Oakland Unite is proud to present its proposed 2019-2021 Spending Plan.

To develop the framework and recommendations in this plan, residents living at the center of violence shared insights about what they need, and where existing supports fall short. Local and national experts also shared knowledge about effective models. Oakland Unite engaged deeply with this information, building on years of local experience and evaluation, and recommends the following investments to address trauma, support healing, and reduce violence.

Oakland needs to focus on gun violence. We know that young adults in Oakland Unite programs are less likely to be arrested for violence. And through coordinated City and community effort, homicides are lower than in past years. This is good; but it is not enough. There is more work to be done. Oakland must continue to act with urgency to reduce violence, save lives and strengthen communities. Half of available funds will support interventions that serve people and families at the center of gun violence.

The City also needs strategies that help young people steer clear of violence. Community members and system leaders value programs that divert youth from arrest or prosecution, and help them transition home after incarceration. These interventions must include family members, community-based coaching, and school and career supports. Funding diversion and reentry efforts will support youth to achieve their goals and avoid harm.

Ending the cycle of violence means addressing violence against women and girls. We heard repeatedly the need for a more intersectional approach to violence. Oakland Unite recommends increasing current funding to serve survivors of domestic violence and commercial sexual exploitation, and more intentionally engaging with women, girls, and people who identify as LGBTQI.

Oakland must support community leadership to promote healing. Where violence occurs most frequently, residents don’t necessarily feel the impact of citywide reductions. Community members want spaces to connect and resources to lead further violence reduction efforts. Oakland Unite will launch a community healing strategy that supports grassroots neighborhood efforts to reduce violence and heal trauma.

Oakland Unite aims to bring together a network of community providers and system partners who strive together to support people at the center of violence.

This network relies on skilled workers with a personal understanding of trauma, who meet people where they are and form strong relationships. But Oakland Unite and its network of service providers cannot achieve safety and healing alone. The recent creation of a Department of Violence Prevention presents an important opportunity to re-articulate and improve how Oakland works to eliminate violence. This spending plan offers a framework to build upon, fueled by a community-centered vision of healing and transformation. When people and families most affected by violence are supported through crisis and have access to opportunity, they can lead the way to ending the cycle of violence in our communities.
# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

# INTRODUCTION

- Towards Safety and Healing in Oakland
- Community Approaches to Violence Intervention
- Oakland Unite Framework for Safety and Healing
- Values-Based Investing
- Systems Approach to Violence Prevention

# DEVELOPING THE SPENDING PLAN

- Community Listening Campaign Themes
- What’s Working: Lessons from the Field
- Department of Violence Prevention Learning Process

# OVERVIEW OF 2019-2021 STRATEGIES

- Overview of Strategies
- Gun Violence Response
- Youth Diversion and Reentry
- Gender-Based Violence Response Services
- Community Healing

# APPENDIX A: PARTNERS CONSULTED

# CITATIONS
INTRODUCTION

TOWARDS SAFETY AND HEALING IN OAKLAND

When it comes to promoting safety and healing in Oakland, residents have supported a shared approach: one that strengthens people and communities at the center of violence through a combination of intensive services and focused policing practices. In 2014, Oakland voters passed Measure Z, the Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act (Safety and Services Act). The Act built on the lessons learned from the previous Measure Y, the Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2004, to bolster a shared safety approach for the City. The Safety and Services Act raises over $27 million annually – out of this, $2 million is set aside to improve fire response services, $14.8 million goes to the police department for specific violence reduction efforts, and $9.8 million goes toward community-based violence intervention programs. The Act establishes a Safety and Services Oversight Commission (SSOC) to ensure proper spending of the funds and evaluation. Collectively, these funds represent a major investment by Oakland residents in strategies to promote safety and healing in the City.

OAKLAND UNITE

Oakland Unite is the division in the City of Oakland Human Services Department charged with implementing violence intervention programs. Oakland Unite provides direct services and funding to community-based organizations to serve people and families at the center of violence. Oakland Unite focuses on the three forms of violence named in the Safety and Services Act: gun violence, family/domestic violence, and commercial sexual exploitation. 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.

Every two-to-three years, Oakland Unite prepares a spending plan to outline the strategies and services recommended for the next funding cycle. Recommendations are based on community input and local and national evidence about what works to reduce violence.
COMMUNITY APPROACHES TO VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

Community approaches to violence intervention start with people at the center of serious violence and extend outwards to their loved ones and the broader community. When experiencing trauma, people and communities often move through phases in which they first react, seek to recover, and then work to rebuild. Oakland Unite aims to bring together a network of community providers and system partners to support people as they move through these stages. The network relies on skilled workers with a personal understanding of trauma, who meet people where they are and form strong relationships.

Oakland Unite’s Framework for Safety and Healing, shown on the following page, offers a public health approach to violence reduction that begins by engaging people experiencing serious violence to help them find safety, and supports them as they heal and grow.

MISSION

Bring together and fund community-driven support for people at the center of violence in Oakland to seek safety, healing, and growth through transformative relationships and opportunities.

VISION

People at the center of violence are safe and have access to opportunity. They lead the way to ending the cycle of violence in our community.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>People at the center of gun violence and their loved ones</th>
<th>Engagement &amp; Safety</th>
<th>Healing &amp; Growth</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>People at the center of gun violence and their loved ones</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Young people involved or at risk of justice-system involvement and their loved ones</td>
<td>Youth get support to move away from violence and out of the justice-system, such as help reentering school and the community after incarceration.</td>
<td>Life coaching supports young people to navigate their situation and strengthen socio-emotional skills.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diversion programs use restorative techniques to help youth repair harm instead of facing charges.</td>
<td>Education and career exploration programs help young people work towards their future.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survivors of family violence or commercial sexual exploitation and their loved ones</td>
<td>Survivors have access to 24-hour support to find a way out of immediate danger.</td>
<td>Longer-term support includes transitional housing, legal assistance, healing, coaching and mental health supports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Interventions involve crisis response hotlines, drop-in &quot;safe space&quot; centers, and reaching out to people identified by law enforcement. Emergency housing helps people stay safe in the short-term.</td>
<td>Providers bring specialized experience of working with family violence survivors and commercially sexually exploited young people.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communities that experience most of the serious violence in Oakland</td>
<td>Activities and events such as vigils, healing circles, and support groups offer people a way to connect with one another after violence occurs.</td>
<td>Block parties, barbecues or parks events led by community members provide safe spaces to gather, celebrate, and transform norms around violence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
VALUES-BASED INVESTING

To fulfill its mission, Oakland Unite holds the following values in mind:

EQUITY
People who have experienced violence must be at the center.
To Oakland Unite, equity means that people and communities most impacted by violence receive the most resources and organizations based in those communities are prioritized. This also means valuing service providers who have similar life experiences as the people they serve.

COMMUNITY & COLLABORATION
We are stronger together.
Government and community-based service systems must work hand in hand with community members most affected by trauma and violence. Funding streams and service systems should be aligned with one another to have the greatest impact.

INDIVIDUAL & COMMUNITY RESILIENCE
All people have the power to heal.
Oakland is full of strong, resilient people. Support at the right time can help people at the center of violence move through pain and create solutions for themselves and their loved ones. Stronger, healthier individuals build stronger, healthier communities.

ACTION
Learn and do; repeat.
Oakland must continue to act with urgency to reduce violence, save lives, and support communities. Action should be guided by ongoing learning about what works, which requires looking carefully at outcomes and listening to participants' own reflections. The challenges are persistent and dynamic; the solutions must be even more so.

SYSTEM APPROACHES TO VIOLENCE PREVENTION

Oakland Unite and its network of service providers cannot achieve safety and healing alone. Disparities in wealth, health, education, and housing are all forms of structural violence — and they perpetuate the cycle of individual violence. The City of Oakland has embraced an explicit equity narrative that highlights the need to change its own systems and institutions that contribute to inequitable outcomes.

Oakland Unite's success relies on larger efforts to undo root causes of violence and must help drive those efforts forward. The people most affected by unequal systems have the most insight into how they function. By working in partnership with people and communities at the center of violence, Oakland Unite seeks to identify solutions that improve public systems, reduce disparities, and decrease violence in all its forms.
DEVELOPING THE 2019-2021 SPENDING PLAN

The framework and strategy recommendations in this report were informed by a community listening campaign, review of local and national lessons from the field, and emerging themes from a citywide participatory planning process focused on violence prevention. Most importantly, recommendations are directly informed by the people and neighborhoods most impacted by violence.

COMMUNITY LISTENING CAMPAIGN

Oakland Unite worked with Be The Change Consulting, a local women-of-color led business, to hold five community listening sessions with: young adults at highest risk for gun violence, families of homicide victims, young people impacted by commercial sexual exploitation, community advocacy groups and faith leaders, and Oakland Unite service providers. Additional listening sessions were held with established family violence survivor support groups and the Safety and Services Oversight Commission. Altogether, over 100 people participated in conversations about Oakland's current violence intervention strategies to explore what’s working, what can be improved, and to answer specific questions such as how community members can play a greater role.
LISTENING CAMPAIGN THEMES

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

Closer coordination with other local and regional service systems is critical to meet needs related to housing, substance abuse treatment, mental health, family support and jobs.

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

Preventative diversion programs should help young people avoid deeper involvement in violence and the justice system.

Service providers with personal understanding of violence are trusted and help demonstrate opportunities for growth and transformation.

People need support and advocacy when interacting with law enforcement. There must be clear boundaries between Oakland Unite and law enforcement.

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

Reducing violence requires more than immediate response; community healing is necessary to address ongoing experiences of loss and trauma.
WHAT’S WORKING: LESSONS FROM THE FIELD

Oakland has had significant reductions in gun violence in recent years -- though much work remains to be done. Oakland Unite works with an independent evaluator, Mathematica Policy Research, to better understand what services and strategies are most effective for people affected by different forms of violence. In the two years since launching new strategies, Oakland Unite learned that:

**People are better off.** Adults who received life coaching or employment and education support services had fewer short-term arrests for a violent offense, relative to a comparison group of similar individuals. Participants across strategies benefited from direct use of grant funds for incentive stipends and wages, and from connection to resources like conflict mediation and job placement.⁵

**The Oakland Unite network serves people at high-risk of violence.** Program participants have experienced violence, contact with local law enforcement, and are often disconnected from education. Most people are between 14-35 years-old, live in West, Central, and Deep-East Oakland, and the majority identify as African American (61%) and Latino/a (20%). Programs focused on gun and gang violence serve mostly men and boys, while programs focused on sex trafficking and family violence primarily serve women and girls.⁶

**Agencies have shared values and shared practices.** Oakland Unite grantees value hiring peer providers with similar lived experience and agree that training and support – including livable salaries – for providers is necessary for program success. Oakland Unite coordination has increased use of best practices such as small caseload ratios, longer service duration, case planning, and incentives.

DEPARTMENT OF VIOLENCE PREVENTION LEARNING PROCESS

On June 20, 2017, Oakland City Council created a new Department of Violence Prevention (DVP). The mission of the DVP is to dramatically reduce violent crime and serve communities impacted by violence to end the cycle of trauma. To inform the development of the DVP, Urban Strategies Council (USC) is leading a participatory planning process informed by a Steering Committee of community and City stakeholders. Oakland Unite staff is engaged with their community-led process, and USC and Steering Committee members also attended Oakland Unite listening sessions.

Through ongoing dialogue to share what was learned in each process, common themes were identified. Central among these was the desire for a balanced approach to intervention and prevention that prioritizes the people at the center of violence, both victims and perpetrators, while also meeting the needs of youth at-risk of becoming involved in violence. In addition, both processes lifted-up the need for integration of trauma-informed/healing-centered principles in systems and practices, and more funding for grassroots, resident-led ideas and innovations.