prostitution activity, probably due to enforcement efforts on the east side of Tacoma. That district has made inquiries about the anti-prostitution signs now being displayed in the Larchmont district.

The initially scheduled November CAP Team meeting was cancelled due to a Safe and Clean conference, however team members had the opportunity to discuss team issues after conference topics were addressed.

Dec. 23 Summary of Action

On Dec. 17, 2009, Citizens Against Prostitution (CAP) team members conducted their regular monthly meeting. John O'Loughlin arranged to have a presentation by LESA Communications officer Dave Lovrack. The idea is to educate team members in how to use the non-emergency system to report prostitution activity. It is expected that team members will then carry that message to neighborhood councils, business districts and community groups to educate them on

effective reporting of prostitution activity to enable focused police enforcement.

On Dec. 22, 2009, members of the CAP team met with Centro Latino's director of operations, Patricia Chase, and her staff regarding the efforts of the team. Research of "best practices" of agencies around the county to combat street prostitution was discussed. Also noted was the discovery (via Pierce County Jail statistics) that Latino males represent a disproportionate number of males arrested for patronizing prostitutes. The idea to distribute anti-prostitution activity warning messages to Spanish speaking members of the community was presented. The Centro Latino staff seemed very interested in assisting in the effort and provided insight into cultural issues affecting some Latino males and their views of patronizing street prostitutes. The possibility of broadcasting a public service announcement (PSA) on local Spanish language radio stations was discussed and positive feedback was received. Patricia Chase advised that she has contacts with the Spanish language radio station, La Grande, and would initiate contact with them to propose the idea. Examples of possible PSA messages authored by CAP team member Matt Peelen utilizing a general template provided by CAP team member Maria Lee were offered.

A Spanish speaking Tacoma Police Department officer has offered to assist, if need be, in taping a PSA to be broadcast on radio.

Plans and preparations continue to be made by the TPD Special Investigations Division (SID) involving strategies to conduct more anti-prostitution enforcement and re-start the "John School". A regular schedule of undercover missions is being formulated, although it will be a flexible schedule to adjust to conditions on the street. Two newly assigned SID officers will focus on prostitution enforcement and will be receiving specialized training in the next few months. The idea is to be prepared for the typical spring/summer increase of activity.

The Safe Streets Campaign will be ordering more anti-prostitution signs for businesses and residents to display in the designated Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution zones.

Jan. 28 Summary of Action

On January 28th, 2010, Citizens Against Prostitution (CAP) team members conducted their regular monthly meeting. Anti-prostitution signs were distributed to all team members, past and present. City Prosecutor Jean Hayes was presented with additional signs to distribute to other prosecutors in her office. The purpose was to keep the anti-prostitution efforts, which is a top priority of community and business members, on the minds of those who prosecute these types of cases.

The Tacoma Police Department announced that the Special Investigations Unit continues to conduct regular enforcement missions targeting street prostitution. Numerous arrests and contacts have been made and these actions are being noticed and welcomed by the community. Statistically, citizen complaints of street prostitution activity are down when comparing the latest two month period between last year and the present year. Plans of enforcement missions targeting "johns" are being made and will commence in the near future, which will allow the John School to be re-started.

Based on the response of the Tacoma Police Department in developing a strategic enforcement plan to address street prostitution, the CAP team will now shift their focus to efforts that do not involve enforcement. Using the principles of Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) theory, members will seek to identify "hot spot" areas of the Stay Out of Areas of Prostitution (SOAP) zones. The idea is to attempt to change the physical conditions (i.e. lighting, access, increase warning signage, etc) to make it less desirable for prostitutes and "johns" to

conduct their business. The CAP Team hopes to conduct a future regular meeting in the field to look for areas that could use CPTED improvements.

A new research report was discovered by CAP Team member John O' Loughlin discussing the effectiveness of "John School". After author permission was obtained, the report was placed on the team webpage under the "research and reference materials" section.

A new research report was discovered by CAP Team member Dan Hensley detailing recent surveys of men who buy sex and what would deter them from patronizing prostitutes in the future. After author permission was obtained, the report was placed on the team webpage under the "research and reference materials" section.

Plans are being made for team members to make appearances at community group, business district and Neighborhood Council meetings for the purpose of providing education on how to report prostitution related crime to LESA Communications. Maria Lee will be developing a template for team members to follow based on information obtained from LESA Communications Officer Dave Lovrack during his recent visit to a team meeting.

CAP Team member Michelle Roose volunteered to connect with the Esteem Program and the Metropolitan Development Council on a monthly basis to provide updates on efforts to help recover prostitutes and improve their lives. Recently, the Esteem Program manager, Tiffany Bluhm, announced their first successful recovery of a female prostitute. She reported that subject was sexually abused as a child and both her parents are in prison for separate acts of murder. The female began prostituting and dealing drugs at the age of 16 as a way to make money. The Esteem Program has provided her with housing, life counseling, a mentor, a GED completion program and a sexual abuse recovery group. They soon hope to arrange for her to be enrolled in a local vocational school so she can learn a trade to provide for herself. The Esteem Program also announced that they have begun an outreach effort at local jail facilities and are having great success. They recently conducted a prostitute/stripper support group meeting in which 32 women participated. Discussion topics were related to making healthy choices and developing self-respect to live better lives.

Feb. 24/Mar. 24 Summary of Action

The February CAP team meeting was cancelled due scheduling conflicts of several members.

On March 25, 2010, the CAP team convened for their regular monthly meeting. A special guest, Tiffany Bluhm of the Life Center Esteem program, attended to present updates on her organization's attempts to reach women involved in prostitution. Tiffany reported that their program has been busy with 20 women currently participating in counseling and peer group support. Their staff routinely visits local jails to reach out to more women that need help with counseling, drug addiction, job-skills training, housing and health care.

At a March 24 Public Safety Committee Meeting, the City announced that it will not be seeking to adopt the Washington State Law involving the impoundment and fee requirement of vehicles used in prostitution activity. The legal/monetary risk and enforcement strategies already proving effective were the primary reasons cited for the decision.

To provide some perspective, the CAP team sought to have the City adopt the vehicle impound law at a time when police enforcement efforts were intermittent and ineffective. Based on the CAP team's presentations of research, crime statistics and community involvement, the City has revamped its anti-prostitution strategies and placed more focus and effort into enforcement.

Consistent enforcement has reduced total number of prostitution related calls for service Citywide since Jan. 1 by 21 percent, and citizen complaints of prostitution activity by 25 percent. In the targeted area of the 4-4 district (where community involvement spurred the community-based anti-prostitution signs), total calls for service related to prostitution activity decreased by 30 percent while citizen complaints of prostitution activity was reduced by 36 percent since Jan. 1. These decreases come at a time when community groups and neighborhood watch members are being actively encouraged to report incidents of suspected prostitution activity.

Led by a Tacoma Police Department lieutenant, sergeant and two assigned officers, the “John School” was re-established as an enforcement component. This recognized program is designed to allow males arrested for prostitution related crimes to choose education instead of prosecution. Each student must meet requirements and pay a fee to attend a one-day class. Topics include, but are not limited to, sexually transmitted diseases, sexual addiction, family impact, community impact and personal tragedy of women involved in prostitution. Tacoma area business and community members will be sought to present details of the negative impact of street prostitution on their quality of life. Recognized professional experts will present other portions of the class.

During the evening of March 24, the TPD Special Investigations Unit conducted an undercover enforcement mission targeting male patrons of prostitution. The operation netted 8 arrests and all were booked into the Pierce County Jail. Of the eight, three chose the “John School” in lieu of prosecution. The remaining five were disqualified for reasons of criminal background and/or immigration violations.

During recent street contact with a patrol officer, an admitted prostitute with extensive criminal history said the TPD is doing a “good job” and the prostitutes are “running scared”. She also said street prostitutes have observed displayed citizen anti-prostitution signs and acknowledge the community attempts to change the reputation of the area.

The CAP team will continue to develop an outreach program to engage the community on the importance of reporting incidents of suspected prostitution activity.

Maria Lee created a train-the-trainer template for use by both team members and community members who wish to instruct others on how to effectively serve as the eyes and ears of a community and report suspicious behavior. Other team members will volunteer to deliver this presentation at community group and business district meetings in the upcoming months, and the team’s work will eventually come to an end.

Due to the near completion of its efforts, the team has decided to meet every other month and has scheduled its next team meeting for May 27, 2010.

Summaries of Action to Follow

May 26, 2010 Summary of Action

C. How will this proposal help reduce crime?

This proposal is based upon the premise that there is a tremendous relationship between prostitution and narcotics, robbery or assault related crimes. By understanding how they correlate, and tackling challenges accordingly, crime can be reduced.

How will you measure your project's impact on crime:

- a reduction in number of resident complaints or calls for service about street prostitution
- a reduction in number of prostitutes visible on streets at particular times
- a reduction in number of arrests of prostitutes and their johns
- a reduction in recidivism by both prostitutes and their johns
- a reduction in total reported crime within target areas (as compared with control areas), keeping in mind that changes may be due to other factors and that reported crime does not always correlate with actual crime

D. How have you/ will you include the community in your work?

Include planning as well as the implementation and ongoing delivery of your project.

- Engage business districts and community groups and encouraging them to display signs against street prostitution to display their support of this effort.
- Engage the Safe Streets Campaign by seeking their assistance with funds for signage as well as promotion of this effort.
- Seek business leaders and community members that would be willing to speak with the media and other members of the public to be the face of the effort.
- Educate businesses and citizens on techniques and strategies to change environmental conditions (CPTED) to reduce prostitution activity.
- Educate businesses and citizens on when to generate a call for service from the police and what information should be conveyed for an effective response.
- Possibly organize a citizen "Hooker Patrol" on foot and in vehicles, where participants would wear brightly colored clothing and be completely non-confrontational (but visible and observant of all activity, thereby causing "johns" to shy away from exposure and leave the area).

E. How long do you think you need to complete your work?

Although full implementation will happen by May 2010, this effort will launch September 2009.

F. Timeline and Major Milestones

1. team formed June 17, 2009
2. Web site up July 7, 2009
3. launch of effort Sept. 25, 2009 (March Against Crime)
4. projected full implementation May 2010

G. Tasks and Assignments for next 30 days

Timeline is “ASAP” (Optimally by Jan 27, 2010)

- The team will continue dialogue with the Centro Latino organization to establish contact with Spanish language radio stations to formulate a public service announcement of warning messages related to anti-prostitution enforcement efforts.

H. Resources that have been secured or are needed for the planning, implementation, and ongoing delivery of project. Who will do what and by when to get the things you need?

Timeline is “ASAP” (Optimally by Jan. 27, 2010)

- The team will continue dialogue with the city to adopt HB 1362 and seek opportunities to have the names of arrested “johns” published in the media.
- Since the Tacoma Police Department has made a strong commitment to conduct regular enforcement operations, the Citizens Against Prostitution team will transition to focus solely on efforts to involve the community in participation.

I. Will your activities be coordinated with those of other teams from 2008 or 2009?	
Combined/ Coordinated Activity	Team(s) Involved
1. Review the Pierce County Jail policy regarding prostitution related booking and housing to determine cost to the city. Assure that the city is receiving value for the dollar expended.	Target gangs to prevent repeat offenders
2.	
3.	

J. Other Information

K. Team Member Contact Information

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