Oakland Unite’s recommendations for strategic investments in the 2019-2022 funding cycle center on the belief that Oakland can move towards safety, healing, and growth by working in close partnership with people and communities at the center of violence.

**OVERVIEW OF 2019-2022 STRATEGIES**

**GUN VIOLENCE RESPONSE** 48% (~$4.5 million)

- Gun violence response and coordination
- Violence interruption
- Adult life coaching
- Adult employment and education

**YOUTH DIVERSION & REENTRY** 19% (~$1.8 million)

- Youth diversion
- Youth life coaching and reentry coordination
- Youth education and employment

**GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESPONSE** 15% (~$1.3 million)

- Commercial sexual exploitation response
- Family violence response

**COMMUNITY HEALING** 18% (~$1.6 million)

- Community outreach and engagement
- Grassroots mini-grants for healing centered activities
- Trauma informed training for the provider network

Allocations will be finalized based on actual revenue funds available.
HIGHLIGHTS AND SHIFTS

1. **Focus on gun violence.** Half of funds are dedicated to individuals and families at the center of gun violence. This will include an increase in homicide and shooting response funding, and additional emphasis on violence interruption. Women and girls who are connected to incidents of gun violence will be more intentionally integrated into life coaching and employment services.

2. **Prioritize diversion and reentry for youth.** Services will help youth avoid deeper system involvement through partnership with the juvenile justice system. For youth at high-risk for violence or returning to Oakland after incarceration, continue to provide community-based life coaching with educational and career exploration supports.

3. **Increase funding for services that respond to gender-based violence.** Emphasize crisis response and safety planning, in addition to transitional housing and wraparound supports, such as counseling, for people who experience family violence and youth/transition-age youth who experience commercial sexual exploitation.

4. **Launch a community healing strategy.** Fund community partners to host outreach events and healing activities that transform community norms around violence. Develop a mini-grant program to support small grassroots organizations and individuals working to reduce violence in their own neighborhoods.

5. **Support provider success.** Fund fewer grants for larger amounts, with increases in indirect cost allowances and emphasis on higher salaries for direct service staff. Continue to provide coordination and training to enhance peer professionals’ ability to support growth and transformation in program participants.
AIM & SUMMARY

This strategy aims to intervene in the cycle of gun violence to save lives and support healing. It will ensure that people who are shot, and family members of homicide victims get support. The strategy will build a system of support for people involved in gun violence, particularly people connected with groups and gangs. It will help them mediate their conflicts, and offer coaching and resources as they move towards positive goals. Central partners in this strategy include Highland Hospital, Oakland Police Department, Workforce Development Board, Probation, and state criminal justice agencies.

SUPPORTED PROGRAMMING

**Shooting and homicide response** starts with community-based responders who meet people where they are – be it at the hospital or in their homes – and walk with them as they navigate crisis. Families and individuals will be connected to immediate resources and longer-term mental healthcare and healing supports. Programs may advocate with law enforcement on participants’ behalf.

**Violence interruption** that is designed to interrupt conflicts between groups and individuals, with a focus on reducing retaliatory violence whenever possible. Interrupters rely on their community credibility and knowledge of Oakland street violence to form relationships that allow them to intervene in volatile situations. Emergency, temporary relocation is available for those in immediate danger.

**Life coaching** is centered on transformative relationships between people involved in gun violence and trained peer professionals with similar life experiences. Life coaches provide advocacy, systems navigation, family engagement, connection to resources such as housing and mental health, and socio-emotional skill development. Financial incentives reinforce positive lifestyle changes.

**Employment programming** that meets participants’ immediate needs and enhances their long-term job prospects through the development of skills and education. Programs should emphasize paid work experience, certifications or educational advancement, as well as job placement and retention.

**Coordination** by City of Oakland staff will ensure strong communication between community-based providers to better serve participants in need of cross strategy support. City staff will also maintain one-way communication to providers about violent incidents, while protecting participants’ privacy and service providers’ credibility.
PRIORITIZED POPULATIONS

This strategy serves youth, adults, and families at the center of gun violence. As such, it primarily (though not exclusively) focuses on young men of color between the ages of 18-35 and their loved ones.

Referrals will come through local hospitals, community partners, and law enforcement.

People involved in gun violence will be identified by data-driven risk factors such as prior violent injury, prior arrest, and gang/group involvement.

Services should address the cultural or linguistic needs of specific subgroups.

RATIONALE

Oakland has a long-term, serious epidemic of gun violence. Despite recent reductions in shootings and homicides, far too many people lose their lives and are injured by gun violence each year. Dedicated focus is needed to seriously halt the spread of gun violence. Most homicides in Oakland (57-72%) involve group members as suspects, victims, or both. The majority of people involved in gun violence are African American and Latino men between ages 18-34 who have been involved in the criminal justice system. Many have been injured before and previous violent injury is a strong risk factor for future injury.7

When people involved in gun violence are communicated with directly, have the chance to form meaningful positive relationships and connect to longer-term supports, gun violence goes down: cities such as Richmond, Stockton, New Orleans, and Boston have seen homicide reductions of between 30%-80%.8,9 Recent gun violence reductions in Oakland have been linked in part to the Ceasefire strategy, which, like other models, emphasizes a shared focus on young men at the center of gun violence.10 Oakland Unite's role in the strategy is to advocate for and serve these young men through coaching and resources that help them stay alive and free.

When the worst has happened and a family has lost someone to gun violence, offering coordinated support is both the right thing to do and necessary to reduce violence. Shootings and homicide can lead rapidly to retaliation, with brief windows of opportunity where trained, credible interrupters can intervene.11 A strong response following crisis incidents supports the development of relationships, prevents retaliation, and helps people move through grief and towards healing.12,13

Intervention and interruption by themselves are not enough – people at the center of gun violence need longer-term support to repair and rebuild their lives. Life coaches who share similar experiences can build trust with people involved in gun violence, and use techniques such as coaching and motivational interviewing paired with financial incentives to help move people toward their goals.14 Support finding a job is often at the top of the list of goals, and includes job coaching, readiness classes, retention incentives, and subsidized employment. Participating in Oakland Unite adult life coaching and employment programs decreased arrests for a violent crime in the six months after enrollment.15

Oakland Unite Spending Plan: 2019-2022
In response to community input, this strategy will intentionally leverage mental health and substance abuse resources, family support services, and housing options through local and regional partnerships. Services will also be extended to women and girls at the center of violence along with a more intentional focus on strengthening family structures.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Participants and families feel supported during crisis and their basic needs are met

Participants reduce risk behaviors related to violence (e.g. carrying a weapon)

Participants and families have healthy relationships with each other

Participants and families transition out of immediate danger

Participants and families begin to heal from trauma

Participants strengthen their socio-emotional skills (e.g. resilience)

Participants and families avoid violent injury/re-injury

Participants reduce or cease contact with the justice system

Participants are employed and prepared to pursue longer-term goals

Participants and families have healthy relationships with each other
AIM & SUMMARY

This strategy aims to help youth move away from deeper involvement in violence and the juvenile justice system through coordinated interventions. Programs will divert youth from arrest or prosecution, and help them transition back to school and community after incarceration through life coaching and education and career exploration. Central partners in this strategy include Oakland Unified School District, Alameda County Office of Education, Alameda County District Attorney’s Office, Oakland Police Department, Alameda County Probation Department, and Alameda County Health Care Services Agency.

SUPPORTED PROGRAMMING

**Diversion programming** that uses restorative justice practices with youth who have been arrested, but not sentenced, with the goal of having charges dropped, or that provides OPD with an alternative option for youth facing arrest.

**Life coaching and reentry services** for youth transitioning from the Alameda County Juvenile Justice Center. Services include rapid school placement support, health care services, and referrals to community-based life coaching. Life coaching is centered on transformative relationships and provides advocacy, systems navigation, family engagement, incentives, and socio-emotional skill development.

**Education and career exploration services** that improve young people’s education outcomes and career readiness. Programs must support academic achievement and offer a range of work opportunities afterschool and in the summer.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

This strategy serves Oakland youth ages 14 to 18 who are identified as at high-risk for violence or system-involvement.

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Referrals will come through schools, community partners, or the juvenile justice system.

Data-driven risk factors include chronic absenteeism, violent injury, arrest, gang/group involvement or exploitation.

Services will be available to multi-lingual youth and for young women and girls as well as young men and boys of color.
RATIONALE

An African American youth was 112 times more likely to be arrested on felony charges than a White juvenile in Oakland in 2017, a disparity called out as “the most extreme” among the indicators compiled in Oakland’s recent Equity Indicator’s Report.16 As of October 2018, 275 Oakland youth were on probation, with African American and Latino youth representing the greatest percentage.17 Community members and City and County leaders share the goal of reducing contact between young people and the juvenile justice system. Probation has reduced the number of young people held in detention, and the District Attorney’s office has engaged in a successful diversion program for youth supported by Oakland Unite.18

Early intervention and diversion help young people avoid deeper system involvement -- restorative techniques are used to help youth repair harm and successful completion results in charges being dropped.19 Participants in Oakland Unite’s community listening sessions also expressed a need to offer life coaching and other services to youth who have not been arrested, but who are clearly in need of support.

For youth already involved in the juvenile justice system, local evaluation of Oakland Unite programs has shown that youth have better outcomes when they get wrap-around life coaching and support reconnecting to school.20 Coordination by Oakland Unite ensures a more seamless transition for youth from detention back to the community, and creates a space for providers to problem-solve and share resources.21 Participating in career exploration and employment programs has been shown to significantly reduce violent arrests for youth by 33%-42%, and to increase education completion and college or training program enrollment.2223

EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Diverted youth have charges dropped and no further justice system contact</th>
<th>Youth successfully complete probation without re-arrest</th>
<th>Youth have increased awareness of educational and job/career options</th>
<th>Youth avoid violent injury</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Youth transitioning from incarceration are connected to school within 48 hours</td>
<td>Youth increase socio-emotional skills (e.g. resilience)</td>
<td>Youth have improved educational outcomes</td>
<td>Youth have caring relationships with positive adults and peers</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
AIM & SUMMARY

This strategy directs funding towards interventions that support people experiencing family/domestic violence and commercial sexual exploitation (CSE). It aims to help survivors meet their immediate safety needs and provides resources that aid them in their journey towards healing and stability. Central partners in this strategy include the District Attorney’s Office and Family Justice Center, the Oakland Police Department, Probation, and Alameda County Healthcare Services Agency.

SUPPORTED PROGRAMMING

**Outreach and crisis response** that connects people experiencing gender-based violence to support as they transition out of immediate danger. This may include crisis response hotlines, drop-in centers, outreach following incidents of violence, and emergency housing that provides a temporary safe place for survivors to stabilize and access resources.

**Wraparound supports** such as legal advocacy, systems navigation, coaching, family support, mental health services, and other resources that support healing, stability, and socio-emotional strength.

**Training** by community-based experts in family and sexual violence to the Oakland Unite network or to law enforcement agencies will strengthen capacity to identify and respond to gender-based violence.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

This strategy serves youth, adults, and families affected by family violence, dating violence, and/or commercial sexual exploitation. As such, it primarily (though not exclusively) focuses on women, girls, and people who identify as LGBTQI.

- Referrals will come through hotlines, drop-in centers, community partners, or from law enforcement.
- Youth up to age 25 experiencing CSE will be prioritized. Family violence support addresses the needs of the whole family.
- Services should address the cultural or linguistic needs of specific subgroups.
RATIONALE

One in three California women report experiencing domestic violence at some point in their lifetimes, and among African American women the self-reported rate increases to 42%. From January 2016-June 2017, there were 17 homicides related to domestic violence in Oakland. In 2017, 3,070 calls were made to OPD for family violence – and only a quarter of all physical assaults by an intimate partner are reported to the police. Oakland accounts for over 50% of emergency department domestic assault visits in Alameda County. Oakland is also known as a hub for commercial sexual exploitation of children. Between 2011 and 2016, OPD intervened in youth CSE 273 times, an average of 45 per year.

Gender-based violence has serious immediate and long-term consequences for individuals, families, and communities in Oakland. Women and children who experience family violence are at higher risk for long-term health challenges. Gender-based violence also intersects with violence in the streets – children who experience family violence are more likely to participate in multiple forms of violence as adults.

Strategies to help survivors of family violence typically include opportunities for people to access confidential support through services such as 24-hour hotlines. Family violence intervention specialists help people move out of immediate danger through safety plans, legal support, and emergency housing. Longer-term supports such as mental health services, access to social and family supports, and links to employment resources and housing are also critical components of serving survivors of family violence.

Interventions that serve young people impacted by CSE similarly require safety planning and relationship-building to foster trust. Best practices include having CSE survivors involved in program development and implementation. CSE survivors often relapse to exploitation before they permanently leave their exploiters, and interventions must take this cycle into account. Long-term services and supports are essential in addressing the needs of CSE young people and their families or caregivers.

In Oakland Unite’s community listening sessions, people expressed that the needs of women and girls were not fully addressed by existing services. In response, Oakland Unite seeks to increase funding for this strategy, while also emphasizing the needs of women and girls in each strategy.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Survivors transition out of immediate danger**
- **Survivors access resources to increase longer-term safety (e.g. protection orders)**
- **Survivors are not re-injured and/or exploited**
- **Survivors feel safe and have a positive outlook on their lives**
- **Survivors develop healthy relationships with positive adults and peers**
- **Survivors access tools and knowledge that help them begin to heal from trauma**

Oakland Unite Spending Plan: 2019-2022
AIM & SUMMARY

This strategy aims to lift up the wisdom of people closest to violence and deepen their skills to promote healing through community-led outreach activities and events. A grassroots mini-grant program will be launched to support innovative community-based violence reduction projects. The strategy also supports the development of a trauma-informed network of peer professionals through ongoing training and learning opportunities.

SUPPORTED PROGRAMMING

- **Community outreach** led by people from neighborhoods most affected by violence. Outreach may take the form of resident engagement, healing circles, vigils, summer parks programs, or other events intended to promote peace. Outreach providers will serve as ambassadors for the violence prevention network.

- **Grassroots mini-grants** that support the violence reduction efforts of smaller organizations and individuals who have experienced violence. Grants will range in size and in focus area, but may include community-building and education, peer support for survivors of violence, leadership development, or other activities to change norms around violence.

- **Strengthening the Oakland Unite network** through tailored training opportunities and learning communities for frontline staff working to help people heal from violence. Training may include life coaching, conflict mediation, gender responsive approaches, cognitive behavioral techniques, and trauma-informed practices. Training will include certifications and take place in cross-agency cohorts.

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

Community outreach and grassroots mini-grants will be focused on neighborhoods in West, Central, and Deep East Oakland that are most affected by multiple forms of violence.

Training efforts will focus on direct service staff, including grassroots mini-grant recipients, working for funded violence intervention programs. By design, these individuals often have lived experiences of violence and share characteristics with their participants.
RATIONALE

Participants in the Oakland Unite listening campaign stated that community healing and restoration is necessary for violence reduction. In neighborhoods where violence occurs most frequently, residents don’t necessarily feel the impact of citywide reductions. Community members want spaces to connect, heal, and lead further violence reduction efforts in sustainable ways.

When community members strengthen connections with one another, they strengthen their collective resilience and change norms around violence. This process is supported by the creation of safe parks, thriving arts and culture spaces, and healing circles, marches and vigils. To reclaim shared spaces and foster community among residents in neighborhoods at the center of violence, Oakland Unite has hosted free, family-friendly summer events in parks in Oakland on Friday nights since 2011. A 2015 study found that crime in the areas in and around the event was reduced during the weeks the events take place. This strategy seeks community partners to run similar community events and activities to promote community building and collective healing.

Outreach and engagement by community leaders to their own networks are another way to strengthen community connections and change norms around violence. Community members who participated in the Oakland Unite listening campaign had many ideas – some of which they were already putting into practice – about ways to reduce violence and support healing in their neighborhood. Community outreach that engages with, supports, and builds links between these innovative, grassroots approaches creates a stronger citywide violence prevention network.

In addition to community-based efforts, training in healing strategies and trauma-informed practices is needed for the Oakland Unite network of peer providers, who are rooted in Oakland and have often experienced violence themselves, to be ready to support and serve others. Direct service staff participation in skill development and healing circles to process vicarious trauma they may experience through their jobs enables staff to provide better services for their participants.

EXPECTED OUTCOMES

- **Communities have safe spaces to gather, heal and stand against violence**
- **Community members are more involved in reducing violence**
- **People working to reduce violence are connected in positive ways**
- **Communities establish stronger shared norms against all forms of violence**
- **Community leaders are supported in their efforts to heal their own communities**
- **Providers have strong skills that enhance their work and support their growth**

Oakland Unite Spending Plan: 2019-2022
# APPENDIX A: PARTNERS CONSULTED

## Community and Public Partners
- Akonadi Foundation
- Alameda County Behavioral Health Care Services
- Alameda County District Attorney’s Office
- Alameda County Health Services-Highland Hospital
- Alameda County Office of Education
- Alameda County Probation Department
- Alameda County Public Defender’s Office
- Alameda County Public Health Department
- Alameda County Superior Court
- Alameda County Violence Prevention Initiative
- AC United Against Trafficking
- Asian Prisoner Support Committee
- Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence
- Brotherhood of Elders Network
- CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation
- CA Board of State and Community Corrections
- California Partnership for Safe Communities
- Californians for Safety and Justice- Alliance for Safety and Justice
- Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice
- Department of Violence Prevention Coalition
- East Bay Community Foundation
- Ella Baker Center for Human Rights
- Gifford Law Center
- Joint Powers Authority, Safety Impact Table
- Oakland Community Organizations
- Oakland Unified School District
- PICO California
- Prevention Institute
- Urban Strategies Council

## City of Oakland
- Department of Race and Equity
- Oakland Fund for Children and Youth
- Oakland Parks, Recreation and Youth Development
- Oakland Police Department
- Oakland ReCAST (Resilience in Communities After Stress and Trauma)
- Safety and Services Oversight Commission (SSOC)
- Workforce Development Board

## Expertise from Outside of Oakland
- Advance Peace, Richmond, CA
- Chicago CRED, Chicago, IL
- City of Los Angeles, Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development
- City of Milwaukee, Health Department Office of Violence Prevention
- City of Richmond, Office of Neighborhood Safety
- City of Sacramento, Gang Prevention and Intervention Task Force
- City of San Francisco, Department of Children Youth and Families
- Urban Institute, Washington, D.C.
- Urban Peace Institute, Los Angeles, CA


6 Ibid.


14 See note 9.

15 See note 5.

16 See note 3.

17 Alameda County Probation Department. Data extract prepared for Oakland Unite (November 2018).


19 Ibid


25 See note 7.


36 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Presentation for the Rebuilding Communities After Stress and Trauma (ReCAST) New Grantee Webinar Series, Rockville, MD.


ABOUT OAKLAND UNITE

Oakland Unite is the division in the City of Oakland Human Services Department charged with implementing violence intervention programs. With proceeds from the 2014 Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act as well as leveraged funds, Oakland Unite provides direct services and funding to community-based organizations to serve people and families at the center of violence. In the four years since the Act was passed, Oakland Unite programs have provided intensive interventions to over 3,000 people each year and reached thousands more through community events.

ABOUT THE SAFETY AND SERVICES OVERSIGHT COMMISSION

The Safety and Services Oversight Commission is a body established by the 2014 Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act to ensure the proper revenue collection, spending and implementation of the programs mandated by the Act. Members must live in Oakland and are appointed by the Mayor and confirmed by City Council. The Commission’s duties include reviewing spending plans for funds received through the Act, overseeing the evaluation of efforts funded by the Act, and making recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the spending plans prior to Council approval. As part of the 2019-2022 Oakland Unite spending plan development process, Commission members reviewed evaluations of existing services, took part in a planning retreat, and gave input on how themes articulated by community members informed strategy direction.

Design by: Eva Silverman at Pushcart Design (pushcartdesign.com)
SYNTHESIS of OAKLAND UNITE

Community Listening Sessions

Prepared by
Be the CHANGE consulting
## Table of Contents

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In the spring of 2018 Oakland Unite entered into a partnership with Be the Change Consulting to conduct a series of community listening sessions.

Listening Session Goals

**To understand** the community and stakeholders experience of violence.

**To develop** a collective “picture” of how violence is experienced and healed in Oakland.

**To dialogue** about opportunities to strengthen current offerings.

**To explore** the intersectionality of the violence experienced.

While the primary objective of these listening sessions was to hear from the community what is working or challenging in violence prevention interventions, we also wanted to use these sessions to allow those present to feel seen and validated in their experiences. Towards this end, we provided meals, childcare, and reflective artwork in each session, so that there was a component of self-care and appreciation built into the series.
Stages in This Process

The design process included the following stages:

Discovery
Meeting with Oakland Unite
The Be the Change Consulting team worked with Oakland Unite staff to establish the key information to collect through this process.

Facilitation of Community Listening Sessions
We collected stories, insights and suggestions from over 100 Oakland residents impacted by violence.

Consolidation of findings
We reviewed the data collected and synthesized recurring themes, outlier experiences, and formulated recommendations.

Presentation & Discussion of Key Themes and Findings to Oakland Unite & Key Stakeholders
We had the opportunity to share the outcomes of the listening sessions with the Safety & Services Oversight Commission, and at a community briefing led by Urban Strategies Council as part of their larger Department of Violence Prevention planning process.
How Each Listening Session Was Designed

Each listening session was designed to capture various forms of information through interactive dialogue, discussion and story-telling.

**STICKER DOT VOTING**
What are my connections to Oakland?

How do I identify?

How have I experienced violence?

What Oakland communities am I a part of?

**SURVEY**
Which Oakland Unite services am I aware of?

Which have I used?

**INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION**
Who is being helped and who is not but should be?

What barriers do people experience to getting help around violence?

What does an Oakland without violence look like?

**CAROUSEL BRAINSTORM**
What is working now?

What is not working?

What would work better than what we have now?

What does healing look like?

How does the community want to be involved?
Over four months, we spoke to 120 participants who reflected various roles and Oakland perspectives. These participants represented participants and service recipients, survivors of violence, family members of those impacted by violence, advocates and faith groups, commercially and sexually exploited minors, non-native English speakers, and Oakland Unite Grantees and service providers.

The participants were almost equally divided between genders and reflected a diversity of racial identities, with Black and Latino people most represented.
70% of the participants who attended these listening sessions identified as Oakland residents for more than ten years and were able to speak to the historic conditions of violence, specifically the ways that incarceration rates, gang activity, gun violence, and sex trafficking have intersectional impacts that can impact an individual family at multiple points. These pervasive issues within our city impact some communities much more than others.

A recurring theme that arose amongst participants was that where someone lives in Oakland plays an important role in the type of perspective they hold. We were fortunate to have diverse representation from all across Oakland, from the hills to the flats, East and West Oakland. Over 90% of the people present were from communities in East, West, North and Central Oakland—the neighborhoods that experience a disproportionate dosage of violence, compared to the
hills of Oakland. In particular, East Oakland, which is comprised of 8 of the top 10 highest ranking police beats for community poverty and violence in Oakland.

These 120 participants generously offered their insights, perspectives, and stories to support Oakland Unite’s ability to reflect on current offerings and refine future plans.
What We Learned

As we synthesized the notes we consolidated similar ideas into themes and pulled out outlier ideas. Based on the emergent data, the following recommendations stood out as prominent actionable suggestions for Oakland Unite’s next spending plan.

Key Themes

1. Those that are closest to the problem are closest to the solution; strategies that uplift the wisdom of the community, individuals with lived experience, and grassroots, community organizations are valued.

Overall we found that the folks who showed up to participate in these listening sessions were holding a strong sense of community responsibility and determination to address the issue of violence in Oakland. There was a palpable sense that individuals, family members and neighborhoods most affected by violence are well positioned to describe and envision the pathways towards ending that violence.

“More funding for grass roots organizations, providing practical support and services.”

2. Urgent action is needed to further reduce gun violence, sustain existing reductions, and for the community to feel the reduction.

People expressed an urgent need to respond to gun violence when it happens. This was an idea that was expressed in both conversations and the sticker-dot-voting portion of data intake. Although participants’ concerns covered a wide variety of forms of violence, there was an emotionally charged emphasis placed on the impacts of gun violence and the various ripple effects of that violence—on families, friends, women/girlfriends, mothers and children.

“The village healing the village.”

“The community will notice once people are no longer dying.”
3. Preventative, diversion programs should help young people avoid deeper involvement in violence and the justice system.

Participants repeatedly expressed frustration that it is so much harder to find services for youth that are not yet in trouble and are still in school. There are a cohort of young people who are on the brink of crisis. Participants in various listening sessions expressed a need to expand the rules around eligibility, so that youth on the fringe of experiencing violence might be eligible for some services. It was expressed that prevention would be both cheaper and easier than intervention.

“We need to reach the young communities to build better future generations.”

“We need to plan events for youth and the ones affected by violence and break the cycle.”

4. Services for women who experience violence should be expanded, and less disconnected from service offerings for men.

Participants talked about the intersectionality of the impacts of violence. When talking to young people who had been commercially sexually exploited, they told stories of the ways in which a young man involved in a shooting may be intrinsically connected to a girlfriend, a sister, a mother, and a grandmother—sometimes even in the same household. Three strategies that were offered by participants include: consider hiring more women as life coaches, prioritize funding those organizations that hire and promote women, and train outreach teams to recognize and address domestic/family violence and sexual assault as they intervene in gun violence.

“Girls and women are losing themselves. They need more resources for trauma and PTSD related to family violence.”

“Violence against women impacts us all for we are all connected.”

5. Closer coordination with other City and County service systems would help meet needs related to housing, substance abuse treatment, mental health, and jobs.

While the questions we asked in these listening sessions were focused on violence prevention, people’s vision for what was needed included a wider range of community issues and challenges. In every session people brought up homeless camps and addiction as two problems that they believe contribute significantly to the levels of violence in Oakland. Access to information about tangible supports for housing and jobs was suggested as a necessary addition to the resources provided by violence prevention service providers.

“We need services that reach whole families and whole communities.”
6. Service providers with personal understanding and experience of violence are trusted and help demonstrate opportunities for growth and transformation.

Participants who have received services value that life coaching services are timely; that life coaches and street outreach teams and coaches are there any time of day or night, when incidents actually happen. People appreciate receiving services from someone relatable; it matters to people that the service providers look and sound like them. They value that these services are located in their own neighborhood. They feel they can talk to providers who share their lived experience, which aids in establishing trust and models for the possibilities for healing.

“I need someone who can show me good choices and resources.”

“I need someone to talk to keep going and stay focused.”

7. People need support in their interactions with law enforcement and clarity about Oakland Unite’s relationship to law enforcement.

Participants had a wide range of feelings and concerns as to the role of Oakland Police Department (OPD) and other first responders in violence prevention. Many people expressed a need for different officers (more from the community) and/or different training (more de-escalation and relational). There was also confusion about the roles and procedures in place when OPD and the Fire Department Paramedic teams are working to secure a crime scene and treat shooting and homicide victims. Family members expressed a desire for better communication from OPD about the investigation following the loss of a loved one. In addition, the community wanted to more clearly define the role of Oakland Unite in relationship to other city entities. Specifically, that information shared with a Life Coach is not shared with OPD.

“Change policies and train first responders to allow them to be more effective at a crime scene.”

8. Community healing is necessary to address ongoing experiences of violence.

There is a need for ongoing support services (such as grief groups and counseling) that extend beyond the days or weeks immediately following a shooting. Many people talked about the need for ongoing healing in their communities, and that trauma has no expiration date. When asked who is missing or not receiving the supports they need, people described “timing out” of grief groups before they felt healed or ready to face life after the death of a loved one.

“We need to organize and support regular meetings and activities that build relationships.”

“We need prayer, food, childcare and a safe place to meet and have discussions.”
Final Reflections

Throughout this process there were times we felt almost overwhelmed by the levels of trauma and pain that flooded the rooms we convened in. At other times we were lifted and inspired by the resilience demonstrated and hope expressed in those rooms. There is an abundance of evidence that the violence prevention strategies currently in place are working on many levels—the timeliness, cultural competency and neighborhood-based accessibility of street outreach teams and life coaches; the connections, shared stories and support of ongoing grief and survivor groups. We also heard creative, fresh ideas on how services can be expanded or improved. We heard many people say thank you to Oakland Unite for the Listening Sessions themselves and the space to share their thoughts and reflections. It was clear that spaces such as these, that promote building relationships and community healing are necessary. We feel deep gratitude to those who showed up to tell their stories and support solution building for a stronger, safer, and healthier Oakland.
MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Safety and Services Oversight Commission (SSOC)
FROM: Tonya Gilmore, City Administrator’s Office
DATE: November 15, 2018
SUBJECT: Proposed SSOC 2019 Meeting Calendar

SUMMARY:

The proposed 2019 calendar is attached to this memo. The dates on the calendar are the 4th Monday of each month except for holidays which fall on or adjacent to the regular meeting dates.

There is an additional meeting scheduled for the 5th Tuesday in April which is the proposed date from the SSOC to the City Council for the Measure Z Joint Meeting. The date is suggested, pending direction from the City Council.

The SSOC should discuss this calendar, choose the meeting dates, and approve the calendar as amended.

NEXT STEPS:

Adoption of calendar by the SSOC and then staff will post it to the website.

ATTACHMENTS:

Proposed SSOC 2019 Meeting Calendar
Proposed SSOC 2019 Meeting Calendar

January 28, 2019*

February 25, 2019*

March 25, 2019

April 22, 2019

*Note meeting will be held in Council Chamber

Potential Date for City Council and SSOC Joint Meeting - April 30, 2019
(Pending Council Direction)

May 20, 2019 (due to holiday)*

June 24, 2019

July 22, 2019

August 26, 2019

September 23, 2019

October 28, 2019

November 25, 2019

December 23, 2019