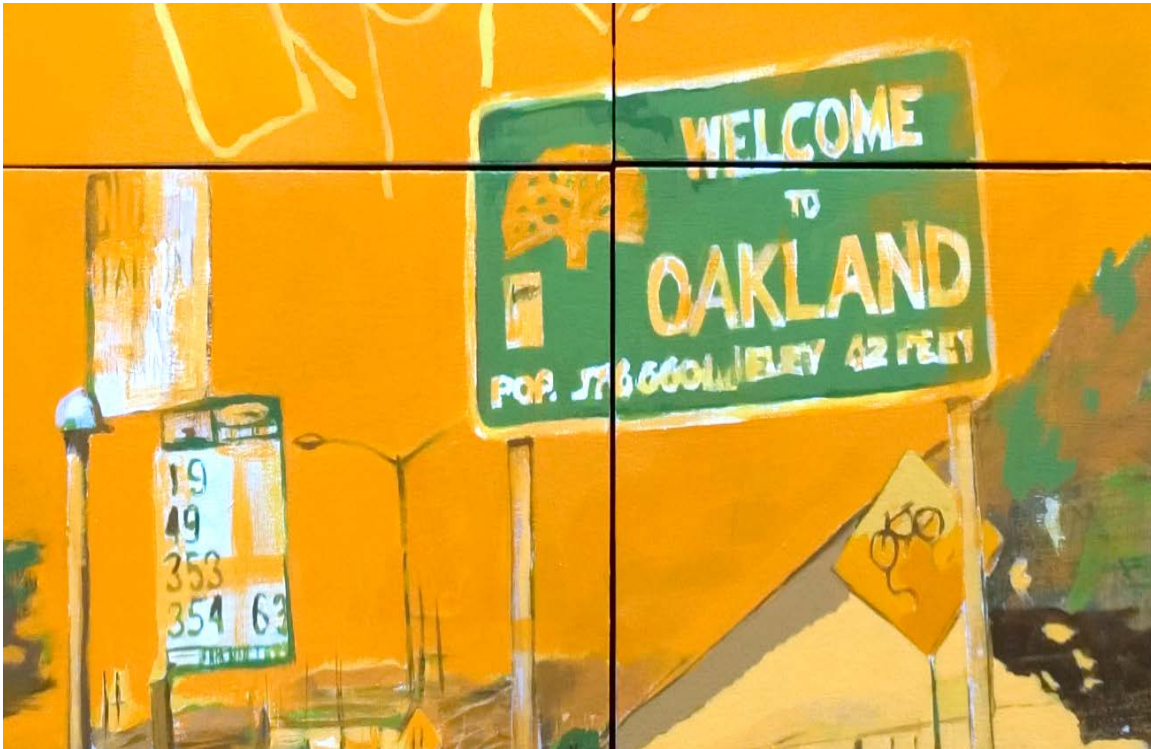


The Oakland Strategy

The Making of a Model City via Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement & Sustainability



Developed by

Olis Simmons
Executive Director
Youth UpRising
8711 MacArthur
Oakland, CA 94605
510-777-9909 (office)
510-777-9949 (fax)
olis@youthuprising.org
www.youthuprising.org

LeRonne Armstrong
Sergeant of Police
Oakland Police Department
455 7th Street
Oakland, CA 96412
510-777-8500 (office)
510-777-8562 (fax)
LArmstrong@oaklandnet.com

Endorsed by Oakland Community Organization

7200 Bancroft
2 Eastmont Mall
Oakland, CA 94605
510-639-1442 (office)
510-632-1225 (fax)
www.oaklandcommunity.org

Silence the Violence,
Project of Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
344 40th
Oakland, CA 94609
510-428-3939 (office)
510-632-1225 (fax)
www.ellabakercenter.org

INTRODUCTION

There are a number of exciting developments in Oakland's current violence prevention landscape. The first and most notable development is the prioritization of concentrated violent crime and homicide reduction strategies over diffuse violent prevention strategies that came to be pervasive in the past decade. Another key development is Measure Y—a landmark initiative that funds both police and community-based services for high-risk youth and young adults. These elements have contributed to more fertile ground for other violence prevention investments, including Alameda County's Blueprint for Violence Prevention, a newly piloted Re-Entry Program out of County Supervisor Keith Carson's Office, and State Senator Perata's Violence Prevention Initiative. Within this context, strategic data-driven approaches offer the most viable interventions.

The conditions in Oakland—the prioritization of violent crime and homicide reduction, the Measure Y initiative, and cross-jurisdictional investments—lead to conditions in which public-service providers and law enforcement can focus and coordinate their activities within communities chronically plagued by violent crime and homicide. This paper describes a four-pronged approach to violent crime and homicide reduction that capitalizes on the unique set of assets in the City of Oakland. This paper recommends a strategy for Oakland to build a sustainable system to significantly reduce violent crime and homicide by:

- (a) Leveraging existing violence prevention efforts, including Oakland's Measure Y, OPD's Cease Fire and PACT Team, Senator Perata's Violence Prevention Initiative, and Alameda County's Re-Entry and Blueprint efforts;
- (b) Resourcing three teams—Street Outreach, Faith-based Homicide Response, and Resource Development—to reach and provide meaningful services to the city's highest-risk residents;
- (c) Strategically deploying municipal and public safety resources as an explicit violent crime and homicide reduction tactic; and,
- (d) Reestablishing law enforcement agencies as valuable assets and prospective employers in communities most impacted by homicide and violent crime.

RATIONALE

This paper draws on lessons from Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and Highpoint, NC, where *intensive supports* with *suppressive enforcement* were combined to substantially lower rates of violent crime and homicide. The aforementioned cities brought together representatives of key social services agencies, law enforcement and youth-serving organizations to implement efforts leading to a dramatic reduction in homicides. Five guiding lessons from these other cities are as follows:

- *Accountability and data collection help inform the project.* The collection and analysis of detailing data on everything from drug violations and arrest rates to rates of foster care placement, and days at work can be used both to adjust the

program and to document impact. Though tedious, data-driven processes ensure that the program can “sustain itself over time regardless of personalities.”¹

- *Creative partnering among all types of entities creates more momentum and structure.*
In order to be effective and sustainable, partnerships must result in changes in how agencies and organizations work together at all levels, with a commitment to move away from relying on ad hoc arrangements between street-level personnel or, at the other extreme, orders from a few officials at the top.
- *The cost is high, but the alternative is more expensive.*
The program maybe deemed expensive; however but any cost-benefit analysis will evidence substantial lower costs associated with this type of intervention in comparison with the expense of suppression and incarceration.
- *Coordination is difficult but necessary.*
While decision-making may take longer than in a top-down model, partnership decisions are much more likely to be actually carried out.
- *Support from top officials is vital to the effort’s survival.*
Senior level buy-in and leadership by elected officials will be essential to success.

In keeping with the best practices of other cities that have experienced reductions in violent crime and homicide, the Oakland Strategy is aimed at changing the trajectory of youth people’s lives and must be built on a renewed commitment to coordination of both human services and violence prevention resources. The Oakland Strategy is designed to build sustainable processes for service providers, police, prosecutors, judges, community members, and other key stakeholders to routinely interact for the purpose of successfully transitioning youth and young adults from high-impact communities into productive lifestyles. The strategy’s objectives address the lack of *law enforcement cohesion* that creates conditions where the same family with a 19-year-old on adult probation, and a 17-year-old on juvenile probation, interface with separate probation agencies that are alienated or disconnected from each other. Additionally, the strategy’s objectives address the lack of *social service cohesion*. Most organizations specialize in a narrow area—such as physical health, public schooling, after-school programs, drug and alcohol abuse, mental health, or housing—rather than the full range of societal supports that can promote safer behavior.

DATA-DRIVEN PLANNING & PRACTICE

Oakland’s violent crime and homicide prevention efforts must be grounded in data-driven planning and implementation processes that are: (1) accurate depictions of “real world” conditions, (2) applicable to conditions on the ground, and (3) ongoing and continually updated to best inform and adjust the deployment of resources, especially for Teams engaged in work on the ground. With accurate and applicable tools and approaches, Oakland’s data-driven implementation model reaffirms that community-based “street-

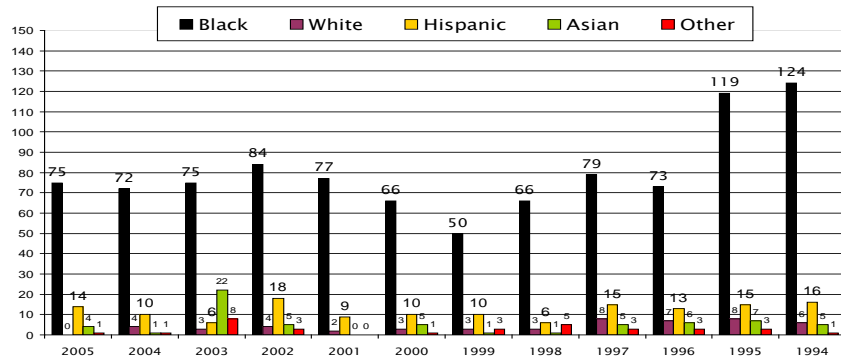
¹ Insert web address

based” methods are actually the most effective way for public agencies and communities to investigate, solve, and ultimately prevent violent crime and homicide.

The types of data on violent crime and homicide collected by community- and faith-based agencies, the Oakland Police Department, Alameda County, and other city agencies serve different purposes for each entity. The proposed Oakland Strategy will link data, its implications, and go beyond reporting raw numbers void of contextualization from each of the aforementioned agencies. A data-driven process will serve as a mechanism to ensure cross-jurisdictional coordination of geographically-organized prevention and intervention activities aimed at reducing violent crime and homicide.

Oakland has some of the highest-risk neighborhoods in Alameda County. More than 80% of violent crime occurs in Oakland or affects Oakland residents. The violent crime rate in Oakland has been consistently the highest in the county since the 1980s. Like many urban communities across nation, the victims and perpetrators of homicide are overwhelmingly young men of color between the ages of 15 and 29. Although African Americans make up only 35% of the total population in the city, this racial group represents more than 77% of homicide victims. This fact, unfortunately, is not always reflected in the allocation of violence prevention resources, with some efforts focused primarily on emerging gang activities within Hispanic and Asian communities.

In Oakland, young African-American males are consistently both murder victims and suspects at four times the rate of other racial and ethnic groups. Victims and suspects from 2000 to 2005 were 74% Black, 15% Hispanic/Latino, 5% White, 4% Asian, and 2% unknown. For the same time period, 71% of victims and suspects were ages 12 to 34, with the majority of that number—more than 60%—falling within the 18-to-34 age range.



LEVERAGING CURRENT INVESTMENTS

Oakland has a rich diversity of city-, county-, and state-based violence prevention initiatives aimed at stemming the plague of violent crime and homicide. This diversity lends to many hearts and minds thinking critically—but not collectively—about how to save lives, re-instate Oakland’s presence as a model city, and contribute to a healthier and more economically vibrant future for each resident. The Oakland Strategy seeks to leverage and coalesce these diverse investments towards measurable, sustained reductions in violent crime and homicide. Current efforts include the City of Oakland’s

NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

Page 5 of 11

Measure Y Programs, the Alameda County Board of Supervisor's Blueprint, State Senator Don Perata's Peacemaking and Violence Prevention Initiative, and Supervisor Keith Carson's pilot Re-entry Program. Below is an overview of each program:

Measure Y is a comprehensive and multifaceted effort to address the multiple and complex risk factors associated with violence including poverty, unemployment, discrimination, substance abuse, educational failure, fragmented families, and domestic abuse. Efforts build on positive assets and resilience in individuals, families, and communities. The Oakland City Council approved a continuum of 18 specific best practice-based program strategies for reducing violence among the Measure Y target population.

The Alameda County Blueprint, adopted by the Alameda County Board of Supervisors in July 2005, is a comprehensive violence prevention plan designed to reduce all forms of violence affecting county communities and families. The goals of the Blueprint are threefold: (1) to decrease the presence of risk factors that contribute to violence and increase the presence of resilience factors that are protective against violence within individuals, families, and communities; (2) to increase accountability for violence prevention-related outcomes, foster violence prevention leadership in the County, increase coordination of violence prevention efforts, and enhance understanding of effective violence prevention approaches, programs, and policies; (3) to decrease the level of all forms of violence throughout the County over time.

To draw from the experience and expertise of community leaders, Senator Perata convened a diverse group of ex-offenders, ministers, health and young-adult service providers, law enforcement, and judicial leaders, who came together to implement an initiative to reduce violent crime. Toward this effort, pilot neighborhoods were selected based on concentration of violent crime and homicides. These neighborhoods include West Oakland, San Antonio/Fruitvale, and Deep East Oakland. The pilot intends to implement four priority program areas: (1) reentry programs, (2) community-based activities for highly at-risk young people, (3) mental health services and supports, and (4) a Peacemaking Team to be launched, hosted, and managed by trusted community-based organizations in Oakland and Richmond, California.

With support from the State of California, Supervisor Keith Carson's office is piloting a reentry program informed by cognitive-behavioral change modalities. The pilot has four major components: (1) intensive case management services for individuals slated for release within 12 months, (2) ongoing, intensive case management services to support recently released and formerly incarcerated individuals, and (3) ongoing access to life-skills training along with mental health supports that focus on physical health and substance-use treatment services, and (4) the implementation of policy changes that allow formerly incarcerated individuals to fairly compete in the job market.

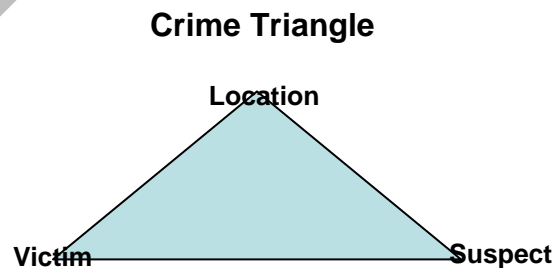
The Police And Correction Team (PACT) is an OPD unit partnered with the California State Department of Corrections & Rehabilitation that focuses on the oversight and support of parolees. Specifically, the PACT Team holds weekly trainings for all newly released State parolees. This effort is key, as nearly half of the 3,000 of those paroled to Oakland each year return to custody. These weekly meetings focus on enrolling them in a host of job-readiness, vocational-education,

life-skill development, and social supports, including housing, healthcare access, and alcohol and drug treatment.

Beyond the obvious benefits that will flow from mapping and better coordinating existing violence prevention resources and services, this leveraging effort presents two additional opportunities. The primary opportunity is created by establishing unbiased and uniformly applied methods for validating the effectiveness of existing investments. This will allow reallocation of resources deemed ineffective. In this way, this leveraging effort actively supports the manifestation of a collective vision of Oakland as a model city, wherein all residents live in healthier and more economically vibrant communities. The other key benefit that will flow from this leveraging effort is the strategic expansion of partnerships. Both the on-the-ground needs of residents and data will quickly make clear where partnerships must be established. For instance, it is likely that youth and young adults in the targeted communities are more likely to have been in jail, to have siblings who are also in the criminal justice or foster care system, and to have been arrested for a drug, gun, or violent offense. Moving these young people into productive lifestyles will require building new partnerships with County agencies, especially the Social Service Agency's departments of Children and Family Services and Welfare to Work.

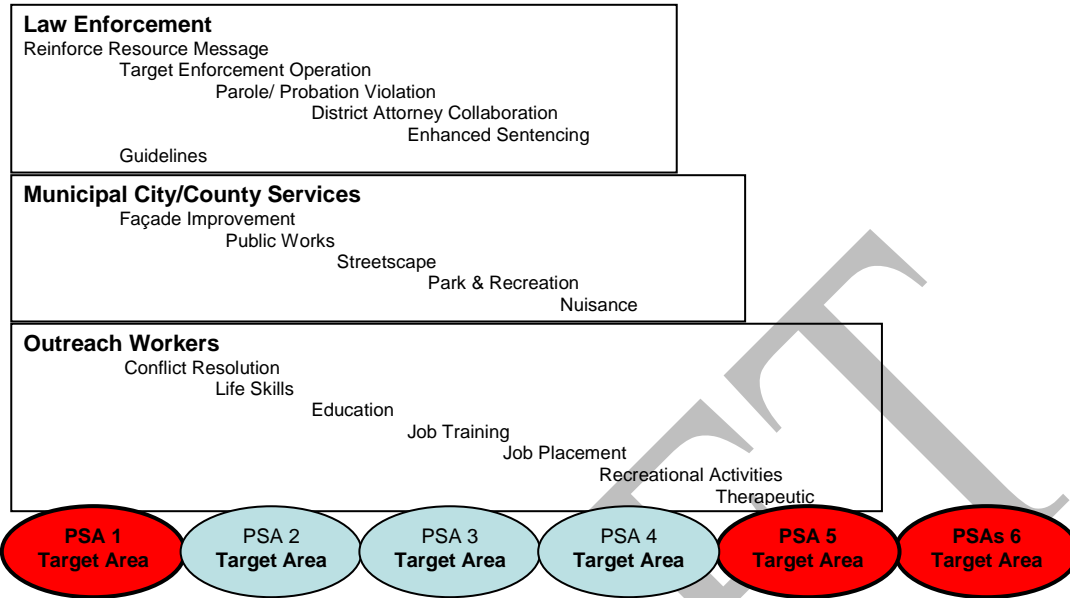
OAKLAND STRATEGY

Oakland has a longstanding commitment to reducing violent crime and homicide, and over the years has focused intensively, through law enforcement and community-based services, on victims and suspects. While these efforts have enjoyed modest success, there has been no significant or sustainable reduction in violent crime and homicide. Considering the widely accepted crime triangle shown here, the Oakland Strategy seeks to better coordinate suspect and victim services and supports while strategically targeting high-crime locations within each Police Service Area (PSA). Longitudinal data reveals that many of Oakland's current hotspots for violence have persisted since the 1980s. The Oakland Strategy is aimed at affecting long-term and sustainable improvements in communities long plagued by violent crime and homicide by more strategically addressing all three points on the crime triangle.



The Oakland Strategy builds upon successes and lessons from violence prevention work in Boston, Chicago, Philadelphia, and High Point, NC, and is grounded in local realities. The chart below provides a general overview of the Oakland Strategy's graduated interplay among Outreach Workers, Municipal Services, and Law Enforcement within selected priority hotspots. Note that the first step is Outreach, followed by strategic deployment of city/county resources, and, finally, full and aggressive use of tactical law enforcement resources.

Oakland Strategy Progression Model



Specifically, the Oakland Strategy responds to Oakland’s unique needs and is designed to foster citywide coordination between relevant community and faith-based organizations, the Oakland Police Department and other law enforcement agencies, and community stakeholders such as NCPC’s. To be successful, the interplay of the three phases above must happen within the larger context of the Oakland Strategy, which consist of four (4) key components:

1. Leveraging Existing Investments

There is a need to better coordinate and implement existing violence prevention efforts so that existing investments are maximized. Specifically, this will include conducting an inventory of existing violence prevention-related programming to determine where service overlaps and gaps exist for those most at risk of becoming a victim or perpetrator of violence. This may involve convening interested parties—community-based organizations, faith-based organizations, the Police, key city services such as Parks and Recreation, and neighborhood-based groups—to ensure efforts are accurately mapped to deploy maximum effectiveness. These efforts take into consideration that most community-based organizations have elements that are strictly violence prevention in addition to other programming and activities.

2. Building Three Teams

An investment in a three (3) teams is critical to proactively reduce the Oakland's violent crime and homicide rates. The first team, the **Outreach Team**, will perform a number of key functions. The Outreach Workers—most of whom will be from the same part of the city in which they work—emphasize helping young people reach safe and productive goals. They offer in-the-home and on-the-street counseling for residents. Their support can be as simple as a ride to a job interview or an after-school basketball program or as complex as expediting the entrance of youths into public schools, literacy programs, drug

NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION

treatment, mental health counseling, or job placement programs run by other partnering organizations. More specifically, their work will include:

- Developing relationship with residents at priority hot spots
- Engaging residents and/or their families, in a range of activities and services aimed at encouraging alternative life choices
- Gathering information to identify needs and prevent the escalation of tension likely to lead to violence
- Working with everyone in communities impacted by violent crime and homicide
- Clearing hotspots to avoid police action

The Outreach Team will be organized by the City's six (6) Police Service Areas (PSAs) in order to align with the overall goal of targeting the location portion of the Crime Triangle described earlier. In terms of the staffing pattern, the Outreach Team will consist of the following:

- (a) **Violence Reduction Outreach Coordinator**, responsible for holding and advancing the Strategy;
- (b) **Outreach Administrative Assistant**, responsible for providing overall administrative support,
- (c) Six (6) **Violence Reduction Outreach Area Leads**—one for each PSA, but assigned based on needs reflected in violent crime and homicide data—responsible for providing leadership for Outreach Workers,
- (d) Twenty-Four (24) **Violence Reduction Outreach Workers**, to allow four (4) staff per area to do street-based, one-on-one outreach in priority hotspots.

The second, **Faith Based Homicide Response Team** will expand the role of faith based organizations as appropriate, partnering and supporting other members of the clergy who are contracted through Measure Y to counsel families and loved ones at crimes scenes and their homes following loss. The exact nature of this expanded faith role will be based on an assessment of the current needs and service gaps, but one viable option is to enhance OPD's Chaplin Program to more proactively create a caring arm of the police department.

The third team, the **Resource Development Team**, is charged with the coordination of key services and supports, including maintaining a "living resource guide." A primary focus of this work is to develop a sophisticated regional approach to job creation, vocational education, and job-placement assistance. More specifically, this will involve developing "Living Resources" via active linkage with other agencies to provide access to services and activities that prevent violence. Such activities are focused as follows:

Employment

This service area attends to fundamental employment needs that must be addressed in order for the primary population to have viable income-generating options that reduce exposure to precursory risks for violent crime and homicide. These resources will include:

- Intense job counseling and placement assistance
- Private sector engagement regarding business development and workforce attachment

- Liaison with the Department of Motor Vehicles
- Liaison with the Employment Development Department
- Access to supported pathways into public safety careers, such as police and fire
- Support for entrepreneurial efforts

Life Skills

Life-skill training and services seek to build the capacity of the primary population to respond to life challenges without engaging in criminal or violent behavior. These resources will include:

- Financial Literacy
- Coping, including grief, loss, and life-change support services
- Communication, including dealing with intimate relationships

Health

These activities are aimed at focusing health and wellbeing resources on communities most impacted by violent crime and homicide. These resources will include:

- Building effective alcohol and drug treatment mechanisms
- Promoting effective already-existing teen-pregnancy prevention programs
- Artistic expression

Recreation/Civic Engagement

These activities are aimed at rebuilding the connections between neighbors and the public agencies that serve them. Here, there is an opportunity to support a diverse range of interested citizens in coming together to build community, address shared concerns, and celebrate accomplishments. These resources will include:

- Community events such as BBQ's, concerts, block parties, and cultural events
- Town hall meetings
- Sports teams, including basketball, football, and/or soccer

3. Strategically Deploying Municipal & Police Resources

This work will focus on building a strategic interface between the Oakland Police Department and other municipal services. Through the working relationships within city and county service agencies, the “broken windows” can be addressed in high crime areas. The goal here is to allow the City to deploy its agencies in a manner that best supports community revitalization in alignment with public safety concerns. In this way, valuable city resources, such as CEDA’s façade improvement program, become an explicit part of an overall violence reduction tactic. In terms of police deployment strategy, the Special Duty Unit II, the Targeted Enforcement Task Force, and the Crime Reduction Teams will be the primary teams responsible for enforcement and suppression of violent crime and homicide in targeted “hotspots.” OPD data suggests narcotics are usually involved in most of Oakland’s violent crimes and homicides. After the intensive efforts by the Outreach Team and strategic deployment of municipal services, OPD will aggressively enforce all laws, including narcotics laws at the street level, as the next step in reducing violent crime and homicide.

Officers will use a variety of techniques to conduct short- and long-term investigations directed toward the apprehension and identification of individuals involved in activities likely related to violent crime and homicide, including narcotics sales. Officers will conduct buy/bust and surveillance operations and work with federal agents to enhance

surveillance capabilities in “hotspots.” These Officers will be tasked with conducting at minimum three buy/bust operations and two reverse-sting operations per month in the various “hotspots.” They will also be tasked with locating drug houses in “hotspots,” and developing information to either serves search warrants or conducting parole/probation searches at these locations. Additionally, OPD will work closely with federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies, including the FBI, DEA, ATF, BNE, Alameda County Probation Department, State Parole and Rehabilitation, and the District Attorney’s Office. This collaboration will result in the successful transformation of the targeted hotspots.

4. Re-Establishing Police as a Valuable Community Asset

This work will focus on reestablishing public safety agencies as valuable assets in communities most impacted by homicide and violent crime. Building upon the training of OPD officers to be more attuned to the cultural dynamics that inform the lives of residents living in hotspots, this work will intentionally rebuild positive police-community relations. Additionally, this work will recruit Team members who can be groomed to joined the Oakland Police Academy and/or move into other public safety careers. In practice, most of this relationship-building will be focused in Recreation/Civic Engagement activities that are supported and promoted by all the Teams.

BUDGET PROJECTIONS

This section should overview costs associated with launching and maintaining the Oakland Strategy. In order to attain long-term results with lasting community impact, there is a dire need for sustainable funding in these program efforts. Additionally, it is imperative that resources reflect adequate means to motivate program participants to make healthy choices that create transformative outcomes in those we serve. To make ideal budget projections, it is necessary to identify and solidify both direct and indirect costs.

TRACKING & ACCOUNTABILITY

A clear evaluative process should be outlined in order to ensure the Oakland Strategy provides quality services, measurable outcomes, and builds and maintains broad-based buy-in. The evaluation should begin with an inclusive process for creating realistic deliverables that leads a formal evaluation plan which includes ongoing traditional and nontraditional community stakeholders’ input. In general the evaluation should focus on quantitative outputs, qualitative outcomes, and qualitative measures. In addition to an evaluation plan and process, this effort should ensure coordination and accountability at all levels through the establishment of a Steering Committee and Working Group. While the details of these group’s compositions need to be worked out, in general the Steering Committee should consist of a chief executive officer or deputy from each major partner agency. They could meet quarterly to review strategy, develop funding, and intercede with organizations outside the partnership. A Working Group, modeled after Boston’s success, should consist of mid-management staff from each of the key agencies who are

directly responsible for the supervision of the on-the-ground work. This Working Group should meet weekly, biweekly, or monthly as needs dictate, to deal with inter-agency issues and to review performance data and adherence to minimum standards within the partnership.



TIMELINE & NEXT STEPS

A key next step is for the Mayor's Office articulating a unifying vision and set of clear goals. Moving forward will also require developing timelines for a host of issues, including setting up the Planning Workgroup, developing the Matrix, forming the Steering Committee, identifying funding and other resources, building cross-system buy-in, recruiting high performing staffing, seating the Operational Workgroup once staff in other factors are in place, and of course, developing the evaluation framework.