

Beach Street Revival continues to tax city's police resources

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SANTA CRUZ — The fallout of cruising cars and drinking from the Beach Street Revival has improved from last year, but it continues to tax all the city's police resources, say city officials.

City Manager Dick Wilson said this morning there were major traffic congestion and minor drinking problems along Beach Street Saturday night from the revival of 1950s and '60s customized cars. Wilson said it cost the city 174 hours in police overtime.

"All of our police resources were committed and we probably could have used more," he said of the weekend's revival.

Revival promoter Rick Petersen responded, "We wrote them a letter advising them to increase the police force and increase its budget."

He said the revival welcomes increased police presence. "That was the problem last year when we had all the trouble. This year, they did their job."

In doing their job this weekend, police issued 251 citations covering 404 traffic violations. They also took 171 people to jail, mostly for drunkenness.

By 10 p.m. Saturday, Beach Street was jammed with cars and the police put up barricades to keep it open for emergency vehicles.

Wilson said, "Clearly, the revival taxes

our resources and I don't know that I'm willing to be as accommodating as even the Police Department any more. We'll have to look at this year's experience closely and meet with the police to prepare some recommendations."

Wilson expects the City Council will want to discuss this year's revival soon.

Petersen pointed out that among other income that will go to the city treasury from the revival is the money from traffic fines.

He also said there's the park-rental fee of \$200 a day for San Lorenzo Park, the \$800 for shuttle buses to Cocoanut Grove, the money that went to motels and to the city from its motel tax and the money spent by thousands that came to the revival.

Convention Bureau Manager Joe Flood said he estimates that 300 or more hotel rooms were rented to revival fans.

Flood doesn't see the revival as a great money-maker for the city, but he said, "It's a good event and the city can't go on getting rid of its major events simply because they cause problems."

He said the display of cars and the sales booths in San Lorenzo Park were well done.

The Beach Street Revival got its name because in years past it was held along the

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frontage street to the Boardwalk. It grew to be a problem along Beach Street and on West Cliff Drive customized cars would go cruising during the evening.

This year, there was controversy over the parade permit, so Petersen called off the official parade, and moved the car show to benchlands near San Lorenzo Park.

However, the instinct to cruise apparently was too much for many people. Beach Street ended up being jammed again.

Wilson is saying the city will have to look at the problems to seek greater control.

Petersen is saying, "We are somebody to contend with. We're not going to go away simply because the city says so. We're here to stay."

Wilson agrees the city's authority is limited and he doesn't want to extend that authority, but he's worried about stretching police resources beyond their limits. And he's worried about police costs and any damage that can happen to the community from events that get out of hand.

The Police Department was commended by city officials for the handling of Saturday night's problems on Beach Street.