
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

June 4, 2008

Ald. Bob Donovan
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Public-Private Partnership To Target Crime & Aims For Sudden Impact, Alderman Says

“Operation Impact” to Bring Unique Approach to Fight Crime and Revitalize Large Area on Near South Side; News Conference Thursday Will Include Aldermen, Police Chief and District Attorney

An innovative public-private partnership to fortify public safety will flood a large area of Milwaukee’s near south side this year with beat patrol officers, surveillance cameras and lights from new alley lighting systems.

Operation Impact is described by founder/author Ald. Bob Donovan as “a unique, multifaceted, comprehensive approach to fighting crime, restoring order, and revitalizing that involves the community pulling itself up by the bootstraps.” He will be joined by Police Chief Edward Flynn, a representative of Mayor Tom Barrett, Milwaukee County District Attorney John Chisholm, and fellow Common Council members **during a news conference at 10:30 a.m. on Thursday, June 5, 2008** to announce the initiative. The news conference will take place in the school gymnasium **at Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church, 2229 W. Greenfield Ave.**

Operation Impact will cover the area bounded by W. Pierce St. on the north, W. Lincoln Ave. on the south, S. 16th Street/S. Cesar Chavez Dr. on the east and S. 38th St. on the west – an area considered one of Milwaukee’s most ethnically diverse and touching three aldermanic districts.

In addition, approximately 85% of all crimes in Police District Six occur within the area, Ald. Donovan said.

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Operation Impact/ADD ONE

“Most of the focus of Operation Impact will be nuts and bolts ‘broken windows’ law enforcement, with officers looking to enforce all manner of laws and city ordinances, from littering, loud music and traffic violations to prostitution, theft and robbery,” according to Ald. Donovan, who mentioned he’s received letters and notes of support for the initiative from George Kelling (Milwaukee native and a key author/proponent of “broken windows – community policing” strategy), Mayor Barrett, Common Council President Willie L. Hines, Jr., and Chief Flynn.

But part of what makes the initiative unique is how it will be funded – primarily with private donations from local businesses and corporations. In fact on June 10 the Common Council will formally accept private donations to help pay for police overtime costs that will allow Operation Impact beat patrol officers to scour the targeted area this summer.

“As a Milwaukeean I’m very proud of the private interest and involvement we’ve received so far, with corporations, foundations, and even ‘mom and pop’ store owners contributing money and resources to help this initiative move forward,” said Ald. Donovan, noting also that the private money received by Operation Impact is also being used to expand neighborhood surveillance cameras to 18 new locations, and to install alley lighting in poorly lit areas across the affected area.

To sense the flavor of the community-wide effort that is critical to the initiative’s existence, the alderman said dozens of community agencies and programs are contributing personnel, volunteers and/or resources, including UMOS, Southside Organizing Committee, Operation Payback, Community Partners, Weed and Seed, Journey House, Layton Boulevard West Neighbors, Weekend Warriors, Milwaukee Christian Center and many others.

Key Features of Operation Impact:

Beat patrol officers: The area would be divided into beat areas covered by officers patrolling on bicycles in two shifts, one from noon to 8 p.m. and the other from 4 p.m. to midnight. Beat officers would be expected to have contact information for and work closely with the area’s building inspectors and sanitation inspectors as well as the neighborhood and social service organizations in the targeted area. By establishing relationships with residents and business owners on each block, officers would gather information about nuisance properties, drug houses, graffiti tagging, and other such activity. Using the information gleaned from the residents they would work with squad officers and the Community Prosecution Unit to make preventing crime and restoring order their top priority.

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Operation Impact/ADD TWO

Surveillance Cameras: Existing cameras on W. National Ave. have proven effective in deterring street crimes such as prostitution, drug dealing and panhandling, and cameras at 18 new locations will help deter crimes in those areas. Camera installation would expand to other parts of this targeted area.

Alley Lights: An effort would be underway to install garage lights in the alleys throughout the targeted area. Additional lighting has been a proven deterrent for certain property crimes.

Private Security: Private security officers would be engaged to patrol the targeted area to act as “eyes and ears” for the police. They would not actually engage people doing suspicious activity, but would identify problems and work closely with the police. The security patrols around the Aurora St. Luke’s Medical Center campus would be one private security group making this effort and ideally other patrols would monitor other neighborhoods in the targeted area.

Neighborhood Ambassadors: W-2 participants would be hired for community service work such as litter removal, graffiti removal and neighborhood outreach. Ambassadors would be in uniform -- which would also act as a crime deterrent. These Ambassadors would be modeled after the Downtown Public Service Ambassadors, a program that has proven successful and merits expansion.

Court Watch: Citizen volunteers would monitor key court cases affecting the area. They would go to court, write victim impact statements, etc.

Weekend Warriors: This volunteer group of citizens would go out on weekends twice a month to perform such services as lawn cutting for the elderly, graffiti clean-ups, litter clean-ups and the like. Their efforts will go a long way in improving the environment in the targeted area.

Church Effort: Churches within the borders would be contacted and be asked to engage their members in working to improve the area. The Prince of Peace Corps would be initiated at each church. Members commit to ownership of the two square blocks around the church as well as ownership of the block each member lives.

- **--Please see the attached document for other Operation Impact components.--**