



CITY OF OAKLAND

# AGENDA REPORT


**TO:** Jestin D. Johnson  
City Administrator

**FROM:** Holly Joshi  
Chief of Violence  
Prevention

**SUBJECT:** Ceasefire-Lifeline Contracts

**DATE:** March 30, 2026

City Administrator Approval

  
Jestin Johnson (Apr 13, 2026 22:46:10 PDT)

Date: Apr 13, 2026

## **RECOMMENDATION**

**Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:**

- 1. Amending A Professional Services Agreement With The Trustees Of The University Of Pennsylvania For The Term Of July 1, 2025, To December 31, 2028, To Add Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) For A Total Amount Not To Exceed Six Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars (\$639,952) To Evaluate The City Of Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline Strategy And Waiving The City Of Oakland's Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements And Competitive Bidding Process; And**
- 2. Awarding A Grant Agreement To Faith In Action East Bay For The Term Of July 1, 2026, To June 30, 2027, For Services Related To Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline Strategy For A Total Cost Not To Exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000)**

## **EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

The proposed resolution will allow the Department of Violence Prevention (DVP) to fund services that will enhance the City of Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline strategy, which focuses intensive support services and enforcement efforts on individuals most likely to draw or drive gun violence. Specifically, this resolution will allow the DVP to amend an existing contract with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania for evaluation of the Ceasefire-Lifeline strategy to add \$200,000 for an expanded qualitative evaluation. It will also allow the DVP to award a one-year grant to Faith In Action East Bay for \$150,000 to fund a full-time staff position that will support the Ceasefire-Lifeline strategy, as well as food for call-ins, gift cards for prospective life coaching participants, and stipends for faith-based leaders who participate in custom notifications.

Public Safety Committee  
April 21, 2026

## **BACKGROUND / LEGISLATIVE HISTORY**

### Ceasefire-Lifeline

As part of its comprehensive approach to public safety, the City of Oakland implements the evidence-based, data-driven strategy for reducing gun violence known as focused deterrence. This approach focuses intensive social services and law enforcement efforts on the small segment of the population—approximately 350 to 400 people in Oakland—most likely to draw or drive gun violence. Nationally, this model is referred to as *Ceasefire*. In Oakland, it is known as *Ceasefire-Lifeline* to reflect the model's two interwoven components: the *Ceasefire* enforcement arm, led by the Oakland Police Department, and the *Lifeline* intensive services arm, delivered by the DVP. The goals of *Ceasefire-Lifeline* are to prevent gun violence, reduce the footprint of the criminal justice system, and support high-risk individuals in changing their behaviors to achieve long-term safety and stability. The City of Oakland first implemented *Ceasefire-Lifeline* from 2012 to 2018 and reduced homicides by nearly 50%, with at least 31.5% being directly attributable to the strategy. Following several years of disinvestment and an associated spike in homicides, the City of Oakland reinvested in the model in early 2024 and subsequently reduced shootings and homicides by over 50% in two years. Oakland's 2025 homicide rate was the lowest seen in decades.

### Contract with the University of Pennsylvania

The DVP has an existing contract with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania to evaluate the City of Oakland's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy. This contract was approved by City Council through [Resolution 90732 C.M.S.](#) and [Resolution 91006 C.M.S.](#) for the term of July 1, 2025, to December 31, 2028, in the amount of \$439,952. This contract is primarily funded by external grants from the Bureau of Justice Assistance and Kaiser Permanente, and it satisfies specific evaluation requirements of those grants in addition to evaluating the impact of the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy overall. The current scope of the evaluation entails the following:

1. Trend Analysis of Homicides and Shootings
  - a. Analyze monthly and yearly counts of homicides and shootings from 2021-2026 with comparisons to trends in similar California cities.
  - b. Synthetic difference-in-differences analysis of monthly and yearly counts of homicides and shootings 2021-2026 (pre- and post-intervention).
2. Descriptive Analysis of Direct Communications
  - o Analyze trends in monthly counts of direct communication deliveries 2024-2026.
  - o Summarize characteristics of direct communication recipients (e.g., demographics, group/gang associations).
  - o Summarize the characteristics of clients receiving repeat direct communications.
  - o Regression analysis of victimization and criminal justice outcomes for matched treatment (contact made) and control subjects (no contact made).
3. Descriptive Analysis of Life Coaching
  - o Analyze trends in the month counts of life coaching enrollments and caseloads.
  - o Summarize characteristics of life coaching enrollees (e.g., demographics, group/gang associations).
  - o Summarize services received by life coaching enrollees.
  - o Qualitative interviews with life coaching enrollees.

4. Analysis of Life Coaching Participant Outcomes
  - Summarize prosocial outcomes (e.g., employment and education achievements) and analyze differences by length of enrollment and services received.
  - Analyze criminal justice outcomes (e.g., rearrest, conviction) with comparisons to direct communication recipients who did not enroll in life coaching.
  - Analyze victimization outcomes with comparisons to direct communication recipients who did not enroll in life coaching.
  - Regression analysis of criminal justice outcomes (e.g., rearrest, conviction) for matched treatment (participated in life coaching) and control subjects (direct communication recipients who did not enroll in life coaching).
  - Regression analysis of victimization outcomes (e.g., rearrest, conviction) for matched treatment (participated in life coaching) and control subjects (direct communication recipients who did not enroll in life coaching).

The DVP chose to contract with the University of Pennsylvania's Crime and Justice Policy Lab for this evaluation because two of the lab's researchers, Drs. Anthony Braga and Lisa Barao, are national experts in the evaluation of focused deterrence strategies for gun violence reduction such as *Ceasefire-Lifeline*. Together, they have authored numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals regarding the evaluation of focused deterrence strategies in dozens of cities across the county, including recent evaluations in San Francisco and Stockton. They have prior experience conducting evaluation work in Oakland, as they evaluated Oakland's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy from 2012 to 2017. They have also conducted three separate problem analyses of gun violence in Oakland since 2016, allowing the City of Oakland to consistently monitor drivers of gun violence in Oakland by documenting the circumstances of shootings and homicides, victim and suspect demographics, and group conflicts and alliances. Furthermore, Vaughn Crandall and Reygan Cunningham, experts in the implementation of focused deterrence models who formerly led the California Partnership for Safe Communities, recently joined the Crime and Justice Policy Lab and bring local and national expertise in the implementation of focused deterrence strategies to this evaluation.

#### Grant to Faith In Action East Bay

Faith in Action East Bay (FIA) is a nonprofit organization of faith-based leaders in the Bay Area who focus on racial and social justice issues. FIA played a central role in bringing *Ceasefire-Lifeline* to Oakland in 2012 after learning of the model's success in Boston and Chicago, and the organization has remained an integral partner in implementing the strategy since that time. Specifically, FIA has been responsible for identifying, training, and coordinating faith-based leaders to participate in custom notifications and call-ins, which are direct communications with individuals at highest risk for gun violence to implore them to accept services and cease high-risk behaviors. FIA has also served on the cross-sector partnership team that has coordinated implementation of the strategy over the years, with representatives from the Department of Violence Prevention (formerly Oakland Unite), the Oakland Police Department, the Mayor's Office, and the Alameda County Probation Department,

From July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2025, the DVP funded a full-time staff member at FIA to support *Ceasefire-Lifeline* activities through funding from the Board of State and Community Corrections' California Violence Intervention and Prevention (CalVIP) Grant Program. This staff member was tasked with participating in custom notifications and call-ins as a faith-based representative and coordinating other faith-based leaders to participate. This staff member also

disbursed grant-funded gift cards to direct message recipients to encourage their enrollment in life coaching, and the staff member disbursed grant-funded stipends to faith-based leaders as compensation for their time. This position, while an important component of Oakland's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy, ceased on July 1, 2025, when the DVP's CalVIP funding ended. The DVP was not awarded renewed funding through the CalVIP cycle that began on April 1, 2026.

## **ANALYSIS AND POLICY ALTERNATIVES**

The proposed resolution, if adopted, will allow the DVP to enhance the City of Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline strategy in two ways:

- (1) Add \$200,000 to the DVP's existing grant with the University of Pennsylvania to fund a more robust qualitative analysis of program implementation and participant outcomes.
- (2) Award a one-year grant to FIA to fund a full-time staff position that will support the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy, as well as food for call-ins, gift cards for prospective life coaching participants, and stipends for faith-based leaders who participate in custom notifications.

### **Contract with the University of Pennsylvania**

The DVP's current contract with researchers from the University of Pennsylvania includes one set of interviews with 5-10 life coaching participants to better understand the life coaching experience and which components are most important for personal transformation. The current contract does not include interviews with life coaches responsible for delivering services or representatives from Ceasefire-Lifeline partner agencies to better understand strategy implementation. The proposed addition of \$200,000 would enable researchers to enhance the qualitative evaluation components in the following ways:

- (1) Increase the number of life coaching participants interviewed from 5-10 in one year to 15-30 over three years to better understand the most impactful components of life coaching.
- (2) Add interviews with life coaching staff to better understand how life coaching services are delivered.
- (3) Add interviews with key staff at *Ceasefire-Lifeline* partnership entities, including the Oakland Police Department, Office of Mayor Barbara Lee, Alameda County Probation Department, and FIA, to better understand how this cross-sector, collaborative strategy operates in practice.

Learnings from these interviews will be pivotal to interpreting quantitative data produced from the same evaluation. While quantitative data may show that Ceasefire-Lifeline contributed to a significant reduction in shootings and homicides, quantitative data will not explain how and why that reduction occurred. Qualitative data are necessary to understand how the Ceasefire-Lifeline strategy functions, how life coaching services are delivered, and how and why they are impactful in the lives of participants.

Grant to Faith In Action East Bay

The DVP will execute a new, one-year grant agreement with FIA for \$150,000 to resume funding a full-time staff member who will be tasked with participating in custom notifications and call-ins as a faith-based representative, training and coordinating other faith-based leaders to participate in custom notifications and call-ins, disbursing gift cards to *Ceasefire-Lifeline* message recipients as an incentive to enroll in life coaching, and issuing stipends to faith-based leaders who participate in custom notifications and call-ins as compensation for their time. The grant with FIA will also fund food for call-in meetings, which take four to five times per year. These items, which play an important role in the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy, were previously funded by DVP CalVIP grants that have now ended. They are unable to resume without funding from the DVP as FIA has no alternative source of funding.

**WAIVER RATIONALE**

The DVP is requesting that City Council waive the Local and Small Local Business Enterprise Program requirements and competitive bidding process for the requested contract amendment with the University of Pennsylvania for evaluation services related to *Ceasefire-Lifeline*. The researchers from the University of Pennsylvania are national experts in the evaluation of focused deterrence strategies for gun violence reduction such as *Ceasefire-Lifeline*, and they therefore have deep knowledge of the data and analyses needed to assess impact. They have extensive experience working in Oakland, as they conducted an impact analysis of *Ceasefire-Lifeline* in Oakland from 2012 to 2017 and have conducted three separate problem analyses of gun violence in Oakland since 2016. One member of the research team previously served as the program coordinator of *Ceasefire-Lifeline* in Oakland from 2013 to 2018, bringing unique local insights and understanding. Finally, the DVP is already under contract with the University of Pennsylvania to conduct a largely quantitative evaluation of *Ceasefire-Lifeline*, which must be integrated with qualitative findings in order to produce the most helpful findings.

**RELATED PLANNING EFFORTS**

This agenda item is a routine item and does not relate to any Oakland strategic planning efforts.

**FISCAL IMPACT**

A breakdown of the appropriated project funding sources for the DVP’s contract with the University of Pennsylvania is provided in **Table 1**. Funding for the requested contract increase of \$200,000 will come from the DVP’s General Purpose Fund allocation for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. This expenditure is a one-time cost and will be spent during Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

**Table 1: Project Funding Sources for Contract with the University of Pennsylvania.**

Fund Source	Organization	Award	Project	Program	Amount
2994 (Kaiser grant)	70211	24645	1007638	Fostering Safe and Healthy Communities Program (SC22)	\$127,957

Fund Source	Organization	Award	Project	Program	Amount
2112 (BJA grant)	70211	24643	1007639	Fostering Safe and Healthy Communities Program (SC22)	\$311,995
1010 (General Purpose Fund)	70211	N/A	1006367	Fostering Safe and Healthy Communities Program (SC22)	\$200,000

Funding for the requested grant with FIA for \$150,000 will come from the DVP's General Purpose Fund allocation for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. This expenditure is a one-time cost and will be spent during Fiscal Year 2026-2027.

### **PUBLIC OUTREACH / INTEREST**

No public outreach was deemed necessary for the proposed resolution beyond the standard City Council agenda noticing procedures because the DVP has an existing contract with the University of Pennsylvania for evaluation services and FIA is the long-time, established faith-based partner for the City of Oakland's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy.

### **COORDINATION**

This report and legislation have been reviewed by the Office of the City Attorney and the Budget Bureau. As core members of the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* partnership team, the Oakland Police Department and Office of Mayor Barbara Lee are supportive of the proposal.

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

Researchers from the University of Pennsylvania's Crime and Justice Policy Lab evaluated the City of Oakland's *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy from 2012 to 2017 and found that the strategy was directly responsible for a 31.5% reduction in homicides during that time. These researchers are national experts in the evaluation of focused deterrence strategies for gun violence reduction such as *Ceasefire-Lifeline* and have authored numerous publications in peer-reviewed journals regarding their impact.

During the DVP's prior grants with FIA, DVP staff have required quarterly narrative reports that include information on number of direct communications delivered, number of clergy trained, number and amount of clergy stipends disbursed, and number and amount of gift cards disbursed to prospective life coaching participants. The DVP will continue this practice for the proposed grant if funding is awarded.

### **RACE AND EQUITY**

The *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy serves individuals at the highest risk of imminent gun violence, the majority of whom are African American or Latino males. Of the 110 participants currently enrolled in life coaching with the DVP through *Ceasefire-Lifeline*, 83% are African American.

Additional supports for the *Ceasefire-Lifeline* strategy will directly contribute to more positive outcomes for this vulnerable population.

### **ACTION REQUESTED OF THE CITY COUNCIL**

Staff Recommends That The City Council Adopt A Resolution:

1. Amending A Professional Services Agreement With The Trustees Of The University Of Pennsylvania For The Term Of July 1, 2025, To December 31, 2028, To Add Two Hundred Thousand Dollars (\$200,000) For A Total Amount Not To Exceed Six Hundred Thirty-Nine Thousand Nine Hundred Fifty-Two Dollars (\$639,952) To Evaluate The City Of Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline Strategy And Waiving The City Of Oakland's Local And Small Local Business Enterprise Program Requirements And Competitive Bidding Process; And
2. Awarding A Grant Agreement To Faith In Action East Bay For The Term Of July 1, 2026, To June 30, 2027, For Services Related To Oakland's Ceasefire-Lifeline Strategy For A Total Cost Not To Exceed One Hundred Fifty Thousand Dollars (\$150,000)

For questions regarding this report, please contact Holly Joshi, Chief of Violence Prevention, and (510) 920-6272.

Respectfully submitted,



Holly Joshi (Apr 9, 2026 15:36:11 PDT)

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