



**1998 Herman Goldstein Award for
Excellence in Problem-Oriented
Policing**

**Nomination to the
Police Executive Research Forum**

OAK PARK REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

Submitted By

**The Sacramento Police Department
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Sacramento, CA 95814**

**Arturo Venegas, Jr.
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June 11,1998

OAK PARK REVITALIZATION

In 1993, the Sacramento Police Department launched an effort to work with the Oak Park neighborhood in Sacramento. The neighborhood had long had a reputation for high crime, violence, drug abuse, and economic deterioration. The city of Sacramento was receiving an inordinate amount of complaints from neighborhood residents and the business community about the rising crime rates and the steady decline of the social and economic conditions in the Oak Park neighborhood. These community fears were not unfounded. Crime statistics revealed that the Oak Park community had higher crime rates for drug offenses, burglary, and violent crimes such as murder, robbery, and aggravated assaults than any other neighborhood in the city. In addition to rising crime problems, the neighborhood showed other signs of decay.

The police department met with then City Councilmember Deborah Ortiz, neighborhood leaders, and the State Department of Criminal Justice Planning (OCJP). They formed a partnership and through their coordinated efforts they received an initial grant from OCJP to implement community policing in the Oak Park neighborhood. One police officer and a police sergeant were assigned to the grant, which was funded for eighteen months.

The department began gathering sources of information to assess the seriousness of the neighborhood problems. Census information was gathered indicating that of the approximately 18,000 people living in this area, only 40% owned their own homes; 80%

of the families received some type of public assistance; and approximately 50% of the residents in this dense area were unemployed. The area is also culturally rich with an ethnic breakdown of 27% black, 19% Asian, 25% White, and 28% Hispanic. This diverse population and economic conditions created a community unable to fight the increasing narcotics and gang related crimes of violence.

The Police Department gathered statistics to further clarify crime related problems in Oak Park. During this time period, the Sacramento Police Department responded with a traditional law enforcement response. In 1992, Police officers made 506 drugs arrests and the Sacramento Police Department's Gang Unit spent over 30% of its enforcement time in Oak Park. This large allotment of resources showed only small, short term improvements. The Department decided a more efficient, long term solution was needed to battle the crime and neighborhood decay that was occurring in the Oak Park community.

The officers assigned to the neighborhood quickly involved themselves in SARA, a systematic problem-solving model. They began to investigate the myriad of problems associated with the Oak Park community and immediately started to build strong partnerships to help them solve neighborhood problems. Their first community outreach was to the business community and to the various, loosely formed neighborhood associations. The Neighborhood Police Officers (NPOs) met with residents and business groups to survey the Oak Park neighborhood. The information collected determined that

narcotics, prostitution, and gang related crimes were the major concerns within the community.

The officers assessed the resources existing within the community and approached the Sacramento Housing Authority and the University of California, Davis Medical Center located in Oak Park for their organizational resources, financial assistance and support. These two partnerships proved to be invaluable to the success of the program. As a result of these partnerships, the original Oak Park NPO and Sergeant teamed with the two UC Davis Police officers. An additional two officers were funded by the business community action funds, and two other police officers were hired by Sacramento Housing and Redevelopment Agency (SHRA) to form a core team of eight Oak Park NPOs.

The newly formed team of eight officers looked outside the traditional information sources to gather the data relating to the health of the community. UC Davis Medical Center identified trauma rates for the neighborhood and identified the numbers of drug addicted babies born from the neighborhood. This data helped to further clarify the deteriorating conditions and was used as an indicator of the community health in the Oak Park area. The data was analyzed and the information was used to establish the strategies with the community. Their plan involved four strategies of

- suppression,
- community oriented policing,
- prevention, intervention, and treatment,
- neighborhood revitalization.

Strategy #1: Suppression

The NPOs worked with probation and parole officers and conducted quarterly gang and narcotic sweeps. During the first year and a half of the program, the NPOs logged 198 arrests for narcotics related charges and 369 total arrests. The NPOs continued to make more arrests for narcotics and gang related crimes. The increased enforcement led to the confiscation of weapons and an increase in weapons related offenses. Weapons offenses ranging from possession of firearms to possession of dangerous weapons/destructive devices increased from 72 cases in 1993 to 125 cases in 1996 for an increase of 42%. (See table 1)

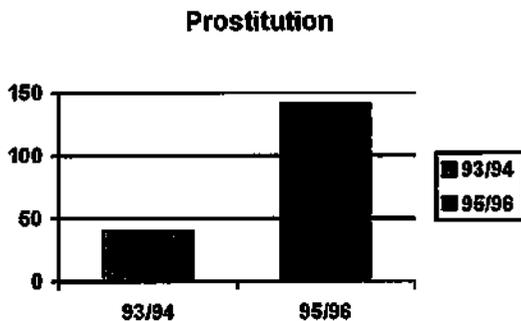
Table 1



The NPOs developed their own expertise in narcotics operations and began to write their own narcotics search warrants. The NPOs made 656 narcotics arrests and achieved a total of 1728 arrests during the first three years of the grant period. The Oak Park NPOs wrote over 200 narcotics search warrants, which resulted in over 400 arrests. The program was so successful that OCJP extended funding to the initial grant from eighteen months to three years.

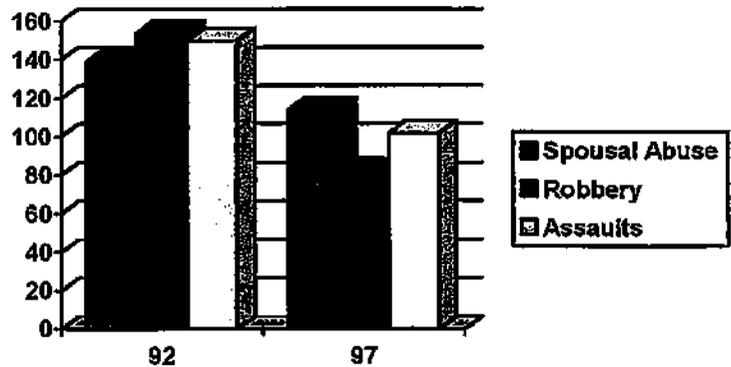
In an effort to reduce the tolerance for criminal activity and reverse the negative stigma on the community, the NPOs initiated monthly undercover prostitution sting operations, which resulted in 203 arrests. Prostitution arrests rose from 40 in 93/94 to 141 in 95/96 for an increase of 252%. (See table 3) The increased enforcement resulted in a substantial reduction in prostitution activity.

Table 3: Prostitution



Other areas showed a reduction in the crime rate as a result of the increased enforcement. Spousal abuse dropped 18% from 139 in 1992 to 114 by the end of 1997. Robbery decreased 54% from 154 in 1992 to 82 by the end of 1997. Assaults involving deadly weapons plummeted 32% from 150 in 1992 to 102 in 1997. Shooting into inhabited buildings dropped 67% from 33 in 1992 to 11 in 1997. Burglary dropped 34% from 466 in 1992 to 307 in 1997. Finally, overall calls for police services dropped 13% from 21,155 calls during 1992 to 18,345 calls for police service during 1997. Crimes in Oak Park dropped dramatically over the past five years in almost every category (See table 4 and attached statistical graphs [attachment #1])

Table 4: Crimes



The UC Davis Medical Center (UCDMC), which lies within the Oak Park neighborhood, became involved in the Oak Park Revitalization Program and dedicated

their resources. The UCDCM with the cooperation of the UC Davis Police Department began by assigning two UC Davis Police Officers to assist in the revitalization program. The NPOs coordinated efforts with UCDCM to provide jobs for the neighborhood youth, school programs, and computers for the Parent/Community Center at Sacramento High School. The Medical Center also provided valuable economic and enforcement strategies. As a result of creative and innovative programs developed through this partnership a 68% decrease in crimes at UC Davis Medical Center was realized.

The consistent and steady drop in virtually all areas of criminal activity shows a slight upward spike in some categories during 1997. During 1997, the original eight NPO's were reduced to as few as four neighborhood police officers for several months. Staffing shortages created by budget cuts, promotions, and early retirement incentives offered during 1997 caused the reduction. We believe the reduced presence of the NPO's may have been a variable causing the slight upward increase in certain crime categories.

Get tough strategies and a zero tolerance for drug dealers and narcotics violations caused a significant drop in related crimes. In addition, the calls for service remained high indicating the neighborhood was responding with less tolerance for illegal activities.

Strategy #2: Community Oriented Policing

Community oriented policing increased the law enforcement presence and improved the cooperative relationships between police and citizens in the target area. The initial contacts with residents and community groups were met with apprehension, apathy, and anger over the present neighborhood conditions. The majority of the affected residents felt both the City and the Police Department were responsible for the neighborhoods state of disarray. Citizens vented hostility towards the NPO's and police administrators attending early community meetings. With the high visibility enforcement efforts put forth in the implementation of Strategy #1, the residents became more involved in the community oriented policing process.

The NPOs formed community groups centered on parks, schools, and recreational facilities. The NPOs established five Drug Free Zones (DFZs) in the Oak Park area. Over the last five years each of the DFZs has become increasingly more active and involved in their neighborhoods. Membership at the meetings average between 20 to 30 people. Each year the DFZs sponsors a community fair to celebrate their accomplishments and encourage others to join in their cause. Local businesses offered merchandise for raffles to help sponsor the anti-drug and gang theme during community fairs sponsored through; the police department and their NPO's. Attendance at the community fairs has reached over 1000 adults and children this year, including many business and local political leaders. The DFZ meetings not only included police personnel, but also city staff, nuisance abatement,

and city council members. Members of the Drug Free Zones and the community began to realize that they could make positive changes in their neighborhoods by organizing and rallying together. Complaints and negative feelings were turned into positive actions to fight crime and blight through partnerships with city staff, UCD Medical Center, police and other outside agencies.

The community DFZs have worked with city official to identify problem areas for enforcement. They have also received training from city services and identified problem substandard housing that the NPOs followed up by opening POP projects to eliminate blight from the neighborhood. The DFZs also conducted regular street clean-up's to discourage gang activity and loitering in drug areas. They have completed over 75 street clean-ups during the period of the grant. Additionally, the Drug Free Zones worked with the Revitalization committee to implement a truancy center at the high school. As a result, over 500 truants were brought to the center during the first year and truancy rates at the local high school have dropped over 5% from the beginning of the program three years ago.

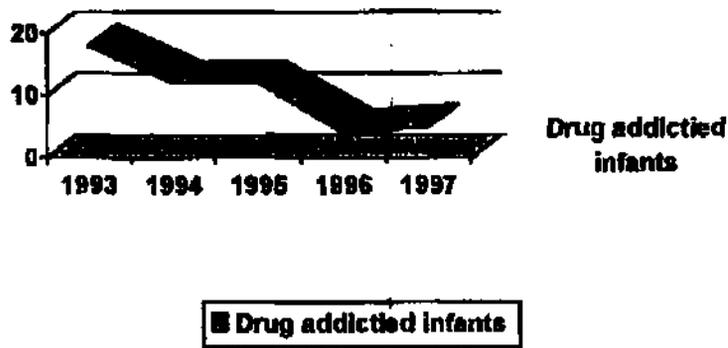
The NPOs originally established three neighborhood based offices in the Oak Park neighborhood. The offices served the areas of north, central, and south Oak Park and were accessible to the community. The NPOs met with citizens and youth from the neighborhood at the offices and opened lines of communication with the community. The officers helped the community conduct weekly street sweeps in the gang infested area to

dissuade drug sales and gang activity. They assisted the members of the neighborhood organizations with efforts to curb truancy through the establishment of a truancy center, assisted the school with evening telephoning of parents of habitually truant students, and rallied support for anti-prostitution marches on "The Stroll" an area known for high prostitution and related crimes.

UC Davis Medical Center, located at the eastern edge of the Oak Park neighborhood, is the closest health care facility and serves as the hospital of choice for the residents. UCDCMC keeps information on the babies born by zip code. The majority of the zip code 95817 lies in Oak Park. A review of the toxicology positive babies (infants born under the influence of drugs) showed a significant decrease from 18 births in 1991 and 12 in 1995 to only 5 in 1998. This indicates a 72% reduction of drug positive babies.

See table # 5

TableS: Drug Addicted Infants Born in Oak Park



This verifies the pre-natal education efforts from UC Davis Medical Center coupled with community policing strategies have reduced the number of drug positive babies born in Oak Park. This could be an indication that the health of the community is improving. An additional benefit is the savings to the Medical Center for the care and treatment of these chronically ill children. The mothers usually lack insurance to pay for the birthing of their babies and the hospital must absorb the costs. These savings are in turn passed onto the public. This saving more than recovers the cost to the medical center for the expense of the two officer positions that the University funded for the program.

Strategy #3: Prevention, Intervention and Treatment

Strategy 3 targeted the needs for prevention, intervention and treatment. These needs were addressed and met through Sacramento City School District program coordinator Michael Stember. The police worked with the school to establish liaisons between the school and the community.

The youth in the community became the focus of the NPOs. They worked with the schools to bring programs to the students designed to build self-esteem, leadership abilities, conflict resolution skills, community involvement and pride. Programs such as the mentoring program, nursing ROP, truancy, and inter scholastic sports provide academic support as well as athletic and social events to the students who participate. The

NPOs established their office at Sacramento High school and joined into a partnership with the school to create the Parent/Community Partnership Center. The office is used by the community and parents for evening truancy calling, a mentoring program initiated by the NPOs, and to organize community events. The NPOs worked with the UC Davis Medical Center to procure eight computers designed to help tutor the students with their homework and teach them computer and academic skills.

The NPOs developed programs that were successful and well received by the school administration and students. The first program created was the mentoring program. Twelve at-risk youths were identified and mentored by the NPOs during the first year of the grant. During the second year of the program, the NPOs created a partnership with California State University at Sacramento. Students of Criminal Justice were teamed with at-risk youth. The mentoring program was expanded to include fifty-nine high schools at-risk youth were teamed with fifty-nine CSUS students from the Criminal Justice and Psychology Department. The mentees enjoyed working with their mentors. They showed increased self-esteem, academic involvement, improved attendance, fewer behavior problems, and an increased interest in higher education. They learned social and team building skills by attending cultural events (symphonies, plays, etc.) and confidence building exercises (rope course & rock climbing). During the last year, over sixty CSUS students mentored at-risk youth at Sacramento High School. This provided an excellent opportunity to bring the students into the academic environment at

CSUS. Sacramento High School experiences one of the highest dropout rates in the state.

The goal of the mentoring program is to reduce the drop out rate as well as prevent the youth from involvement with drugs and gangs. For the last 4 years approx. 60 high school students have been involved in the mentoring program and received mentoring from CSUS. These kids will graduate in 1999. The change in the drop out rate will not be realized until the teens reach graduation.

In addition UCD Medical Center sponsored a nursing ROP program at the high school. The NPO's formed a partnership between UCDCMC and the high school and initially sponsored 25 youth, targeting minorities and at-risk students. During the period of the grant more than 100 students have enrolled in the program. UC Davis Medical Center will assist the youth after graduation with grants and scholarships designed to further their college education in the nursing field.

Strategy #4: Reclamation and Revitalization

Reclamation and Revitalization proved to be a very involved process. The building inspectors were cut from the grant after the first year. Unable to hire extra help, the NPO's created a close partnership with the two Problem Oriented Police (POP) officers assigned to the their district. With the assistance from the POP officers, the NPOs exceeded the original grant goal of 25 abatement investigations by completing 69 POP

projects during the grant period and 116 abatement investigations of substandard conditions at residences and commercial buildings over the last five years. One neighborhood liquor store was closed down for receiving stolen property, which helped send a message to the community that illegal behavior would not be tolerated. The NPOs also organized job fairs during the local Drug Free Zone community events.

The reduction in criminal activity led to the decreased insurance rates for businesses wanting to move into the community. Recently, two multi-million dollar businesses have relocated into Oak Park after they discovered lower insurance rates and reduced overhead costs. The downward spiral of businesses leaving Oak Park is beginning to reverse as new business moves into the area and the neighborhood begins to show signs of growth and prosperity. The positive signs of neighborhood revitalization are slowly crystallizing as crime rates and trauma rates dropping indicates a growing healthy community as economic conditions begin to improve. The neighborhood is steadily showing positive indicators of growth and with the continued assistance from the police department the partnerships initiated by the NPOs the trend should continue.

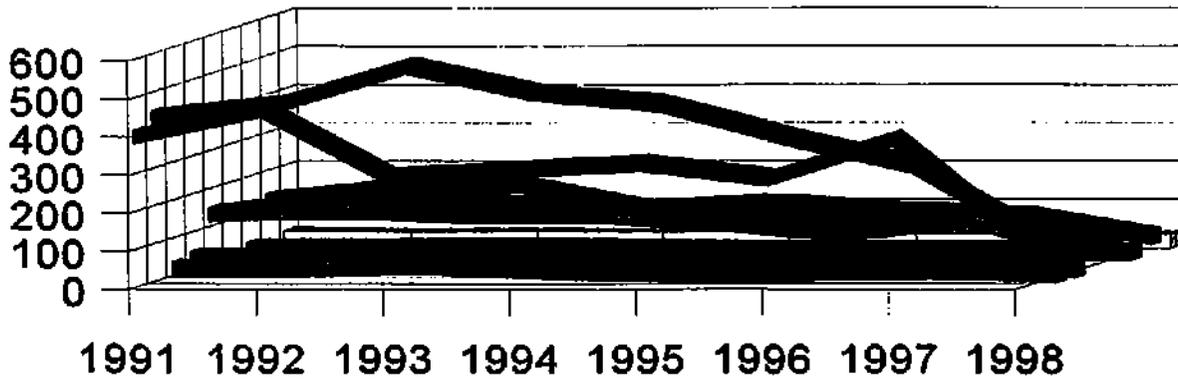
ATTACHMENTS

Crime

Statistics

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998



- 187 PC
- 211 PC
- 261 PC
- 273.5 PC
- 417 PC
- 11350-11550 HS
- 211 PC
- 245 PC
- 246 PC
- 459 PC

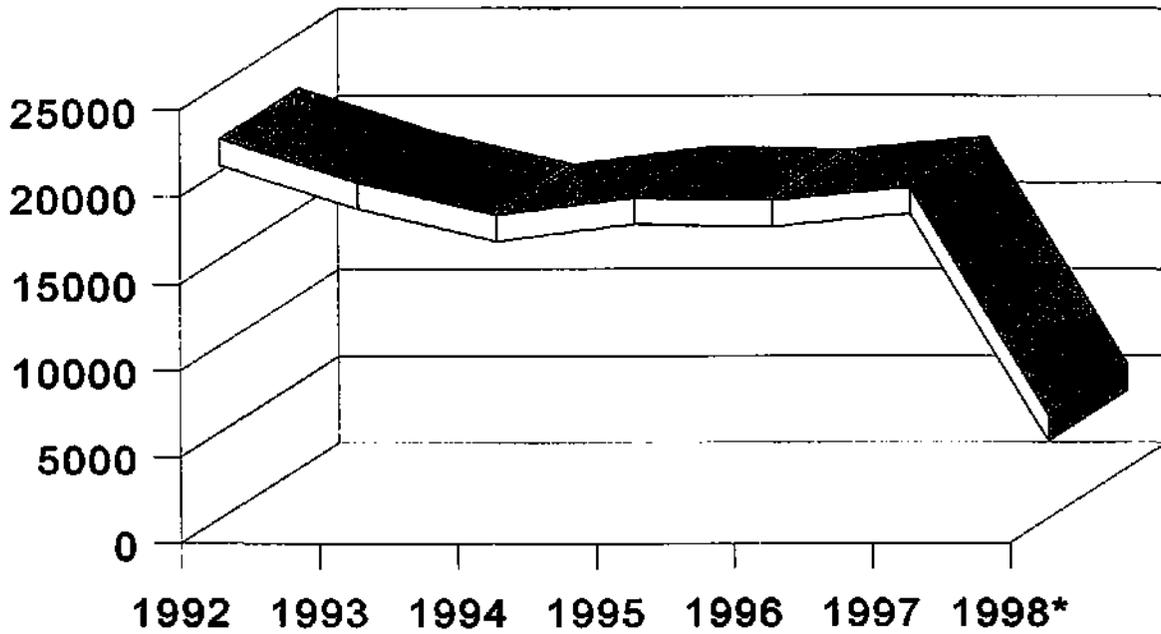
***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
187 P	9	5	8	5	7	0	3	0
211 P	121	154	161	97	114	93	82	26
261 P	9	9	13	9	5	6	6	1
245 P	124	150	147	116	128	78	102	21
273.5	132	139	130	129	108	82	114	39
246 P	32	33	49	35	15	20	11	1
417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	468	381	307	117
11350	398	468	292	311	327	288	393	128

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1992 - 1998 Calls for Service



□ Calls for Service

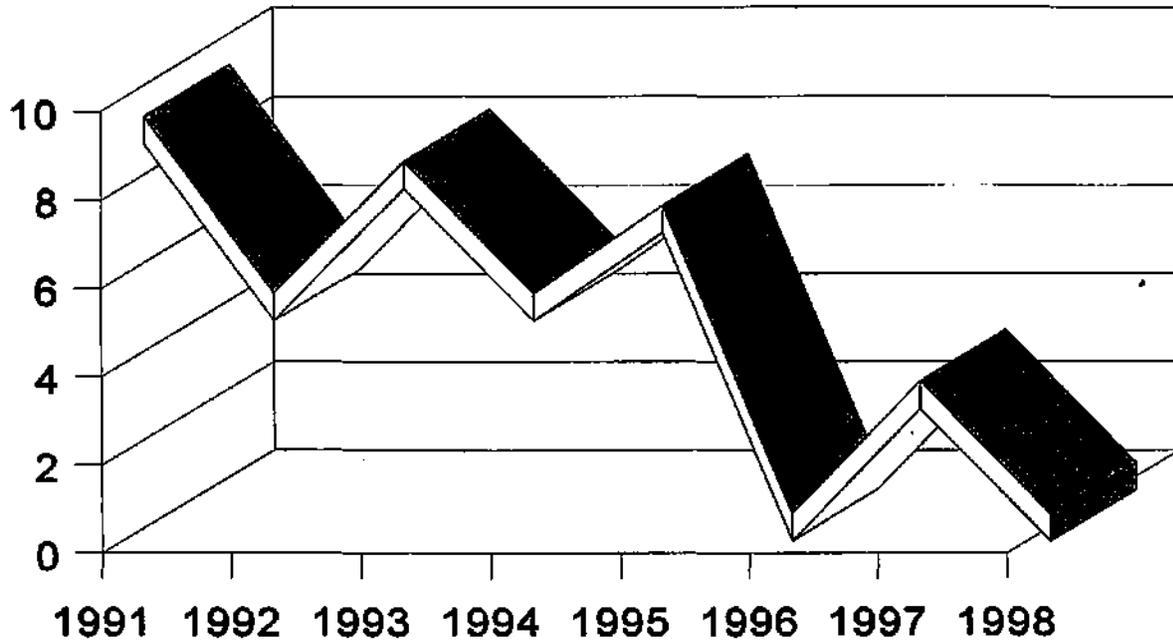
***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Year	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998*
Total Calls	UNK	21,155	18,622	16,783	17,758	17,594	18,345	5,243

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Murders



□ 187 PC

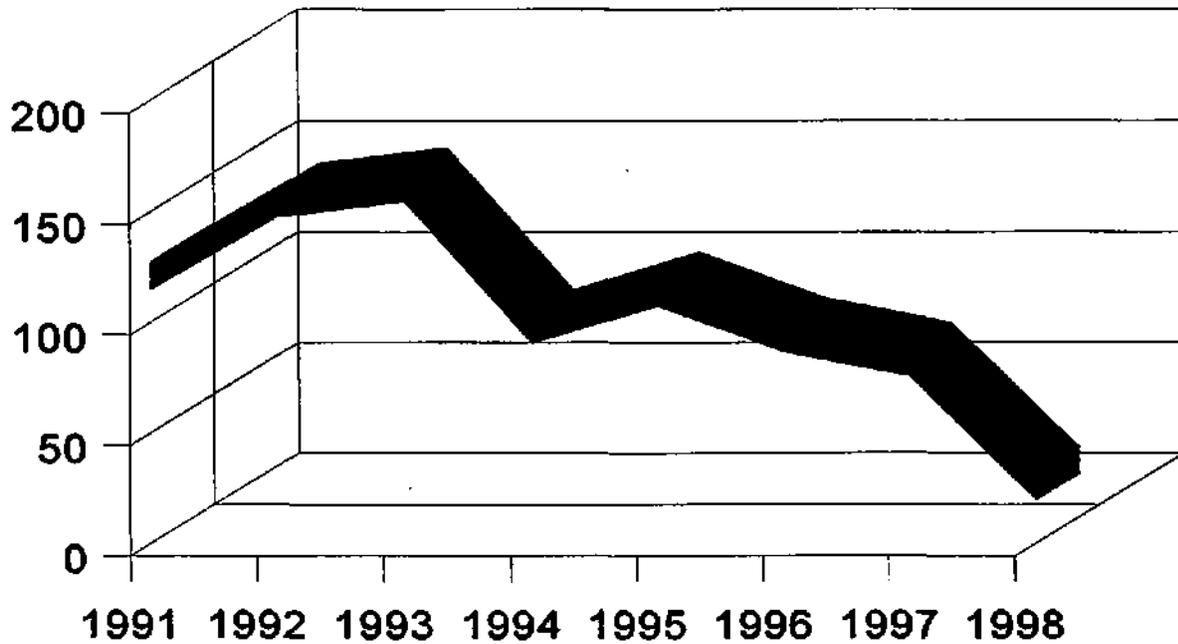
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273.5	132	139	130	129	108	82	114	39
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417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	468	361	307	117
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Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Robberies



■ 211 PC

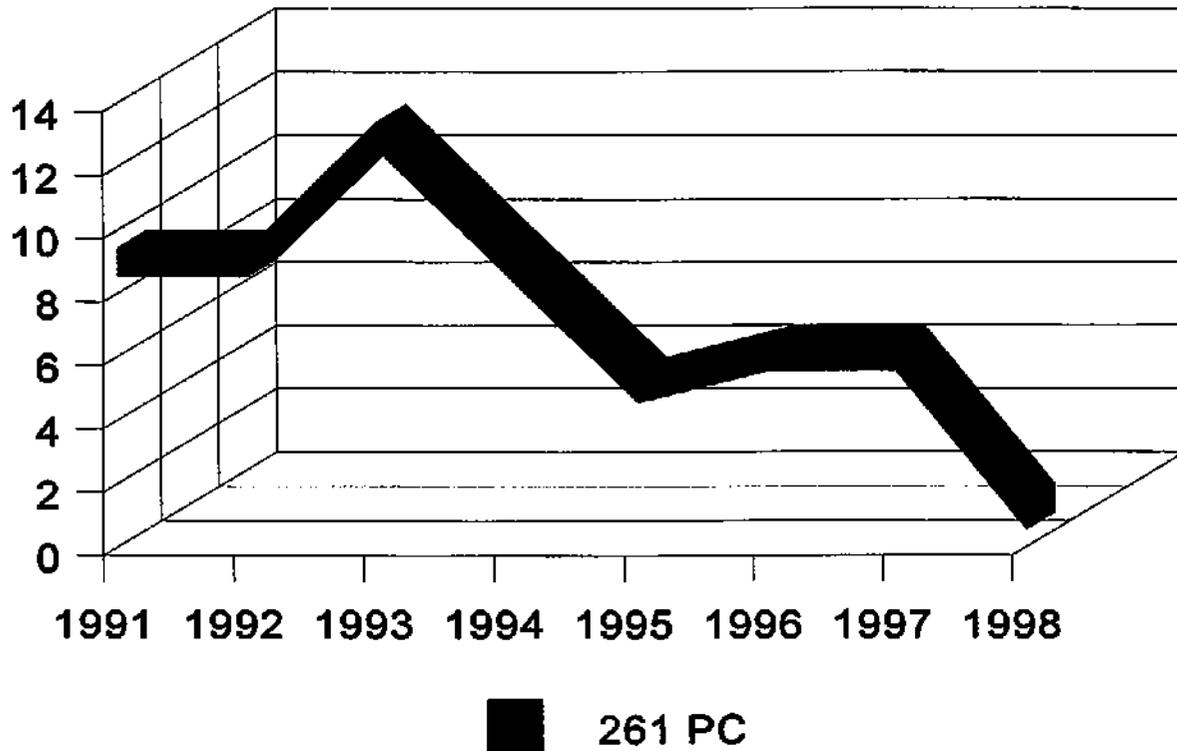
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261 P	9	9	13	9	5	6	6	1
245 P	124	150	147	116	128	78	102	21
273.5	132	139	130	129	106	82	114	39
246 P	32	33	49	35	15	20	11	1
417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	468	381	307	117
11350	398	468	292	311	327	288	393	128

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Rapes



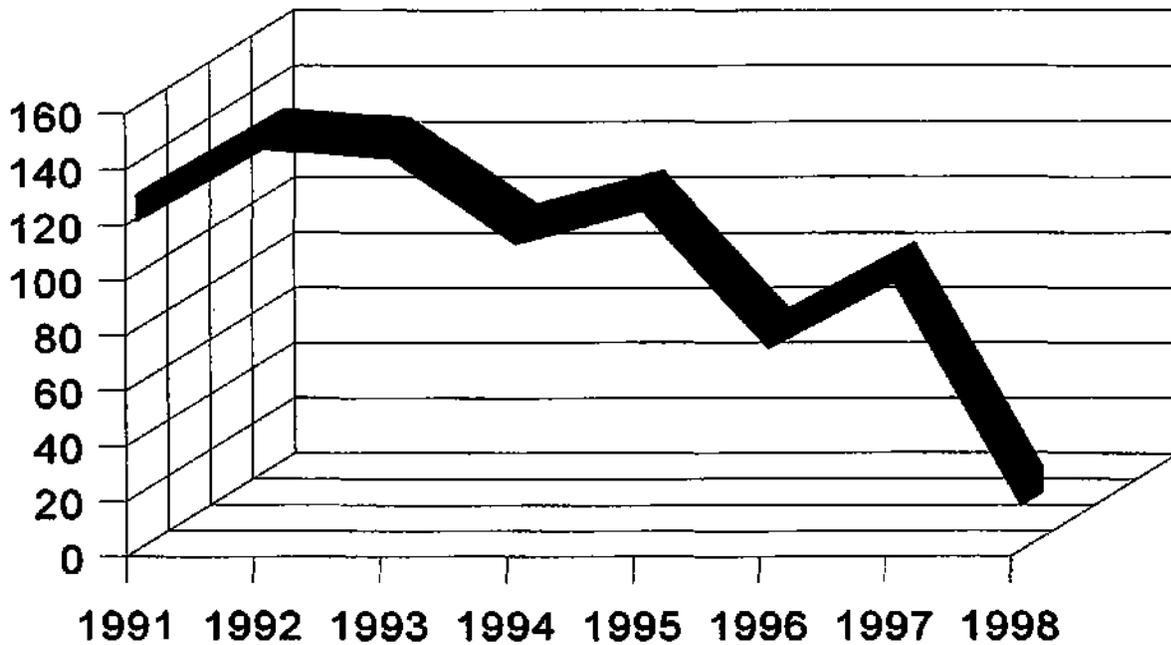
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417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	468	381	307	117
11350	398	468	292	311	327	288	393	128

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Felony Assaults



■ 245 PC

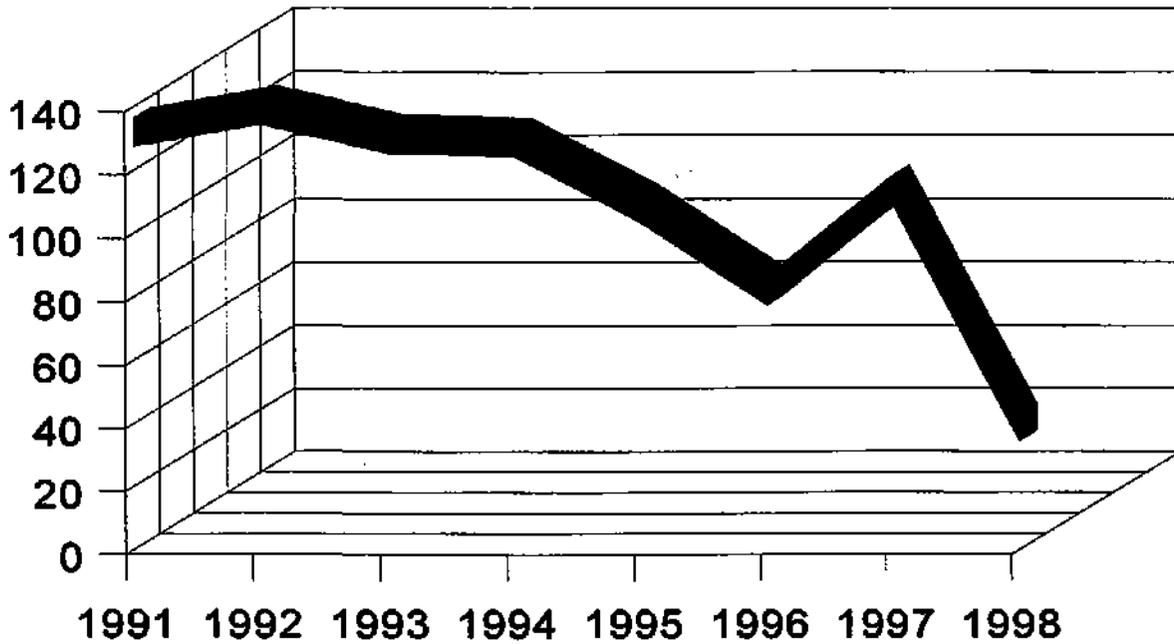
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273.5	132	139	130	129	108	82	114	39
246 P	32	33	49	35	15	20	11	1
417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	488	361	307	117
11350	398	468	292	311	327	288	393	128

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Domestic Violence



■ 273.5 PC

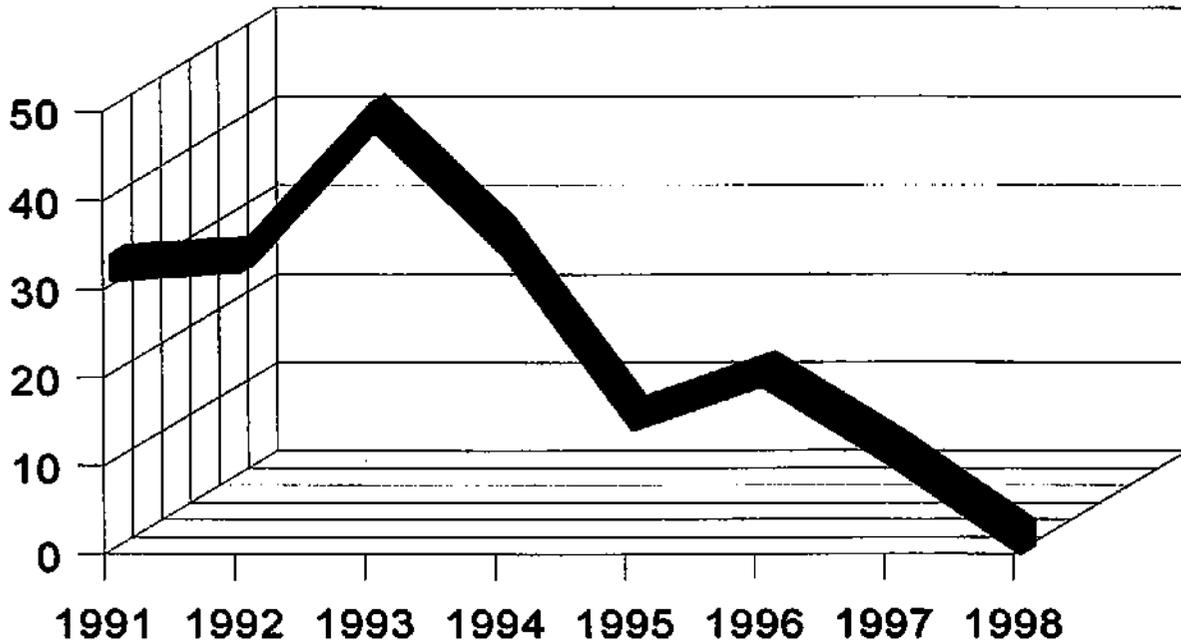
***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

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167 P	9	5	8	5	7	0	3	0
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261 P	9	9	13	9	5	6	6	1
245 P	124	150	147	116	128	78	102	21
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417 P	19	19	23	11	4	6	12	3
459 P	434	468	567	498	468	361	307	117
11350	398	468	292	311	327	266	393	128

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Shoot Into Dwelling



■ 246 PC

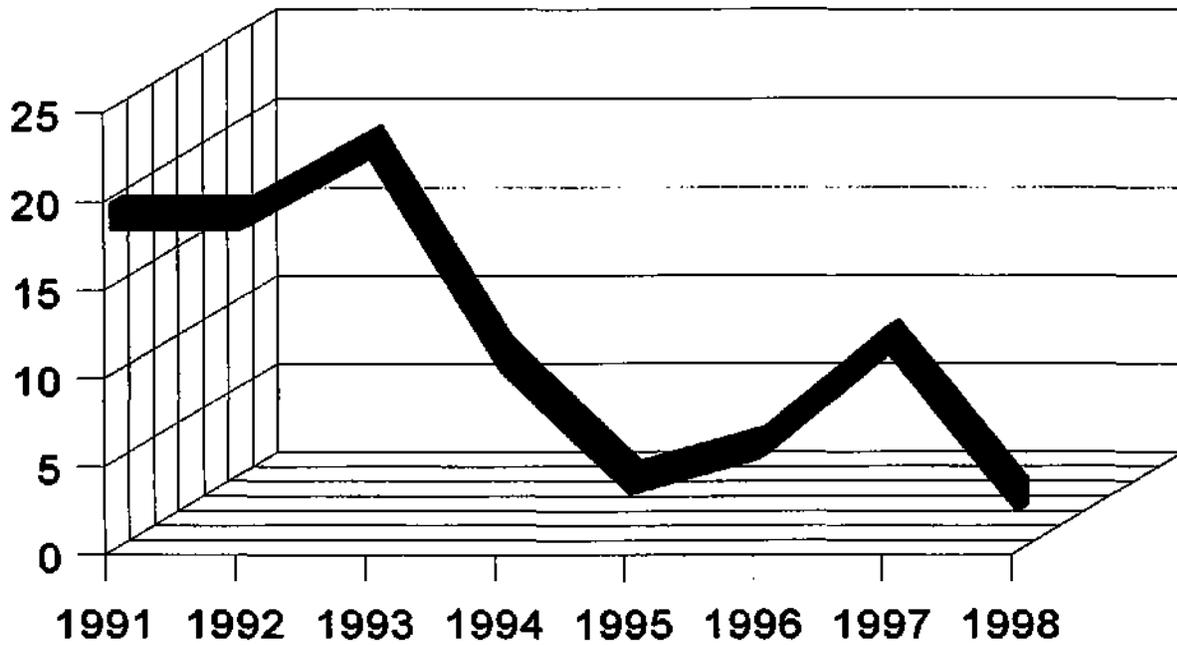
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11350	398	468	292	311	327	288	393	128

*Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Brandishing



■ 417 PC

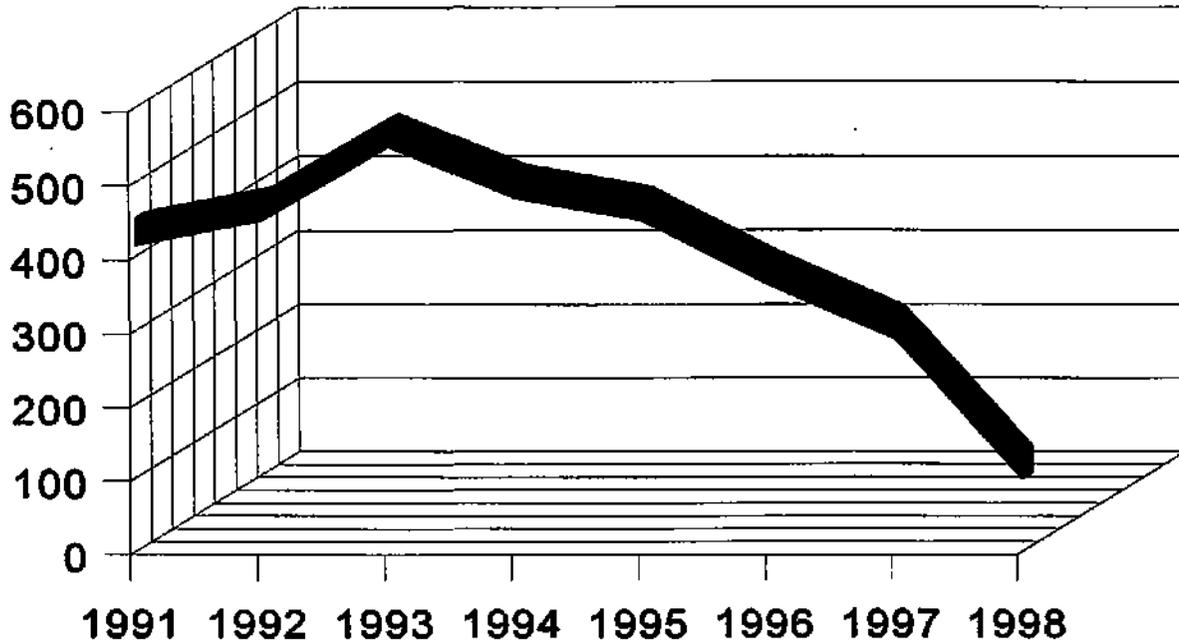
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Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 - 1998 Burlaries



■ 459 PC

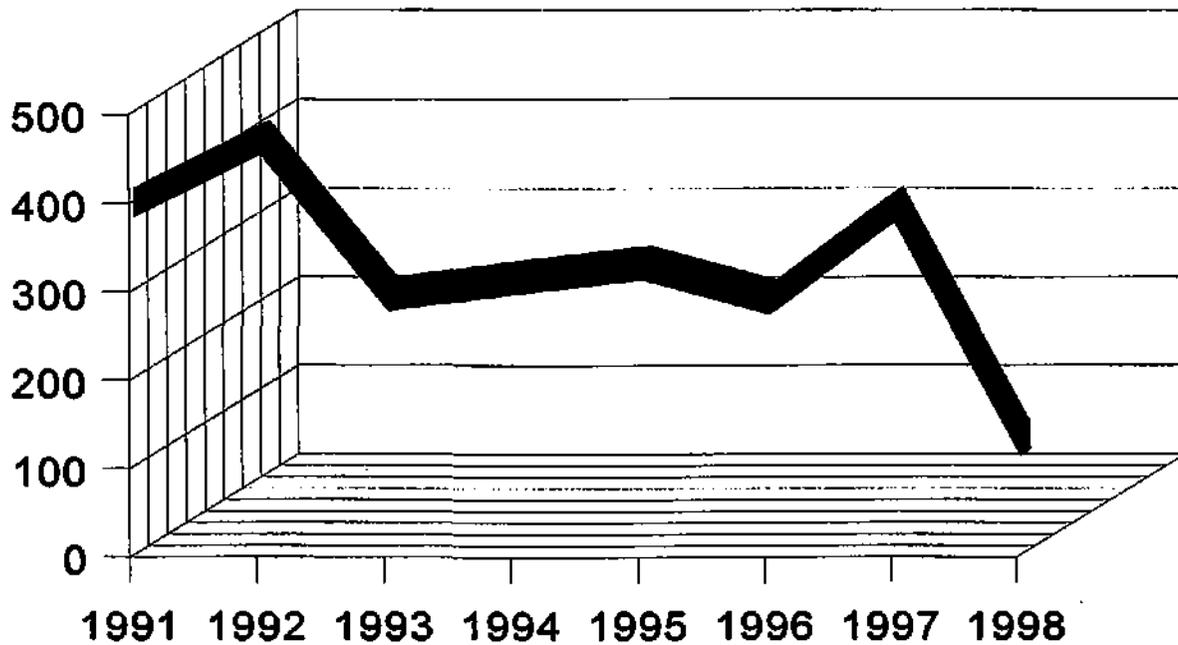
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***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

Oak Park Crime Stats

1991 -1998 Drug Activities



■ 11350-11550 HS

***Note: 1998 Stats are only from January - April**

	1991	1992	1993	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998
187 P	9	5	8	5	7	0	3	0
211 P	121	154	181	97	114	93	82	26
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**SACRAMENTO POLICE DEPARTMENT
1998 HERMAN GOLDSTEIN AWARD NOMINATION**

OAK PARK REVITALIZATION PROGRAM

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