

Outcome Evaluation

Safe Passage Home--Oakland

I. Background

Oakland's Safe Passage represents the confluence of several different movements focusing on child health and safety in East Oakland, a low-income, ethnically diverse community of approximately 50,000 residents. Predecessors to this initiative included a successful Weed and Seed Initiative that had demonstrated success in reducing drug dealing and associated crime, and a Hope IV program that was very successful in revitalizing the Coliseum and Lockwood Gardens Public Housing developments—the city's largest developments, which had previously been a focus of drug-dealing and of general community disorganization. However, there remained considerable concern throughout the community, and in the City of Oakland as a whole, that youth crime—and particularly violent youth crime—was continuing to rise.

In early 1996, the East Bay Public Safety Corridor and the Oakland Police Department began planning for a series of initiatives regarding youth violence. Based upon a quantitative geographic analysis conducted by the Corridor of OPD crime reports for 1992-1994, it was known that crimes involving youth (as victims or perpetrators) were highly concentrated in both time and space. The time between 3 P.M. and 6 P.M. was found to be most dangerous for youth. The majority of violent crimes were concentrated in areas of East and West Oakland, with over half of the crimes occurring in census tracts containing only 15% of the total city population. Moreover, even within those census tracts, crimes were found to be concentrated with particular, enduring hotspots. These hotspots, while comprising only 3% of all blocks in Oakland, contained more than 30% of all violent crimes involving youth.

Consequently, when the Department of Justice issued an RFP in mid-1996 for *COPS (Community Oriented Policing Services) Problem-Solving Partnerships*, the Corridor and the Oakland Police Department developed a proposal that would pilot a data-driven community-focused approach to reducing violent crimes involving youth. This proposal was funded, and initial program development began in early 1998.

The East Bay Public Safety Corridor Partnership is a consortium consisting of 21 cities, 2 counties, 19 school districts and 23 law enforcement agencies committed to working together to find solutions to the problems of crime, drugs and violence in their communities. The participating communities are located in a corridor on the Eastern side of San Francisco Bay and have a combined population of approximately 1.3 million people, stretching from Fremont in the south to the Carquinez Strait in the North. The Partnership is the largest local public safety collaboration in the nation. The leadership of the Partnership--the Corridor Council--is comprised of state legislators, mayors, county supervisors, county administrators, mayors, city managers, school superintendents, community foundation representatives, community members, and youth.

II. Purpose of the Initiative

The Safe Passage Home Oakland was initiated to develop data-driven community-initiated responses to keep children safer during their passage to and from school and throughout the

afterschool hours of 3 P.M. to 6 P.M. Although the initiative was initially proposed with a principal focus on violence crimes involving youth as victims, community planning and follow-up data analysis revealed a second problem with traffic safety. Consequently, the initiative also developed interventions targeted toward decreasing incidents in which students were injured by vehicles on their way to and from school.

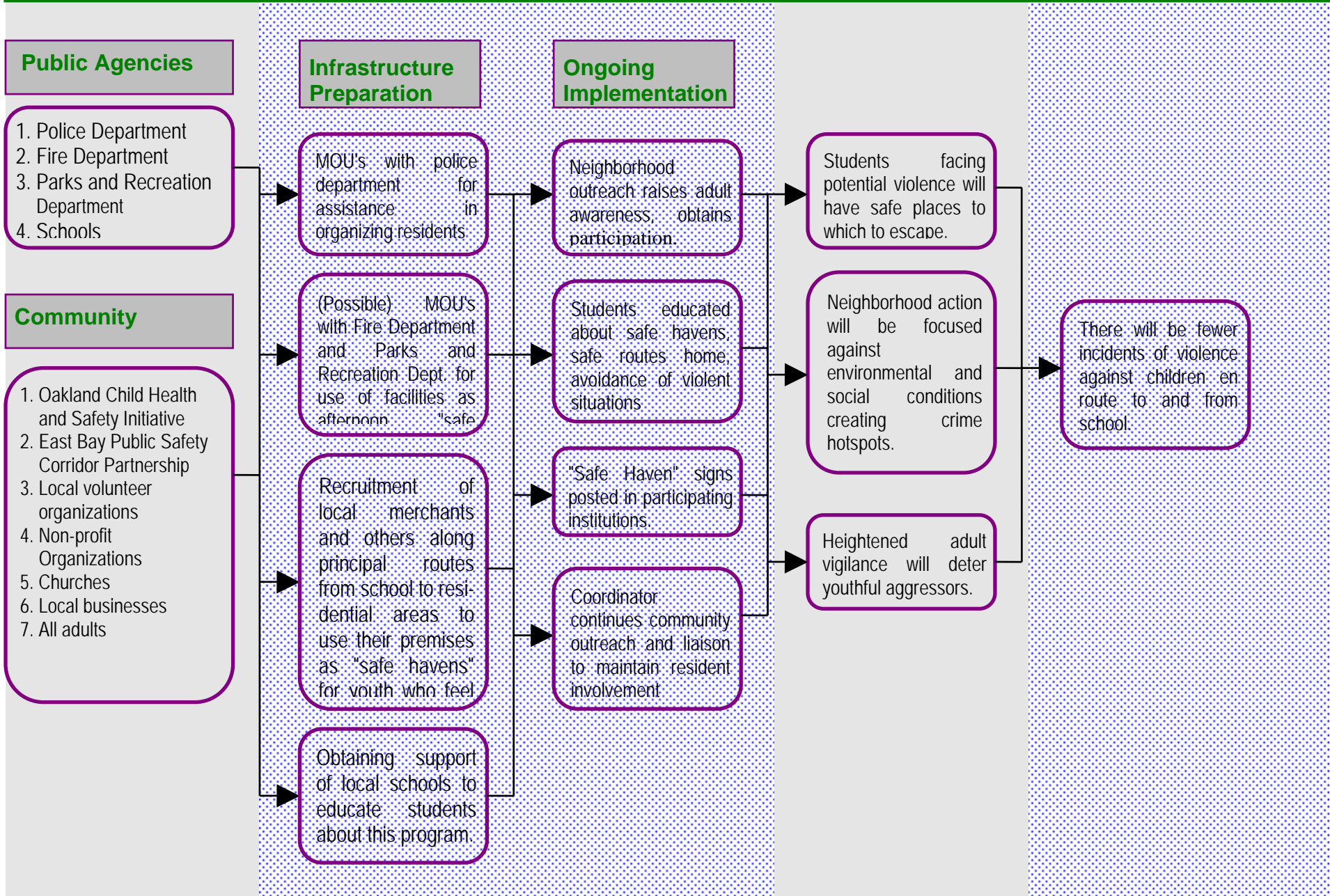
“Effectiveness measures” as proposed in the Problem-Solving Partnerships proposal were as follows:

- A. Decline in the number of assaults against youth in the target area between 3PM and 6PM
- B. Decline in the harm done by assaults
- C. Increase in the sense of safety during the early afternoon by youth in the target area.
- D. Decrease in truancy
- E. Increase in the number of businesses, organizations, adults and youth participating in the Safe Passage Home Project and other youth safety projects in the target area.
- F. Increase in conflict resolution and violence avoidance skills among at-risk youth.

Target area for the intervention was originally designated as census tracts 4088 and 4089. In the process of community planning, the scope of the intervention was broadened to include portions of census tracts 4085, 4086, and 4087 between International Blvd and Bancroft Avenue, making the target area roughly coextensive with the Lockwood Elementary School attendance area.

A logic model for the initiative is provided on the next page.

Inputs	Activities	Intermed. Outcomes	Final Outcomes
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III. Interventions

A. Initial Analysis

A number of methods of data collection were undertaken to support development of the strategic plan:

1. Quantitative Data Analysis:
 - a. All Oakland crimes for the period 1995-1997 were extracted from the Oakland Police Department Automated Record Management System. These data were cleaned, geocoded, mapped, and analyzed. Analysis examined trends in the nature of crimes, relationships between victims and perpetrators, hotspots, frequencies by time of day, day of week, and time of year.
 - b. Community Resources: Community resource data on community organizations and facilities, public programs and facilities, and churches were collected, geocoded, and mapped, and made available in both map form and resource-list form.
 - c. Hospital discharge data was analyzed for trends in youth admissions for violence- and accident-related causes.
2. Focus Groups and Individual Interviews: Respondents included 128 adults and 76 youth. Questions addressed included:
 - Listen to the impressions, feelings, and experiences of people who live and work in the neighborhood regarding the safety of children and youth within the community;
 - Discover what people saw to be the assets or strengths of their community which could be used to find solutions to the problem;
 - Discover what people believe are the causes of children and youth being unsafe;
 - Discover what people believe is needed to create a safer community for children and youth with a particular interest in identifying program needs, resources or activities;
 - Gauge the readiness of individuals willing to commit to participating in community activities around the subject of safety for children.

Stakeholder constituencies included:

- Business Owners
- Community Leaders
- Community Service Organizations
- Elected Officials
- Housing Authority Police
- Ministers or People from the Faith Community
- Oakland Police
- Parents
- School Officials
- Teachers
- Tenants of Public Housing
- Youth

- Youthful Offenders

3. Town Hall Meetings: Two town hall meetings were held at which the quantitative and qualitative data and findings were presented. After the first town hall meeting, issues were raised that required additional data analysis. The consultants completed those requested analyses and presented them to the second town hall meeting.

The participants in the Town Hall meetings identified a number of issues on which to concentrate the work of the initiative:

- a. Traffic safety on International Blvd. (formerly East 14th Street) bordering Lockwood Elementary and Havenscourt Middle School was a major problem.
- b. Youth engaged in fights routinely after school.
- c. Youth did not have sufficient skills to resolve conflicts in non-violent ways.
- d. Police were perceived as unresponsive to the community's needs; especially being available and interested and on foot in the area surrounding the schools.
- e. Community members did not perceive that there was a caring atmosphere in the neighborhood surrounding the school.
- f. Families were perceived as needing support to improve parenting skills.

B. Program Activities

Following the town hall meetings, a community task force was formed including school administrators, outreach workers, local library staff, parents, Housing Authority police and project staff, including the OPD's Neighborhood Services Coordinator, schools police, and OPD officer representatives, Asian Community Mental Health Services outreach/training staff, Community Health Academy local organizer, afterschool program provider, resident council member of local housing project, local parochial school staff, and interested youth.

Activities undertaken included the following:

1. Traffic Safety: Neighborhood residents worked with CHA and pressured for another traffic light and better signage. The neighborhood service coordinator from OPD worked with city staff and consultants to assess the need for a traffic signal as part of a special workshop on environmental responses. The process for final approval was underway at the close of the project.
2. Conflict Resolution: The local Village Center (newly formed) afterschool program decided to include conflict resolution for students from the middle school. Unfortunately, the time lag from signup to implementation proved too long and this program did not occur. At this point, the Community Task Force encouraged both school principals to implement the program within the regular school day. Both agreed and signed up for teacher training from the school district. The elementary school signed up earlier and implementation was in Fall, 1999.
3. Community Safety Patrol: The task force felt strongly that a community safety patrol working with parents, volunteers from the community task force, other community members and with backup from the school police and/or local police department would provide a clear demonstration to youth that the community is interested in creating a safe environment

around the school. The first attempts to form the patrol were based upon a volunteer model. However, it was very difficult to recruit members as this neighborhood has experienced many short term fixes and is reluctant to get involved in new efforts. To show that it could be done, staff from the project as as the community safety patrol for a few months. Recruitment efforts also focused on neighborhood crime prevention council members.

4. Community Policing: At the request of the community task force, when fighting increased after school police worked overtime at the same time (in the hours just after school) and their presence known on foot. Information was also proved by the local parochial school and the library staff regarding increases and decreases in youth-on-youth violence. All school staff and library staff participated in discussions with the officers and other members of the community task force.

A request was made by the community task force for the schools police to change their work schedule so that officers would be available in the hours after school. The schedule was modified but not to the extent requested.

C. Continuation after the end of Problem Solving Partnership grant funding

1. The community task force decided that the community safety patrol needed a small amount of financial support, and efforts were begun to obtain support. This was successful and (as the Problem Solving Partnership Grant ended) a total of approximately \$25,000 was to be dedicated to this effort over an 18 month period. Recruitment was begun for area leaders (working up to 10 hours per week) and volunteers who could not devote as much time but were interested in supporting the effort.
2. The Community Taskforce became the backbone of the Village Center's governing council that was being formed as the grant was ending. They listed community safety as a very important goal and are expected to sustain the project's efforts.
3. Two of the sponsors of the Community Safety Patrol are the Weed and Seed program and the East Oakland Partnership to Reduce Juvenile Gun Violence. They were becoming involved with this project just as the grant ended. This expanded the different groups working together in the area and was an encouraging sign of ongoing interaction. The latter had plans to institute a support group for teens (Teens on Target) at Havenscourt Middle School.

D. Replication of the Model

1. The City of Oakland began a Safe Passage Home Committee for Citywide replication of the community safety patrol model and staff of the Problem Solving Partnership participated in it and continue to do as the grant ends. It is hoped that the City will create local programs responsive to community input, as has occurred with the Problem Solving Partnership Initiative.
2. Oakland Child Health and Safety Initiative (OCHSI) is a ten-year project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation to promote the health and safety of Oakland children, focusing on low-income areas of the city. One the projects which OCHSI has undertaken to implement in nine neighborhoods throughout the city is the Safe Passage Home Project.

IV. Outcome Assessment

To assess the impact of the intervention, the Oakland Police Department downloaded to the evaluators all automated crime reports for crimes occurring between January 1, 1996 and December 31, 1999. These reports included information on:

- Date of Crime;
- Time of Occurrence
- Code Section Violated
- Address of Occurrence
- Demographics of victim, if known
- Demographics of suspect, if known

Data were then geocoded and analyzed for trends in overall crime, violent crime, juvenile-involved crime, and juvenile-involved violent crime. Prevalence and persistence of hotspots for violent crimes involving juveniles was also analyzed. Geocoding and analysis included crimes for the entire city to provide a perspective within which to evaluate the outcomes.

The intervention—including the initial community assessment and town hall process—lasted from October 1998 through December 1999. Many of the project’s successes—implementing a conflict resolution curriculum at Lockwood Elementary and Havenscourt Middle School, obtaining a new traffic light on International Blvd.—either occurred after the official end of the project or occurred too late in the project year to provide adequate data for evaluation. Nevertheless, the results are in the direction one would expect for a successful intervention.

Count of Crimes: City of Oakland vs. Target Area

Year	City of Oakland		Target Area	
	All Crimes	Violent Crimes	All Crimes	Violent Crimes
1996	3004	681	287	73
1997	3200	778	377	85
1998	3256	835	375	78
1999	2759	766	282	57

Table includes crimes occurring between 7 am and 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Because Lockwood Elementary is a year-round school, crimes occurring during the summer are included. Target area crimes comprise crimes committed in census tracts 4085, 4086, 4087, 4088, and 4089. Only crimes were included that involved youth ages 18 or under as victim or suspect. Violent crimes are assault, battery, homicide, rape, and robbery.

Source: Oakland Police Department Automated Record Management System.

Although Oakland as a whole experienced no decline in violent crimes committed by youth on weekdays during daylight hours (7 AM –6PM), and the target area experienced no decline in the three years before the Safe Passage Program, the Target Area did experience a significant drop in the number of such crimes during the year of the intervention

As Table 2 indicates, a Chi² test on these data indicate that the drop is statistically significant at the .05 level. As was indicated above, the data is inadequate to show causality, but

it is consistent with a positive impact on violent youth crime occurring on school days during the day light hours.

Table 2. X² Test on observed data

Observed			
	City of Oakland exc. Target area	Target Area	Total City
96-98 aver	685	80	764
99 actual	709	57	766
	1394	137	1530
Expected			
	City of Oakland exc. Target area	Target Area	Total City
96-98 aver	696	68	764
99 actual	698	68	766
	1394	137	1530
	Partials		X Sq.
	0.18686	1.90560	4.18
	0.18645	1.90144	

Adequacy of data:

Considering that the police data was not entered with an address validation, a reasonably high geocoding success rate was obtained, by dint of a great deal of hand matching. Table 3 below indicates the overall success rate. A disquieting aspect is the relatively low geocoding success rate for violent crimes in 1999 (85%) although there is no reason to suspect that there was any systematic bias in the actual locations of those crimes that could not be geocoded.

	All Crimes			Violent Crimes		
	Total Crimes	Geocoded	Percent geocoded	Total Crimes	Geocoded	Percent geocoded
1996	3,004	2,933	97%	681	656	96%
1997	3,200	3,095	97%	778	749	96%
1998	3,256	3,104	95%	835	775	93%
1999	2,759	2,570	93%	766	653	85%

Table includes crimes occurring between 7 am and 6 pm, Monday through Friday. Only crimes were included that involved youth ages 18 or under as victim or suspect. Violent crimes are assault, battery, homicide, rape, and robbery.

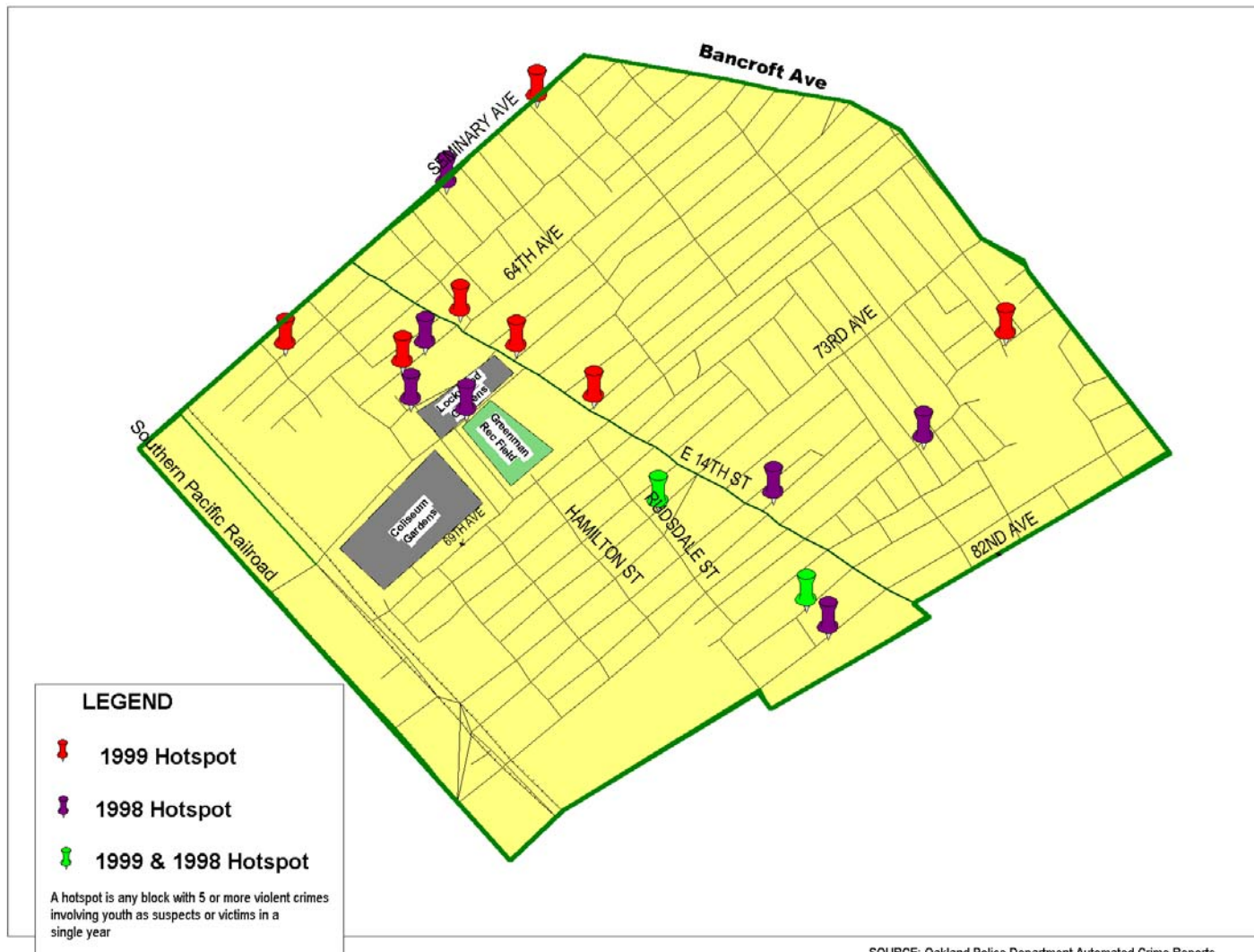
HotSpots

It was planned that the intervention would analyze hotspots for violent crimes against youth and would work to address the underlying causes for crimes occurring in those locations. In fact, as the map on the next page indicates, the intervention had no measurable effect on these crime hotspots. Defining a hotspot as an area in which 5 or more violent crimes involving youth occurred in a face block in on calendar year, the target area had nine hotspots in 1998 and nine hotspots in 1999.

Consistency with Logic Model

Contributing to the evidence that the intervention was successful is the consistency of actual achievements with the logic model developed at the beginning of the program. The Safe Passage Logic Model is reproduced below, with elements confirmed by the evaluation highlight in yellow. In fact most of the interventions and most of the causal links hypothesized prior to program implementation were in fact observed.

Oakland Crime Hotspots: Violent Crimes involving Youth as Victims or Suspects



SOURCE: Oakland Police Department Automated Crime Reports
 Prepared by Resource Development Associates 7/00

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