

Public Safety, Finance & Strategic Support Committee (PSFSS)

Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program Overview & Update

November 21, 2024
Agenda Item (d)1.



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Background

Organized Retail Theft:

Definition (490.4 PC): Two or more people acting in concert to steal merchandise with the intent to sell, exchange, or return the merchandise for value

Losses:

- Stores catch shoplifters roughly 2% of the time
- Average shoplifter arrested once out of every 100 incidents
- Nationwide: \$121.6 billion in economic losses in 2023
- California:
 - \$8.72 billion in revenue in 2022
 - \$1.32 billion in lost sales tax revenue in 2022

* Statistics from Capital One Research



Background

Board of State & Community Corrections (BSCC) Grant:

- **California State Budget Act of 2022:** Organized Retail Theft Prevention Grant Program through Senate Bill 154 to prevent and respond to organized retail theft
- **July 7, 2023:** SJPD submitted a grant proposal for \$8.49 million for October 2023 through December 2026
- **September 14, 2023:** BSCC approved the grant
- **October 24, 2023:** City Council presentation and grant approval

Project Goals:

- Reduce organized retail theft within the city
- Increase successful criminal prosecutions
- Collaborate with allied agencies and retail partners



Project Description/Results

Investigative Resources

Organized Retail Theft Detail (Financial Crimes Unit):

- Investigate cases, gather intelligence, provide outreach to retail partners, track crime statistics, identify hotspots, identify best practices, collaborate with the DA's Office for prosecution
- 1 full-time Forensic Analyst (non-sworn)
- 4 part-time investigators (non-sworn) (BSCC approved increase to 6)

Overtime (sworn) Detectives:

- Apprehension & arrest of suspects, search warrants, suspect interviews, etc.

Field Resources

Overtime Patrol Officers (sworn):

- Proactive patrol and retail crime enforcement, deployed at malls and other hotspot locations
- Timely response to critical ORT events, deterrence and prevention

Overtime Community Service Officers (CSOs):

- Timely response to cold crimes, thorough initial investigation, and documentation

Results: Q3 & Q4 FY 2023 – 2024: 537 patrol events

Technology Resources

300 Automated License Plate Readers (FLOCK):

- All 300 have been installed, assist in identification and apprehension
- Strategically deployed for retail theft prevention, apprehension and prosecution

Additional Forensic Technology:

- Latent fingerprints workstation – installed in Central ID
- Forensic & software workstation - installed and analyst trained
- Vehicles and radios, etc. - purchased



Project Impact

Overall Retail Theft Incidents Reported	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
FY 2022 - 2023	829	972	819	929	3,549
FY 2023 - 2024	1,127	1,210	983	1,113	4,433

Overall Retail Theft Cases Filed/Submitted	Total
FY 2022 - 2023	961
FY 2023 - 2024	1,428

ORT Investigator Cases Filed/Submitted	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Total
FY 2023-2024**	0*	11	102	92	205
FY 2024-2025**	245				

* ORT Detail did not exist in Q1 FY 2023-2024

**Includes cases worked by officers for overtime using grant funds



Success Stories

Case 24-071-0567

- March 2024
- Target (The Plant) - theft of \$700 alcohol - arrested
- 39 prior thefts – reported and unreported – 17 additional cases
- Six counts of Grand Theft plus enhancement (awaiting trial)

Case 23-347-0534
& 24-173-0899

- December 2023 & June 2024
- Two suspects – 23 thefts from Home Depot, Lowe's, and Dicks Sporting Goods
- Charges
 - Suspect 1 – 17 counts of Grand Theft plus enhancement
 - Suspect 1 – 90 additional thefts – 23 Grand Theft charges (awaiting trial)
 - Suspect 2 – 3 counts of Grand Theft plus enhancement

Case 24-102-0488

- April 2024
- Dick's Sporting Goods - \$1800 Stanley Tumblers
- Vehicle description - used ALPR to obtain plate
- Photo line-up conducted on registered owner - positive ID
- Felony charges filed – suspect at-large in Fresno Area
- ORT Detail coordinating with Fresno PD for arrest.



Plans

FY 2024-2025 ORT Detail Plans:

- Hire the second of two new ORT investigators approved by BSCC
- Increase participation in sting operations to increase ORT arrests
- Implement online reporting by retail organizations
 - Rollout a pilot retail location at the Plant Shopping Center in December 2024
 - Rollout two additional retail locations in the third quarter of FY 2024-2025
- Track ORT ALPR use by working with the system vendor to extract the appropriate data
- Look for ways to utilize unspent funds to achieve goals



QUESTIONS

