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**PROJECT PEACE /OPERATION ASPIRE 2023 Gun Violence  
Organization Committee**



## GVI

- The Group Violence Intervention (GVI) reduces homicide and gun violence, minimizes harm to communities by replacing enforcement with deterrence, and fosters stronger relationships between law enforcement and the people they serve.
- GVI focuses on the groups at highest risk for violent victimization and offending, with the intention to keep those in them alive, safe, and out of prison. The GVI partnership communicates directly with group members, 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



## GVI FRAMEWORK

GVI facilitates direct, sustained engagement with the small number of group involved individuals through a partnership of community leaders, social service providers, and law enforcement standing and acting together.

- An explicit focus on homicide and serious violence
- An approach, not a program



# Focused Attention on Highest Risk Groups

Identify in real time small numbers of the highest risk people and groups

Open lines of direct and respectful communication with them

Establish clear standards against violence and for safety and success from people influential with those at highest risk

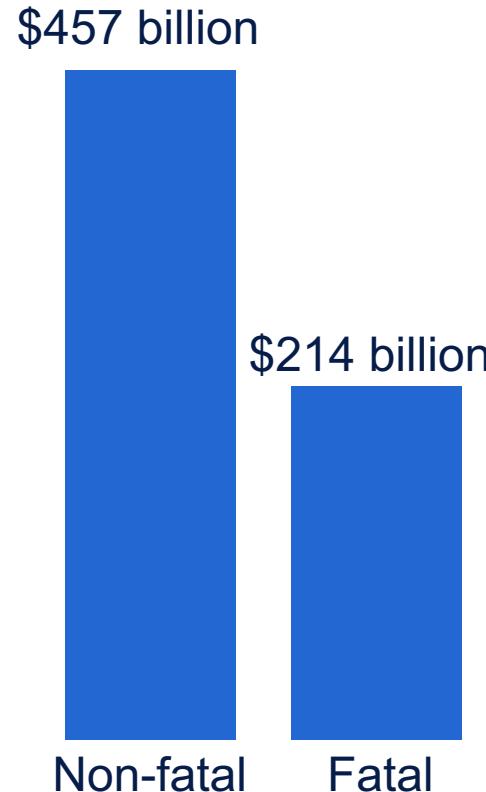
Offer meaningful support to keep people safe, alive, and out of prison

Reserve strategic consequences as a last resort for if/when groups continue to shoot and kill

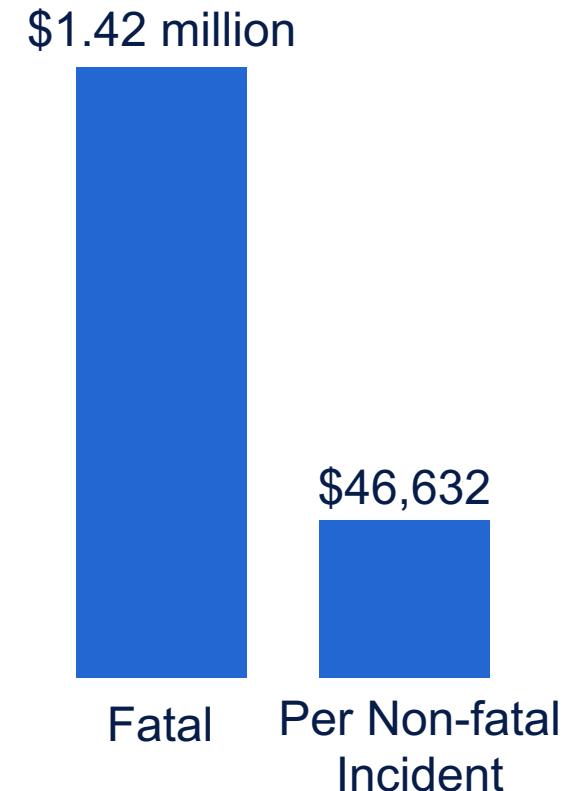


## Cost of Gun Violence

### United States Costs



### Minnesota Average Costs

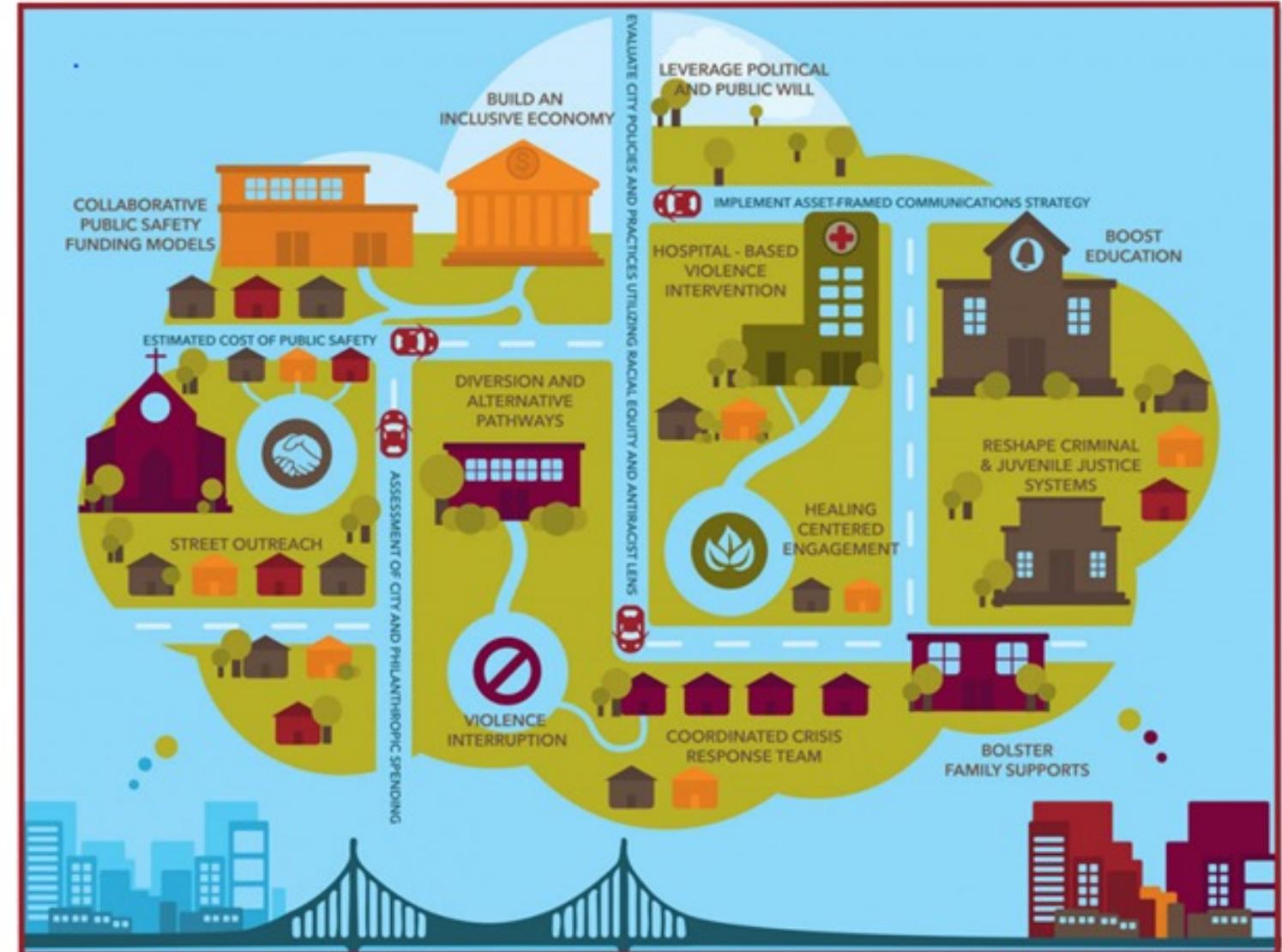


Note: Information courtesy National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform

# GUN VIOLENCE REDUCTION STRATEGY



# CVI- Community Violence Intervention



Graphic illustrated by Daphne Walker, Communications Outreach Specialist, Russell: A Place of Promise, Cities United.



## CVI-Community Violence Intervention

Community violence intervention (CVI) is an approach that uses evidence-informed strategies to reduce violence through tailored community-centered initiatives. These multidisciplinary strategies engage individuals and groups to prevent and disrupt cycles of violence and retaliation, and establish relationships between individuals and community assets to deliver services that save lives, address trauma, provide opportunity, and improve the physical, social, and economic conditions that drive violence.

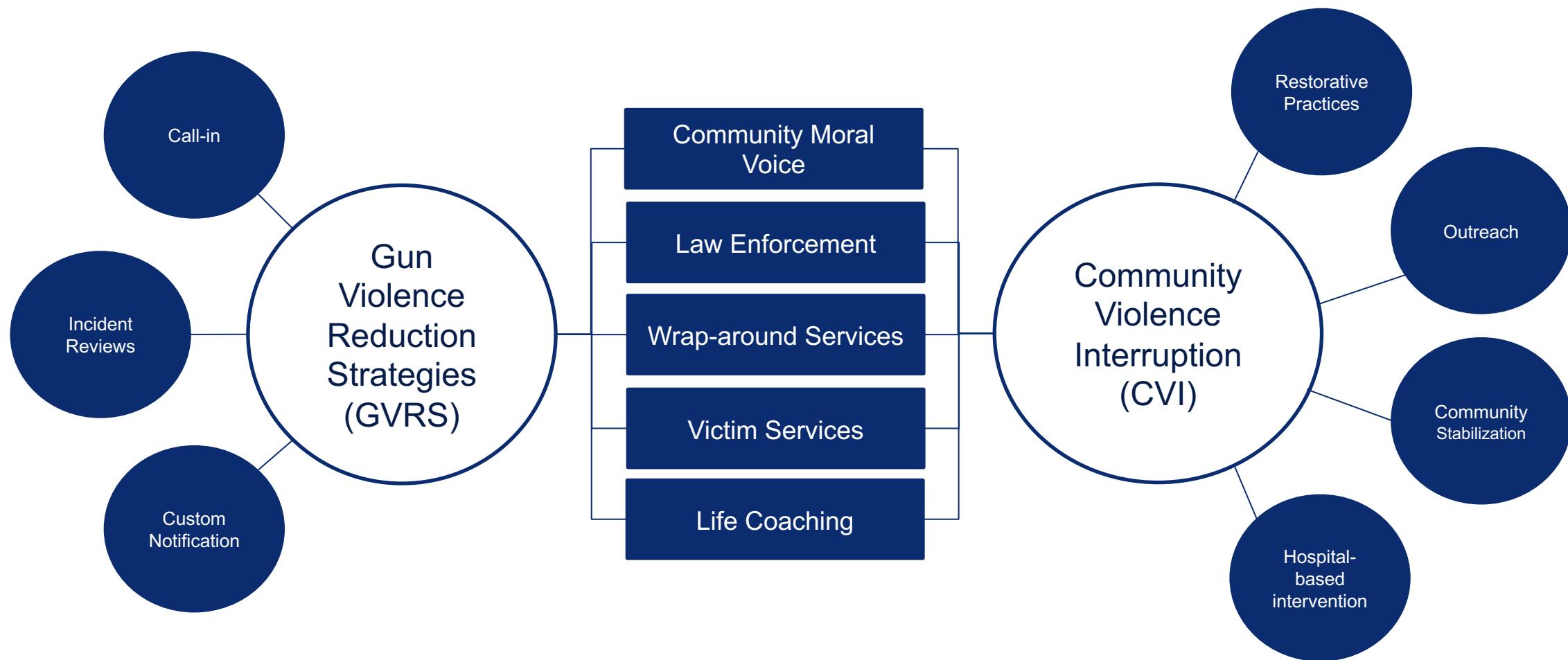


## **ONS - Integrated Gun/Group Violence Prevention Strategies - GVRS & CVI**

Dual Approach: CVI and Gun/Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) ONS is tasked with implementing a comprehensive, long-term, and sustainable approach to driving reductions in violence outlined in the Community First Public Safety Framework (CFPS). At the same time, the office is also engaged in the immediate response — most notably through Community Violence Intervention (CVI) and the Gun/Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS).



# ONS - Integrated Gun/Group Violence Prevention Strategies - GVRS & CVI



## COMMUNITY-FIRST PUBLIC SAFETY FRAMEWORK

### STRATEGY LEAD

*City of Saint Paul Mayor, Deputy Mayor, Office of Neighborhood Safety*

### PROJECT PEACE

PREVENTION/INTERVENTION  
ENVIRONMENTAL DESIGN  
ACCOUNTABILITY/OUTREACH  
COMMUNITY ACTION  
ENFORCEMENT

### STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION AND CORE OPERATION TEAM

*ONS Director, ONS Program Manager, Police Chief, City Attorney, County Attorney*

### NEIGHBORHOOD SAFETY COMMUNITY COUNCIL

*Operational partners support core team in carrying out the work of Operation Peace in each portion of the strategy.*

*Members of this system group do not carry out the work of the strategy directly; they provide additional oversight and support on a citywide/countywide level.*

#### COMMUNITY VOICE PARTNERS

- Parents and family members of murdered
- Ex justice involved and former group members
- Faith leaders
- Survivors of violence
- Street outreach workers
- Trusted messengers

#### JUSTICE PARTNERS

- Police agencies
- Sheriffs' offices
- City and County Prosecutors' offices
- Public Defenders
- Federal agencies (ATF, DEA, FBI)
- Intelligence analysts or crime analysts

#### SUPPORT AND OUTREACH PARTNERS

*Formerly Area Action Group/CFPS Workgroup*

- Mentoring programs
- Trauma care providers
- Reentry programs
- Street outreach workers
- City social service agencies
- Traditional services (education, employment, mental health, substance abuse programs)
- Probation and parole agencies

#### SYSTEMS PARTNERS

- City Council members
- Ramsey County Commissioners
- County Attorney
- U.S. Attorney
- Technical assistance (Cities United, Harvard GPL, NNSC)
- Corrections departments



## **Project PEACE and Operation ASPIRE**

Project PEACE is a methodical, individualized gun violence intervention that connects gun violence involved individuals with evidence-based community led programming, and wraparound supports. The approach facilitates direct, sustained and persistent engagement with a small number of group-involved individuals through a partnership of community leaders, optimal response teams, social service providers, employers, and law enforcement standing and acting together



# ASPIRE Composition

*A Saint Paul Intervention and Recovery Effort*

- ASPIRE is made up of primarily officers that came from patrol and few from specialty units.
- The creation of ASPIRE led to an opportunity for officers who were not writing warrants the chance to develop that aspect of the investigative process.
- It also provided them more time to coordinate with outreach groups to interact with the community.
- ASPIRE joined the Gang and Gun Unit and increased the following stats from the previous year: Gun Recovery, Warrants Written, Arrests Made, and Community Outreach.

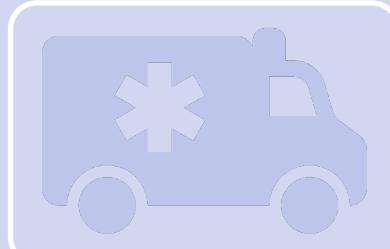


## Project PEACE and Operation ASPIRE

The approach facilitates direct, sustained, and persistent engagement with a small number of group-involved individuals through partnership of:



Community  
leaders



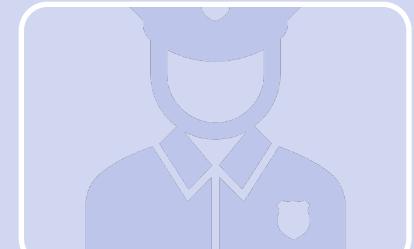
Community  
First  
Response  
Teams



Social  
service  
providers



Employers



Law  
enforcement



## Project PEACE/Operation ASPIRE Pilot Phase

- Referrals of individuals engaged in gun violence from SPPD ASPIRE (A Saint Paul Intervention and Recovery Effort).
- Referrals occur:
- During enforcement action
- When police encounter a victim of violent crime
- The individual or their family can benefit from intervention, diversion, or other resources
- SPPD contacts Healing Streets and ONS after referral



## Project PEACE/Operation ASPIRE Pilot Phase

Group Violence Reduction Strategy (GVRS) - Currently piloting in the since July 2022 - Under Mayor's leadership, ONS drives strategy and day-to-day project management associated with GVRS - ONS coordinates daily with SPPD, CAO, as well as service providers and community moral voice - Relies on partnership with law enforcement - Integrated, complementary strategy to CVI



## Project PEACE/Operation ASPIRE Incident Review

- A incident review is an operational, problem-solving meeting, led by ONS Director and SPPD Aspire Commander, to discuss all incidents of serious violence within the City.
- It includes core operational partners who are able to give input on incidents, receive requests from partners and develop realistic deliverables for implementation. •
- This problem-solving meeting seeks to identify the dynamics of violence and victimization.
- Using intel and qualitative data from the incident review, practitioners can discuss the relative violence that different groups are involved in, and identify groups and individuals for notifications, engagement, services, outreach, and/or enforcement



## Project PEACE and Operation ASPIRE

**129** Referrals to Project PEACE from ASPIRE

- 83 referrals requested from parent or family member for services
- 33 victims of gun violence
- 47 individuals involved in group violence
- 27 individuals involved in youth violence
- 14 individuals involved in other forms of behaviors

Outcomes:

- 44 referrals remained with ONS to receive direct services
- 52 interventions completed by ASPIRE Officers
- 9 families relocating to new housing options
- 55 referrals to other City or County agencies
- 25 referrals to Community-based Organizations
- 119 guns seizures



# 2023 vs 2022 EVIDENCE COLLECTION

## Major Takeaways:

So far this year has been extremely low for casings collected and cases with casings collected are drastically lower. We are seeing an all around decrease in firearms related activity for 2023.

### 2023 Casings Recovered

CN's With Casings Recovered \*: 93

Total Casings Recovered \*\*: 547

Average Number of Casings\*\*: 6

**As of 4/4/2022**

CN's With Casings Recovered \*: 180

Total Casings Recovered \*\*: 1335

Average Number of Casings\*\*: 7.5

**All of 2022 Comparison**

CN's With Casings Recovered \*: 680

Total Casings Recovered \*\*: 4613

Average Number of Casings\*\*: 7

### 2023 Firearms Recovered

Total Firearms Recovered: 158

Ghost Guns: 18

Switches/Fully Automatic: 9

**As of 4/4/2022**

Total Firearms Recovered: 119

Ghost Guns: 10

Switches/Fully Automatic: 2

**All of 2022 Comparison**

Total Firearms Recovered: 603

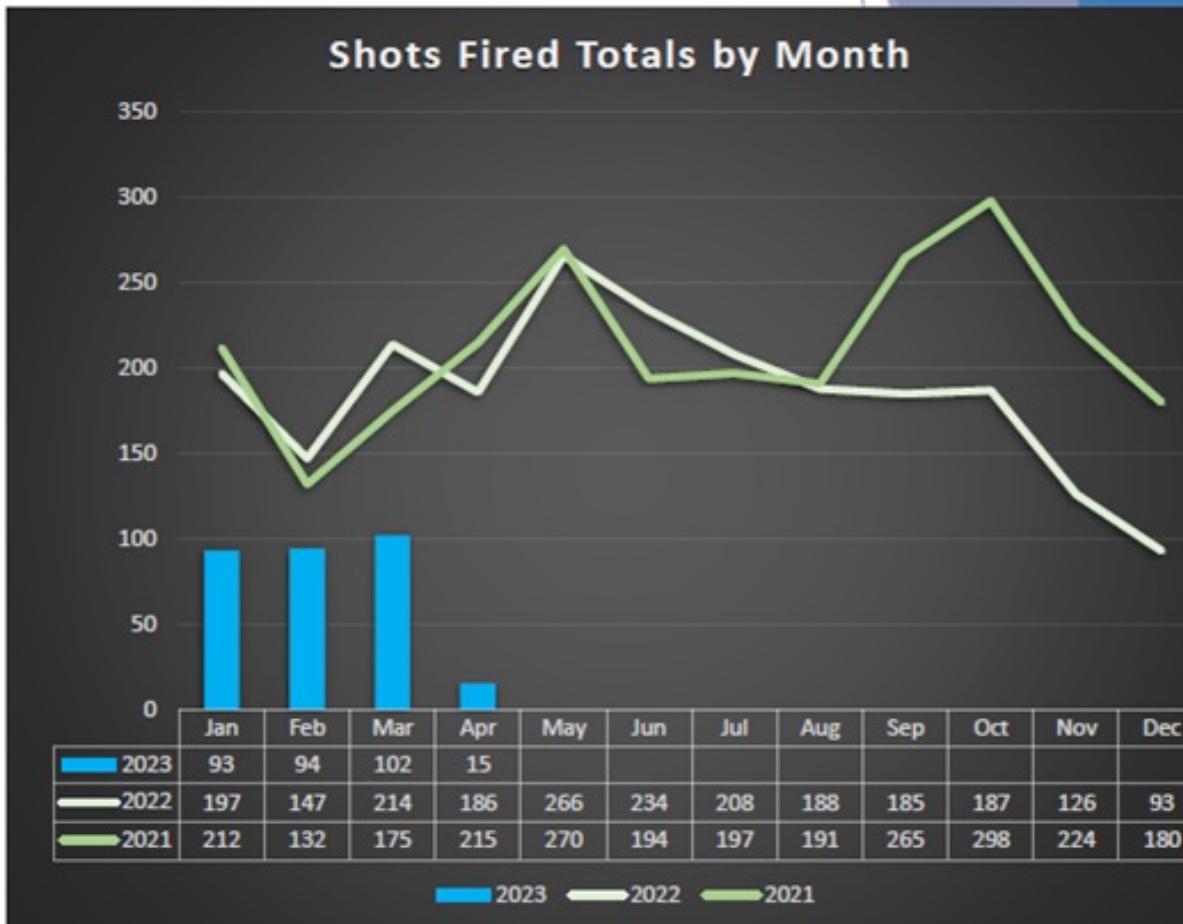
Ghost Guns: 44

Switches/Fully Automatic: 19



## 2023 SHOTS FIRED

- First quarter of 2023 is **down 48%** from 2022
- March shots fired calls were **down 52%** compared to 2022
- Expect to see **low** numbers in comparison to 2022
- Expect a slight increase for April in comparison to March. Historically there is a consistent increase leading into the warmer months.



## Healing Streets Project

Community-centered Healing based approach to Violence Prevention, Intervention, and Healing group/gun violence in Ramsey County. Centered in the narratives and lived experiences of those most impacted by group/gun violence.

Reduce group/gun violence through four key direct service areas

- Community based violence prevention and intervention
- Healing/grief services for survivors of group/gun violence (persons who've caused harm)
- Hospital-based violence intervention
- School-based prevention/intervention and impacted peer advocacy

## Healing Streets-Prevention

- ❖Community-based violence prevention/intervention/healing
- ❖School-based violence prevention/intervention/healing
- ❖Healing-centered community advocacy and support

The key outcomes for this prevention work are:

Youth and adults see themselves as positive leaders

Youth and adults are not engaged in gun or group violence

Increased awareness of the impacts of gun and group violence among community groups and partners

## Healing Streets- Intervention

Community Mediators and Community Health Responders aid people moving to a physically safe space, rental assistance if needed to relocate, referrals to services that support long-term positive choices such as employment assistance, job training, education, grief supportive services, and/or health and mental health care. Community Mediators will also focus on helping participants make positive, supportive social networks; rebuild trust in the family; and prosocial recreational activities.

Key outcomes of this work are:

Households and families are physically safe

Participants do not engage in retaliatory violence

Participants have positive support networks

## Healing Streets- Healing

Healing Streets is contracting with Grief Workers who will provide grief groups specific to gun and group violence for victims, their families, and communities. As a part of regular work, Healing Streets Project will develop a healing map, which is a concrete tool for identifying how grief impacts the body and provides a map for dealing with grief. Groups will focus on building natural support networks and community connections.

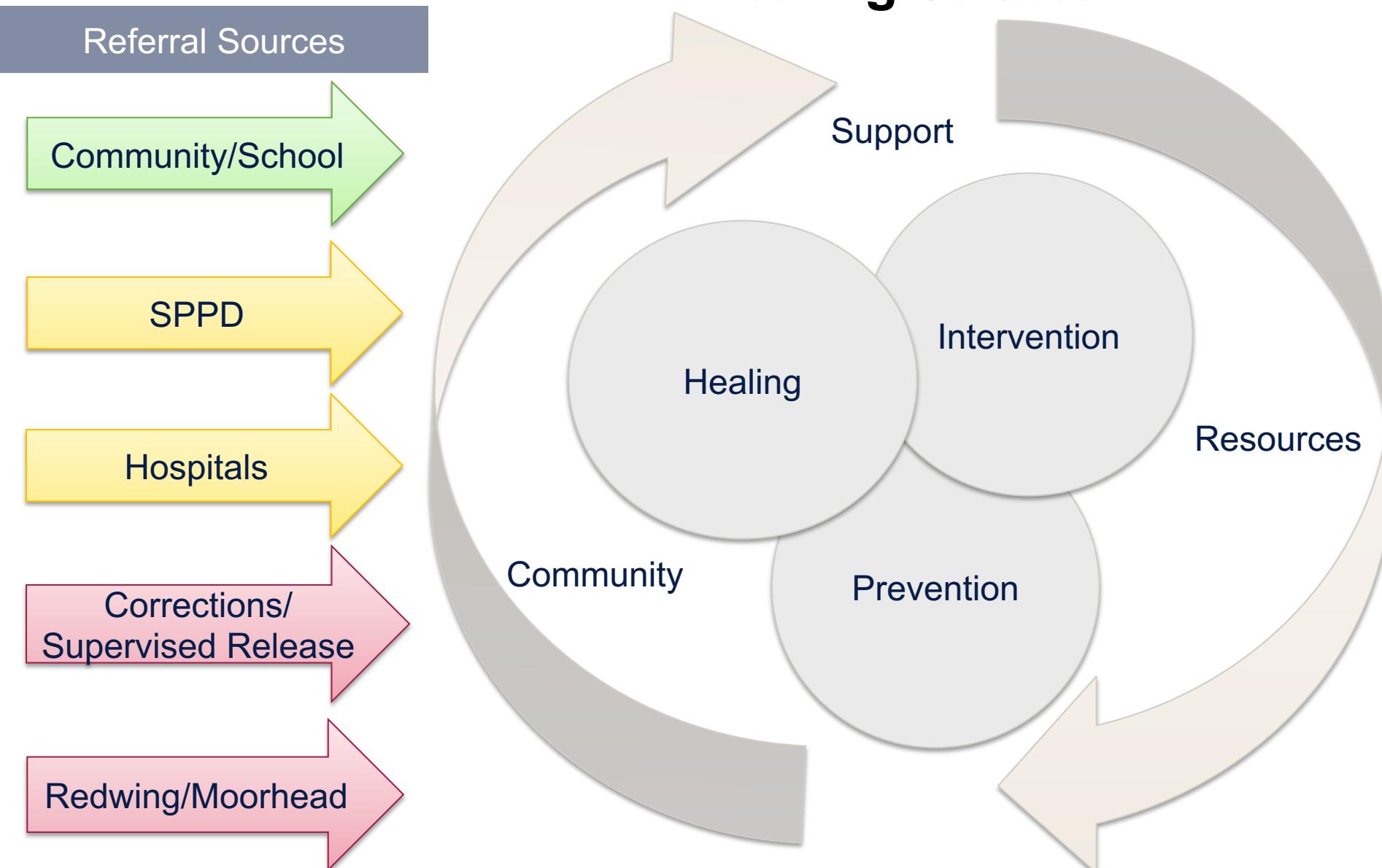
The key outcomes of this work are:

Communities engage in healing and have positive support networks during ~~this~~ extremely stressful times

Participants develop resiliency within themselves and their communities

Communities have protected spaces for healing

# Healing Streets



## Local & National Partnerships

St. Paul Office of Neighborhood Safety (ONS)

St. Paul Police Department

Maplewood Police Department

North St. Paul Police Department

St. Paul Parks & Recreation

Ramsey County Public Health/County Manager's Office/County  
Attorney's Office/Community Corrections/Workforce Solutions/Social  
Services

Regions Hospital – St. Paul

Restoration Inc. – Twin Cities

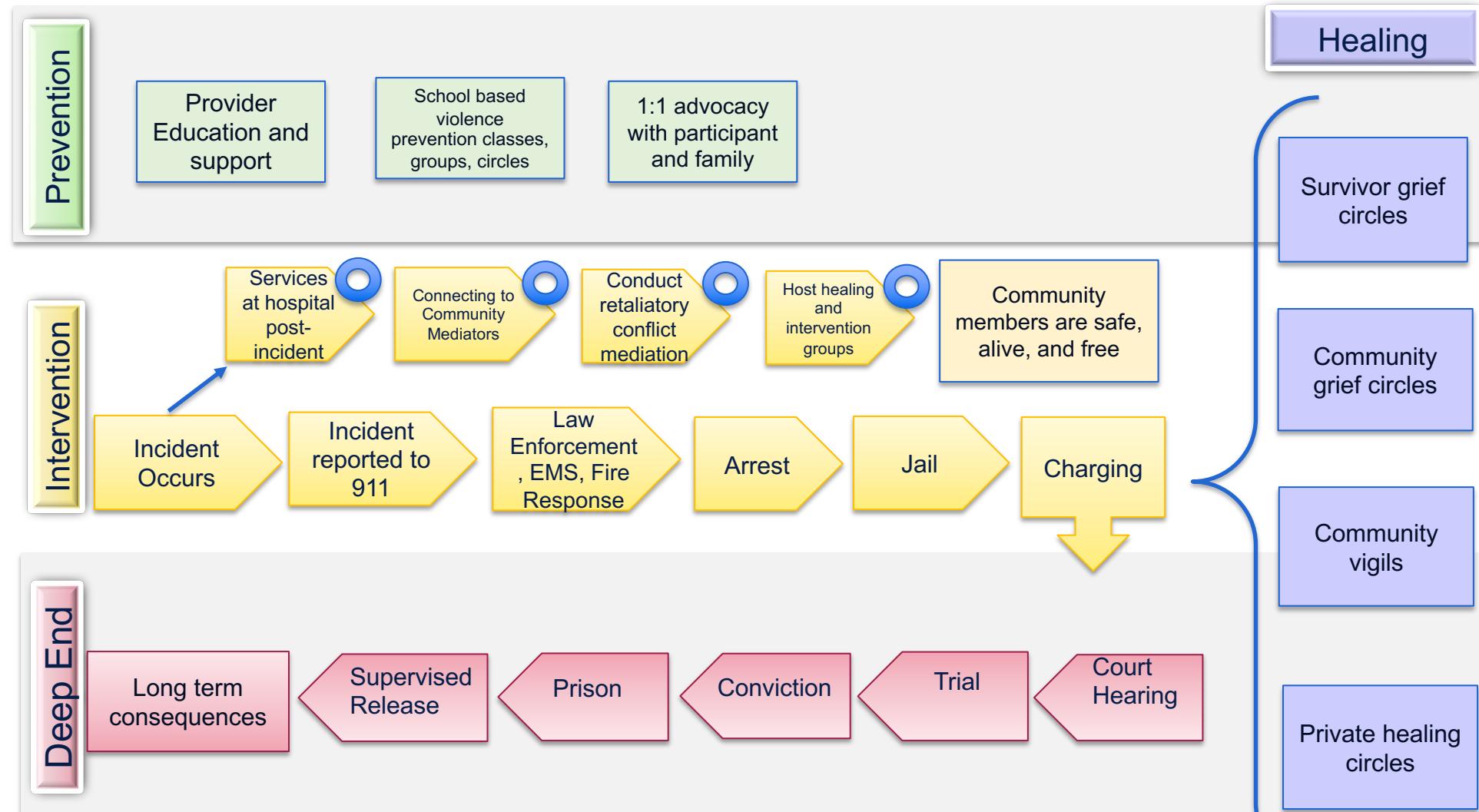
Advance Peace – Richmond, CA

Community Connections for Youth – Bronx, New York

National Office of Violence Prevention Network – Oakland, CA

Cities United – Louisville, KY

## Path to Community Wellness- Healing Streets



Indicates added capacity with ARPA funds



# Oxford/Jimmy Lee Community Center Healing Efforts

- Community
  - Awakenings Team – support to young people at rec centers
  - Ramsey County Critical Response
  - Irreducible Grace Foundation
  - Innovative Solutions
  - JK Movement Healing Circles
  - Upcoming Family Event with Central High School
- Staff
  - Emergency Assistance Program – Group and individual counseling
  - Ramsey County Critical Response
  - Irreducible Grace Foundation
  - Innovative Solutions
  - Community Healing Day (all rec center staff)



# Oxford/Jimmy Lee Community Center Training Efforts

- De-escalation
  - People Incorporated
  - Saint Paul Police Department – Community Engagement, Enrique “Cha-Cho” Estrada
- Restorative Practices: Principles and Paradigms
- Team Building
- Safety
- Authentic Connections (Ramsey County) – Space impacts on behavior and engagement



## Oxford/Jimmy Lee Community Center ONS Collaboration

- Real-time communications for onsite issues throughout system
- Connection with community partners – Innovative Solutions support during critical after-school times
- ONS staff support during after-school hours
- ONS staff support navigating justice systems and expertise
- Planning for Spring and Summer throughout Saint Paul



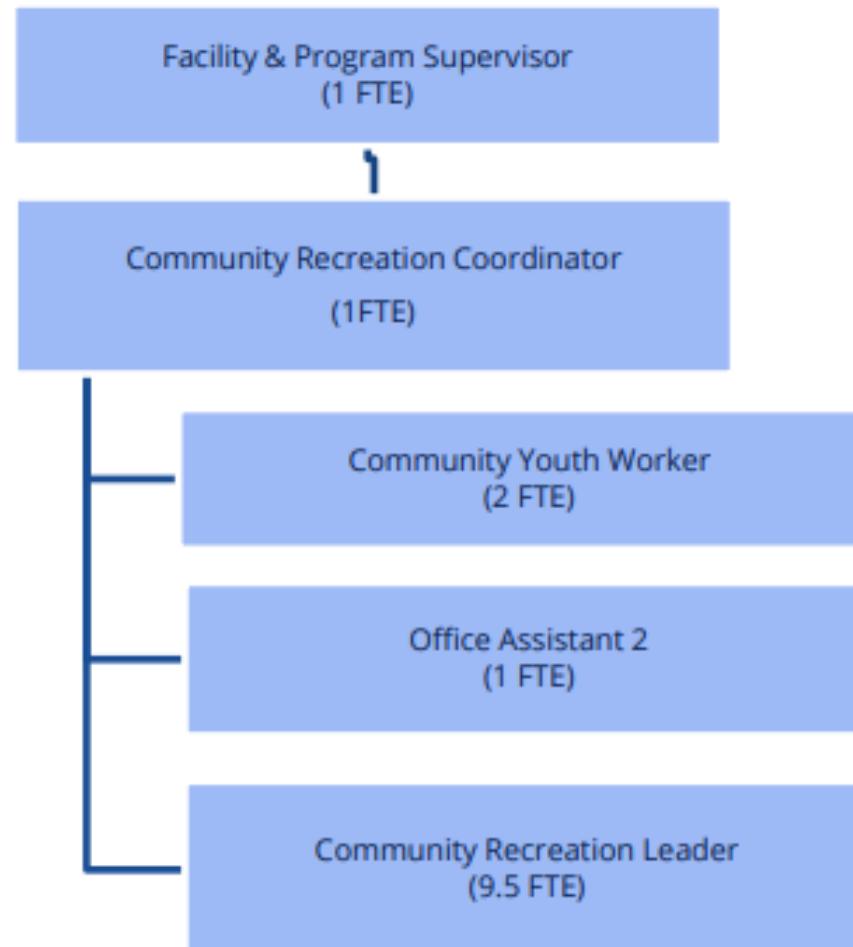
## Parks/SPPS Relationship & Strategy

- End of school day logistics
  - Parent pick-up and metro transit
  - Communication out potential issues
  - Visual “handoff” between Oxford & Central staff
- Two-way communication between staff at Central and Oxford
  - Radios
  - Text / Phone Calls
  - Regular check-in meetings
  - School Support Liaisons visiting Oxford after school
- Aligning updated safety plans to use similar language and strategies as SPPS
- Working to hire Community Youth Workers to split time between Central and Oxford, school during lunch, rec center after-school



# Parks Updated Staffing Model

- New positions
  - Facility & Program Supervisor
  - Community Youth Workers
  - Added 2.0 Community Rec Leaders





# Parks Review & Revise Safety Procedures

- Weekly working group
  - Support from Emergency Management, Saint Paul Public Schools
  - Members from Rec, Aquatics, Safety & Security
- Reviewing current procedures
- Aligning policies and procedures with Saint Paul Public Schools
- Three additional work groups
  - Updating the Emergency Action Plan Template
  - Staff in charge model
  - Outside the building engagement
- Cataloging safety equipment and materials across the division



# ASPIRE/ONS/Saint Paul Public School

## Harding High School Response

- Responded and provided on-campus safety presence
- Partnership conversations and school safety collaboration
- Healing Streets worked with affected family members
- Ongoing safety support and engagement
- Designing community support and adaptable liaison for schools



# ONS /ASPIRE

## El Rio Collaboration Incident

- SPPD-Commander Stiff/DC Ford
- Westside Boosters
- Neighborhood House
- WestCo
- Parks and Rec



## Victim Services

- Dale University Story Program Manager Lofton -Mother lost son actually help
  - Answer questions
  - Collaboration
- Build Trust w/ Office and SPPD
- Collaboration w/ DPS Victim Reparations



## Cautionary Lessons on Expansion

- Because of promising early results, pressure is mounting to scale GVRS
- Initial scale-up is an extremely delicate phase that if not handled carefully and thoughtfully can irreparably doom implementation efforts
- There are important lessons to be learned from scaling challenges of the past in cities, such as Chicago, Los Angeles and Baltimore itself.
- Overall Infrastructure and Policy and Procedure are vital to successful implementation



## Successful Scale UP

- Successful scale-up starts with a solid foundation; it does not end there.
- Avoid rushed or crisis-driven scaling and have a data-driven plan.
- To ensure quality implementation, minimum capacity benchmarks must be met for each of the Strategy's four main components:

**Incident Review (IR)** -Must maintain ability to identify and track high risk individuals, groups and group conflicts

**Direct Communication (DC)** must maintain the ability to directly communicate with highest-risk at an acceptable rate within a minimum timeframe and with sufficient quality

**Life Coaching (LC)**, provide a immediate social service suite and supports

**Strategic Enforcement (SE)** maintain commensurate enforcement capacity



## Beyond Pilot

- Remember: quality implementation and sustained results are all about maintaining minimum performance standards.
- Doing so requires resources and capacities.
- This does not mean a “doubling” of capacity
- It is about dedicated program managers, calculated staffing enhancements in street outreach and life coaching and integrating enforcement capacities into the GVRS management structure in a thoughtful way.

# Questions



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