Entertainment Gateway Revitalization

Deputy Chief Jaime Ayala
Lieutenant Jennifer White
Arlington, Texas
Arlington, Texas

- Population - 371,038
- 50th largest city in U.S.
- 99.5 square miles
- 6.8 million visitors/year
- 600 commissioned officers
- 190 non-commissioned
Entertainment District Area

• Amusement Parks
  – Six Flags over Texas
  – Hurricane Harbor

• Sports Venues
  – Rangers Ballpark in Arlington
  – Dallas Cowboys Football Stadium (under construction)

• Other Venues
  – Arlington Convention Center
  – Retail shopping, hotels and restaurants
Scanning
Scanning

20 Years of Decay
- 17 budget motels
- 70 used car dealerships
- Homeless camps
  - Vacant lots
  - Creek beds
  - Bridges & overpasses
- Drugs & Prostitution (open-air)
• Chronic Homeless
  – Under influence of alcohol/drugs
  – Frequently victimized and incarcerated for minor offenses
  – Intimidate visitors and businesses
  – Use panhandling income to support area drug and prostitution markets

• Homeless Camps
  – Environmental impact
  – Hazardous material clean-up
  – Physical and financial resources
Scanning
Homeless Camps
Motels – Division St

6 mile extension
Motels – North Watson Rd
(Local view)

Arlington Inn, 1195 N. Watson
American Inn, 1181 N. Watson
Executive Inn, 1175 N. Watson
Analysis
Analysis

• Data
  - Uniform Crime Report Part I data
  - Calls for service
  - Repeat call locations
  - Code violations
  - Tax status and water fees
Analysis

• Literature Review
  • “Street Prostitution” – Michael Scott, COPS
  • “Disorder at Budget Motels” – Karin Schmerler, COPS
  • “Panhandling” – Michael Scott, COPS

• Researched laws and ordinances nationwide
Analysis

• Citizen and Business Complaints
  - Solicited by:
    • Prostitutes
    • Drug dealers
    • Panhandlers
  - Visitors denied refunds when attempting to check-out early to find safer lodging
Analysis

• Stakeholder Groups Identified
  – Used car dealership owners and managers
  – Budget motel owners and managers
  – Nearby residents and business operators
Response
Response

• Comprehensive Action Plan (Action Areas)
  - Nuisance abatement team
  - Public information campaign
  - New ordinances
  - Chronic homeless outreach
  - Camp eradication
  - Prostitution enforcement
  - Panhandling eradication
  - Budget motels
  - Car lot target hardening
  - Civilian patrols
  - Narcotics enforcement
  - Code enforcement
Nuisance Abatement Team

• Team Members
  – Police and Fire Departments
  – City Attorney’s Office
  – Neighborhood Services
    • Code Enforcement, Health and Building Inspectors
  – Housing Authority

• Mission
  – To proactively marshal all available administrative and legal resources to:
    • Secure a safe living environment
    • Deny criminals the use of real property as a base for operations
Nuisance Abatement Team

- Identified 5 motels attracting the most crime and disorder
- Met with the owners about nuisance issues
- Made recommendations
  - Call 911 to report activity
  - Hotel guest registration (Valid ID)
  - Improve lighting and signage on property
  - Issue Criminal Trespass warnings
  - Provide a reasonable means of security

- No cooperation received from North Watson Rd motels
Response

• Immediate Action
Placed an electronic sign in front of these motels
  • “High Crime Area, Report Activity, Call 911”
Response

- Budget Motels
  - Motels on North Watson Rd
    - Traditional high visibility enforcement
    - Tax standing
    - Hotel occupancy tax
    - Code and Fire violations
    - Community Development and Planning
Response

- Budget Motels
  - Motels on Division St
    - Held quarterly meetings
    - Emphasized owner and manager accountability
    - Shared crime data and list of problem tenants
    - Encouraged successful properties to mentor problem properties
    - Provided suggestions for improving crime and quality of life issues
Response

• Motels on Division St
  – OK Motel, 505 E. Division
    • Nuisance abatement – 30 days
      
      | Year | UCR | CFS |
      |------|-----|-----|
      | 2004 |  4  |  60 |
      | 2005 |  8  | 194 |
      | 2006 | 13  | 418 |
      | 2007 | 17  | 320 |
      | YTD 2008* |  4 |  72 |

  – Town Inn, 1717 E. Division
    • Nuisance abatement
    • Legal action (delinquent on taxes)
Response

- Public Information Campaign
  - Media coverage
    - Newspaper
    - Talk radio shows
    - Television news
  - Campaign against prostitution
  - Presentation to local civic groups
    - Rotary, Kiwanis, Optimist clubs
    - Citizens on Patrol
    - Chamber of Commerce (Hospitality Cluster)
    - Action North community group
    - Arlington Convention and Visitors Bureau
ARLINGTON URBAN BLIGHT

Police seek new ways to fight panhandling, prostitution

The department is researching tougher ordinances and asking for community help.

By SUSAN SCHROCK
sschrock@star-telegram.com

ARLINGTON — Arrests alone can’t rid Division Street and Watson Road of prostitution, drugs, chronic homelessness and related problems, Arlington police say.

The department has employed several new enforcement techniques in the past two years, from placing a highly visible electronic sign along Texas 360 warning motorists that they’re entering a high-crime area to posting online photos of prostitution suspects.

Now police are pressing for new city ordinances, public education campaigns and community involvement to further deter crime and make the two thoroughfares safer.

SUSAN SCHROCK, 817-568-6676

NEWSPAPER COVERAGE

ARLINGTON

City determined to clean up 2 long-blighted corridors

Officers are going to be on the lookout for prostitution, drug dealers and illegal activity from streets along Division Street and Texas 360.

Inside a map of the process ongoing in Arlington:

- 20 arrests in the past two years
- Drug, prostitution, theft
- People living in abandoned vehicles
- Homeless people

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Jennifer Foshee and Kimberly Brashear walk near East 7th and Division streets recently.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

Crime warning sign draws innkeepers’ ire

Since April 2005, police have responded to more than 100 drug offenses in the 100 block of Watson Road, which is where the three models are located.

By MICHAEL JONES

ARLINGTON — Taking a new approach to fighting crime along a quiet north-central street, police are putting up signs warning motorists to expect drugs and prostitution.

The signs, which are placed every 200 feet along Division Street between South Lovers Lane and North Bell Avenue, are intended to deter drug dealers and people living in abandoned vehicles.

Police say the signs are part of a broader effort to make the area safer, but some business owners say the signs are unnecessary.

ARE YOU AWARE OF ANY CRIME OR CRIMINAL ACTIVITY IN YOUR AREA?

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

Want to provide feedback on the new signs? Email sigs@star-telegram.com

A marijuana billboard

An electronic sign near the entrance of a marijuana dispensary displays an advertisement.

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Response

Campaign against Prostitution
Response

- New Ordinances
  - Adopted
    - Aggressive Panhandling
    - Guest registration requirements for hotel/motels
    - Manifestation for the purpose of prostitution
  - Researched
    - Exclusionary zones for those convicted of certain offenses (prostitution)
    - Hired consultant to research ability to implement in Texas
  - Roll call training for officers
Response

- Chronic Homeless Outreach
  - Participated in City’s development of 10-year plan to end chronic homelessness
  - Utilized social services to reunite chronic homeless with families and provide legitimate employment
    - Mission Arlington
    - Arlington Life Shelter
    - Salvation Army
  - Tarrant County Health outreach (free AIDS testing)
Response

• Camp Eradication
  - Mapped existing camps
  - Posted “No Trespassing” signage (Texas Department of Transportation)
  - Worked with County District Attorney to prosecute offenders
  - Arrested trespassers
  - Eradicated camps
Response

- Prostitution Enforcement
  - Arrested prostitutes utilizing male undercover officers
  - Arrested “Johns” utilizing female undercover officers
  - Operations conducted in front of budget motels
  - Enforced new ordinance (manifestation)
Response

• Panhandling Eradication
  – Increased enforcement (6-month reporting period)
    • 44 arrests and 84 citations issued
  – Enforced new ordinance (aggressive panhandling)
  – Researched signage to discourage those who give to panhandlers
Response

- Car Lot Target Hardening
  - Security Survey
  - Code Inspection
  - Developed E-mail group
  - Quarterly meetings/Business Crime Watch established
    - Urged reporting offenses (online option)
    - Increase owner accountability
    - Businesses pooled together and hired security
    - “No Trespassing Signs”
  - Quarterly newsletter
THE CRIME EYE

The community will benefit when the APD and your dealership join forces.

Business Watch

We Report Responsible Activity

Participate in the Division Street Business Community Watch Group and learn how you can receive the above signs to post on your property.

Storefront Officer, I am assigned to specific areas of town to address crime and quality of life issues. Since January 2007 I have been assigned to work solely with the dealerships along Division Street in developing a working partnership to reduce this criminal activity from occurring on your lot.

One goal that has been established for your business community has been to develop the Division Street Business Community Watch to those problems. In addition, by attending these quarterly meetings you will receive education on the detection and deterrence of crime, as well as insight into other initiatives that the police department is implementing into your area.

On March 29th the first Division Street BCW Group meeting was held for all the dealerships along Division Street. At this meeting we discussed what a BCW group was and the benefits of being involved in hours dedicated to your business. Being involved in...
Response

• Code Enforcement
  – Code Rangers
  – Trained Police Officers in top code violations
  – Parcel to Parcel Inspections
Assessment
Assessment

• Continual data review
  – UCR Part I data
  – Calls for service
  – Narcotics Unit activity
• Review in department-wide meetings
• Citizen feedback
Assessment

- **Prostitution**
  - Open-air prostitution market no longer visible
  - 220 reversal arrests
  - Reduced number of prostitution arrests made by Vice Unit
  - 317,158 hits to the prostitution web page since June 2007

- **Narcotics/Covert Operations Activity**
  - Open-air drug market no longer visible
  - Undercover officers and confidential informants were then unsuccessful in drug buys
Assessment

• Used Car Dealerships
  – Increase in reporting offenses
  – Feedback from quarterly meetings
    • “Crime is lower than it has ever been”
Assessment

- As we developed our partnerships with the auto dealerships, we learned most were not reporting offenses such as vehicle burglaries.
- As a result of that partnership, we developed a hypothesis that calls for service and UCR offenses would increase.
Assessment

UCR Part I Offenses & Calls for Service at All Used Car Dealerships (70)

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>UCR</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>1,103</td>
<td>1,166</td>
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+ 6%

+ 29%
Assessment

UCR Part I Offenses & Calls for Service at Collaborating Used Car Dealerships (18)

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<tr>
<td>UCR</td>
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<td>57</td>
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<tr>
<td>CFS</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>456</td>
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</table>

+ 24%  
+ 78%
Assessment

• Motels on North Watson Rd
  – 80 days before/after “High Crime” sign posted April 6, 2006
    • UCR Part I Offenses: -52% (29 vs 14)
    • Drug-Related Offenses: -70% (50 vs 15)
    • Calls for Service: -49% (515 vs 265)
Assessment

• Motels on North Watson Rd
  – American Inn
    • Worked with Texas Attorney General’s Office
      – Filed injunction; motion for final closure
  – Executive Inn
    • Reduced crime and disorder
  – Arlington Inn
    • Abated and demolished due to substandard building
Assessment

UCR Part I Offenses at Motels

- Motels on Division: 126
- Motels on Watson: 88

Apr 2006 - Mar 2007:
- Motels on Division: 126
- Motels on Watson: 88

Apr 2007 - Mar 2008:
- Motels on Division: 28 (30% decrease)
- Motels on Watson: 14 (50% decrease)

Legend:
Assessment

Calls for Service at Motels

- Motels on Division:
  - Apr 2006 - Mar 2007: 2,703
  - Apr 2007 - Mar 2008: 1,604
  - Decrease: -41%

- Motels on Watson:
  - Apr 2006 - Mar 2007: 1,016
  - Apr 2007 - Mar 2008: 450
  - Decrease: -56%
Assessment

Drug-Related Offenses at Motels

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Motels on Division</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motels on Watson</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>15</td>
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</table>

-78%
Assessment

Total Average Officer Cost Savings

Motels on Division
- Apr 2006 - Mar 2007: $145,286
  - Cost savings: $59,071 (41%)

Motels on Watson
- Apr 2006 - Mar 2007: $80,000
- Apr 2007 - Mar 2008: $24,188
  - Cost savings: $55,812 (69.75%)
Summary

• Significant physical and perceptual reduction in crime and disorder
• Revise comprehensive action plan for sustainability
• Continue to analyze long-term impact
Questions?