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The City of Redondo Beach, California, is located about 18 miles southwest of Los Angeles and home to mostly middle to upper middle class single family residents. The population is about 70,000. Crime in Redondo Beach is on a par with many similar cities throughout the country. The major crime concerns in the City range from theft of recyclables to gang related activities. Naturally the City has its share of burglaries, robberies and drug dealers.

The City of Redondo Beach is geographically configured into a sort of "figure eight" with a "North" and "South" end. The North end of the city is split by a major east/west thoroughfare, Artesia Blvd. (State Route 91). Along Artesia there are numerous business establishments that comprise the "Business District" of North Redondo. This district is bound on all sides by large residential tracts comprised of single family dwellings and apartment buildings.

~~THE HEDCHDO GOKP MOISE~~ was located at 2521 Artesia Blvd. Originally built as a single family residence in 1937, "The Court" as it was known, had evolved over the years into an eleven room motel/apartment house charging \$100-\$150 weekly rental rates.

By the early 1970's "The Court"-had turned into an establishment inhabited mostly by parole violators, burglars, drug addicts and prostitutes. This of course had the expected effect on the surrounding businesses and residential area. Burglaries and thefts increased. The perception of safety

decreased with the presence of unsavory persons throughout the neighborhood. Stolen property and narcotic paraphernalia were commonly found in and around "The Court" and the overall appearance of the building gave a negative impression to the neighborhood.

Over the years the Redondo Beach Police Department responded to problems in and around "The Court" in a traditional manner. When a call was received that involved the motel, police responded, handled the call, ~~then~~ left. Sometimes an arrest was made and sometimes no action was taken. Narcotics units conducted several investigations centered around residents of "The Court" and subsequently made arrests, but the arrest of one drug dealer was usually followed by the moving in of another. The then style of policing the problem could be described by the phrase "You call, we haul, that's all."

This pattern of "putting out forest fires" continued for 18 years with little if any improvement. In the late 1980's the owner, who was convicted of "Slum Lord" violations at another apartment complex he owned, was convinced, to make some minor cosmetic improvements at "The Court". This did nothing to reduce the problems associated with the tenants and their associates. The most recent recordation of police calls indicates 85 incidents at the location in one six month period.

In December of 1993 Mel Nichols was appointed as the new Chief of Police for the Redondo Beach Police Department. Chief Nichols pointed the department in a new direction, that of Community Oriented Policing and Problem Solving. Shortly after his arrival, Nichols was shown "The Court" and told that it was "THK" problem location in all of Redondo Beach. Chief Nichols simply said, "Lets do something about it"; with that the wheels were set in motion.

The initial project was assigned to the Special Investigations Unit (SIU). SIU is a surveillance unit comprised of one Sergeant and six officers. The mission of SIU is varied and includes suppression of narcotics, gangs and vice related crime; but the main focus is on career criminals. John Skipper, then a sergeant, and case agent Ofcr. Marina Morales took the lead on "The Court".

Preliminary investigation by Skipper revealed that "The Court" required police services more than any motel in the City, despite the fact that it had only eleven rooms and was by far the smallest such business.

After establishing a historical reference that indicated that "The Court" was in fact a problem location, SIU began contacting various informants and learned that several active burglars were currently residing at the motel. Armed with intelligence information, SIU and the Crime Impact Team (the surveillance unit from the neighboring Torrance Police Department known as CIT) conducted an intensive three week surveillance of The Fedando Court Motel during March of 1994. Within days of starting CIT observed a "Court" resident and paroled burglar commit a residential burglary. The subject was arrested by CIT and Redondo Beach patrol officers. He was subsequently convicted and sentenced to prison as a career criminal.

Surveillance continued and during the next three weeks SIU made 15 felony arrests for various violations including drug sales, parole violation and even one arrest on federal charges for theft of mail. Throughout the surveillance Skipper, Morales and the rest of the SIU maintained close contact with all of the officers whose beat included "The Court". Patrol officers were encouraged to closely monitor the location during those times when SIU was not conducting surveillance. They did this and made several misdemeanor.

arrests. Patrol officers were also very helpful in assisting SIU in making arrests in such a manner as to cover up the ongoing surveillance.

In early April, 1994, Skipper contacted Redondo Beach Code Enforcement Officer Mike Magdaleno and arranged for an inspection of "The Court". Magdaleno was familiar with the location and owner from previous contacts. Code Enforcement Officer Magdaleno took the ball at this point and coordinated the Fire Department, City Building Inspectors and the Los Angeles County Health Department in an inspection effort.

The initial inspection was conducted on April 15, 1994, and resulted in the discovery of 46 violations of the City's building and housing codes (serious structural, plumbing, electrical, mechanical, and safety problems).

From that point on the main efforts of this project were carried by Magdaleno, City Prosecutor Mike Webb and City Attorney Bob Wadden. A chronological list of events is attached to this summary. The history culminates with the demolition of The Redondo Court Motel in December of 1994.

The solution of this particular problem is special in several ways. To begin with, "The Court" was a true community problem. It was a haven for criminals who preyed on the surrounding community. The mere presence of the building and its residents decreased the perception of safety. As one nearby businessman said after the demolition "Ask any of the business owners along here..... We think tearing it down is the best part of the Artesia corridor beautification project." This location also required an excessive amount of time and energy from the police department. Now the location is a vacant lot. A copy of a newspaper article about the project, from the front page of "The Daily Breeze", the leading local newspaper, is also attached to this summary.

The problem at "The Court" is also tremendously important because it served as the cornerstone in building Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving at the Redondo Beach Police Department. There were many officers in Redondo that were very resistant to change, resistant to the notion of implementing a new policing philosophy, resistant to Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving. They thought it was "soft on crime" and/or a "warm and fuzzy" approach to policing. The success at The Redondo Court was first hand proof that the strategy worked. Never again would a Redondo Beach Police Officer be called to "The Court". This made believers of many "old timers" and did wonders in promoting acceptance to the philosophy of Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving.

Finally, "The Court" was a textbook example of the problem solving process. The situation was carefully analyzed and identified as a legitimate problem. Once this was established lead personnel were identified. The lead personnel then determined what resources were needed and brought those resources to bear on the problem. The resources were many and varied. Personnel from many components of the organization came together and played an active role in solving the problem (investigators, traffic officers, patrol officers, communications operators, records clerks, and analysts). In addition> personnel from other departments within the City (inspectors and attorneys) focused on the problem, joined the team, and made a significant contribution. Agencies external to the local departments also helped solve the problem (County Health and the Tbrance Police Department). Even though key personnel weren't trained in Cotmunity Oriented Policing/Problem Solving at the time, the common sense approach to resolving the problem followed the SARA model to the letter.

The demolition of a problem building or location may fall into the "You've seen one, you've seen 'em all" category of problem solving, but for the reasons discussed above, THE KEDOWDO COURT *SOUTFLON* will always be remembered as the beginning of Community Oriented Policing/Problem Solving in Redondo Beach.

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- 04-15-94: Inspection conducted by Code Enforcement of the subject premises 2521 Artesia Blvd. (Redondo Court Motel) at the request of the Special Investigations Unit of the police department. Inspection done with Building Inspectors, Los Angeles County Health Department Inspectors, and Fire Department Inspectors. Resident manager John Dockerty consented to the inspection. Inspection revealed 46 violations of building and housing codes (structural, plumbing, electrical, and mechanical problems). Photos follow this chronology.
- 04-19-94: Notice and order sent to owner of Redondo Court Motel, Martin Barry Canter.
- 04-20-94: Follow-up inspection. Some work initiated; no permits obtained.
- 07-22-94: Follow-up inspection. Only minor corrections had been completed.
- 09-08-94: Follow-up inspection. Numerous violations were still outstanding. Owner did not vacate premises. Matter sent to City Attorney for action.
- 09-27-94: Assistant City Attorney Robert V. Wadden, Jr. filed a lawsuit against owner to compel vacation of the premises and correction of violations.
- 10-05-94: Owner Canter came to the Building Department for a meeting requested by him with Bob Wadden, Nagy Jacob, and Mike Magdaleno. Resident manager Dockerty had passed away and Canter wanted to settle the pending lawsuit. Canter agreed to demolish the Redondo Court Motel.
- 10-18-94: An amended lawsuit was filed which stipulated that the owner will demolish the motel by November 7, 1994.
- 10-31-94: Owner Canter faxed a letter to the City Attorney stating that he is in bankruptcy, cannot proceed with the demolition, and explains that the bankruptcy trustee has agreed that the property could be sold in an "as is" condition.
- 11-04-94: Investigation by Bob Wadden revealed that bankruptcy mentioned was dismissed on September 26, 1994, and that the owner is in full control of the property. The owner is advised to follow the court order.
- 11-07-94: Owner advised to demolish structures or let City demolish.
- 11-08-94: Owner agrees to let City demolish the Redondo Court Motel.
- 12-19-94: Redondo Court Motel demolished.