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COMPREHENSIVE HOMICIDE INITIATIVE

FINAL REPORT

(GRANT 96-DD-CX-0014)

I. INTRODUCTION

In 1995 the City of Richmond applied for and received a \$350,000.00 Comprehensive Homicide Grant (96-DD-CX-0014) from the U. S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice Assistance. This grant had a funding period of 12/01/95 to 03/31/99. The grant actually was extended into 1999 as some difficulty was experienced in receiving all the funding in a timely fashion, which hampered us meeting all our goals and objectives initially.

Once the entire balance was received the grant moved along with little difficulty. As will be reflected in this close-out narrative, we were able to comply with all goals and objectives as stated in our program description during the application stage. Equipment purchases, program management and quarterly financial reports to BJA went smoothly.

For the biggest part of the grant period Jeff Hall from BJA was our grant advisor. Towards the end of the period Brian Crane took over the roll. Both individuals were easy to work with and provided guidance where needed.

II. GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The Grant actually broke out in two phases with the first phase somewhat of a planning component. The second phase surrounded taking the information compiled from consulting law enforcement and community groups and plugging it into our program design.

As stated, the first phase involved information gathering and equipment research. Two Community Violence Reduction Summits were held to generate citizen input. The first Summit helped define a basic course of action and the second dealt with citizens reluctance to serve as witnesses or share information about crime in their neighborhood. A sample of materials given out at the second summit is included in this report for your review (Exhibit A)

Committees:

Our program design dealt with using advisory committees to assist in our homicide reduction efforts. To that end, Advisory Committees were developed from the African American, Hispanic and Asian Communities. A Ministerial Alliance was formulated from the religious community.

A Criminal Justice Committee was developed that included Contra Costa County District Attorney's Office, Parole, Probation and HUD. This group enhanced the long standing working relationship we already enjoyed with each professional organization.

From these groups we spun-off into several collaborative meetings with others who shared our desire to reduce homicides. An example of these groups are as follows:

1. The Police Department became deeply involved with the West Contra Costa County Unified School District. Liaison Officers were assigned to the school to reduce violence at its early stages. We also started a Student Welfare & Attendance Team (S.W.A.T.) in an effort to return students to the classroom. (Exhibit B)
2. A Citizens Academy was started to educate Richmond Residents in how the Police Department does business. We also included some Trauma Intervention Training should a violent situation materialize and it must be defused. This same concept was started at the Youth Level with a West Contra Costa Youth Academy. (Exhibit C & D)
3. Our contacts with Battered Women and Rape Crisis Groups grew into a Domestic Violence Training Program involving all West County Police Agencies. (Exhibit E)

All of the above coupled with talking to key individuals in the community gave the Police a solid base of information in the area of violence/homicide reduction. This objective of the grant was clearly met.

Analysis of Homicide Information:

This goal/objective of the grant spoke to allowing Homicide Investigators to easily gather information concerning their cases. Personal computers and software was purchased and Investigators are now linked with each other, crime analysis information network, internal records and outside State/Federal record systems.

Evidence Gathering:

Another goal of the grant was met by assigning a full-time Evidence Technician to Homicide. Grant money has allowed us to purchase an Evidence Vehicle and equip it with state of the art evidence gathering equipment. We also purchased computer/digital photographic equipment to assist in Courtroom presentations.

Outside Agencies:

The grant Program Design also spoke to involving outside agencies in an overall effort to reduce violence/homicide. The Drug Enforcement Agency Mobile Enforcement Team (MET) was specifically mentioned. During the course of this grant period, MET was used for months at a time in various drug tracks.

Efforts to again bring the California Highway Patrol back for a second tour of duty never materialized due to their staffing levels.

Outside Evaluation:

Early into the grant process we were contacted by a Doctor James Fyfe from Crime and Justice Research Institute who BJA brought in as an outside evaluator. Our Police Department and Dr. Fyfe, along with co-workers, John Goldkamp, Mike White and Suzanne Campbell entered into a cooperative information gathering partnership that continues today.

We have allowed C.J.R.I. to access our Records, State Records, Homicide Cases and free access to Investigators. Statistical gatherers were given an office in the Police Department so they could easily perform their functions.

In July of 1997, C.J.R.I. printed a document titled Developing Strategies for Reducing Homicide based on our grant. In December of 1997, BJA printed a Monograph which C.J.R.I. compiled highlighting our grant (Exhibit F & G).

C.J.R.I. has made several site visits and is scheduled for a final visit in September before completing their overall evaluation. We are extremely interested in reading their final document and what all the data they gathered told them. I would hope their final will become a part of this close-out document due to the additional detail, I'm sure C.J.R.I. report will contain.

III. MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION

Comprehensive Homicide Initiative Meeting

In July of 1998, a group of Richmond Police representatives met with BJA, CJRI, St. Louis Police and Atlantic Police personnel to discuss Richmond's grant strategies. This meeting took place in New Orleans and was very informative as all shared their views on the subject of homicide reduction.

A copy of the Power Point Presentation we gave at this meeting is enclosed. (Exhibit H)

News Articles:

I have included a sample of local news articles written about this grant. (Exhibit I).

Photographs/Equipment:

I have included a series of digital photographs depicting the Evidence Vehicle we purchased and how we set it up to store grant purchased equipment (Exhibit J).

I have included a list of equipment purchased, which I believe you have already received from our Finance Department. (Exhibit K)

IV. CONCLUSION

The Comprehensive Homicide Initiative Grant has allowed us to meet, train and purchase items to aid in our effort to reduce violence/homicides. Once some early on glitches were resolved the grant process and purchases went very well.

Overall, our perspective of the grant is nothing but positive. Homicide numbers are down from a total of 34 in 1995 to 18 in 1998. In 1998 alone we decreased our violent crime by 29%.

Should the opportunity present itself in the future to participate in a similar type of grant we will definitely apply. If you have any questions about anything presented in this report please don't hesitate to contact me.

Thank you,

Doug

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Enclosure(s)