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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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***PAROLEE REENTRY PROGRAM TO ENTER SECOND YEAR
NEXT STOPS: SAN QUENTIN PRISON & CALIFORNIA HIGHWAYS***

January 14 – The City of East Palo Alto’s Parolee Reentry program, known as the East Palo Alto Community-Based Coalition (CBC), has started its second year of operation. To date, the CBC has served over 100 parolees.

The next stop for the CBC is San Quentin prison. On January 17th and 27th, 2009, officials in the program, including representatives from the Police Department, Free-At-Last, Job Train, and the Ministerial Alliance, will go to San Quentin prison to receive specialized training from the San Quentin inmate group called “No More Tears” – this group works with inmates in San Quentin to end violence in our communities and reduce recidivism.

The Police Department has been working with “No More Tears” for close to two years and recently entered into a contract with the group to provide this training and serve as an advisory committee for the reentry program. In 2007, No More Tears and the Police Department produced a “Stop the Violence” video that has been aired on the Media Channel and the Police Department’s cable show, “Make the Call”.

This will not be the first time members of the CBC have been to San Quentin. In 2008, David Lewis, co-founder of Free-At-Last, Pastor Andre Harris, Senior Pastor Born Again Christian Center, and Chief Davis met with East Palo Alto inmates to talk about the program and the inmates’ goals when they are released. Mr. Lewis and Pastor Harris are frequent visitors at San Quentin and pick up local inmates upon their release.

The Police Department is also finalizing a contract with CDCR, in partnership with Cal Trans, to implement a \$1.1 million parolee-job program to start in mid-February. Twenty (20) parolees will be hired to conduct clean-up services on Bay Area roads and highways and receive job training from Cal Trans.

According to Chief Davis,

“As a community it is our obligation to ensure our residents return from prison to an environment conducive to their success and that of the community. The efforts of the CBC and the Department of Corrections are to be applauded. This is the only such program in California and will prove to be a model that will revolutionize the role of local law enforcement and communities in parole supervision and reentry.”

Background

On April 3, 2007, the East Palo Alto City Council passed a resolution authorizing the City Manager to enter into a three and a half year contract with the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) to implement the East Palo Alto Community-Based Coalition (CBC) – a parole reentry program that blends enforcement with programming services. As part of the contract, the CDCR funds the program at a total projected cost of \$3.4 million dollars (\$949,000 annually).

This program was initiated by Assembly Bill 2436, authored by Assembly Member Ira Ruskin, which requires the CDCR to establish a pilot parole reentry program in East Palo Alto. This program is designed to serve 120 parolees annually, and will, at a minimum:

1. Create a Day Reporting Center that provides a single reporting location for parolees and provides a host of reentry services, such as:
 - a. Individualized treatment plans
 - b. Residential/transitional housing
 - c. Substance abuse education and treatment
 - d. Anger management
 - e. Domestic violence programs
 - f. Cognitive and life skills development
 - g. Parenting and family reintegration
 - h. Community service
 - i. Educational services (GED preparation)
 - j. Budgeting and money management
 - k. Job readiness and job search
 - l. Discharge planning and aftercare
2. Provide transitional sober living accommodations for 12 parolees or ten percent of the target population.
3. Conduct a prerelease needs assessment of inmates scheduled to parole to East Palo Alto.
4. Develop a reentry plan identifying services needed by persons returning to the community.
5. Forge partnership between the police and CDCR parole agents to enhance the level of supervision and accountability of parolees residing in East Palo Alto.
6. Create partnerships with local community organizations and service providers to provide support services to parolees such as transitional housing, job training, or placement, or substance abuse treatment.

For more information about the CBC, please contact CBC Director Pam Cherry at (650) 521-4422.

For more information about “No More Tears”, please contact Denise Banister at (510) 478-2958.

For more information about the Day Reporting Center, please contract Mr. Bob Hoover at (650) 521-6643.

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