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# AGENDA REPORT

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

**FROM:** Sara Bedford  
Director, Human Services

**SUBJECT:** Oakland Unite Violence Prevention  
Services Spending Plan

**DATE:** November 14, 2018

City Administrator Approval

Date:

11/20/18

## RECOMMENDATION

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Approving Violence Prevention Program Strategies, Funding Amounts, And The Request For Proposal Process For Programs Funded By The 2014 Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act For The Funding Cycle From July 2019 Through Fiscal Year 2021-2022.**

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report provides City Council with recommendations on the strategic investment of funds from the Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act of 2014 (Safety and Services Act) for violence intervention and prevention programs. Oakland Unite, a division of the Human Services Department (HSD), worked with community members and public partners to develop the framework and allocations in the attached Spending Plan (**Attachment A**).

Highlights and shifts in the Spending Plan include the following:

- Dedicate the bulk of funds to people and families at the center of gun violence;
- Prioritize diversion and reentry for youth to help them avoid deeper system involvement;
- Increase funding for gender-based violence response services (e.g., domestic violence and commercial sexual exploitation); and
- Launch a community healing strategy to support resident-led initiatives.

Council approval of this report will allow staff to issue a competitive request for proposals (RFP) for a three-year funding cycle, with new service contracts to begin in July 2019. Most of the available service funds (80%) will be released through this process, with the remainder going to direct allocations for service positions based within the City and at public partner agencies.

Oakland Unite further recommends holding \$1.5 million from Safety and Services Act violence prevention funds in reserve to support implementation of the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP), where such activities constitute an eligible use of the tax revenue collected pursuant to the Safety and Services Act. The proposed spending plan is informed by the DVP planning process, which is ongoing. Holding some funds in reserve will allow the City to meet additional needs that emerge through that process.

Item: \_\_\_\_\_  
Public Safety Committee  
December 4, 2018

**BACKGROUND/LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

**Overview of Safety and Services Act:** In 2014, Oakland voters passed Measure Z, the Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act. The Safety and Services Act raises over \$27 million annually (FY 2018-19) through a special parcel tax along with a parking surcharge on commercial lots – out of this, \$2 million is set aside to improve fire response services, \$14.8 million goes to the police department for violence reduction efforts, and \$9.8 million goes toward community-based violence intervention programs. The objectives of the Safety and Services Act are to:

1. Reduce homicides, robberies, burglaries and gun-related violence;
2. Improve police and fire emergency 911 response times and other police services; and
3. Invest in violence intervention and prevention strategies that provide support for at-risk youth and young adults to interrupt the cycle of violence and recidivism.

In regards to violence prevention and intervention strategies, the Safety and Services Act emphasizes coordination of public systems and community-based services with a joint focus on youth and young adults at highest risk of violence as guided by data analysis (See Section 3(C)3). It names collaborative strategies such as crisis response, victim services, and reentry support intended to interrupt the cycle of violence and recidivism. HSD administers Safety and Services Act funds through its Oakland Unite division. Every three years, Oakland Unite prepares a spending plan to outline the strategies and services recommended for the next funding cycle.

The Act establishes a Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Oversight Commission (SSOC) that, among other duties, reviews spending plans for proposed funding, and makes recommendations to the Mayor and City Council on the plans prior to Council approval.

**Funding Cycles:** The Safety and Services Act sunsets in December 2024. Following the previously awarded three and half year funding cycle, Oakland Unite recommends that violence prevention grants be awarded through two additional competitive requests for proposals.

**Awarded:** January 2016 – Fiscal Year 2017-18 (2.5 years; Resolution No. 85720 C.M.S.)  
Fiscal Year 2018-19 (1-year extension; Resolution No. 87195 C.M.S.)

**Proposed:** Fiscal Year 2019-20 – Fiscal Year 2021-22 (3 years)  
Fiscal Year 2022-23 – December 2024 (2.5 years; subject to a future spending plan, with additional 6 months to be awarded dependent on availability of funds)

**Department of Violence Prevention:** On June 20, 2017 Oakland City Council created a new Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) (Ordinance No. 13451 C.M.S.). 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 currently leading a participatory planning process (Resolution No. 87192 C.M.S.). Oakland Unite is taking part in this community-led process as a member of the Steering Committee and worked to align the spending plan with the findings from that larger process. USC and community partners also took part in Oakland Unite’s planning process and there has been ongoing dialogue to share what was learned and inform recommendations.

**ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

**Recommendation:** Oakland Unite recommends adopting the strategies and allocations outlined in the attached spending plan for the three year-period beginning July 1, 2019 through June 2022 (**Attachment A**). Proposed strategies are the result of a planning process that included extensive community input and review of local and national best practices as described below. The bulk of these funds (80%) would be released through a competitive RFP process in January 2019 to meet the July 1 funding start date.

Oakland Unite further recommends holding \$1.5 million of the Safety and Services Act violence prevention funds in reserve to support continued development and implementation of the DVP. The proposed spending plan is informed by the DVP planning process, which is ongoing. Holding some funds in reserve allows the City to meet needs that emerge through that process.

**Proposed Strategies:** 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 through a shared safety approach by working in close partnership with people and communities at the center of violence.

**Table 1 - Recommended Strategy Area Allocations**

<p><b>YOUTH DIVERSION &amp; REENTRY</b>  <b>19% (~\$1.8 million)</b>  <b>Est. 280 served</b></p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth diversion</li> <li>• Youth life coaching and reentry coordination</li> <li>• Youth education and employment support</li> </ul>	<p><b>GUN VIOLENCE RESPONSE</b>  <b>48% (~\$4.5 million)</b>  <b>Est. 800 served</b></p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gun violence response and coordination</li> <li>• Violence interruption</li> <li>• Adult life coaching</li> <li>• Adult employment support</li> </ul>	<p><b>GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESPONSE</b>  <b>15% (~\$1.3 million)</b>  <b>Est. 1200 served</b></p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Commercial sexual exploitation response</li> <li>• Family violence intervention</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>COMMUNITY HEALING</b>  <b>18% (~\$1.6 million), Est. 1800 served</b></p> <p>Includes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community outreach and engagement focused on transforming norms</li> <li>• Grassroots mini-grants for healing-centered activities</li> <li>• Skills-based learning to strengthen the provider network</li> </ul>		

\*allocations will be finalized based on actual revenue funds available

**Planning Process:** The strategy recommendations for the spending plan were informed by a community listening campaign, review of local and national lessons from the field, and emerging themes from the citywide, participatory DVP planning process. Oakland Unite participated in: internal review of service and evaluation data; interviews with community and public partners; conversations with local and national leaders in the field; and, most importantly, listening sessions and interviews with Oakland community members impacted by violence. Details on the process can be found below, as well as in the Spending Plan (**Attachment A**) and the attached memo on community input developed by Be The Change Consulting (**Attachment B**).

**Spending Plan Highlights and Shifts:** Several themes and recommendations emerged from the community engagement process. These themes are summarized below, accompanied by highlighted shifts in the proposed spending plan. Common themes to both the DVP participatory planning process and the Oakland Unite listening campaign included the desire for a balanced approach to intervention and prevention that prioritizes the people at the center of violence while meeting the needs of youth at-risk of becoming involved in violence. In addition, both processes also 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.

**Table 2 - Listening Campaign Themes and Spending Plan Shifts**

Theme	Spending Plan Action/Shift
1. Those that are closest to the problem are closest to the solution	<b>Center the voices of people who have experienced violence.</b> Prioritize models that build on the wisdom of people impacted directly by violence, and develop new ways to partner more closely with community.
2. Urgent action is needed to reduce gun violence further	<b>Focus on gun violence.</b> Dedicate the bulk of funds to people and families at the center of gun violence to intervene in moments of crisis, prevent retaliation, and support healing.
3. Systems should help young people avoid deeper justice system involvement	<b>Prioritize diversion and reentry for youth.</b> Continue to support young people returning after incarceration, develop stronger pathways to avoid incarceration, and more intentionally involve families.
4. Services for women who experience violence should be expanded	<b>Increase funding for gender-based violence response services.</b> Emphasize funding for people who experience family violence and youth/transition-age youth who experience commercial sexual exploitation.
5. There are deep needs for support around housing, substance abuse treatment, mental health, and jobs	<b>Continue to strengthen current investments with City/County agencies.</b> Explore new ways to increase access to services for participants referred by the Oakland Unite network as part of a regional approach to violence.
6. People value service providers who share similar lived experiences	<b>Prioritize hiring peer professionals with deep roots in Oakland.</b> Support opportunities for training and skill development and higher salaries.
7. Clear boundaries are needed between services and law enforcement	<b>Develop and train law enforcement on protocols for working with the Oakland Unite network</b> that protect participants' privacy and the credibility of service providers.
8. Reducing violence requires more than immediate response; community healing is necessary	<b>Launch a community healing strategy.</b> Seek community partners to host outreach events and healing activities. Fund and support small grassroots organizations and individuals working to reduce violence in their own communities.

**Proposed Request for Proposals Process:** Staff recommends releasing most funds (80%) for the Fiscal Year 2019-20 through 2021- 22 funding cycle through a competitive RFP process. The remainder is recommended for direct allocation for programs and positions that are implemented by Oakland Unite and public partners, as outlined in the fiscal impact section. For the RFP submission process, Oakland Unite will solicit proposals from nonprofit community-based and public agencies. As in the past, applicants will be required to demonstrate the ability to leverage an additional 20 percent in matching funds. Oakland Unite will provide technical assistance to applicants, including at least one bidders' conference following RFP release.

For the RFP review process, Oakland Unite will convene review panels that consist of community members, subject-matter experts and public sector partners involved in the strategy. Past performance will be shared with the review panel for any applicants that are former grantees. Oakland Unite will present final grant recommendations to the SSOC and City Council for approval. An estimated timeline of key dates includes:

- RFP release – January 14, 2019
- Proposals due – February 25, 2019
- Grant recommendations – April 22, 2019 (SSOC); May 28 (Public Safety Committee); June 4 (City Council)
- Contract start date – July 1, 2019

**Alternate Options:** Staff recommends the strategy allocations, process, and timeline outlined above based on input from community members and local stakeholders about current violence prevention and intervention needs. This recommendation balances the City's interest in being able to meet needs that emerge through the DVP planning process while strengthening gun violence and gender-based violence response services, youth diversion and reentry support, and community healing. Figure 3 describes the recommended option and two alternate options.

**Table 3 – Spending Plan Options**

Description	Pros	Cons
<p><u>Option 1 (recommended):</u> Release RFP in January 2019 for 3-year contracts; hold \$1.5 million in reserve for DVP implementation</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows for needed shifts from currently funded strategies based on community input</li> <li>• Uninterrupted service delivery</li> <li>• New community organizations able to apply for funding</li> <li>• Reserve funds available to meet emerging DVP needs</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Does not incorporate final recommendations from USC DVP planning process</li> <li>• Challenges administrative capacity to handle other large City contracts (e.g., OFCY, Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Fund)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Option 2:</u> Release all funds in January RFP for 3-year contracts; no funds held in reserve</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Supports expansion of services and allows for needed shifts from current strategies based on input</li> <li>• Uninterrupted service delivery</li> <li>• New community organizations able to apply for funding</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Funds unavailable to meet any new emerging DVP needs</li> <li>• Challenges administrative capacity to handle other large City contracts (e.g., OFCY, Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Fund)</li> </ul>
<p><u>Option 3:</u> Delay release of RFP and approve 12-month extension of existing contracts</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Allows extra time for DVP process to unfold and further alignment of spending plan with DVP</li> <li>• Timeline off-cycle from other RFPs (e.g., OFCY, Sugar-Sweetened Beverage Fund)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delays needed changes to violence intervention work</li> <li>• Delays ability of new community groups to apply for funds</li> </ul>

**FISCAL IMPACT**

**Total Projected Expenses:** Approval of this spending plan will allow Oakland Unite to conduct an RFP process to identify community-based partners to provide services in the recommended strategy areas for violence prevention. In addition, it will partially fund one position based at Alameda County Probation and one position based at Oakland Unified School District who coordinate youth reentry, and nine positions that coordinate and provide direct services within the City. The total projected cost of all these direct service efforts in FY 2019-2020 is \$9,200,000 and estimated to be similar for FY 2020-21 and FY 2021-22.

In addition, one-time funding in the amount of approximately \$1,500,000 will be kept in reserve to support future DVP implementation activities, where such activities constitute an eligible use of the tax revenue collected pursuant to the Safety and Services Act.

**Funding Sources:** The recommended allocations will be supported primarily by restricted funds collected for violence prevention programs as authorized by the Safety and Services Act. The Safety and Services Act is estimated to provide a total of \$27.4 million in FY 2018-19. As prescribed in the voter-approved measure, funding is allocated as follows:

**Table 4 – Safety and Service Act Funds**

Category	Percent Allocation	FY 2018-19 Amount
Audit and Evaluation	3% of total funds	\$0.8 million
Oakland Fire Department	\$2 million of remainder	\$2 million
Oakland Police Department	60% of remainder	\$14.8 million
Oakland Unite	40% of remainder	\$9.8 million

This funding will continue in FY 2019-20 and FY 2020-21. Of the annual allocation of Safety and Services Act funding for services, approximately 12 percent is used to cover program management activities, including planning, research, data analysis, and contract management.

All funding is held within the Measure Z – Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2014 Fund (2252). In addition, carryforward from the Measure Z – Violence Prevention and Public Safety Act of 2014 Fund (2252), HSD Policy and Planning Organization (78311), Measure Z Violence Prevention Service Reserve Project (TBD) will be used to enhance funding for the three-year grant period. Revised revenue projections are not yet available for Fiscal Years 2019-2020 and 2020-2022, and if revenue projections change, either positively or negatively, staff will reflect adjustments during the grant award process.

**Leveraged Funds:** Oakland Unite works with multiple partners to leverage funds and resources, including the Oakland Fund for Children and Youth, Head Start, Community Housing Services, Alameda County Probation, the Workforce Development Board, and Oakland Unified School District. Over \$3.5 million in funds from the California Board of State and Community Corrections, California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation, the California Workforce Prison to Employment Program, and the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention have been secured to supplement Safety and Services Act funds. Additional available funding from related grants and other revenue sources may be included in the RFP alongside Measure Z funding to facilitate a more efficient allocation and award process.

## **PUBLIC OUTREACH/INTEREST**

As mentioned above, Oakland Unite staff conducted an intensive public input and planning process to develop the Spending Plan. A central part of this process was a series of community listening sessions hosted in partnership with Be The Change Consulting, a local women-of-color led business. Listening sessions were held with over 100 people, including: 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. Be The Change developed a 2.5-hour interactive format for the listening sessions designed to gather qualitative data about current violence intervention strategies – what’s working, what can be improved, and to answer specific inquiries such as how can community members play a greater role. Please see **Attachment B** for details.

Oakland Unite staff also participated in the USC-led DVP participatory planning process as part of the Steering Committee. To increase alignment USC and Steering Committee members attended Oakland Unite listening sessions, with ongoing dialogue to share findings. Findings from both processes were shared at a November 10 community briefing convened by USC.

Staff presented this item to the SSOC on November 26, 2018, in Oakland City Hall, Hearing Room 1. Prior to reviewing the attached plan, SSOC members reviewed evaluations of existing services, took part in a planning retreat, and gave input at their September 24 and October 22 meetings on how themes from the listening campaign informed strategy direction.

## **COORDINATION**

This report and legislation have been reviewed by the Office of the City Attorney, Finance Department, and the City Administrator’s Office.

Oakland Unite participates in collaborative efforts including the Alameda County Reentry Network, Oakland Ceasefire, the California Cities Gang Prevention Network, the Alameda County Human Trafficking Advisory Council, and National League of Cities’ campaigns to reduce violence. Recommendations in this report were developed in coordination with stakeholders from these and other efforts. See **Attachment A** for a list of partners consulted.

## **PAST PERFORMANCE, EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP**

**Evaluation Efforts:** The Safety and Services Act requires evaluation of funded efforts to be conducted by a third-party independent evaluator. SSOC and City Administrator’s Office oversaw the process for selecting the evaluator, Mathematica Policy Research, who began activities in January 2017 and will continue through 2020 (Resolution No. 86487 C.M.S).

The evaluation of violence intervention services includes: annual descriptive reports on program activities; annual evaluations of the impact of selected strategies on participant outcomes; and a four-year comprehensive evaluation of the impact of participation in programs. Results from current and future evaluation will inform program implementation.

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Public Safety Committee  
December 4, 2018

**Evaluation Findings:** Initial evaluation findings on new strategies launched in 2016 include:

- 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 are at high-risk of violence. Participants have experienced violence, contact with local law enforcement, and are often disconnected from education.
- Agencies have shared values and shared practices. Grantees value hiring peer providers with similar lived experience and agree that training, support, and coordination around use of best practices is necessary for program success.

Moreover, recent gun violence reductions in Oakland have been linked in part to the Ceasefire strategy, which emphasizes a shared focus on young men at the center of gun violence. 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.

### **SUSTAINABLE OPPORTUNITIES**

**Economic:** Programs for Oakland residents affected by violence will improve their economic stability through recidivism reduction, educational achievement, and employment for youth and young adults. Breaking the cycle of violence reduces medical, police, and incarceration costs.

**Environmental:** Expanding social services and improving opportunities for those most impacted by violence helps make marginalized communities safer, healthier, and stronger. Safer neighborhood conditions contribute to the growth and revitalization of our communities.

**Social Equity:** Oakland Unite programs focus on serving low-income communities of color most impacted by violence and seeks to achieve greater social equity by improving school performance, expanding employment opportunities and providing comprehensive support.

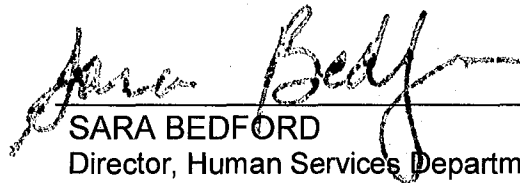


**ACTION REQUESTED OF THE COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution Approving Violence Prevention Program Strategies, Funding Amounts, And The Request For Proposal Process For Programs Funded By The 2014 Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act For The Funding Cycle From July 2019 Through Fiscal Year 2021-2022.

For questions regarding this report, please contact Peter Kim at 510-238-2374.

Respectfully submitted,



SARA BEDFORD  
Director, Human Services Department

OAKLAND UNITE DIVISION  
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Peter Kim, Interim Director  
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*Prepared by:*  
Josie Halpern-Finnerty, Acting Manager  
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Attachments (2):

- A: Oakland Unite Spending Plan 2019-2022
- B: Memo on Community Input by Be the Change Consulting

**ATTACHMENT A**  
**Oakland Unite Spending Plan 2019-2022**

# OAKLAND UNITE SPENDING PLAN 2019-2022



# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

## **Oakland Unite is proud to present its proposed 2019-2022 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.

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# 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 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.<sup>1</sup> 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.

# OAKLAND UNITE FRAMEWORK FOR SAFETY AND HEALING

## PEOPLE AT CENTER

## ENGAGEMENT & SAFETY

## HEALING & GROWTH

### People at the center of gun violence and their loved ones

When someone is killed, their loved ones get grief support including funeral planning and help accessing victim assistance funds.

When a shooting or serious injury occurs, victims are met at hospital bedside and connected to resources including conflict mediation when needed.

Street-credible violence interrupters work with groups/gangs to mediate conflicts.

Life coaching helps people involved in gun violence address safety concerns and work towards their personal goals.

Victims of violence are offered longer-term healing and mental health services, and links to other needed resources.

Interrupters help people involved in groups/gangs identify alternatives to violence, and connect them to life coaches for support when ready.

Life coaching is based on transformative relationships and includes mentoring, systems advocacy, and connection to job supports, housing or other resources.

### Young people involved or at risk of justice-system involvement and their loved ones

Youth get support to move away from violence and out of the justice-system, such as help reentering school and the community after incarceration.

Diversion programs use restorative techniques to help youth repair harm instead of facing charges.

Life coaching supports young people to navigate their situation and strengthen socio-emotional skills.

Education and career exploration programs help young people work towards their future.

### Survivors of family violence or commercial sexual exploitation and their loved ones

Survivors have access to 24-hour support to find a way out of immediate danger.

Interventions involve crisis response hotlines, drop-in "safe space" centers, and reaching out to people identified by law enforcement. Emergency housing helps people stay safe in the short-term.

Longer-term support includes transitional housing, legal assistance, healing, coaching and mental health supports.

Providers bring specialized experience of working with family violence survivors and commercially sexually exploited young people.

### Communities that experience most of the serious violence in Oakland

Activities and events such as vigils, healing circles, and support groups offer people a way to connect with one another after violence occurs.

Block parties, barbeques or parks events led by community members provide safe spaces to gather, celebrate, and transform norms around violence.



# 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.<sup>2</sup> 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.<sup>3</sup>

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.<sup>4</sup>



# DEVELOPING THE 2019-2022 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.

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

## **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.

**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.<sup>5</sup>

**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.<sup>6</sup>

**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.







# OVERVIEW OF 2019-2022 STRATEGIES

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.

## GUN VIOLENCE RESPONSE 48% (~4.5 MILLION)

INCLUDES:

**Gun violence response and coordination**

**Violence interruption**

**Adult life coaching**

**Adult employment and education**

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESPONSE 15% (~1.3 MILLION)

INCLUDES:

**Commercial sexual exploitation response**

**Family violence response**

## YOUTH DIVERSION & REENTRY 19% (~\$1.8 MILLION)

INCLUDES:

**Youth diversion**

**Youth life coaching and reentry coordination**

**Youth education and employment**

## COMMUNITY HEALING 18% (~1.6 MILLION)

INCLUDES:

**Community outreach and engagement**

**Grassroots mini-grants for healing centered activities**

**Trauma informed training for the provider network**



# 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.



# STRATEGY AREA

## GUN VIOLENCE RESPONSE

800 ESTIMATED SERVED  
9-10 ESTIMATED GRANTS  
48 % OF FUNDS

## 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.

# PRIORITY 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.<sup>7</sup>

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%.<sup>8,9</sup> 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.<sup>10</sup> 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.<sup>11</sup> A strong response following crisis incidents supports the development of relationships, prevents retaliation, and helps people move through grief and towards healing.<sup>12,13</sup>

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.<sup>14</sup> 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.<sup>15</sup>



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 and families transition out of immediate danger

Participants and families avoid violent injury/re-injury

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

Participants and families begin to heal from trauma

Participants reduce or cease contact with the justice system

Participants and families have healthy relationships with each other

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

Participants are employed and prepared to pursue longer-term goals

# STRATEGY AREA YOUTH DIVERSION & REENTRY

280 ESTIMATED SERVED  
5-6 ESTIMATED GRANTS  
19 % OF FUNDS

## 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.



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.<sup>16</sup> As of October 2018, 275 Oakland youth were on probation, with African American and Latino youth representing the greatest percentage.<sup>17</sup> 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.<sup>18</sup>

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.<sup>19</sup> 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.<sup>20</sup> 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.<sup>21</sup> 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.<sup>22,23</sup>

## EXPECTED OUTCOMES:

**Diverted youth have charges dropped and no further justice system contact**

**Youth successfully complete probation without re-arrest**

**Youth have increased awareness of educational and job/career options**

**Youth avoid violent injury**

**Youth transitioning from incarceration are connected to school within 48 hours**

**Youth increase socio-emotional skills (e.g. resilience)**

**Youth have improved educational outcomes**

**Youth have caring relationships with positive adults and peers**

# STRATEGY AREA

## GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE RESPONSE SERVICES

1200 ESTIMATED  
SERVED  
3-4 ESTIMATED  
GRANTS  
15 % OF  
FUNDS

### 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%.<sup>24</sup> From January 2016-June 2017, there were 17 homicides related to domestic violence in Oakland.<sup>25</sup> 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.<sup>26,27</sup> Oakland accounts for over 50% of emergency department domestic assault visits in Alameda County.<sup>28</sup> 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.<sup>29</sup>

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.<sup>30,31</sup> 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.<sup>32</sup>

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.<sup>33</sup>

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.<sup>34</sup> 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.<sup>35</sup>

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**

# STRATEGY AREA COMMUNITY HEALING

1800 ESTIMATED  
SERVED  
2-3 ESTIMATED  
GRANTS  
18 % OF  
FUNDS

## 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.<sup>36</sup> 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.<sup>37</sup> 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.<sup>38</sup>

## 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**





# 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  
Be The Change Consulting  
Brady Campaign to Prevent Gun Violence  
Bright Research Group  
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  
Mathematica Policy Research  
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



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<sup>23</sup> Miller, C., Millenky, M., Schwartz, L., Goble, L. & Stein, J. (2016). Building a Future: Interim Impact Findings from the YouthBuild Evaluation. MDRC. Available: [https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/YouthBuild\\_Interim\\_Report\\_2016\\_508.pdf](https://www.mdrc.org/sites/default/files/YouthBuild_Interim_Report_2016_508.pdf)

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<sup>26</sup> Open Justice Crime Statistics on Domestic Violence. Available: <https://openjustice.doj.ca.gov/crime-statistics/domestic-violence>

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## 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](http://pushcartdesign.com))



## **ATTACHMENT B**

# **Memo on Community Input by Be the Change Consulting**

SYNTHESIS of OAKLAND UNITE

# Community Listening Sessions

Prepared by

Be the CH  NGE  
consulting

# Table of Contents

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# Process Overview

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?

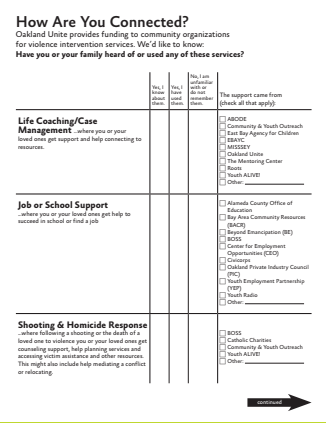


**THE NEIGHBORHOOD I CALL HOME IS:**

NORTH OAKLAND	NORTH HILLS
WEST OAKLAND	CHINATOWN & CENTRAL
SAN ANTONIO	LOWER HILLS
FRUITVALE	ELMHURST
CENTRAL EAST OAKLAND	SOUTH HILLS

## SURVEY

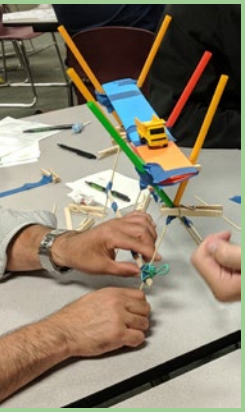
Which Oakland Unite services am I aware of?  
 Which have I used?



**How Are You Connected?**  
 Oakland Unite provides funding to community organizations for violence intervention services. We'd like to know: Have you or your family heard of or used any of these services?

	Yes, I have heard of this service	Yes, I have used this service	No, I have not heard of this service	The support came from (check all that apply)
<b>Life Coaching/Case Management</b> where you or your loved ones get support and help connecting to resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> ABCDE <input type="checkbox"/> Community & Youth Outreach <input type="checkbox"/> EAVI/ Agency for Children <input type="checkbox"/> MTRV <input type="checkbox"/> Oakland Unite <input type="checkbox"/> The Healing Center <input type="checkbox"/> Roots <input type="checkbox"/> Youth ALIVE <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<b>Job or School Support</b> where you or your loved ones get help to succeed in school or their job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> Alameda County Office of Education <input type="checkbox"/> Bay Area Community Resources (BACR) <input type="checkbox"/> Bay Area Education (BE) <input type="checkbox"/> BOSS <input type="checkbox"/> Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO) <input type="checkbox"/> Unifund <input type="checkbox"/> Oakland Private Industry Council (PIC) <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Employment Partnership (YEP) <input type="checkbox"/> Youth Radio <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<b>Shooting &amp; Homicide Response</b> where you or your loved ones get counseling support, help planning services and locating their resources and other resources. This might also include help mediating a conflict or reconciling.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/> BOSS <input type="checkbox"/> Santa Chelita <input type="checkbox"/> Community & Youth Outreach <input type="checkbox"/> Youth ALIVE <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____

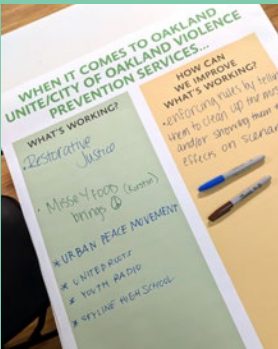
## INTERACTIVE DISCUSSION



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?



**WHEN IT COMES TO OAKLAND UNITE/CITY OF OAKLAND VIOLENCE PREVENTION SERVICES...**

**WHAT'S WORKING?**  
 • Restorative Justice  
 • Messy Food brings @ (Group)  
 • URBAN PEACE MOVEMENT  
 • URBAN PEACE  
 • YOUTH PA-DIP  
 • OFFLINE PEACE SCHOOL

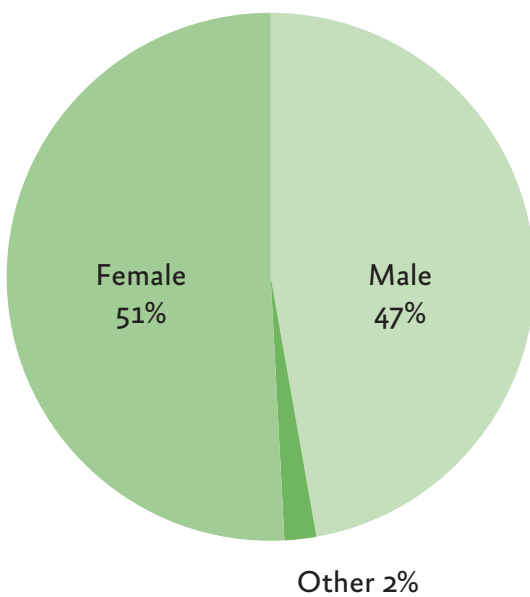
**HOW CAN WE IMPROVE WHAT'S WORKING?**  
 • Collaborating more by having them to clean up the mess and/or showing more effects on signage

# Who Showed Up

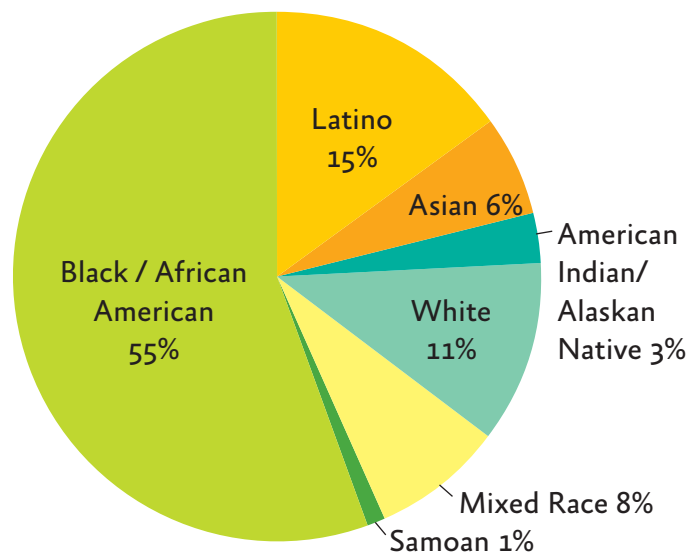
Over four months, we spoke to 120 participants who reflected various roles and Oakland perspectives.

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.

## GENDER



## RACIAL IDENTITY

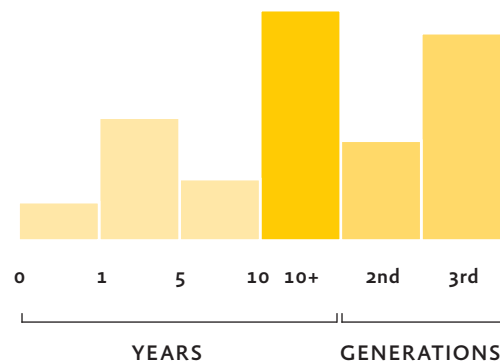


The participants were almost equally divided between **genders** and reflected a diversity of **racial identities**, with Black and Latino people most represented.

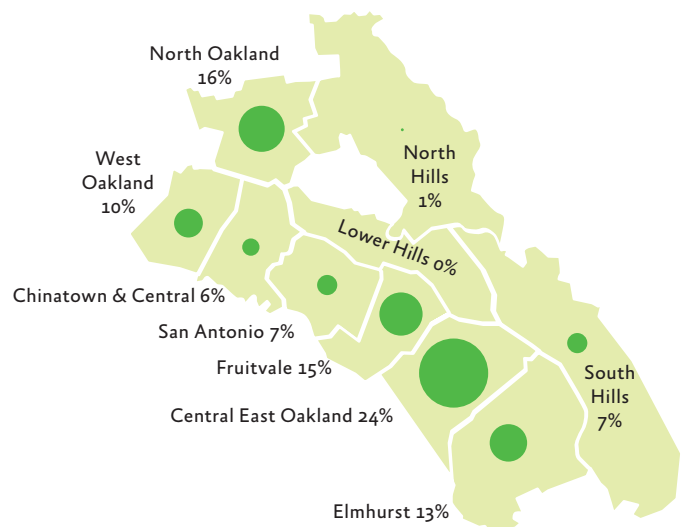
70% of the participants who attended these listening sessions identified as **Oakland residents** for more than ten years and were able to speak to the historic conditions of violence, specifically the ways that incarceration rates, gang activity, gun violence, and sex trafficking have intersectional 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

### HOW DEEP ARE YOUR OAKLAND ROOTS?



### THE NEIGHBORHOOD I CALL HOME IS...



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.

**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."

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

"Too many guns in our community leads to death."

"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.

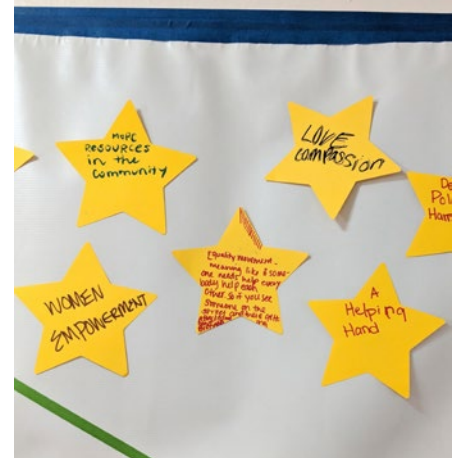
“We need to organize and support regular meetings and activities that build relationships.”

“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.



2018 NOV 20 PM 4:09

RESOLUTION No. \_\_\_\_\_ C.M.S

Introduced by Councilmember \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLUTION APPROVING VIOLENCE PREVENTION PROGRAM STRATEGIES, FUNDING AMOUNTS, AND THE REQUEST FOR PROPOSAL PROCESS FOR PROGRAMS FUNDED BY THE 2014 OAKLAND PUBLIC SAFETY AND SERVICES VIOLENCE PREVENTION ACT FOR THE FUNDING CYCLE FROM JULY 2019 THROUGH FISCAL YEAR 2021-2022**

**WHEREAS**, the City of Oakland voters passed Measure Z, the Oakland Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Act (“Safety and Services Act”), in November 2014, approving a series of taxes to support violence intervention objectives, including programs and services that provide support for high-risk youth and young adults to interrupt the cycle of violence and recidivism; and

**WHEREAS**, the Human Services Department (HSD) administers Safety and Services Act funds for violence intervention programs and services through its Oakland Unite division, which every three years prepares a spending plan to outline the strategies and services recommended for the next funding cycle; and

**WHEREAS**, HSD’s Oakland Unite division developed spending plan recommendations concerning strategies to prioritize and the process for allocating funds in collaboration with community and public partners that included community listening sessions, review of local and national best practices, and interviews with public and community partners; and

**WHEREAS**, the spending plan recommendations were informed by the ongoing citywide participatory planning process led by the Urban Strategies Council to inform the development of the City’s new Department of Violence Prevention (“DVP”); and

**WHEREAS**, the proposed spending plan dedicates the bulk of funds to gun violence interventions, with additional funds allocated to youth diversion and reentry supports, gender-based violence response services, and efforts to support community healing; and

**WHEREAS**, the Safety and Services Act establishes a Public Safety and Services Violence Prevention Oversight Commission (SSOC), whose members received the priority spending plan for Safety and Services Act violence prevention and intervention funds on November 26, 2018; and

**WHEREAS**, the FY 2018-19 Adopted Budget projects total revenue from the Safety and Services Act for Fiscal Year to be an estimated \$27,447,807, out of which an estimated \$9,849,749 is available for violence intervention and prevention programs; and

**WHEREAS**, revenue projections are not yet available for Fiscal Years 2019-2020 and 2020-2022, and if revenue projections change, either positively or negatively, staff will reflect adjustments during the grant award process ; and

**WHEREAS**, Oakland Unite recommends holding approximately \$1.5 million available from prior year service reserve funds to support future DVP implementation activities where such activities constitute an eligible use of the tax revenue collected pursuant to the Safety and Services Act; and

**WHEREAS**, a competitive Request for Proposals (RFP) process is recommended for most strategies and services, with the remaining funds recommended for direct allocation for two (2) positions implemented by public institutional partners, and roughly nine (9) existing FTE administrative positions and approximately nine (9) FTE violence intervention direct service positions within the City; and

**WHEREAS**, Oakland Unite staff will return to the SSOC and City Council in the spring of 2019 with recommendations concerning grant allocations to specific agencies that result from the RFP process; now, therefore be it:

**RESOLVED:** That the violence prevention program strategies, estimated funding amounts, including approximately 12% for Oakland Unite administrative costs, and the RFP process for the funding cycle beginning July 2019 through Fiscal Year 2021-22 described in the accompanying report are hereby approved; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That approximately \$1.5 million from prior year service funds will be held in reserve to support future DVP implementation activities where such activities constitute an eligible use of the tax revenue collected pursuant to the Safety and Services Act; and be it

**FURTHER RESOLVED:** That available funding from related grants and other revenue sources may be included in the RFP process to facilitate a more efficient allocation and award process.

IN COUNCIL, OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA, \_\_\_\_\_

**PASSED BY THE FOLLOWING VOTE:**

AYES - BROOKS, CAMPBELL-WASHINGTON, GALLO, GIBSON MCELHANEY, GUILLÉN, KALB, KAPLAN AND PRESIDENT REID

NOES-

ABSENT-

ABSTENTION-

ATTEST: \_\_\_\_\_  
**LATONDA SIMMONS**  
City Clerk and Clerk of the Council  
of the City of Oakland, California