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# AGENDA REPORT

**TO:** Sabrina B. Landreth  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Anne E. Kirkpatrick  
Chief of Police

**SUBJECT:** Oakland Ceasefire Evaluation

**DATE:** January 22, 2020

City Administrator Approval

Date:

2/13/2020

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends that The City Council Receive An Informational Report On The Ceasefire Impact Evaluation.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Ceasefire strategy has three goals (also referred to as "aims"):

1. Reduce gang/group related shootings and homicides;
2. Reduce the recidivism rate of participants; and
3. Build community-police trust among participants.

The Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act of 2014 - Measure Z, allows the City of Oakland to collect taxes for ten years to improve police, fire, and emergency response services as well as community strategies for at-risk youth and young adults. The law also requires that the City set aside funds to evaluate Measure Z-funded strategy implementation. OPD issued a Request for Qualification (RFQ) for a Ceasefire evaluation and through this process chose a team of sociology professors and academics to lead the evaluation. The evaluation demonstrated that the Oakland Ceasefire Strategy can claim significant ownership of the reductions in homicides and non-fatal shootings which the City experienced during the implementation period. The evaluation also demonstrates that the strategy a preferred method of reducing homicides and non-fatal shootings. The evaluation report (**Attachment A**) provides strategy-specific recommendations for building greater community-police trust.

## BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY

The City of Oakland implemented the Ceasefire strategy on October 18, 2012, in consultation with Oakland Community Organizations (OCO) in light of a spike in homicides. At the end of 2012 the total number of homicides for the year was 125. Since 2012, the Oakland Police Department (OPD), Human Services Department (Oakland Unite), faith leaders, and community members have worked together to implement the Ceasefire strategy.

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1. Reduce gang/group related shootings and homicides;
2. Reduce the recidivism rate of participants; and
3. Build community-police trust among participants.

These goals or 'aims,' were developed and have been executed as part of a community, police, and human service provider partnership since 2012. Oakland has now experienced a 42 percent reduction in homicides and a 49.9 percent reduction in shootings since the strategy was implemented, despite changes in departmental and Ceasefire Strategy leadership.

### ***Measure Z and Ceasefire***

In July 2014, the City Council adopted Resolution No. 85149 C.M.S., which sent the 2014 Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act ("Measure Z") to the November 4, 2014 general municipal election ballot. Oakland voters adopted the Act with 77.05 percent of the vote on November 4, 2014. Measure Z maintains the existing parcel tax and parking tax surcharge for a period of 10 years to improve police, fire, and emergency response services as well as community strategies for at-risk youth and young adults.

Measure Z Section 4B sets the requirement of an annual program evaluation:

"Annual Program Evaluation: Annual independent program evaluations pursuant to Section 3(C) shall include performance analysis and evidence that policing, and violence prevention intervention programs and strategies are progressing toward the desired outcomes. Evaluations will consider whether programs and strategies are achieving reductions in community violence and serving those at the highest risk. Short-term successes achieved by these strategies and long-term desired outcomes will be considered in the program evaluations."

Based upon this evaluation requirement, OPD included a Ceasefire-specific evaluation in their three-year Measure Z spending plan; \$250,000 per year was set aside for this evaluation. The evaluation team was selected after a RFQ process in 2016 and approved per City Council Resolution No. 86312 C.M.S.

Through the RFQ process, Northeastern University School of Criminology and Criminal Justice was chosen to be the lead evaluator. The proposed sub-consultant was Yale University Department of Sociology, principal investigator Anthony Braga, Ph.D. The co-principal investigative team consisted of Andrew Papachristos, Ph.D. (formerly of Yale University Department of Sociology and now with Northwestern University Institute for Policy & Research); Gregory Zimmerman, Ph.D.; and Rod Brunson, Ph.D. of Rutgers University.

The conclusion of the evaluation was completed in 2018, at a time when there was transition in both the City Council and the Ceasefire leadership and management team. Therefore the initial evaluation was not presented to the City Council in a timely fashion and an addendum to the evaluation will include current data.

The "Ceasefire Evaluation Key Findings" document was taken to the Safety and Services Oversight Committee in August of 2018 and scheduled to the September 25, 2018 Public Safety Committee. However, the September 25, 2018 and following three Public Safety Committee

meetings were all cancelled due to a lack of quorum. Therefore, the original 2018 evaluation report dated August 30, 2018 was presented later at the June 25, 2019 Public Safety Committee. However, the full Ceasefire Evaluation was not presented to the Public Safety Committee and City Council.

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

This report outlines the results of the Ceasefire Impact Evaluation (**see Attachment A for full report**). This report outlines highlights of the evaluation findings.

### ***Place Impact Evaluation***

The place impact evaluation comprised two quasi-experimental designs to determine whether the implementation of Oakland Ceasefire was associated with citywide reductions in gun homicide. First, the cross-city quasi-experimental design compared gun homicide trends in Oakland to gun homicide trends in 12 comparison cities: Fresno, Sacramento, Stockton, Santa Ana, Anaheim, Long Beach, Riverside, Bakersfield, Alameda, San Francisco, Richmond, and East Palo Alto.

For each of the 13 cities, interrupted time series analyses of monthly counts of gun homicide between 2010 and 2017 were used to estimate the existence of post-2013-gun violence reduction impacts. These models controlled for population trends, violent crime trends, linear and non-linear trends, and seasonal effects.

The second aspect of the evaluation design compared shooting trends in census block groups with gang/groups that experienced the Ceasefire intervention relative to shooting trends in matched census block groups with gang/groups that did not experience the intervention. Some 93 of 311 census block groups evaluated (24.9 percent) had gang/group territory that experienced OPD Ceasefire Strategy treatment.

Propensity score matching<sup>1</sup> was used to develop matched treated and untreated block groups based on the following variables:

- prior violence;
- the number of gang/groups with territory (colloquially “turf”) in the block group;
- neighborhood disadvantage;
- resident race/ethnicity; and
- measurable gentrification factors.

The propensity score matching resulted in 47 treated and 95 untreated matched block groups. Growth curve regression<sup>2</sup> models with differences-in-differences estimators (DID) were used to analyze monthly counts of fatal and non-fatal shootings in matched treated and untreated block groups between 2010 and 2017. Gun violence displacement and diffusion of program benefit effects were analyzed in block groups adjacent to treated and untreated places.

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<sup>1</sup> Propensity score matching a statistical matching technique that attempts to estimate the effect or impact of a treatment, policy, or other intervention by accounting for the variables predict receiving the treatment.

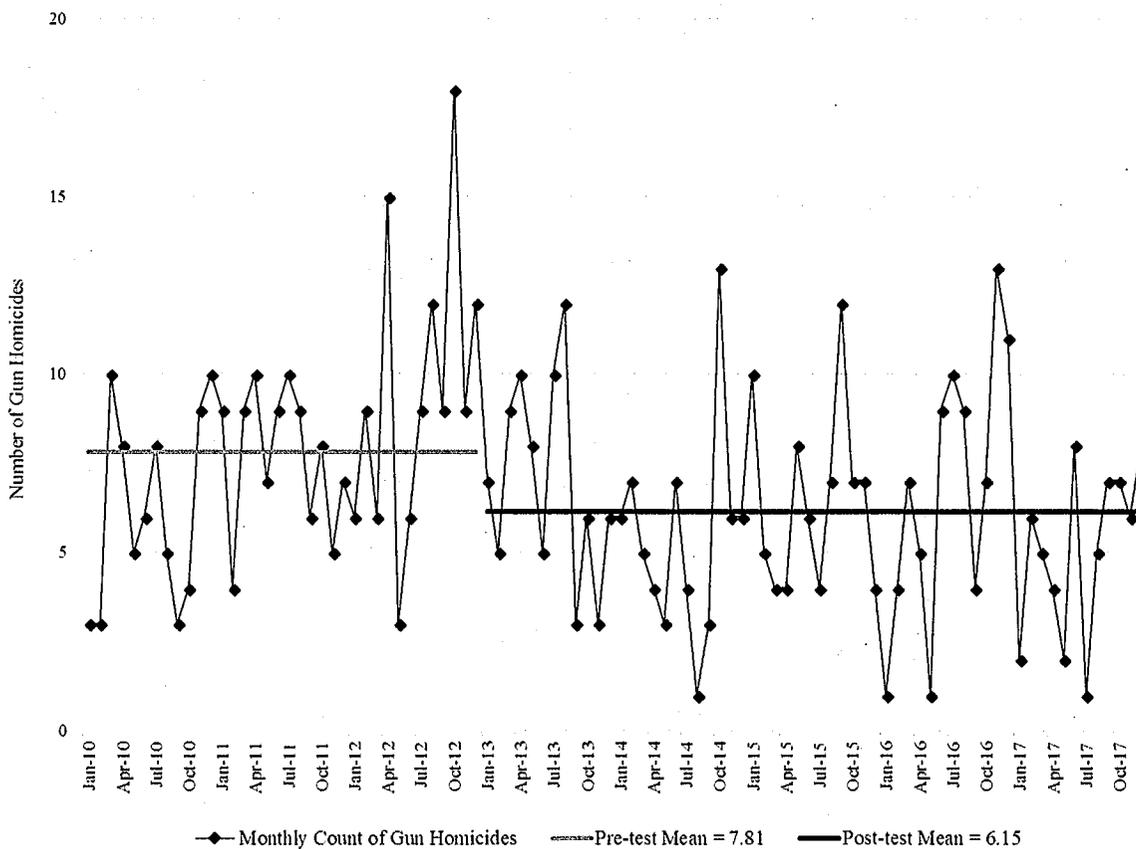
<sup>2</sup> a statistical analysis technique to measure intra-individual change over time, or measure change at group levels in sociology or demography.

**Results**

The Place Impact Evaluation (PIE) found that the Oakland Ceasefire Strategy was associated with an estimated 31.5% reduction in Oakland gun homicides controlling for other trends and seasonal variations (the evaluation was found to be statistically significant with an expected error rate of less than 5 percent - see Figure 1). Only 2 of 12 comparison cities experienced significant reductions during this period (San Francisco and Stockton). The cross-city quasi-experiment suggests that the Ceasefire intervention was associated with a noteworthy citywide reduction of gun homicide in Oakland that seemed distinct from gun homicide trends in other California cities.

The DID estimator suggested (see Figure 1 below) that the Ceasefire intervention was associated with a 20.0% reduction in shootings in matched treated block groups relative to matched comparison block groups (evaluation was found to be statistically significant with an expected error rate of less than 5 percent). The analysis further suggested a non-statistically significant reduction in shootings in areas surrounding Ceasefire Strategy-impacted block groups relative to areas surrounding untreated block groups. The within-Oakland quasi-experiment suggests that neighborhoods with gang/groups that experienced the Ceasefire treatment experienced noteworthy reductions in gun violence that were not displaced to surrounding areas.

**Figure 1. Monthly Counts of Fatal and Non-Fatal Shootings in Oakland, 2010-2017**



### ***Gang / Group Impact Evaluation***

A quasi-experimental design was used to determine the impact of the OPD Ceasefire Strategy. The study looked at whether shooting trends involving gangs and other criminally-active groups (that experienced Ceasefire Strategy treatment) were reduced, relative to shooting trends involving similar groups that did not experience Ceasefire Strategy treatment. Problem analysis research revealed that there were 76 active gangs / groups in Oakland between 2010 and 2017. There were 15 gangs / groups directly treated by Ceasefire intervention after the 2013 launch of the strategy. Social network analysis<sup>3</sup> revealed 13 gang / groups connected to treated gangs/groups through conflicts and alliances- in other words, these other gangs / groups experienced some of the Ceasefire Strategy indirectly (i.e. vicarious treatment). The identification of the gangs / groups was based on prior violence, gang / group size, conflicts/alliances, longevity, and housing project location proximity; this process resulted in 13 directly treated gangs / groups and nine vicariously treated gangs / groups, and 36 untreated matched gangs / groups). Growth curve regression models with differences-in-differences estimators (DID)<sup>4</sup> were used to analyze monthly counts of fatal and non-fatal shootings involving matched treated, vicariously treated, and untreated gang/groups between 2010 and 2017. These models estimated both direct and vicarious (“spillover”) effects of the Ceasefire treatment.

### ***Results of Gang / Group Impact Evaluation***

Both gang/group-member-involved and non-gang/group-member-involved shooting incidents decreased markedly during the study period. However, the decrease in gang/group-member-involved shootings was steeper than the decrease in non-gang/group-member-involved shootings after Ceasefire was implemented in 2013. The average number of gang/group-member-involved shootings decreased by 43.2 percent from a total 346 shootings per year during the pre-intervention years (2010-2012) to 196.6 shootings per year during the Ceasefire Strategy years (2013-2017). By comparison, the average number of non-gang/group-member-involved shootings decreased by only 23.2 percent from 314.7 shootings per year during the pre-intervention years (2010-2012) to 241.8 shootings per year during the intervention years (2013-2017).

The growth curve regression models and DID estimator suggest that the Ceasefire intervention was associated with an estimated 27 percent additional reduction in shootings by treated gangs/groups relative to untreated gangs/groups<sup>5</sup>. The models further revealed and estimated 26.0% reduction in shootings by vicariously-treated gangs/groups relative to untreated gangs/groups (p<.05). These results suggest that the Ceasefire intervention reduced shootings involving treated gangs/groups and their rivals and allies.

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<sup>3</sup> Social Network Analysis refers to the mapping and measuring of relationships and flows between people, groups, organizations, and/or other entities. The dots or nodes in the network are the people and groups; the links show the relationships or flows between the nodes. This type of analysis is completely separate from “social media” analysis.

<sup>4</sup> “Difference in differences” is a statistical technique to analyze the effect of a treatment (e.g. Ceasefire Strategy) for the treatment group, compared to the average change over time for the control group.

<sup>5</sup> The study is statistically significant with a confidence level exceeding 95 percent.

### ***Individual Impact Evaluation + Methods***

The individual impact evaluation is designed to assess the extent to which Oakland Ceasefire is associated with gunshot victimization of those individuals who were part of the initiative (i.e., individuals who were part of a group that was the focus of Ceasefire. Examples of individual connection include: attended a call-in or custom notification; received law enforcement attention; and/or were referred to services by Ceasefire). The major challenge for this part of the research is how to parse out the impact of Ceasefire on any individual's behavior as distinct from the observed impact of the group. Another methodological challenge involves developing a comparable control group since Ceasefire individuals are selected by being amongst the highest-risk people in the city at any one time. The individual impact evaluation builds on one of Ceasefire's foundational premises that gun violence concentrates within social networks and seeks to leverage these exact networks to create a quasi-experimental condition. Specifically, the individual impact evaluation leverages co-arrest networks of individuals arrested in Oakland. gangs/groups provided an opportunity to determine whether the Ceasefire Strategy generated "spillover" violence reduction impacts on these untreated gangs/groups.

### ***Results of Individual Impact Evaluation + Methods***

Ceasefire attendees had lower rates of victimization and lower rates of arrest in the two-years following Ceasefire than in the two-years prior to participation. Compared to both comparison groups, the results suggest that Ceasefire participants experienced a decrease in victimization and an increase in arrests. However, only the increase in arrests for Ceasefire participants was statistically significant and only when compared to non-participating individuals who had similar covariate profiles to participating individuals.

"These results are indicative, but not definitive. All results point to a decrease in victimization for Ceasefire participants. The results on arrest are mixed. The results clearly suggest a reduction in contact with the criminal justice system from before Ceasefire treatment to after treatment for Ceasefire participants. When comparing Ceasefire participants to the comparison group, however, Ceasefire participants experienced a higher overall rate of arrest both *before and after* Ceasefire intervention. Because Ceasefire participants are selected on the basis of being the highest risk individuals in the city at a given point in time, this may reflect differences in the overall rate of justice system contact between the Ceasefire participant group and the synthetic control group.

Both comparison results on victimization and one of the comparison results on arrest are not statistically significant. These study results largely relate to the small group sample size and the relatively low frequency of victimizations, in statistical terms. For example, there were 15 victimizations among the 289 individuals (5.2 percent) who participated in Ceasefire and seven among the 88 (8 percent) individuals who were invited but did not participate. The number of victimizations among the 289 participants is somewhat too small to be considered statistically significant given the small sample size numbers; one would look for at least nine victimizations (over three percent) among the 289 participants for a statistically valid impact results.

### ***Qualitative Assessment of Oakland Ceasefire + Methods***

The objective of the qualitative assessment was to acquire a variety of local stakeholders' perceptions of, and experiences with, Oakland's Ceasefire strategy. To achieve this goal, in-depth interviews were conducted with individuals having considerable knowledge, varied perspectives, and keen insights regarding the following:

1. The effectiveness of current and prior Ceasefire initiative;
2. The nature and extent of gun violence occurring across Oakland; and
3. Whether Ceasefire has improved police-community relations and helped to build mutual trust.

Data collection purposively involved diverse groups of respondents in recognition of their formal and informal program roles and particular viewpoints concerning Ceasefire.

The project involved 21 qualitative, in-depth interviews with different types of people:

- Ceasefire call-in clients;
- City, clergy, and community leaders;
- Police and probation officers; and
- Social service providers.

Interview subjects were recruited and scheduled with the assistance of Oakland-based study partners. Researchers were also permitted to use snowball sampling techniques<sup>6</sup> to recruit additional participants. Interviews were voluntary, conducted in private offices, and respondents were promised strict confidentiality. Furthermore, we were mindful not to record personally identifying information.

The interview guide was semi-structured, consisting of both closed and open-ended questions that allowed for considerable probing on key topics (e.g., whether respondents viewed Ceasefire as both an effective and fair crime-reduction strategy, perceptions of increased/reduced gun violence, and the current state of police-community relations). Except on three occasions, interviews were digitally recorded (audio only, however) and later transcribed in their entirety for accuracy. The transcriptions serve as the primary data for our preliminary analysis. Finally, the evaluators took considerable care to ensure that results typified the most common themes and sub-themes respondents provided.

### ***Results of Qualitative Assessment of Oakland Ceasefire + Methods***

The results herein are focused around Ceasefire's three key aims, representing respondents' statements and observations consistently found throughout the data. The evaluators also presented study participants' views regarding what appears to be working along with their recommendations for moving forward.

#### *Aim 1: Reduce shootings and homicides citywide*

- There was a strong consensus among study participants that Ceasefire greatly enhanced the City's capacity to systematically and thoughtfully reduce shootings and

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<sup>6</sup> "Snowball sampling" is the practice of having study participants recruit other participants for a test or study. This method is used where potential participants are hard to find.

homicides. Social service providers living in the most disadvantaged neighborhoods, however, were quick to point out that too much violence persists. Nonetheless, study participants uniformly agree that a few bad actors are disproportionately responsible for serious violence in Oakland.

- Many study participants reported that the City is experiencing a generational shift concerning the nature of interpersonal violence. Respondents commented that non-fatal shootings and homicides are no longer about gaining control of drug territory. To the contrary, participants reported that contemporary violence is primarily fueled by everyday disputes (e.g., card games, fights over romantic interests, disparaging social media posts), making it appear more random and uncontrollable. Furthermore, unlike in the past concerning gang beefs, participants noted that those at highest risk of gun violence are seldom aware of impending danger (and or potential assailants' identities and/or motives).
- While the overwhelming majority of study participants were highly supportive of Ceasefire, they took care to express concern about its sustainability given deeply entrenched, underlying social conditions highly correlated with urban violence (i.e., extreme poverty, unemployment, poor educational outcomes).
- Untreated / undiagnosed psychological trauma resulting from living in high crime environments was a prominent theme among some respondents. This subset of study participants believed that this potentially debilitating byproduct of urban violence has not received adequate attention.
- Study participants questioned whether the current Ceasefire messaging resonates with younger (i.e., juveniles), at-risk individuals who have not yet come to the attention of criminal justice agents.

*Aim 2: Decrease recidivism and improve outcomes for those at highest risk of violence*

- There is considerable confusion (even among those highly supportive of the intervention) regarding the accuracy and integrity of the call-in lists. At the heart of the issue may be definitional differences among partners from different professional backgrounds. Nonetheless, there is considerable misunderstanding (among nearly all non-police stakeholders) regarding what actions warrant being "in the game" and ambiguity regarding what call-in clients must do to be removed from the list.
- There is also concern among respondents that call-ins are not always conducted in a respectful manner (e.g., they tend to feel coercive and exploitive), deepening clients' distrust of police and the overall criminal justice system.

*Aim 3: Strengthen police-community relations and trust.*

- While the majority of study participants reported that police-community relations had steadily improved since 2012, almost every respondent identified the nationally publicized sex scandal (of 2016 involving a minor) as a devastating setback that continues to undermine community trust.
- Respondents emphasized that positive police-community relations were not merely about officers no longer shooting unarmed blacks. Instead, they were insistent that OPD police leadership must also ensure that rank-and-file officers treat citizens with dignity and respect during routine encounters.

### ***Ceasefire Evaluation Summary - What is Working and Going Well***

The evaluation finds a number of areas where the Oakland Ceasefire Strategy is quantifiably correlated with positive outcomes:

- There is great support (from City, police, community) for dedicating law enforcement and social service resources to the small number of individuals at highest risk for violence (both as perpetrators and victims). Additionally, individuals who have been selected for Ceasefire Strategy intervention due to past criminal activity have expressed a preference for Ceasefire Strategy intervention instead of exposure to a focused police activity presence with a greater fear of arrest.
- Study participants enthusiastically applaud City leaders for their unwavering commitment to Ceasefire. Respondents openly acknowledge that the current political support is unprecedented, deserving a great deal of credit for the observed success.
- Ceasefire has deliberately enlisted and mobilized people of color to work toward improved police-community relation.

### ***Qualitative Recommendations***

1. The Ceasefire Strategy should better involve clients' romantic partners and family members to reduce program stigma and increase community support.
2. Be more inclusive and strategic regarding the public messaging (and face) of Ceasefire. Several study participants pointed out that compared to well-publicized OPD enforcement efforts (e.g., press conferences held following arrests and seizures), the general public knows very little about the equally important social service delivery component.

### **FISCAL IMPACT**

A total of \$500,000 for this evaluation was funded by Measure Z. There are no additional fiscal impacts.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

No public outreach was required in the development of this report and resolution.

### **COORDINATION**

This report was coordinated with the Ceasefire impact evaluation team.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** There continues to be a nexus between economic development and public safety. As crime rates drop and police-community trust goes up, businesses will increasingly invest in the City which could potentially benefit all residents and visitors.

**Environmental:** There are no environmental opportunities identified in this report.

**Race and Social Equity:** The findings from this evaluation will help inform the community and the City of Oakland leadership on the effectiveness of a critical violence mitigation strategy. The Ceasefire Strategy is aimed at decreasing shootings and homicides, which disproportionately impact Oakland's most underserved communities as well as decreasing the recidivism in these same communities and contributing to the ending of mass incarceration in our society. Shootings, homicides including officer-involved shootings disproportionately impact African-American adult males in Oakland. 68.4% of all victims and suspects of homicides in Oakland are African-American. Yet African Americans are 28% of Oakland's population. Decreasing shootings, homicides, and building community-police trust are necessary steps for creating a more equitable experience for our most underserved communities.

The original problem analysis demonstrated that 80% of homicide victims and suspects were African American and almost 90% were male in 2012. From 2011 through 2017, Oakland experienced a 52% reduction in shootings and gun homicides. This reduction in violence therefore disproportionately benefited African American male residents of Oakland.

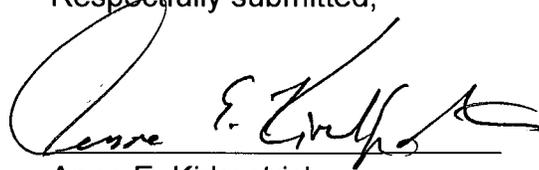
Similarly, the census blocks that received Ceasefire treatment experienced a 20% greater reduction in shootings and homicides than comparable census blocks that did not receive treatment. The census blocks that received the majority of Ceasefire treatment are primarily located in deep East Oakland, with the highest proportion of African American and Latino residents compared with other areas of the city. Therefore, the residents of these neighborhoods disproportionately benefited from the reductions in violence associated with Ceasefire.

**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends that The City Council Receive an Informational Report On The Ceasefire Impact Evaluation.

For questions concerning this report, please contact Captain Trevelyan Jones at 510 777-8672.

Respectfully submitted,



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Attachments

**Attachment A:** Oakland Ceasefire Evaluation