

149144

# CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT

A Community Based Policing Tool  
of the  
Office of the Los Angeles City Attorney

**JAMES K. HAHN**  
City Attorney



L.A. City Attorney Gang Prosecution Section

in cooperation with the  
Los Angeles Police Department  
South Bureau Abatement Team

149144

**U.S. Department of Justice  
National Institute of Justice**

This document has been reproduced exactly as received from the person or organization originating it. Points of view or opinions stated in this document are those of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official position or policies of the National Institute of Justice.

Permission to reproduce this copyrighted material in micro-  
fiche only has been granted by  
Los Angeles City Attorney

Can Section

to the National Criminal Justice Reference Service (NCJRS).

Further reproduction outside of the NCJRS system requires permission of the copyright owner.

# THE L.A. CITY ATTORNEY CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT

The L.A. City Attorney "Civil Gang Abatement" is a coordinated effort by prosecutors, police and local residents to significantly reduce illegal gang activity through the procurement of a civil court injunction prohibiting gang members from engaging in certain otherwise lawful conduct. When the Civil Gang Abatement is coordinated with other government and community-based efforts, as described in the "Broken Windows"<sup>1</sup> theory, crime is not only reduced but the neighborhood's *quality of life* is visibly improved and a mechanism remains to insure its continued improvement.

## GANG RELATED DRUG DEALING WITHOUT A "CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT"

*Without a "Civil Gang Abatement", uniformed police vainly attempt to enforce drug laws against street dealers. All day long, gang members stand at intersections known for drug sales, wear pagers, dress in gang attire, flash handsigns, and wave at and approach passing vehicles and pedestrians for what are certainly offers to buy drugs. Yet, because all of these activities (i.e. wearing pagers, flashing handsigns, waving at and approaching vehicles, etc.) are lawful conduct, the gang members are immune from arrest unless an actual exchange of money for drugs is observed. Since the uniformed officer typically observes only the lawful activity preceding the actual sale, he is forced to drive past in frustration while law abiding citizens look on in disgust.*

Although it is true that an *undercover* officer may be able to successfully arrest and convict a limited number of gang members for drug sales and hopefully obtain lengthy prison terms (which is almost impossible in Los Angeles due to jail overcrowding), undercover enforcement fails to have any measurable impact on the *ability of the gang to profit*. This is

---

<sup>1</sup> The "Broken Windows Theory" explains the deterioration of a community by comparing a building suffering a single broken window to the deterioration of a neighborhood riddled with crime. The theory states that when a single window is broken in an otherwise fit building but is not *immediately* repaired, soon afterwards many other windows will be vandalized in succession. It is a common phenomenon which many have observed in society. It follows that if a building *already* suffers from numerous broken windows, the only way to effectively restore the building to a fit condition is to repair *all* windows at the same time. Anything less than full *coordination* of the repairs will result in an endless attempt to keep fixing some windows while more are vandalized in the interim.

By the same token, if government fails to *coordinate* its efforts to improve a neighborhood so that law enforcement strategies are timed with the restoration and improvement of municipal and social services, the entire effort will fail. If, for example, police make a major drive to reduce gang crime in winter, while municipal government doesn't take steps to repair streets, lighting and garbage collection until the summer, by the time government *begins* to restore municipal services, the successes achieved by the police during the winter months will have already been reversed and gone to naught. On the other hand, if municipal and social services are improved *at the same time* that police reduce gang crime, then the environment which supported the criminal activity will have been altered so as to sustain the successes achieved by the police. (See attached article discussing the "Broken Windows Theory".)

because the "removal" of even a substantial number of drug dealing gang members by undercover officers, for no matter how long, merely creates a "vacancy" in the ranks of the gang's organization, with an endless supply of young recruits ready to assume that enviable position on the street corner dealing the gang's narcotics. Even under the best of circumstances, the gang will successfully consummate hundreds, if not thousands, of drug transactions while suffering only a handful of unsuccessful sales due to undercover enforcement. Add to this the fact that undercover narcotics officers are few in number and that all police departments rely, for the most part, upon uniformed personnel to achieve crime suppression and reduction, it is not surprising that while some gang members may serve long prison sentences, conspicuous drug dealing by the gang continues unabated.

### GANG RELATED DRUG DEALING WITH A "CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT"

*With a "Civil Gang Abatement", uniformed officers are given the tools to effectively impact a gang's ability to profit from drug dealing, while simultaneously providing the means for the community to improve the quality of life for all its residents. The legal procedure known as a "Civil Gang Abatement" is similar to a situs or building abatement.<sup>2</sup> However, unlike a building abatement which may result in a court ordered injunction against a *property owner*, the "Civil Gang Abatement" seeks a series of court orders against *members of a street gang*. For those unfamiliar with building abatements, the legal procedure known as a "Civil Gang Abatement" is easily understood when likened to an ordinary labor strike.*

Consider, for a moment, an emotional labor strike wherein picketers grow in number and eventually become unruly, interfering with the ability of the employer and working employees to enter the work place. Once it becomes evident that routine police action will not be able to insure the protection of those choosing to cross the picket lines and violence appears certain, the employer and/or police provide evidence to a judge that the strikers are creating a dangerous nuisance. The court helps "abate" or reduce the nuisance by issuing orders which prohibit or "enjoin" the strikers from doing certain things, such as picketing too close to the entrance of the work place, limiting the number of picketers and other restrictions which will help to curb anticipated violence. These orders are in the form of an injunction which applies to every striker who chooses to picket and possibly interfere with the employer's ability to conduct business during the strike. If, after the strikers are formally notified of the injunction, they choose to ignore the orders of the court (e.g. picketing closer to the work entrance than the court injunction permits), the strikers are subject to arrest for

---

<sup>2</sup> Situs (building) abatement laws in California generally state that a property owner can suffer fines, jail and/or the loss of one's real property if he causes, maintains or permits a property to become a public nuisance. In real terms, this means that if a landlord fails to take reasonable steps to prevent illegal drug or gang activity at a location, the landlord can face stiff penalties including the seizure of the property. In most cases, the property owner is held strictly liable and is *not* excused because the police were unable to control the problem. Not surprisingly, this is one of the most powerful and successful law enforcement tools in California.

Penal Code Section 166.4.<sup>3</sup>

Thus, aggressive enforcement of an injunction enables law enforcement to effectively *prevent* imminent criminal activity by arresting persons for *prohibited patterns of conduct which are known to precede and facilitate these crimes*. In the case of the strikers, this pattern of conduct includes strikers congregating in dangerously large groups, standing too close to a work place entrance and carrying signs which could be used as weapons. Since, in the case of gang activity, law enforcement can also identify many patterns of lawful activity by gang members which contribute to and normally precede the commission of certain crimes, such as drug dealing, the goal of the Civil Gang Abatement, as in the labor strike analogy, is to identify otherwise lawful conduct by gang members which precedes and furthers criminal activity and then seek to enjoin or prohibit it.<sup>4</sup>

We know, for example, that many gang members wear pagers, "dress down" in gang attire, flash "handsigns", approach and solicit business from pedestrians and passing vehicles, and congregate at known drug sales locations, all for the express purpose of selling illegal narcotics. If, however, this conduct is enjoined (prohibited) by a court, uniformed police are, for the first time, able to make arrests *before* drug deals are consummated, thus impairing the gang's ability to *profit* from drug dealing (which ultimately *prevents* gang-related drug dealing). Simply put, instead of consummating hundreds of illegal drug transactions and earning large profits before suffering an arrest for sale of narcotics, gang members are now subject to arrest for simply doing the things that are *necessary* for them to do *before* they can begin to sell the drugs and earn the profits. Since even standing on a particular corner or wearing a beeper can subject a gang member to arrest, the previously helpless *uniformed* officer is now able to *interfere* with and *reduce* the gang's ability to profit from drug sales by arresting the gang members *before* they are able to consummate a drug transaction. This effort, combined with undercover strategies, can effectively interfere with the gang's ability to profit while incarcerating an increasing number of drug dealing gang members.<sup>5</sup> Since the gang's potential for profits is diminished, the chronic and daily drug

---

<sup>3</sup> California Penal Code §166.4 states, in pertinent part, that: "Every person guilty of any contempt of court.....of the following kinds,is guilty of a misdemeanor: .....Willful disobedience of any process or order lawfully issued by any court."

<sup>4</sup> The "Civil Gang Abatement" can be based on any type of nuisance activity engaged in by a street gang. The most likely nuisance upon which to base a Civil Gang Abatement, however, is ongoing narcotic activity. This is simply because street sales of narcotics typically involve easily identifiable patterns of conduct (eg. possession of pagers and approaching vehicles from known narcotics locations) which facilitate the gang's successful narcotics sales. Accordingly, an injunction prohibiting such conduct could be expected to be successful at abating such narcotic sales. However, this certainly does not preclude the use of a "Civil Gang Abatement" approach to other organized criminal activity where law enforcement can identify patterns of lawful conduct which, if enjoined by a court, would reduce or eliminate the illegal activity.

<sup>5</sup> While undercover efforts, by themselves, are often ineffective in abating gang-motivated drug dealing, they should still be included as part of any drug abatement effort. To be sure, undercover officers are best able to identify and target gang *leaders* for felony arrests leading to significant jail and prison sentences, thus

dealing on neighborhood street corners ceases and other forces are able to work together to significantly improve the overall quality of life for the residents of the community.

## CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT: HOW IT WORKS

The L.A. City Attorney "Civil Gang Abatement" brings together specially assigned police, prosecutors and residents of the targeted neighborhood to gather the evidence which will prove to a judge that identified patterns of conduct such as the wearing of pagers, approaching pedestrians and passing vehicles and congregating at known drug locations furthers the illegal drug activity of the local gang and deserves to be enjoined by the court. Through the use of police, resident and community leader declarations (see attached sampling of declarations used in City of Los Angeles v. Playboy Gangster Crips, described below), photographs and videos, crime and arrest statistics, and anything else that helps describe the gangs effect on the community, the Civil Gang Abatement persuades the judge to issue an injunction prohibiting the gang members, as a group, from engaging in the patterns of conduct identified by the community and police. Before the injunction is issued, a "Notice" by the City or District Attorney is distributed throughout the community warning the gang that if it does not stop (abate) its illegal criminal activities, the City or District Attorney's Office will seek an injunction against the gang.<sup>6</sup> (See attached Notices) If statistics and other evidence indicate that the gang is not complying with the Notice to Abate, then the prosecutor files a complaint (see attached Complaint and Points & Authorities used in Playboy Gangster Crips suit) requesting issuance of an injunction which includes court orders designed to help abate the criminal activity of the defendant street gang. Once the injunction is issued, the police can serve copies of the injunction on all gang members and immediately enforce the orders of the court through arrests for disobedience of a court order.<sup>7</sup> Ideally, those gang members arrested for violating the court injunction

---

inhibiting continued recruitments and coordination of the gang's illegal activities.

<sup>6</sup> The open distribution of the warning revitalizes community support and mobilizes the residents to further support the efforts of law enforcement, including their willingness to complete logs for the "Civil Gang Abatement". But even more striking, the distribution of this warning notice can be most effective in lawfully "intimidating" the targeted gang into abating its criminal activity. In Los Angeles, such a warning notice has been distributed three times in anticipation of a request for an injunction against three different local street gangs. In two instances, (one against the notorious Grape Street Gang in Jordan Downs Housing Project, the other against the Harbor City Crips in the Harbor area of Los Angeles), the distribution of the warning notices themselves, without further court action, brought about a remarkable 50% reduction in gang related crime. Even more surprising, that reduction in crime was sustained for several months. This phenomenon has been observed with the distribution of other legal warnings to gangs (eg. S.T.E.P. notices) with similar, although not quite as remarkable, reductions in crime. We leave it to sociologists and others to speculate on the reasons why the neighborhood distribution of such documents to gang members has such a dramatic and sometimes long lasting effect on their previously unabatable criminal activity.

<sup>7</sup> A phenomenon was observed during the serving of the court orders on individual gang members that cannot go unnoticed. While it was *enforcement* of the terms of the injunction in combination with other efforts described in this paper that was largely responsible for the successes achieved during the first "Civil Gang Abatement", police noticed that gang members actually feared and went to great lengths to avoid being personally served with the court orders. Even though there was no attempt to intimidate gang members during

should be prosecuted by the City or District Attorney assigned to the Civil Gang Abatement. This special prosecutor not only will seek significant jail terms but more importantly, pursue probation conditions (such as "search and seizure" conditions, "do not associate with other gang members", and even "banishment" from the neighborhood) which were not included in the terms of the civil injunction. Thus, even if a gang member violates the injunction and suffers only a small jail sentence with probation, a subsequent violation of probation can result in significant jail sentences and, for all intents and purposes, the removal of that gang member from the neighborhood.<sup>8</sup>

### COORDINATION OF OTHER EFFORTS: "THE COMMUNITY IMPACT TEAM"

While the effort to obtain an injunction against a drug dealing street gang can be, by itself, effective in interfering with a gang's ability to profit from drug dealing and thus reduce the gang's other criminal activities, the "Civil Gang Abatement" can and should be combined with other law enforcement strategies to address the many other problems that are certain to occur in the targeted neighborhood, as described in the "Broken Windows Theory". The creation of "Community Impact Teams" composed of specially assigned police and prosecutors facilitates the coordination of these efforts, as well as the gathering of the evidence necessary to obtain an injunction against the street gang.<sup>9</sup> For example, the Community Impact Teams (or whatever name one assigns to such a group) schedules a number of community meetings attended by local residents, landlords, merchants, regular patrol and narcotics officers and probation officers. At these meetings, the "Community

---

service of the orders, something that was actually impossible due to wide scale media coverage of the event, gang members ran and hid when they observed a police officer holding the large manilla envelope containing the court's injunction and proof of service. Gang members who once boldly sold drugs within a few steps of a uniformed officer now remained indoors to avoid receiving that most feared document, the civil injunction. Naturally, however, after most gang members had eventually been served, they resumed their open sales of narcotics. That is, of course, until the police and assigned prosecutor aggressively enforced the terms of the injunction.

<sup>8</sup> Previous experience has shown, however, that the abatement *deters* future violations of the injunction following the first few aggressive prosecutions for a violation of the injunction. In the first use of the Civil Gang Abatement in Los Angeles, several gang members "tested" the injunction by immediately violating the orders. One gang leader, for instance, threw the court order in the street minutes after being handed it by a police officer. He was immediately arrested for violating the injunction since one of the orders was to not litter. While clearly surprised to learn that he was going to eventually serve three days in jail for an apparently minor violation of law, he was even more shocked to learn that the prosecutor obtained (and his public defender recommended that he agree to) a condition of probation banishing him from the targeted neighborhood for two years! News of that sentence spread rapidly throughout the targeted gang and had the desired effect of virtually insuring future compliance of the injunction by all other members of the gang. Moreover, the littering gang leader obeyed his "banishment" condition and was never again seen in the targeted neighborhood, nor was he observed to participate in future gang activity.

<sup>9</sup> While the creation of "Community Impact Teams" is not a necessary requirement for implementation of a Civil Gang Abatement, such teams can dramatically increase the effectiveness of the process by insuring coordination of the various efforts as called for in the "Broken Windows Theory" of community decline and restoration, as detailed below.

Impact Team" explains the concept of the "Civil Gang Abatement" and its reliance upon the participation of the community. Residents, merchants and property owners attending these meetings are asked to document how the local gang and its criminal activities have negatively impacted their quality of life. Citizens maintain diaries or "logs" of life in the area controlled or frequented by the gang. Not only is gang activity recorded but, importantly, the *consequences* of gang activity are also documented. As such, the logs not only include descriptions of gunshots going off each night and routine intimidation by gang members but also describe how municipal sanitation trucks avoid the neighborhood for fear of gang violence and streets remain in disrepair because maintenance workers are afraid to enter the area. These logs not only serve to mobilize the community against a local street gang but become the primary evidence in court to justify the issuance of an injunction.<sup>10</sup>

### "BROKEN WINDOWS THEORY" AND COMMUNITY-BASED POLICING<sup>11</sup>: A NON-TRADITIONAL APPROACH TO LAW ENFORCEMENT

Because the consequences of gang activity include the deterioration of the normal municipal services such as street maintenance, garbage collection and other services critical to the quality of life of any community (see Broken Window, above), the logs also become an important resource for use by the "Community Impact Team" in determining what other remedies are required to restore the quality of life in the neighborhood. For example, if residents describe trash and debris in alleys, the Team may discover that sanitation trucks do not regularly pick up trash in alleys for fear of violence or simply out of disgust because the gang quickly replaces the trash within hours of its pickup. The "Community Impact Team" thus, through its coordination with other governmental entities including the Department of Sanitation, takes necessary action to insure that future trash pickups include alleys in the targeted neighborhood. The "Civil Gang Abatement" is, accordingly, not only an effective and logical law enforcement tool for the permanent abatement of drug dealing street gangs, but a vehicle to assist a "Community Impact Team" in improving the *quality of life* in a neighborhood. Because the law enforcement activity is scheduled to occur *at the same time* that municipal services are restored by a "Community Impact Team", the lessons learned from the "Broken Window Theory" are realized and the community enjoys a renewed sense of calm as crime is reduced and the neighborhood actually begins to *look* and

---

<sup>10</sup> Residents are, however, given assurances that their logs will only be included in the Civil Gang Abatement with their consent. Moreover, the prosecutor should request and will normally receive a court order "sealing" or "sanitizing" the logs to prevent gang members from obtaining sufficient information to retaliate against residents. If such an order is not obtained, then the logs can be removed from the court file and other evidence can be relied upon to justify the injunction, *including* the fact that residents were afraid to submit declarations for fear of retaliation.

<sup>11</sup> A law enforcement philosophy which encourages police to work closely with residents, property owners and merchants to encourage compliance with the law. Instead of relying chiefly upon arrests and convictions, community-based policing is premised upon the fact that the quality of life of a neighborhood cannot improve unless citizens actively participate with police and elected officials in the restoration of the neighborhood. It also calls for police to attempt to secure compliance from cooperative citizens rather than relying exclusively upon confrontation and court proceedings.

*feel safer, all at the same time.*

Some may question the wisdom of employing police and prosecutors, at significant taxpayer expense, to spearhead an effort to improve the quality of life for a neighborhood besieged by gangs and drugs. Why not use staff from offices of elected officials, especially since the "Broken Windows Theory" involves the coordination of municipal services normally not under the control or supervision of law enforcement? The reason, however, is simple. Since the coordination of all the efforts, both law enforcement strategies and municipal services, must be carefully timed in relation to when successes are achieved by police and prosecutors, only prosecutors and police are able to know *when* the restoration of municipal services are best implemented.

If, for instance, sanitation resumes trash collection in targeted areas before law enforcement has taken appropriate action to keep gang members from continually undermining sanitation efforts, trash collectors will quickly realize the futility in resuming trash collection and, once again, abandon the area. In addition, it is through the gathering of declarations from residents describing how the gang has negatively affected the community that one knows precisely what municipal services are required to improve the quality of life in the targeted neighborhood.

Moreover, it is the application of esoteric and little used laws (i.e. building abatement and nuisance laws, local codes and ordinances, special sentencing procedures) that require a special prosecutor who can use these laws to force compliance by landlords, residents and gang members. All too often, governmental entities responsible for insuring compliance with local laws (such as Building & Safety or Health & Safety Codes) are unsure of little used but effective legal strategies known to a prosecutor which can effectuate compliance and help contribute to the improved quality of life for the community. Thus, a building and safety inspector frustrated in his attempts to enforce Building and Safety Code violations against a property owner who allows gang and drug activity may be more successful if his efforts are linked with the strategies of the prosecutor and police of the Civil Gang Abatement.

In addition, the building inspector may not realize that in the course of inspecting a drug and gang infested building for code violations, the *timing and coordination* of his efforts with law enforcement could not only result in building code compliance but a marked reduction in gang activity. This, of course, is based on a fundamental concept that criminal activity can be dramatically reduced if the environment supporting the criminal activity is changed. Simply put, to the extent that the building inspector can use his legal weapons to force a property owner to improve a building's quality and appearance *at the same time* that other law enforcement efforts are in progress to abate gang and drug activity, he is able to create an environment in that building that will discourage criminal activity and likewise encourage occupancy by law abiding tenants. A building inspector who works closely with the Civil Gang Abatement prosecutor and local police can play a major role in bringing about a marked and permanent reduction in gang related crime in a neighborhood. On the other hand, a building inspector who fails to coordinate his efforts with an experienced prosecutor and local police will do little more than bring about temporary compliance with

local codes and miss an opportunity to contribute to a community's enhanced quality of life.

Sadly, even when governmental agencies *are* knowledgeable about unusual or little used strategies, many prosecutors are not familiar with such strategies and thus fail to aggressively enforce such efforts in court. A specially assigned prosecutor, on the other hand, will not only aid in the discovery of effective, albeit little used legal strategies, but insure their enforcement and support in court. Lastly, only a specially trained prosecutor working closely with police can insure that the Civil Gang Abatement is brought to a successful conclusion notwithstanding it's uniqueness in our criminal justice system. Certainly, elected officials and other governmental representatives should be involved in the coordination effort. But, because this is clearly a law enforcement strategy in combination with other municipal efforts, law enforcement should and must take a leading role.

### CITY OF LOS ANGELES vs. THE PLAYBOY GANGSTER CRIPS

In the first application of the "Civil Gang Abatement" (against a West Los Angeles street gang, the Playboy Gangster Crips),<sup>12</sup> conspicuous street dealing was out of control while a number of apartment buildings were effectively controlled by the local street gang as a result of poor management by property owners. In coordination with the gathering of evidence for the civil injunction against the local street gang, the local prosecutor used California building abatement laws to force property owners to take corrective action to discourage gang and drug activity at their property locations. The prosecutor ordered the owners to remove graffiti daily, erect security gates, install lighting, remove abandoned vehicles, initiate evictions of known drug dealers and even trim shrubbery so as to effectively discourage gang and drug activity. Sample leases (see attached Model Lease), property management advice (see draft of Property Owner Handbook), advice regarding enforcement of state trespass laws (see attached "Trespass Authorization" letter) and other special police patrols were simultaneously offered to help the property owners effectively discourage and remove unwanted gang activity. In addition, the prosecutor applied pressure to other governmental entities to pave streets, restore street lighting, and improve garbage collection. Importantly, however, instead of merely seeking easily obtained court orders against the landlords, the prosecutor applied the concepts embodied in "community-based policing", and *proactively assisted* property owners in taking corrective steps *before* their property deteriorated to the point where prosecution was indicated. (See attached draft of Property Owner Handbook which provides assistance to landlords to discourage and eliminate gang and drug activity and thus avoid abatement proceedings. Publication is expected in Summer, 1991.)

---

<sup>12</sup> The American Civil Liberties Union unsuccessfully challenged the L.A. City Attorney's request for an injunction against the local street gang, the Playboy Gangster Crips. Although the court did not enjoin all activity requested by the prosecutor, the court did find that the street gang was subject to a civil injunction and subsequently issued a number of useful injunctive orders. In the following year, twenty six gang members were arrested for violation of the injunction. Twenty two pled guilty while the remaining cases were dismissed for insufficient evidence. Many of the defendants who pled guilty complied with a probation order to stay out of the neighborhood for two years.

Although numerous prior efforts by police failed to reduce the gang's control over the neighborhood, the "Civil Gang Abatement" reduced criminal activity over 35% and, in effect, forced the gang out of the community. More importantly, the "Civil Gang Abatement" not only *statistically* reduced crime but brought about a significant and visibly measurable improvement in the *quality of life* in the area. Residents, once again, were observed walking their dogs, watering their lawns and painting their homes. "For Sale" signs came down and property values went up. Potholes were repaired, street lights replaced and garbage was collected on a daily basis. The project was so effective that it provided the impetus for the Mayor to create a permanently established program to coordinate such community efforts, appropriately called the "Model Neighborhood Program". Lastly, because the "Civil Gang Abatement" not only reduces criminal activity but also mobilizes the community as an effective voice in government, a mechanism was in place to insure that long after the police and prosecutor have moved on to other neighborhoods, crime in the area would remain low while the quality of life would continue to improve.

In conclusion, while the "Civil Gang Abatement" can be effective as a single law enforcement tool, it is clearly most effective when used as a *vehicle* for the *coordinated* application of 1) law enforcement strategies (such as criminal prosecutions and building abatements); 2) efforts to mobilize the community *and*; 3) the restoration of critical municipal services which are essential for improving the quality of life for residents of the neighborhood. Moreover, while it is conceivable that police departments may be able to begin the abatement process on their own, the early formation of "Community Impact Teams" involving specially assigned police-prosecutor teams is critical to insure that the efforts of the police and other agencies are aggressively supported in court. Furthermore, this special police-prosecutor team is essential to *coordinate* the application of law enforcement strategies with the restoration of critical municipal services so as to bring about a noticeable improvement in quality of life. If police departments and prosecuting agencies are willing to assign the relatively few resources necessary to implement a Civil Gang Abatement, the rewards can be astonishing.....a community that experiences significantly reduced gang activity, drug dealing and truancy while enjoying a noticeable and long lasting improvement in the quality of life for all its residents.

**FOR MORE INFORMATION OR WRITTEN MATERIALS  
REGARDING THE L.A. CITY ATTORNEY'S  
CIVIL GANG ABATEMENT  
CONTACT:**

**R. Bruce Coplen, Supervisor  
Bob Ferber, Assistant Supervisor  
L.A. City Attorney Gang Section  
200 North Main Street  
1600 City Hall East  
Los Angeles, CA 90012  
Ph: (213) 485-0798**



JAMES K. HAHN  
CITY ATTORNEY

Office of the City Attorney  
Los Angeles, California

EXECUTIVE OFFICE  
1800 CITY HALL EAST  
LOS ANGELES 90012  
(213) 485-5408

CRIMINAL BRANCH  
(213) 485-5470

CIVIL BRANCH  
(213) 485-6370

TELECOPIER:  
(213) 680-3634

**NOTICE TO ABATE PUBLIC NUISANCE AND OF INTENT TO SEEK  
A PRELIMINARY AND PERMANENT INJUNCTION IN LIEU OF VOLUNTARY ABATEMENT**

TO: WATTS VARIO GRAPE STREET, aka WVG<sup>+</sup>, aka GRAPE STREET WATTS, aka GSW, aka GRAPE STREET, aka GS, aka WATTS BABY LOCO CRIPS, aka WBLC, aka BABY LOCO CRIPS, aka BLC, aka BABY LOCS, aka LOCO CRIPS, aka LOCS, aka TINY LOCO CRIPS, aka TLC, aka TINY LOCS, aka TL, aka EAST SIDE KIDS, aka ESK, aka PLAYBOY HOO RIDE CRIPS, aka PHRC, aka HOO RIDE CRIPS, aka HRC, aka SOUTH SIDE GRAPE STREET, aka SSG ST, aka YOUNG PANTHERS, an UNINCORPORATED ASSOCIATION AND STREET GANG AS DEFINED IN CODE SECTION 186.22 OF THE CALIFORNIA PENAL CODE, AND ALL OF ITS MEMBERS, ASSOCIATES, AGENTS AND ALL OTHER PERSONS ACTING UNDER, IN CONCERN WITH, FOR THE BENEFIT OF, AT THE DIRECTION OF, OR IN ASSOCIATION WITH THEM;

**THE PEOPLE OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA, BY AND THROUGH JAMES K. HAHN, CITY ATTORNEY FOR THE CITY OF LOS ANGELES, HEREBY PUT YOU ON NOTICE THAT:**

You are creating, maintaining and encouraging, and permitting others to create and maintain, a public nuisance in that you are engaging in and encouraging, and permitting others to engage in, continuing, repeated and ongoing acts of:

- a. murder;
- b. open and conspicuous narcotics trafficking;
- c. open and conspicuous narcotics possession and use;
- d. assaults and other acts of violence;
- e. use and possession of dangerous weapons and ammunition;
- f. vandalism to public and private property including, but not limited to, graffiti;
- g. congregating at locations including, but not limited to, the 2000 to 2100 blocks between 101st and 102nd Streets, the 2000 to 2200 blocks between 97th Street and 99th Place, and the 2000 to 2200 blocks on the north side of 103rd Street, in the City of Los Angeles, so as to attract persons who seek to purchase narcotics and other contraband, and attract members of rival street gangs who intend to commit acts of violence and other violations of law;
- h. congregating at or near Jordan Downs Public Housing Project, in sufficiently large numbers and in such a rude and threatening manner, so as to interfere with lawful law enforcement investigations and activities and threaten the safety and well-being of law abiding citizens;
- i. blocking the free flow of vehicular traffic and emergency vehicles by approaching passing vehicles and engaging passengers in conversation;
- j. blocking and obstructing sidewalks and pedestrian thoroughfares so as to annoy, threaten and intimidate law abiding citizens;
- k. wearing and possessing certain identifiable hats, shirts, belts, jackets, sweat shirts, shoe laces, handkerchiefs, and other articles of clothing which identify the wearer as a member or associate of the criminal street gang known as *Watts Vario Grape Street*, so as to intimidate law abiding citizens, facilitate recruitment of younger law abiding citizens to join said criminal street gang and commit illegal acts, and encourage and induce members of rival street gangs to acts of violence;
- l. yelling of words and phrases and making certain identifiable hand and body movements in public which are intended to warn other gang members, narcotics traffickers, and potential customers of narcotics, that police officers and representatives of the Housing Authority of the City of Los Angeles are present;
- m. soliciting, inducing and encouraging others, either verbally, in writing, or by hand and body movements, to commit acts of violence to law abiding citizens, police officers, and other gang members;
- n. possessing paging devices (beepers) and portable and cellular telephones at or near narcotic locations described in paragraph g. (above) so as to facilitate the trafficking of narcotics by respondent street gang.

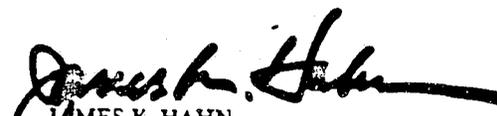
THE ABOVE DESCRIBED ACTIVITIES ARE A PUBLIC NUISANCE, ARE OFFENSIVE TO THE SENSES, ARE INJURIOUS TO HEALTH, AND ARE INDECENT, SO AS TO INTERFERE WITH THE COMFORTABLE ENJOYMENT OF LIFE AND PROPERTY BY AN ENTIRE NEIGHBORHOOD AND A CONSIDERABLE NUMBER OF PERSONS IN THE COMMUNITY.

**THEREFORE,**

You are hereby commanded to halt, discontinue and abate the creation and maintenance of the public nuisance described above.

In the event that you should fail to abate said public nuisance, notice is hereby given that the People of the State of California, by and through James K. Hahn, City Attorney of the City of the Los Angeles, will seek a preliminary and permanent injunction prohibiting the continuance of said nuisance.

**THE VIOLATION OF AN INJUNCTION CAN BE PUNISHED BY CRIMINAL PROSECUTION AND CIVIL CONTEMPT  
RESULTING IN JAIL, FINES, OR BOTH!**

  
JAMES K. HAHN  
City Attorney