

**Operation Dragnet:  
Reducing the Visibility of Street Prostitution  
in Raleigh, NC**



Submitted by:  
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# **Operation Dragnet: Reducing the Visibility of Street Prostitution in Raleigh, NC**

## **SUMMARY**

### ***Scanning***

Operation Dragnet was an effort by Raleigh Police Department to address street prostitution in the College Park/Idlewild neighborhood. While police had focused earlier efforts on criminal behavior, Dragnet focused on reducing chronic visibility of the prostitution market – an entrenched problem that had negatively affected quality of life and eroded community’s confidence in police.

### ***Analysis***

In August 2003, RPD formed an interdisciplinary team. Analysis revealed there were two distinct types of johns: highly risk-averse men who traveled from outlying suburban communities, and recent Latino immigrants, who appeared unaware of any risk. Further analysis revealed two distinct types of prostitutes: chronic or habitual prostitutes, who lived in the area and had been arrested numerous times; and amateur prostitutes, who appeared to be relatively new to the market, had no previous arrests for prostitution and were more easily deterred. Both citizens and police had focused primarily on chronic prostitutes; however, other actors in the market were less entrenched and more easily deterred.

### ***Response***

Analysis revealed distinctive elements of the market, and specific responses were implemented:

1. Police launched a low-cost Dragnet TV program and website featuring arrest photos to shame risk-averse johns.
2. Police collaborated with health programs to design an educational campaign to inform new immigrants about the risks and criminal nature of prostitution.
3. Police began to physically arrest suspects – a particularly effective strategy with discouraging amateur prostitutes.
4. Partners developed intensive programming focused on the unique social needs of chronic prostitutes.

### ***Assessment***

Among other outcomes, the responses implemented resulted in these outcomes:

1. Operation Dragnet and the emphasis on shaming risk-averse johns (largest group) resulted in only 1% (five of 470) re-arrest rate for johns since 2003.
2. The proportion of Latino johns arrested began to decline (from 6 to less than 4 per month on average).
3. Decline in the portion of repeat-prostitute arrests (from 81% to 55%). Time increased between repeat arrests of chronics – 7% were rearrested within 30 days while 17% were not rearrested until one year after their previous arrest. Previously, the majority of repeat arrests occurred within 30 days.
4. Citizen-initiated CFS initially increased and then declined as citizens' confidence in the police increased. From the pre- to post-Dragnet period, calls declined 38%; the decline was steady and consistent, and the reduced visibility of prostitution has been observed by citizens.

## SCANNING

In 2001, the Raleigh Police Department began to focus on street prostitution in a primarily-residential area of Raleigh near downtown. The results of these earlier efforts are detailed in a document posted at <http://www.popcenter.org/Library/researcherprojects/streetProstitution.pdf>. Based on the lessons learned during these early problem-solving efforts (called Phase I), in mid-2003 police adapted their approach to reflect a greater understanding of the problem, and developed new approaches based on these findings. While Phase I addressed the *crime* of prostitution in College Park/Idlewild neighborhood, Phase II focused on the *on-going visibility of the prostitution market* and its impact on neighborhood quality of life and the community's confidence in the police (*see Figure 1*).

Based on community feedback, police understood the chronic *visibility* of street prostitution as problematic and bothersome to citizens as the actual crimes being committed. This realization led us to alter our views and undertake further analysis. Focusing on visible behaviors associated with prostitution instead of actual prevalence of the crime led to the identification of important subcomponents of the problem and very different responses.

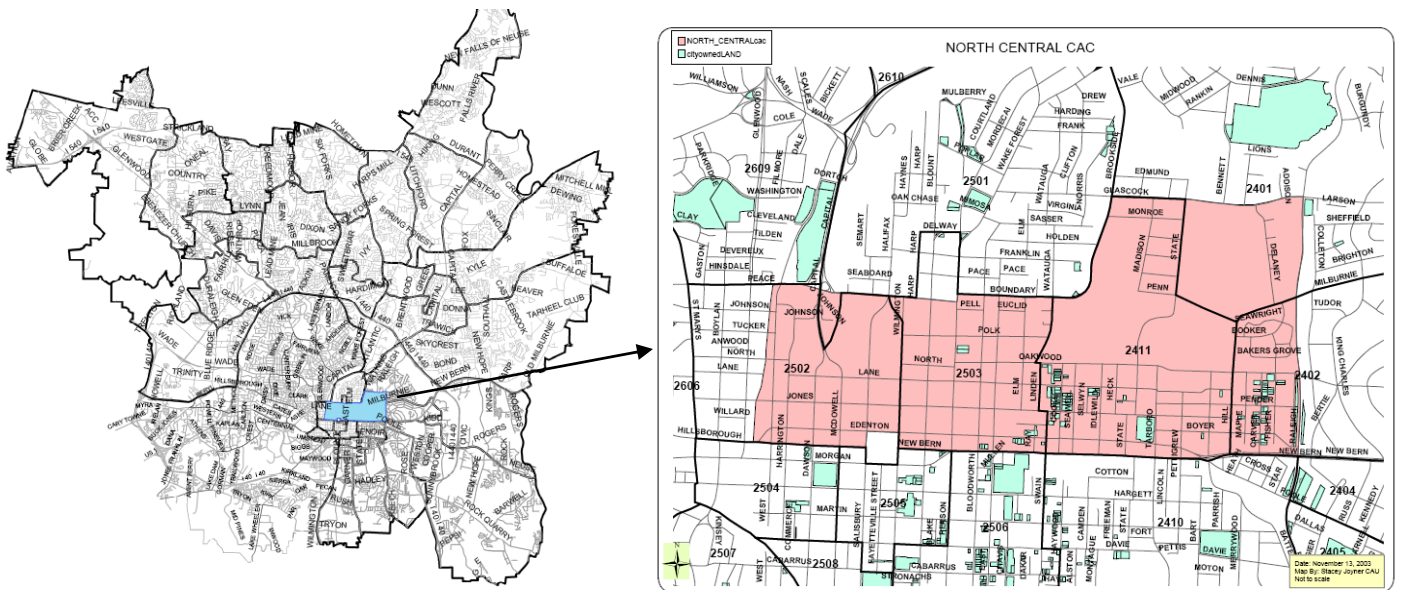
Phase I analysis had established the following:

- Most of prostitutes in the market were crack addicts who lived in this neighborhood in close proximity to drug markets.
- The prostitution market was located adjacent to major thoroughfares into/out of downtown Raleigh. The market was not clustered in time, and operated virtually 24-hours each day. Prostitutes were even well-known to early morning commuters. But visibility of prostitutes was sporadic as most prostitutes would turn a “trick,” then get high returning only when they needed more drugs. Rarely was more than a single prostitute visible on the streets at one time.
- Residents were tired of men from outside the area coming into their neighborhood to solicit prostitutes and buy drugs. Residents were tired of being solicited by johns and seeing prostitutes blatantly soliciting for sex.
- There were no easy and reliable measures of the extent of street prostitution.

In August 2003, outraged residents demanded a meeting with Raleigh’s chief of police, vociferously expressing concerns that their neighborhood was neglected by the police and they demanding action. In particular, residents were angry that uniformed patrol officers would drive past known prostitutes at work – and take no action. While residents were willing to assist police, a plan was needed.

Area patrol officers also were frustrated by the visibility of this problem. When dispatched to a 9-1-1 prostitution call, officers were usually unable to take action against well-known prostitutes, although many prostitutes were arrested for trespassing, public drunkenness and similar charges. Officers were also frustrated by the court system, as most prostitutes were quickly released, and soon back on the street. The sequence of events created an image of police impotence and diminished public confidence in police; the problem seemed large and intractable.

**Figure 1: City of Raleigh and the College Park/Idlewild Neighborhood**



## **ANALYSIS**

In August 2003, RPD formed a broad-based team to analyze on-going problems with prostitution in the College Park/Idlewild area. This team included representatives from RPD (Drugs/Vice, Field and Special Operations, Crime Analysis, and Chief's Office), Wake County District Attorney's Office, Wake County Human Services (Health Educators and HIV/STD Clinic), NC Community Corrections (Probation/Parole), NCSU, and three nonprofits – Women's Center (SHAPE Program for Crack-Addicted Sex Workers), AIDS Services, and ALPES (Latino Health Coalition). In April 2006, the Women's Healing Place opened and their homeless shelter and detox staff joined the team.

In analyzing prostitution, our objective was to address the visibility of prostitution – inherently an easier task than measuring the extent of street prostitution. Although officer knowledge of prostitutes working in area was useful, arrest data became an important source of information. Arrests were not used to measure the volume or intensity of the prostitution problem; instead, arrests were used to examine the characteristics of the offenders. Although arrests are not a reliable source about the amount of a problem, prostitution arrests are a highly reliable source of information about the nature prostitution. They are reliable because the location of arrests was closely correlated with the location of citizen-initiated calls-for-service about prostitution over a five-year period. Further, the number of prostitution arrests were fairly consistent month-to-month, although the type and timing of arrests was varied, reflecting the diversity of the market. Thus, arrests provided a robust data source about the characteristics of suspects, both johns and prostitutes, and their recurrence.

Analysis of arrests revealed important findings. First, there were two distinct types of johns participating in the prostitution market:

- Men from outlying suburban communities who appeared highly risk-averse; and
- Hispanic men, primarily new immigrants to the area of Mexican heritage, who appeared unaware of any risk

Further, analysis of arrests also revealed that there were two distinct types of prostitutes participating in this market:

- Chronic or habitual prostitutes, who lived in the area and had been arrested numerous times; and
- Amateur prostitutes, who appeared to be relatively “new” to the market and had no previous arrests for prostitution

### ***Risk-Averse Johns***

Most of the men who seek out prostitutes in Raleigh are not local. Analysis of the home address of 222 johns arrested in 2004 and 2005 showed that the majority of the men were neither from the neighborhood nor nearby:

- 43% were not from Raleigh
- 53% were from Raleigh, but only one-third of these lived within three miles of the prostitution market (*See Figure: 2004 – 2005 John Map*)

Analysis of the home address reinforced officer perceptions that many of the males who solicited prostitutes were quite risk averse – they did not want to be identified picking up a prostitute. The prostitution markets are conveniently located off major thoroughfares into and out of Raleigh, providing easy access for men who decide to take such a detour.



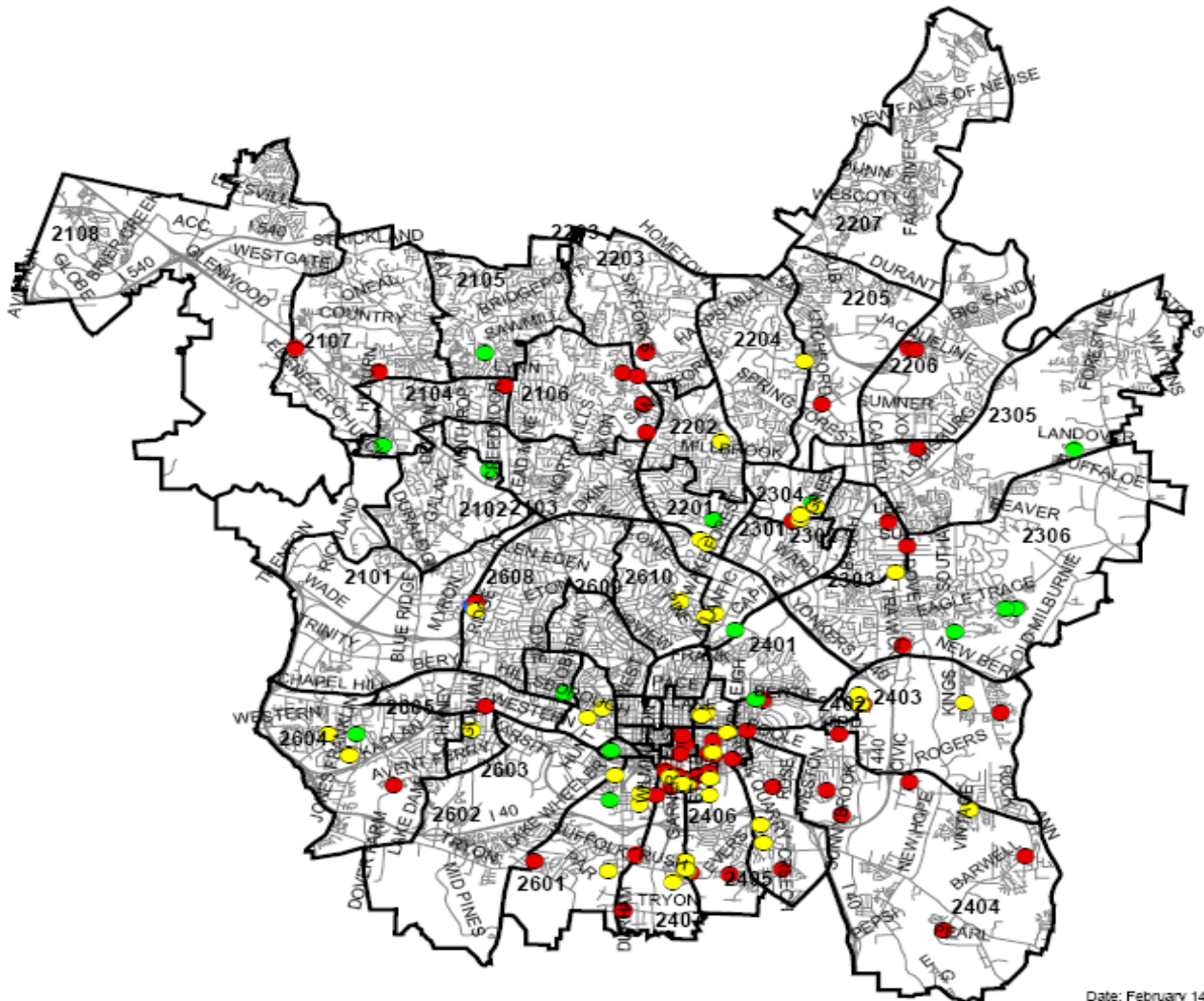
# 2004 AND 2005 JOHN MAP

222 Johns were arrested during the years 2004 and 2005

104 of these could not be mapped:  
9 were Anywhere Raleigh  
95 were from out of town

## Race/Ethnicity of Johns in Raleigh - 118

- Asian - 1
- Black - 54
- Hispanic - 48
- White - 15



Date: February 14, 2006  
Prepared by C. White

In seeking a prostitute, the behavior of these men also reflected their aversion to risk. During surveillance operations, solitary men would be observed circling the block slowly, oftentimes repeatedly. They would occasionally park their vehicles to observe the prostitute's behavior. When approaching the decoy, these men were consistently cagey, and might ask the undercover officer repeatedly if she were a police officer, or demand that the female officer quickly get into the vehicle. Based on these actions, the johns' risk aversion was evident. In fact, many deals fell through during negotiations because the johns became fearful.

### ***Naive Latino Johns***

In contrast to risk-averse johns, arrest data and officer observations identified another type of john: the naive Latino male seeking a prostitute. Raleigh began to experience a huge flux of Latinos in early 2000, and problems with prostitution at brothels were associated with this ethnic group. By about mid-2002, Latino men were becoming increasingly prevalent in the street prostitution market.

In contrast to the risk-averse males who were primarily Caucasian and African American, Latino men demonstrated no caution when soliciting prostitutes. Latino men would be observed driving along a major road, sometimes with one or more passengers, and suddenly spot an undercover decoy officer. Upon seeing the decoy, the Latino driver would slow quickly and whip across several lanes of traffic to solicit her in broken English. These men were easy to arrest because they did not seek to determine whether the decoy was an officer and quickly met the standards of probable cause for soliciting. For police, the arrest was almost like shooting fish in a barrel.

To understand the differences between Latino johns and risk-averse johns, a Spanish-speaking Latino HIV/STD health educator interviewed the men following arrest. Among their reasons for soliciting a prostitute, these men claimed:

- They did not know it was illegal to pay for sex.
- They were lonely and did not know how to meet women in the United States. They thought the decoy officer was attractive and wanted to meet her.
- They were encouraged to lose their virginity to a prostitute and believed they would become physically ill if they did not have sex on a regular basis.

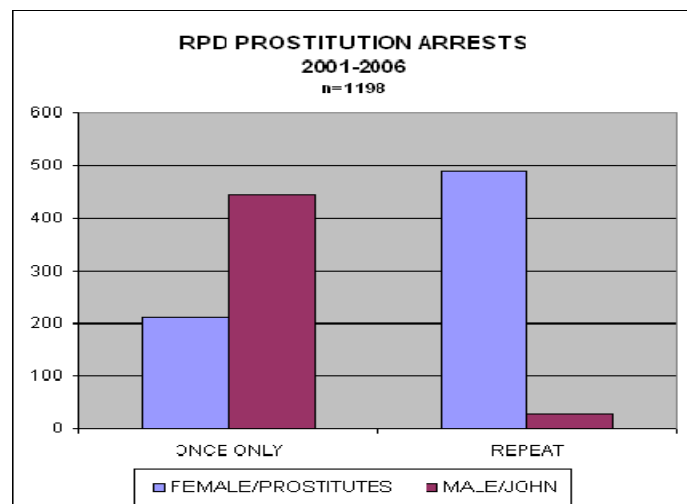
Although it initially seemed surprising that the Latino men would be unaware that prostitution was illegal in the United States, these men were all recent immigrants from Mexico. Most resided in all-male crowded communal living environments. As part of the interviews, ALPES conducted a focus group with Latinos who were on probation for DWI offenses. The purpose of the focus group was to identify opportunities to develop educational campaign messages to dissuade Latinos from soliciting prostitutes.

### *Amateur Prostitutes*

Police have perceived prostitution to be an intractable problem – a view reinforced by the revolving door of the criminal justice system through which many prostitutes flowed. However, analysis of arrests showed that a large portion of prostitutes do not re-offend. During a five year period, RPD made 737 arrests of prostitutes; these prostitutes

were mostly female, but did include a few cross-dressing males. The arrests represented 368 prostitutes, many of whom were arrested multiple times. Fifty-nine percent of the prostitutes (216) were arrested only once during this five year period. This finding reassured police that many of their efforts were successful, and showed that a majority of prostitutes were in fact effectively deterred through arrest.

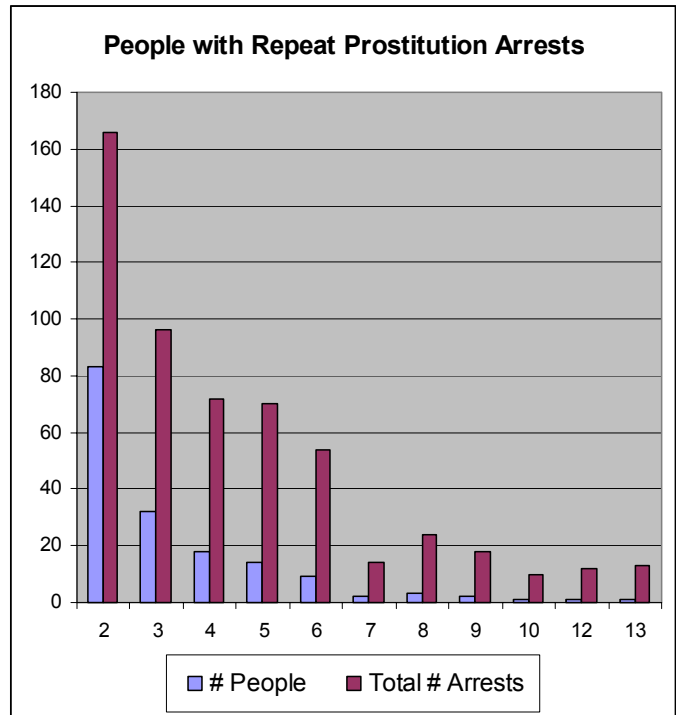
Figure 2



### *Chronic or Habitual Prostitutes*

In contrast to the amateur prostitutes, there was a sizeable group of chronic or habitual prostitutes who were repeatedly arrested by RPD. Over five years, 152 prostitutes were arrested 2+ times for prostitution, generating 521 arrests. Analysis revealed that 41% of prostitutes (152) were responsible for 71% of arrests of prostitutes. While many of these prostitutes (69) had only two arrests (138 arrests), some were chronic and habitual:

Figure 3



- 51 chronic prostitutes – 1/3 of the repeat offenders – were arrested 4+ times for prostitution. In five years, these prostitutes were arrested 287 times for prostitution (other charges and arrests not included), generating 39% (287 of 737) of arrests of prostitutes.
- 18 women were even more chronic, generating 16% (116) of all arrests of prostitutes. These chronics were predominately Caucasian and African American; only one Latina was arrested more than once.
- Most of the 51 chronic prostitutes had lengthy prostitution careers. Only four had a first arrest occurring in 2004 or later. On average, the arrest career of the chronic prostitutes was 3 years.
- Most chronic prostitutes were female (one male), no Latinas, 14 Caucasians and 37 African Americans. Most chronic prostitutes were fairly old – 32% (16) were > 40 years old and 3 were > 50 years old.

<b>Table I: RPD Arrests Related to Nine Prostitutes since 2001<sup>1</sup></b>	
Drug Paraphernalia	25
Second Degree Trespass	23
<b>Solicit For Prostitution/Prostitution</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Loitering for Prostitution</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Crimes Against Nature</b>	<b>4</b>
Larceny/Shoplifting	6
Breaking or Entering	6
Possess/Consume Alcohol City Property/ Intoxicated and Disruptive, Open container	8
Littering Not > 15 Lbs	3
Resist, Delay, Obstruct	4
Indecent Exposure	2
Assault W/Deadly Weapon	1
Block Sidewalk for Pedestrian Traffic	1
Concealed Weapon	1
Impede Flow of Traffic	1
Loitering	1

While prostitutes were also involved in other crimes and arrests, the extent of this involvement was not known. A sample of nine chronic prostitutes (total of 36 prostitution arrests) was selected to examine their overall arrest pattern. Analysis of arrest history showed that these nine women had been arrested 119 times by RPD in five years, only 13 arrests were for felony crimes, 12 were property crimes, and one assault (*See Table I*).

The criminal history of the 19 prostitutes showed that RPD’s uniformed personnel were well-aware of the chronic prostitutes; because prostitution arrests are a difficult charge for a uniformed officer to make, the officers were employing a range of other discretionary arrests to remove the chronic prostitutes – at least temporarily – from the neighborhood where their presence telegraphed “business as usual” to customers, residents and passers-by.

To develop a better understanding of chronic prostitution, a group of the women participated in a focus group facilitated by the director of the Women’s Center SHAPE Program. The SHAPE Program is a crack-addicted sex worker support group designed to help women get

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<sup>1</sup> Only the first charge in the arrest of an individual is listed although multiple charges may have been incurred from the same incident.

prepared for drug treatment. The focus group and program director provided the following insights:

- Drug-addicted prostitutes who have had no “clean time” from drugs are incredibly difficult to get into or interested in a substance abuse program.
- Substance abuse treatment success requires multiple attempts at quitting. Many of the women in the SHAPE program have attempted treatment unsuccessfully.
- A good “trick” is someone with a lot of money. Someone who is willing to pay for every five minutes or someone who is done in five minutes.
- Prostitutes had a preference for Latino johns as they often carried lots of cash and were easy to rob when they passed out. This preference reinforced earlier analysis about the rising prevalence of Latino johns.

We learned through interviews that neighbors were more likely to call 9-1-1 on a familiar-faced prostitute than on a prostitute new to the area. The familiarity of chronic prostitutes walking in the area incensed the neighbors and reinforced in their minds that the police did not care about this problem.

The analysis showed that chronic prostitutes comprised only a portion of the prostitution market, but these were committed offenders, and efforts to reduce this part of the problem might not be as easy or successful as other efforts.

### ***Literature Review Findings***

The perspective of different types of actors in the prostitution market was supported by several recent publications on the topic (Weitzer, 2005). Although there is little research on johns who patronize prostitutes, some studies show that many men feel ashamed of their behavior but patronize street prostitutes because of the easy accessibility, low cost and anonymity (Weitzer, 2005).

Dodge et al (2005) described most johns in Colorado as Hispanic, but noted that johns come from a wide range of socioeconomic groups and many are risk averse -- their caution about getting caught is reflected in the dialogue in which they engage the undercover officer. And Dodge et al

note that police efforts to reduce prostitution "enhance perceptions among residents that the police are earnestly working on the problem" (p. 83).

There are few reliable measures of police effectiveness in addressing prostitution. Penfold et al (2004) conclude that there are no police performance measures related to prostitution and the problem is therefore not a priority for police. As such, it is subject to ad hoc crackdowns that produce only temporary respite for embattled citizens who live in areas of prostitution.

Finally, in one study in Aurora, CO, police launched a publicity effort to shame arrested johns; to measure impact, police recorded the number of arrests typically arising from an undercover sting operation (20) before the publicity with the number of arrests after the publicity (6). (Described in Dodge et al, 2005).

## **RESPONSES**

The responses developed by the Prostitution Dragnet Team related to the different elements of the prostitution problem.

### ***Physical Arrest***

Raleigh, as many other cities, does not make custodial arrests for many misdemeanors. This has traditionally included the prostitution-related offenses. Rather than taking an arrested prostitute or john into custody, RPD officers typically issued the offender a citation and released the individual. In August 2003, RPD began to test the impact of a physical arrest on recidivism for johns and prostitutes. The policy to physically arrest johns and prostitutes was implemented citywide. Officers were briefed on the Dragnet strategy and these hypotheses, along with these reasons for a physical arrest:

- Risk-averse johns have a lot to lose. They typically have a family, own a car, have a job, and care about their reputation in the community. They rely on word-of-mouth

communication to locate the active prostitution market. Naïve johns are typically day-laborers who send money back to Mexico. Therefore, they rely on their day-to-day paycheck and employment. A physical arrest could jeopardize those things they care about most. Therefore, the threat of a physical arrest may be enough to deter them from soliciting prostitutes.

- Physical arrest resulted in an official arrest photo and 10-finger prints in the statewide criminal database. Arrest photos would then be used in Dragnet TV and on the police website.
- Physical arrest of chronic prostitutes provides a temporary respite to the neighborhood by removing the familiar-faced prostitutes and their nuisance behavior from the area.
- Physical arrest of amateur prostitutes may encourage them to find another market or give up this activity.

The Police Attorney also conducted an in-service training class on “loitering for the purpose of prostitution” and “soliciting for prostitution” laws because most officers were unaware that they could charge johns or prostitutes outside of a sting operation. Loitering charges can be used by officers.

The Police Attorney and Detective Division Major also briefed the District Attorney (DA), the Magistrates, and Chief Probation/Parole Officer on this initiative and the benefits of physical arrests, which they agreed to support. The DA assigned one assistant DA to prosecute all the prostitution cases and the Chief Probation Officer assigned two officers to these cases.

### ***Dragnet TV***

Prior to Phase II, an apprehended john got off with little more than a slap on the wrist, and could easily hide his illegal behavior. On August 15, 2003, RPD launched Dragnet TV and website to further deter these risk-averse men by publicly “shaming” them about their behavior. Dragnet TV and the website shows all recent arrest photos for 3-week period. Dragnet TV is shown at regular times during the day on the City’s cable-access station. Dragnet TV also is used to deter potential johns from soliciting a street prostitute. Without exception, all johns physically arrested

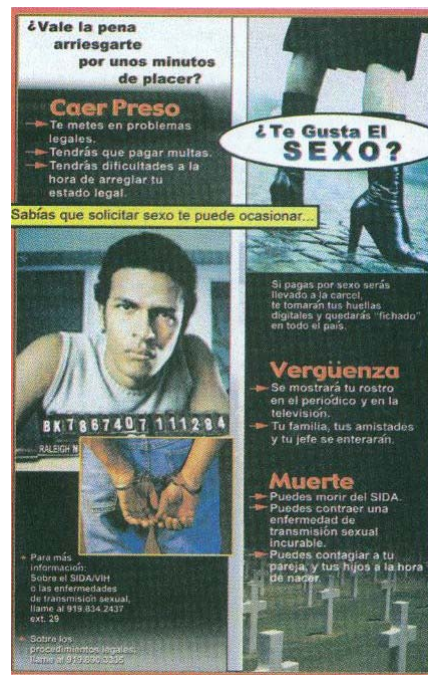


appear on Dragnet TV and RPD's website. Prostitutes are not shown on either medium because their photos would undermine undercover operations and serve as an advertisement to johns.

### ***Latino Educational Campaign***

Based on post-arrest interviews and the DWI focus group results, ALPES developed a multi-media educational campaign in Spanish to educate Latinos on the laws and consequences of soliciting a prostitute. The Spanish-language campaign included posters, pamphlets, 8-minute radio public service announcements on the most popular FM station, published articles in local newspaper and magazine, and call-in talk shows (*see Figure 4 for poster example*). Latino health educators, outreach workers and radio station personalities distributed the materials. In addition, Latino outreach workers went to Latino bars to talk to men about how to find a date in the United States.

Figure 4



### ***Focus on Chronic Prostitutes***

The analysis suggested that there were clear differences between chronic or habitual and amateur prostitutes, with amateur prostitutes being more easily deterred. Therefore, we relied on the expertise of the Women's Center on how to deter chronic prostitutes. As a result, several responses were developed to address the specific needs of chronic prostitutes.

First, the Women's Center operates the SHAPE Program, which provides the only treatment-readiness resource in NC appropriate for the special needs of female prostitutes. This program has three phases: harm reduction for those not interested in treatment, first stages of treatment readiness, and final stages of treatment readiness. The program provides an incentive for

attending meetings (\$10 Wal-Mart gift certificate + 2 bus tokens), which RPD provided funding. Many chronic prostitutes have participated in this program.

Second, officers provided SHAPE program flyers to known prostitutes and those arrested. Third, the SHAPE director conducted post-arrest meetings to introduce them to the program and invite them to use the center. Because the arrested prostitutes were typically high on crack during the post-arrest meetings, the director discontinued these meetings and began to hold meetings in the jail after a prostitute had at least three drug-free days. The purpose of these meetings was to begin to develop a relationship with the women, which is the first step toward a sober lifestyle. This approach, unfortunately, was not effective because many of the women were not getting enough “clean” time in jail.

According to the program direction, most chronic prostitutes in the program have type of mental health disease, which make it even more difficult to try to help these women become drug-free. The Women’s Center is trying to obtain funding for a mental-health outreach worker.

Fifth, we attempted to use supervised probation, which proved to be a dismal failure. Only two women successfully completed their probation requirements. Finally, we recently partnered with the Women’s Healing Place (WHP), which provides homeless women with shelter, and substance abuse detox and treatment services. In the last decoy operation, prostitutes were given the opportunity to voluntarily go to WHP and one of three women went and stayed for three weeks. WHP provided the transport van to the center, saving a one-hour round trip for officers. At the center, women are offered HIV/STD testing and a detox bed.

## ***Community Involvement***

In August 2003, police presented the draft Phase II plans at a community meeting to gather citizen input. The community also received a legal briefing on prostitution laws and limitations of police powers. The community agreed with the plan and expressed interest in being part of the solution.

Because we believe that the johns are easily deterred, we wanted to test the effectiveness of a letter sent home to suspected johns instead of a more expensive arrest. After receiving training, citizens were asked to keep a log of the suspected johns driving through their neighborhood (*see Figure 5*). These logs were returned to RPD and the information used to identify possible repeat johns. When validated, a letter was sent to the registered vehicle owner advising them of crime prevention efforts addressing prostitution and drug dealing in the area (*see Appendix for examples of Spanish & English letters*). Although we believe the letter campaign was effective, community participation waned. Officers then attempted to track covertly license plate tags of those men exhibiting behaviors consistent with johns. Unless there were prostitutes in the vicinity, however, johns did not exhibit these tell-tale behaviors.

Monthly updates on Operation Dragnet were provided to citizens at community meetings. As the visibility of the prostitutes decreased, the level of involvement of the community in tracking license plate tags also decreased.

Figure 5

Suspicious Activity – Prostitution							Neighborhood Name _____
Date/Time	Location	Vehicle Color	Make of Vehicle	Description of Occupants of Vehicle	License Plate	State	Observation
6/24/2003 12:05 PM	SE Corner of Main & Jones	Black	Honda Accord (new looking)	White Male Driver w/ glasses, wearing blue suit and red tie  White Female prostitute in pink dress known as "Missy"	ABC-1234	NC	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Spoke with a suspected prostitute <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Picked up a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Dropped off a suspected prostitute <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Repeatedly circled block How many times? <u>  3  </u> Comments: <i>Car/driver seen almost everyday at lunchtime picking up prostitutes.</i>
<b>EXAMPLE</b>							<input type="checkbox"/> Spoke with a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Picked up a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Dropped off a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Repeatedly circled block How many times? _____ Comments:
							<input type="checkbox"/> Spoke with a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Picked up a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Dropped off a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Repeatedly circled block How many times? _____ Comments:
							<input type="checkbox"/> Spoke with a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Picked up a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Dropped off a suspected prostitute <input type="checkbox"/> Repeatedly circled block How many times? _____ Comments:

Name (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Address (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_ Phone (Optional) \_\_\_\_\_

May a law enforcement officer contact you about this information (circle)? Yes No If YES, please provide your phone number.

Please return completed form to  
 Raleigh Police District 24 ~ Attn: Captain Al White ~ 1601-30 Crosslink Road - Raleigh, NC 27610  
 (919) 857-4455 *Upon completion, this is a criminal investigative record.*

**ASSESSMENT**

Given the historic nature of street prostitution in College Park/Idlewild, we did not anticipate that the problem would be completely eliminated. We did anticipate that the visibility of the problem would be improved by being substantially lessened. As there is no single reliable measure of impact that reflects reductions of prostitution, the results of Operation Dragnet were examined in several different ways, as follows:

***Repeat John Arrests***

Since 2003, five of 470 johns – including two Latino men – have been rearrested. We perceive the low re-arrest rate reflects the effectiveness of “Dragnet TV” in deterring johns. The

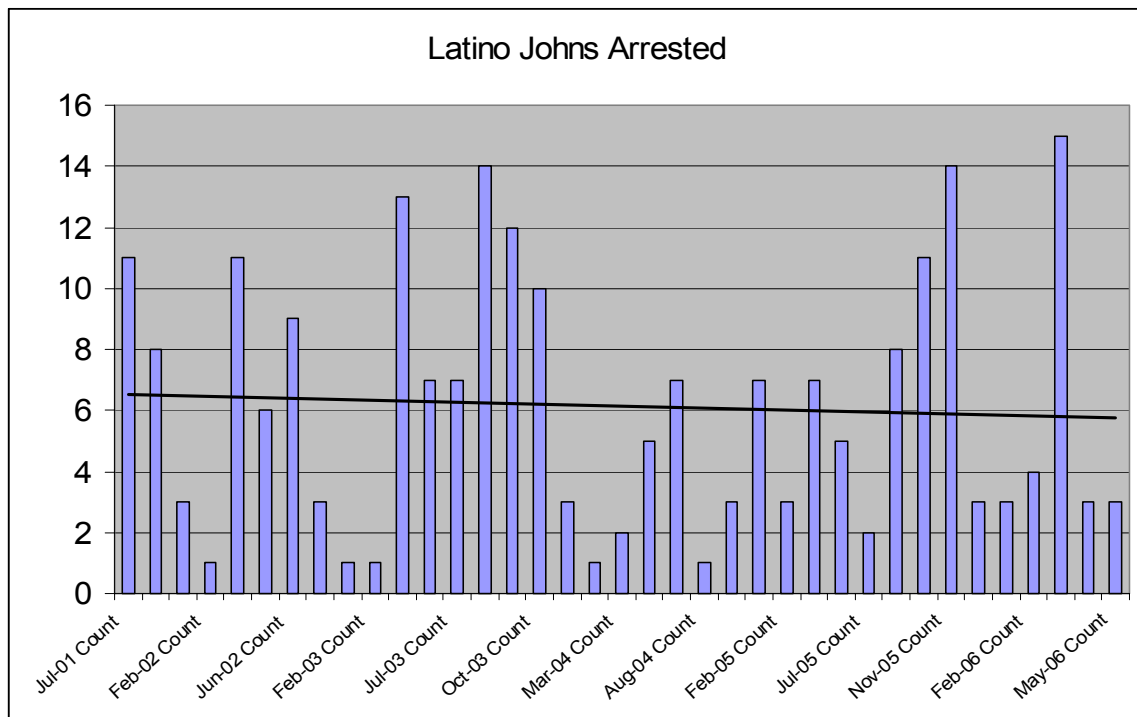
data are supported by police observations during arrests. Many johns ask police during arrest not to put their photograph on television. Several arrested johns have broken down into tears or vomited at the thought of being on TV and RPD's website. Attorneys have also called asking that their clients not be placed on TV. Further, Dragnet TV is very popular with citizens, especially within the target area.

***Reduced Latino John Arrests***

Following the educational campaign, fewer Latinos were arrested. A total of 227 Latino johns have been arrested by RPD since 2001; the volume of Latino arrests has been declining slightly over time (see Figure 6). In addition, those Latinos soliciting the undercover officer demonstrated behaviors consistent with risk-averse johns, such as asking the decoy officer, "Are you the police."

We also found that Dragnet TV had no deterrent effect on Latino johns. Based on focus group results, Latinos typically watch satellite TV, which does not carry the City's cable-access station.

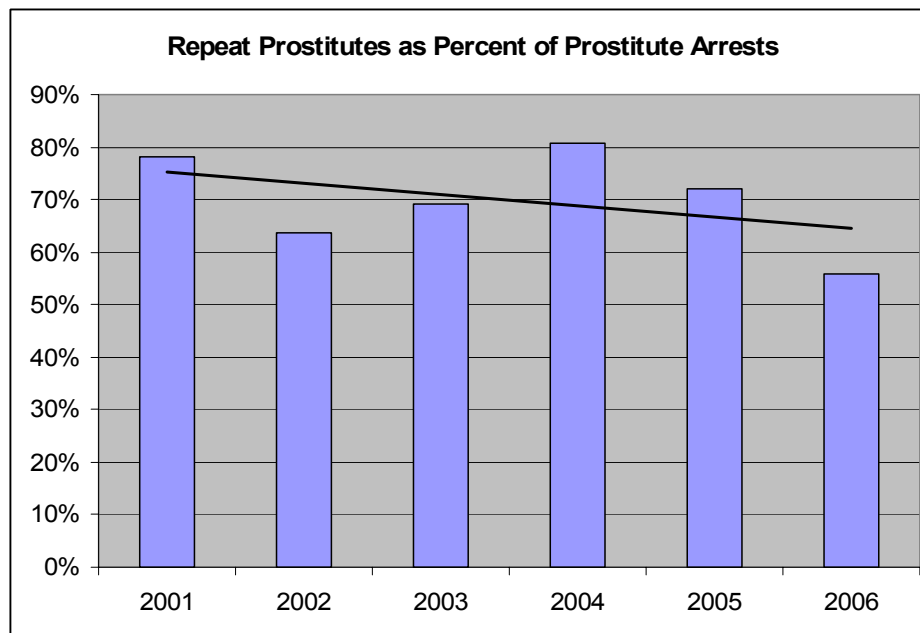
**Figure 6**



### ***Declining Proportion of Repeat Arrests***

Of note, the proportion of repeat prostitutes is declining; from a high of 81% in 2004, the current proportion of repeat prostitutes is about 55%, suggesting that once-only prostitutes are playing an increasing share in the prostitution market (*see Figure 7*).

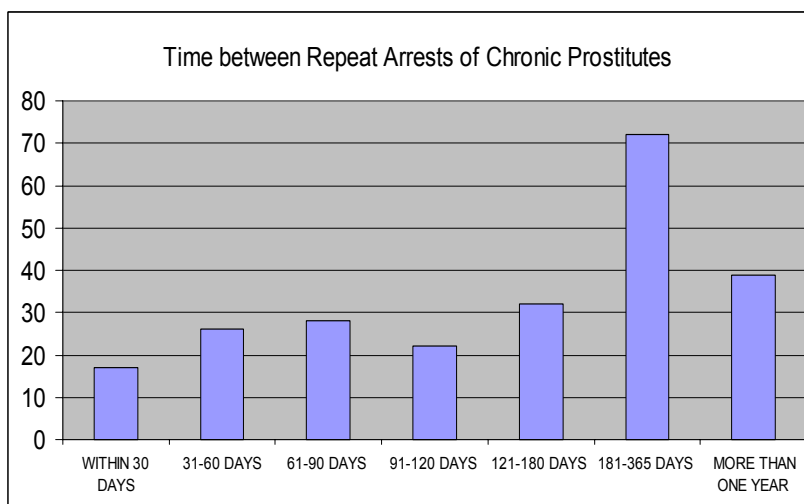
**Figure 7**



### ***Time between Repeat Arrests***

An important outcome of police efforts was to increase the time period between repeat arrests for chronic prostitutes. While some chronics continued to be rearrested very quickly, only 7% of chronic prostitutes are rearrested within 30 days; 17% of chronics are not rearrested until more than one year later (*see Figure 8*). There are also indications that the proportion of prostitution arrests related to repeat persons is declining over time. The decline in repeat arrests suggests that chronic – and often well-known prostitutes – comprise a declining portion of the prostitution market.

**Figure 8**



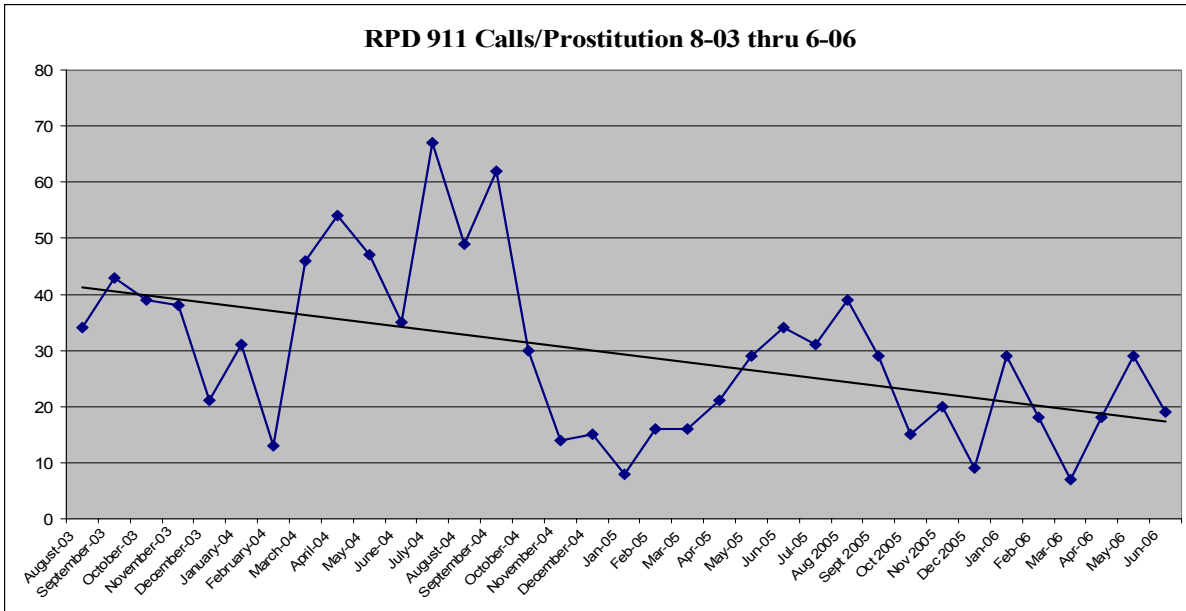
***Reduction in Calls-For-Service***

RPD began monitoring calls for service for prostitution in August 2003. Calls began to increase steadily during 2004, as police efforts in the community encouraged citizens to call the police. The overall trend in calls on a monthly basis was somewhat volatile, with substantial increases each summer, but the overall trend is steadily downward, as revealed in the trend line in Figure 9.

The downward trend is further supported in comparing average calls for service. For the 35-month period, there was an average of 29 calls per month. But the average number of calls from August 2003 through December 2004 (first 17 months) was 37.5 per month, while the average for the following 17 months (January 2005 through June 2006) was 21 per month – reflecting a significant and sustained decline in citizen requests for service (*see Table II*).

<b>Table II: Average Monthly Calls for Service for Prostitution</b>	
Aug 2003 – June 2006	29.3
Aug 2003 – Dec 2004	37.5
Jan 2005 – June 2006	21.0

Figure 9



***Improved Community Perceptions of Prostitution & Confidence in the Police***

Consistent with calls for service data, the frequency of community complaints raised at the monthly community meetings decreased. In fact, prostitution has not been on the meeting agenda in 2006. Chief Perlov also has not received a prostitution-related complaint from area residents since the start of Phase II. Community members have publicly thanked officers during these meetings for their hardwork to reduce prostitution.

***Improved Police Effectiveness***

Time required to make an arrest in a decoy operation has increased from approximately 5 minutes to nearly 15 minutes. The average number of arrests per operation has decreased from 15 to 8 during the course of the study.



## AGENCY & OFFICER INFORMATION

1. At what level of the police organization was this problem solving initiative adopted?
  - Although this problem directly affects two patrol districts, the entire department has adopted this initiative.
  - The Chief's Strategic Initiatives Manager co-facilitates the Prostitution Dragnet with the Executive Officer of District 24.
2. Did officers or management receive any training in problem oriented policing and/or problem solving before this project began or during its execution?
  - Since 2003, all officers are required to take a 2-hour in-service training class on Problem-Oriented Policing and problem-solving techniques. Officers also may chose to take a 1-hour problem-solving technique course. In addition, a ½-day session is taught in the Police Academy. Civilian employees, including the Crime Analysts, are encouraged to take the problem-solving training classes.
  - The team reviewed the *COPS Guide on Street Prostitution*, written by Michael Scott, at the initial meeting and continued to refer to it throughout Phase II.
  - In Phase I of this initiative, the team applied the findings in the *COPS Guide on Street Prostitution* to Raleigh's prostitution problem, under the direction of Dr. Deborah Weisel, NCSU, who is a long-standing member of the Prostitution Dragnet team.
3. Were additional incentives given to police officers who engaged in problem solving?
  - Yes, officers that showed creativity and initiative in problem solving were given the opportunity to work on a prostitution-related overtime project.
4. What resources and guidelines were used, if any, by police officers to help them manage this problem-solving initiative?
  - *POP Guide on Street Prostitution* was made available to all team members.
  - The Chief's Strategic Initiatives Manager was assigned to the team to assist the officers. She also assisted with developing the meeting agenda and recording discussion points.
  - Dr. Deborah Weisel, NCSU, advises the team. She and the Strategic Initiatives Manager conduct research queries on proposed responses.
  - Other agencies were invited to join the team for their expertise and experience working with prostitutes and johns.
  - A project plan was agreed to by team members at the beginning of Phase II. In addition, the plan was revised constantly to include new responses and remove unsuccessful ones.

5. What issues/problems were identified with the problem-oriented policing model or the problem-solving model?
  - None.
  
6. What general resources were committed to this project, and of those resources, what went beyond the existing department budget?
  - Each team member committed to attending the month Prostitution Dragnet meeting.
  - RPD dedicated at least one person from each of these units/divisions: Drugs & Vice Unit, Field Operations – District 24 and the Downtown District, Special Operations, Crime Analysis, and Chief's Office.
  - The Crime Analyst provided weekly arrest and calls-for-service data. In addition, she provides any requested data and analysis related to this initiative.
  - The patrol districts committed to at least one decoy operation per month.
  - Raleigh's cable-access station, RTV, assigned a producer to the Dragnet TV. He produces a new show every 3 weeks. RTV allocates three 15-minute spots per day for Dragnet TV.
  - RPD assigned an administrative support person to update RPD's website every three weeks with new john photos and information.
  - A senior officer attends the monthly community meeting in the College Park/Idlewild area to provide an update on the initiative and to receive feedback.
  - Other personnel commitments include the Wake County District Attorney's Office, Wake County Human Services (Community Health Educators and HIV/STD Clinic), North Carolina Community Corrections (Probation/Parole), North Carolina State University, and three nonprofits - Women's Center (SHAPE Program for Crack-Addicted Sex Workers), AIDS Services (Syphilis Elimination Project), and ALPES (Latino Health Coalition).
  - RPD provided the Women's Center with a \$500 grant to purchase incentives for the women in the SHAPE program.
  - ALPES, a Latino Health Coalition, conducted post-arrest interviews and a focus group with DWI offenders at no charge.
  - ALPES developed the text for the Latino education campaign print materials. In addition, ALPES developed the script for the 8-minute PSAs. ALPES provided all the Spanish translation services at no charge.
  - ALPES and the AIDS Alliance produced newspaper and magazine articles and had them place in the Latino media at no charge.

- El Tunel magazine published the Latino education poster as a PSA at no charge.
- La Ley FM radio station aired the 8-minute PSA at no charge for two weeks.
- Que Pasa AM radio station produced multiple call-in talk shows on Friday afternoons, which discussed prostitution laws and consequences, along with other important topics.
- RPD paid for the layout, design and printing of the posters and pamphlets used in the Latino educational campaign.
- Latino health educators, outreach workers and radio personalities distributed the printed Latino educational materials at no charge.
- Dr. Deborah Weisel provided her expertise and time at no charge.
- The SHAPE program director conducted focus group and individual interviews with SHAPE program participants at no charge.
- The Wake County District Attorney assigned one ADA to prosecute all prostitution-related cases.
- North Carolina Community Corrections assigned two Probation/Parole officers to prostitution cases.
- The Healing Place for Women provides free transportation for prostitutes seeking shelter or detox services.
- Team members make their facilities available for team meetings.

7. Project Contact Person:

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## REFERENCES

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APPENDIX – Samples of Letters Sent to Potential Johns



# RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Jane Perlov, Chief of Police**

110 S. McDowell Street  
P.O. Box 590  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

[DATE]

[FIRST\_NAME] [LAST\_NAME]  
[ADDRESS\_1] [ADDRESS\_2]  
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP\_CODE]

Dear Mr./Ms. [LAST\_NAME]:

On [DATE] at approximately [TIME], a [MAKE] [MODEL] registered in your name with North Carolina license plate [LICENSE\_PLATE] was observed at [STREET\_BLOCK], which is an area where residents have expressed concerns about crimes that affect their quality of life, including prostitution and drug dealing. The police department is actively addressing these chronic problems in the community through surveillance, patrols, and Neighborhood Watch programs. For the public's safety, we encourage everyone to be aware of his or her surroundings and to report any suspicious activity to 911. If you no longer own the above vehicle or if this notice was sent in error, please disregard it.

The Raleigh Police Department is working closely with citizens to improve the quality of life in our neighborhoods. If you have any questions or would like more information about our efforts to reduce crime, fear and disorder in Raleigh, please call Captain Al White, District 24 Commander, at (919) 857-4455.

Sincerely,

Chief Jane Perlov



# RALEIGH POLICE DEPARTMENT

**Jane Perlov, Chief of Police**

110 S. McDowell Street  
P.O. Box 590  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27602

[DATE]

[FIRST\_NAME] [LAST\_NAME]  
[ADDRESS\_1] [ADDRESS\_2]  
[CITY], [STATE] [ZIP\_CODE]

Estimado/a Sr./Sra. [LAST\_NAME]:

El [FECHA], aproximadamente a la(s) [TIME], un [MAKE] [MODEL] registrado bajo su nombre, con placa de Carolina del Norte [LICENSE\_PLATE] fue visto en [STREET\_BLOCK], la cual es una área cuyos residentes han expresado preocupación por los crímenes que afectan su calidad de vida, incluyendo prostitución y tráfico de drogas. El departamento de policía está atacando activamente éste problema crónico en la comunidad, a través de vigilancia, patrullaje, y el programa de Vigilancia Comunitaria.

Por razones de seguridad pública, estamos recomendándole a todos, de que estén conscientes de sus alrededores, y de reportar cualquier actividad sospechosa al 911. Por favor descarte ésta carta, si usted ya no es dueño de éste vehículo, o si ésta carta fue enviada por error.

El Departamento de Policía de Raleigh está trabajando muy de cerca con los ciudadanos para mejorar la calidad de vida en nuestros vecindarios. Si usted tiene alguna pregunta, o si le gustase obtener mas información acerca de nuestros esfuerzos para reducir el crimen, el temor y el desorden en Raleigh, por favor comuníquese con el Capitán Al White, Comandante del Distrito 24, al (919) 857-4455.

Sinceramente,

Chief Jane Perlov  
Jefe de la Policía de Raleigh