
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



FOR INFORMATION CALL

May 5, 2010

Ald. Bob Donovan
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Operation Impact 2010 to Build on Momentum of Successful First Two Years

News Conference Thursday (May 6) Intentionally Located on Corner in "Crime Challenged" Neighborhood; Alderman Donovan will be joined by Police Chief Edward Flynn, Residents, Program Funders and District Attorney's Office Representative

Since 2008 **Operation Impact** has partnered law enforcement and city (public) resources with private donors and local businesses to beef up beat patrols and to intensify crime fighting efforts inside a targeted area on Milwaukee's near south side.

According to Operation Impact's founder, **Ald. Bob Donovan**, in two years the initiative has helped reduce overall crime in the Operation Impact area dramatically. "The best compliment I've received many times about the project is when people tell me they feel safer, and that they've noticed things are quieter," he said. "That general attitude and feeling that we've taken back the streets somewhat from criminals speaks volumes about Operation Impact."

Alderman Donovan will launch Operation Impact 2010 during a **news conference at 12 p.m. tomorrow (Thursday, May 6) at the intersection of S. 23rd and W. Orchard Streets. He will be joined by Milwaukee Police Chief Edward Flynn, community prosecutor and Milwaukee County Assistant District Attorney Kelly Hedge**, as well as other supporters and stakeholders. **Mayor Tom Barrett has also been invited to take part.**

Unlike past years, tomorrow's event will also include Chief Flynn walking a beat (at the close of the news conference), and will serve as the official launch of **Operation Bass Busters 2010**, which is a continuing effort to encourage Milwaukeeans to take action by reporting vehicles emitting excessively loud music or sounds.

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Operation Impact 2010 Launch /ADD ONE

Alderman Donovan said **Neighborhood Ambassadors** – modeled after the Downtown Ambassadors that “patrol” in and around downtown Milwaukee – will also be at Thursday’s event, with cleaning and tidying as a top priority. “The ambassadors not only help residents and keep an eye out for possible criminal activity, but they also frequently pick up litter and clean up debris,” he said.

The Operation Impact target area is 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. The area is located within the 2nd Police District.

Alderman Donovan said Operation Impact, which uses donated private resources to flood the target area with beat patrol officers and additional surveillance cameras, has built a growing crowd of true believers – many of them small business owners and members of neighborhood groups and churches. The initiative has led to an increased citizen and community participation in crime reduction and crime prevention, including spawning dozens of Block Watch groups in the target area since 2008.

Pastor Harry Eisenmenger of Life Restoration Church, 2422 W. National Ave., said Operation Impact has had a direct impact on the area near the church – just blocks from the very busy intersection of S. 27th and W. National Ave. “In my view Operation Impact has helped create a general sense of order where there was once disorder,” said Pastor Eisenmenger, who also owns property nearby.

“Most noticeable, however, is that the presence of the beat patrol officers has caused a dramatic decrease in the number of trouble makers in the neighborhood,” he said.

Steve Fendt of the Southside Organizing Committee said Operation Impact has increased a “feeling of cohesion between people in the neighborhoods and the police department.”

“Operation Impact has been key to the crime reduction we’ve had on the South Side,” Fendt said. “Because of the beat officers, we have a police force that is more visible and accessible to the community, and because of the surveillance cameras, we have neighborhood streets and storefronts that are more visible and accessible to the police.”

Foundations and small business owners continue to be very supportive and generous, providing continual funding support for Operation Impact, according to Alderman Donovan.

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Operation Impact 2010 Launch /ADD TWO

Operation Impact has so far focused heavily on nuts and bolts “broken windows” law enforcement, with officers enforcing all laws and city ordinances, from littering, loud music and traffic violations to prostitution, theft and robbery. The effort was funded primarily with private donations from local businesses and foundations, and in June 2008 the Common Council formally began accepting private donations for police overtime costs that allowed Operation Impact beat patrol officers to scour the targeted area at length.

Dozens of community agencies and programs have contributed personnel, volunteers and/or resources to Operation Impact, 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.