



BERKELEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER  
**TERRY TAPLÍN**  
DISTRICT 2

April 2023

**Memorandum on Berkeley Ceasefire D2 Ad Hoc Advisory Group**

The District 2 Council office convened a series of meetings with local stakeholders and subject matter experts to better understand the operations of violence prevention programs and the challenges local governments may face in implementation.

However, pursuant to the Charter of the City of Berkeley, Article VII § 28(c), the City Manager holds the exclusive power of policy implementation and “administration of all affairs of the city.” As the City Manager’s office undergoes the process of procurement and staffing for the \$1M Ceasefire program, the group sought to provide guidance on best practices and cultural competency to ensure that holistic wraparound services can effectively maximize positive public health and safety outcomes. To preclude any potential influence over the RFP (Request for Proposals) process, identifying information of individual participants and organizations represented in this Advisory Group will not be included in this memorandum.

Participants reflected a general consensus that Ceasefire efforts should be a grassroots community-driven effort. However, several considerations arose for optimal implementation through the community, broadly summarized under three categories: ***institutional***, ***individual***, and ***geographical***.

Institutional considerations

- Violence prevention programs should include school outreach, and closely integrate with family, youth, and mental health services. Gun violence is one manifestation of broader systemic issues, and exposure to violence can begin as early as preschool. Thus, school-based violence intervention should include all ages, including continuing education at BUSD’s Adult School.
  - BPD’s School Resource Officer is experienced with prevention programs.
- Social services should seek to be proactive rather than merely reactive *post hoc* to specific incidents of violence.
- CALLES, a community-based street intervention program run by HOMEY in San Francisco’s Mission District, offers a robust model for intervention, diversion, youth advocacy, and wraparound services.
  - Richmond’s Advance Peace also did stipends for at-risk youth community members to disincentivize truancy, in addition to its Peacekeeper Fellowships for street outreach.
- Funding for services should ensure good compensation for service providers, and leverage other funding sources such as MediCal.
- Service providers and City staff should have robust cultural competency and anti-racism training.
- Generally, efforts should be on synergizing and streamlining rather than duplicating work. The broader the scope of a program, the greater the risk of path dependencies that could hinder the efficacy of service provision (e.g. narrower pool of qualified contractors or infeasible workloads).

### Individual considerations

- Because a smaller at-risk population contributes a disproportionate share of violent incidents in Alameda County, improving health and educational outcomes in these populations can have outsized benefits for public safety outcomes. Services targeted at highest-risk individuals are not necessarily best tracked by performance metrics based on net count of individuals served.
  - By way of example, hospital-based intervention is a critical tool for linking at-risk individuals to wraparound services and disrupting patterns of violence.
- Individual profiles are important to capture in the data on community violence and may provide critical information that would not be as salient in population-wide trends. For case management with youth, tracking and incentivizing GPA and educational attainment has been especially helpful for CALLES in SF.
- Outreach workers will need to form close trusting relationships with the individuals they serve, as well other service providers in the area. Community members and CBOs are well-suited for individual-level interventions, including life coaching and counseling, and City programs should lean into “homegrown” networks. Nevertheless, interventions are significant labor-intensive efforts that often involve overlapping jurisdictions.
  - Likewise, cultural competency and anti-racism should be central to life coaching service provider standards.
- Life coaching is most effective when paired with mental health treatment and other services, such as Healthy Black Families and McGee Ave Baptist Church’s nutrition education and health equity programs.
  - Life coaching can work with cognitive behavior therapy, life mapping, and other intervention frameworks, but it is important that service providers never excuse or condone criminal behavior.
  - While the Alameda County District Attorney’s manages post-arrest mental health diversion programs, BPD will be looking closely at the Specialized Care Unit and other initiatives to support mental health interventions.
- Case management and continuity in violence intervention service can be complicated when an individual turns 18/21. Thus, community relationships may provide critical support if and when individuals fall through “cracks” in the system.
- Reducing the supply and distribution of deadly firearms remains a significant challenge in the absence of much-needed state and federal reforms. However, local and individual incentives remain important. For example, while “gun buy-back” programs have been shown to *only* be effective at reducing violence when directly paired with wraparound services, their cost-effectiveness remains a significant barrier, since jurisdictions would have to offer prices at least at par or higher than replacement value of firearms most likely to be used for criminal activity (est. \$1k-2k), rather than only purchasing more depreciated firearms at the lower end of the resale market.

### Geographical considerations

- Because Bay Area communities extend far beyond municipal borders, so do patterns of systemic violence. Interjurisdictional collaboration is integral to the success of violence intervention programs at the local level.

- At the same time, federal and state intervention may primarily focus on jurisdictions with major cases such as in Oakland and San Francisco, rather than devoting resources to Berkeley, where rates of gun violence have also increased but are lower than larger neighboring cities overall.
- Leveraging linkages with county resources can improve cost-effectiveness and regional durability of positive outcomes. For example, the Alameda County Probation Department has a \$15 million annual budget for violence prevention services. The Deputy Sheriff's Activities League (DSAL) provides youth recreation & fitness programming, food assistance, and community farms in Hayward, Fremont, and Union City.
  - The City of Oakland's Ceasefire program often collaborates on grant funding initiatives with Alameda County partners.
- Inevitably, individuals in Berkeley are already involved in call-ins and other intervention efforts in Oakland's Ceasefire program. Local program management can leverage existing networks both at the neighborhood and regional level.
- Data analysis and "violence affected networks" mapping is underway in BPD and will be essential for partnerships with CBOs and other service providers.