



BERKELEY CITY COUNCILMEMBER
TERRY TAPLÍN
 DISTRICT 2

CONSENT CALENDAR
 Nov. 9, 2021

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Taplin (Author), Councilmember Bartlett (Co-Sponsor),
 Mayor Arreguin (Co-Sponsor) and Councilmember Wengraf (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Budget Referral: Berkeley Ceasefire

RECOMMENDATION

1. Refer to the Fiscal Year 2023 budget process \$200,000 for consulting costs to develop a Gun Violence Intervention (GVI) program, commonly known as “Operation Ceasefire.”

2. Refer to the City Manager the development of a Gun Violence Intervention program with technical support from experienced consultants solicited by a Request For Proposals (RFP), community service providers including faith groups and violence intervention programs, hospital intervention programs, life coaching programs, Berkeley Housing Authority, Berkeley YouthWorks, Berkeley Police Department, Alameda County Workforce Development Board, Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, Alameda County Probation, California’s Office of the Attorney General, US Attorney’s Office, US Marshals Service, US Department of Justice, and other jurisdictions and agencies in the region as needed; and consider an alternate Urban Gun Violence Disruption Strategy such as the Peacemaker Fellowships program as implemented in the cities of Richmond, Stockton, and Sacramento.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

\$200,000 one-time expenditure for Fiscal Year 2023; future operating costs to be determined. This may be a fiscally prudent investment when accounting for potential cost savings of reduced gun violence. According to the Everytown Economic Cost of Gun Violence Calculator Tool, a single gun homicide directly costs state taxpayers \$1 million, and costs Californians \$9 million when including externalities imposed on family members, survivors, and the community at large.¹

CURRENT SITUATION AND ITS EFFECTS

Gun Violence Intervention is a Strategic Plan Priority Project, advancing our goal to create a resilient, safe, connected, and prepared city.

The City of Berkeley saw 36 reports of gunfire by the end of September 2021, 10 more than the same period in 2020—a 38% year-over-year increase. On October 27, 2021, the City Council passed a referral to the Community Engagement Process to Reimagine

¹ <https://everytownresearch.org/report/economic-cost-calculator/>

Public Safety to Create an Interjurisdictional Group Violence Intervention Program, or “Operation Ceasefire,” to Reduce Gun Violence. To date, the Reimagining Public Safety Task Force has not released recommendations for such a program. However, it is worth noting that Ceasefire programs are themselves defined by community engagement.

BACKGROUND

The National Network for Safe Communities defines GVI programs as “a partnership of law enforcement, community members, and social service providers with a common goal but distinct roles,” each role “conveying a powerful community message about disapproval for violence and in support of community aspirations; concrete opportunities for both immediate and longer term assistance and support; and clear prior notice of the legal risks associated with continued violence.”²

In the City of Stockton, the local police department established Operation Peacemaker in 1997, collaborating with federal law enforcement agencies, clergy members, and community groups. In the five years that the program operated, Stockton saw a 43% decrease in the average annual homicide rate.³

Intervention programs in neighboring cities of Oakland and Richmond are credited with enabling major reductions in homicide and gunfire rates. Oakland’s Ceasefire program was established in 2012, and by 2018, the city’s gun violence and homicides had fallen by 50%, the lowest rate in decades.⁴ Sadly, Oakland’s gunfire and homicide rates have increased substantially since the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic.⁵

² <https://nnscommunities.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/GVI-Issue-Brief-1.pdf>

³ Braga, A. A. (2008). Pulling levers focused deterrence strategies and the prevention of gun homicide. *Journal of criminal justice*, 36(4), 332-343.

⁴ <https://giffords.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/05/Giffords-Law-Center-A-Case-Study-in-Hope.pdf>

⁵ Neilson, S. (2021, Sept. 29). Homicides increased in Bay Area major cities in 2020. Are they coming down? *San Francisco Chronicle*. Retrieved Oct. 15, 2021 from <https://www.sfchronicle.com/crime/article/Homicides-increased-in-Bay-Area-major-cities-in-16494869.php>

THE CEASEFIRE STRATEGY'S ACTIONS ARE CONTINUOUS & STRATEGIC



Figure 1. Oakland Ceasefire model

Oakland Unite, a division of the City of Oakland’s Human Services Department, manages Oakland Ceasefire “through a public health and trauma-informed approach.” Further: “As a funder and direct service provider, Oakland Unite coordinates a network of 26 community-based organizations that provide comprehensive, culturally-responsive support services including Intensive Life Coaching, Employment and Education Support, Crisis Response, Violence Interruption/Street Outreach, and Community Engagement.”⁶

In addition to traditional services such as mental health, trauma care, education, and street outreach, these programs organize “call-ins” in which community leaders and local residents affected by gun violence can interface directly with group members to share their pain, explore paths to personal transformation, and discuss commitments to a safer community. These programs develop a framework to identify leaders with moral authority in affected communities to develop violence prevention strategies that build up collective autonomy and resilience. Law enforcement can also identify violent offenders in the community and compel them to attend call-ins as terms of their parole. Alternatively, service providers can also schedule flexible in-person visits to address social determinants of violent crime.

In the City of Richmond, the Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS) was established in 2007, precipitating a 61% reduction in gun violence over the following five years. By 2019, Richmond saw a 65% decrease in homicides and an 85% decrease in shootings resulting in injury.⁷ ONS works with the nonprofit Advance Peace to provide Peacemaker Fellowships, an eighteen-month program with wraparound services and

⁶ <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/oaklands-ceasefire-strategy>

⁷ <https://www.advancepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/03/AP-Richmond-Impact-2019.pdf>

street outreach for individuals involved in violent conflicts in the community, without law enforcement intervention. In contrast to Ceasefire programs, Advance Peace focuses on change through individuals by developing a LifeMAP (Management Action Plan), rather than group “call-ins” through peer networks. Advance Peace also hires formerly incarcerated individuals to work as Neighborhood Change Agents who provide violence interruption services, street outreach and service referrals directly in the community, rather than bifurcating violence interruption and case management.⁸ Advance Peace has successfully replicated the Fellowship model in the cities of Stockton and Sacramento, with funding of up to \$500,000 over 4 years for implementation and evaluation.⁹

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY AND CLIMATE IMPACTS

None.

CONTACT PERSON

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⁸ <https://www.advancepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/ap-focused-deterrence-v1-1.pdf>

⁹ <https://www.advancepeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/1-OnePager-Media.pdf>

