An aerial view of the Oakland city skyline at sunset, with a warm orange and yellow glow over the buildings. The image is partially obscured by a vertical orange bar on the right side.

# OAKLAND CEASEFIRE AUDIT REPORT & FINDINGS

**A REPORT ON GUN VIOLENCE  
REDUCTION EFFORTS**

**DECEMBER 2023**

Prepared by:

**CALIFORNIA PARTNERSHIP  
FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES**

**NICJR** ★  
National Institute for  
Criminal Justice Reform

*We would like to thank the men and women of the Oakland Police Department, Oakland Department of Violence Prevention and the community-based organizations that they fund for providing the information contained in this report and for the work that they do every day to save lives in Oakland.*

*We would also like to thank Kaiser Permanente and the Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Project Safe Neighborhoods grant for funding this report.*

Oakland Ceasefire Assessment

**Final Report  
December 2023**

**Index**

<b>1. Introduction and Framing</b>	2
<b>2. Executive Summary</b>	6
<b>3. Ceasefire Audit Findings &amp; Recommendations</b>	14
<b>4. Annexes</b>	50

**1. Introduction and Framing**

The purpose of this document is to provide an analysis of the effectiveness of the current Oakland Ceasefire strategy aimed at reducing gun violence. With the significant rise in gun violence in Oakland since 2019, and continuing into 2023, this audit is intended to help the Mayor and City Administration identify the challenges and opportunities and to course-correct to get the strategy back on track.

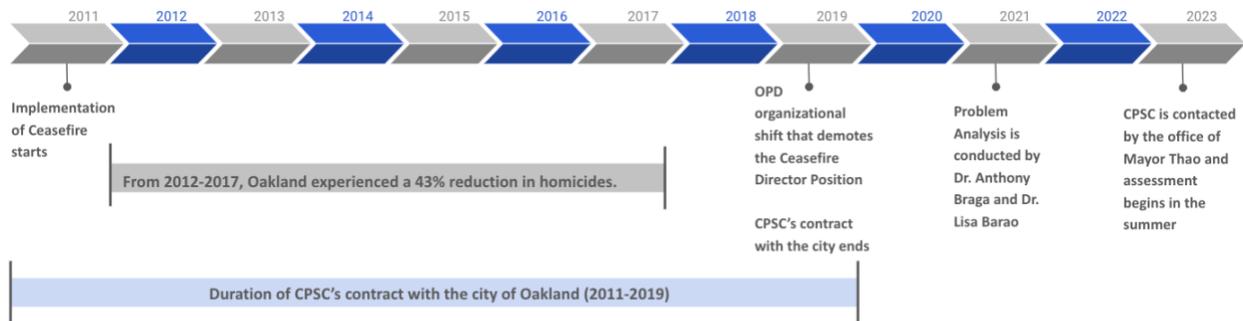
The California Partnership for Safe Communities (CPSC) was asked to conduct this audit because it helped to design and implement the strategy from 2011-2020 as the technical assistance provider to the City of Oakland. Additionally, the current leadership of the CPSC and the National Institute for Criminal Justice Reform (NICJR) helped implement the strategy from 2011-2019 either as city employees or Oakland Unite funded contractors. As the original authors of this strategy, with David Muhammad (now with the NICJR), the CPSC is uniquely qualified to audit this strategy. Both organizations are also nationally recognized violence prevention experts.

The CPSC is a non-profit organization based in Oakland, CA. Our mission is to help cities advance a public safety **“triple bottom line”**: 1) reduce gun violence at a city level; 2) reduce victimization and recidivism for community members at the highest risk of gun violence; 3) build police-community trust. We engage in long-term (3-5 years) partnerships with cities to apply **evidence-**

**informed strategies**<sup>1</sup> to these durable safety problems. We also work with leading scholars to evaluate the impact of these strategies and mine lessons learned for the field and public policy.

The CPSC had previously been under contract with the City of Oakland from 2011 to 2020 (see Figure 1) to help the city build and implement the Ceasefire strategy in both the Oakland Police Department (OPD) and Oakland Unite (now the Oakland Department of Violence Prevention [DVP]). The strategy is an evidenced-based approach and, when implemented correctly, is designed to be an intervention that specifically seeks to intervene with individuals at the very highest risk of gun violence and to reduce gun violence in the near term. Ceasefire is an *intervention* strategy that concentrates resources on high-risk individuals and groups and seeks to reduce victimization and violent perpetration through a combination of community-based and law enforcement interventions<sup>2</sup>.

*Figure 1: Oakland Ceasefire Strategy Timeline (2011-2023)*



Source: Figure created by the CPSC

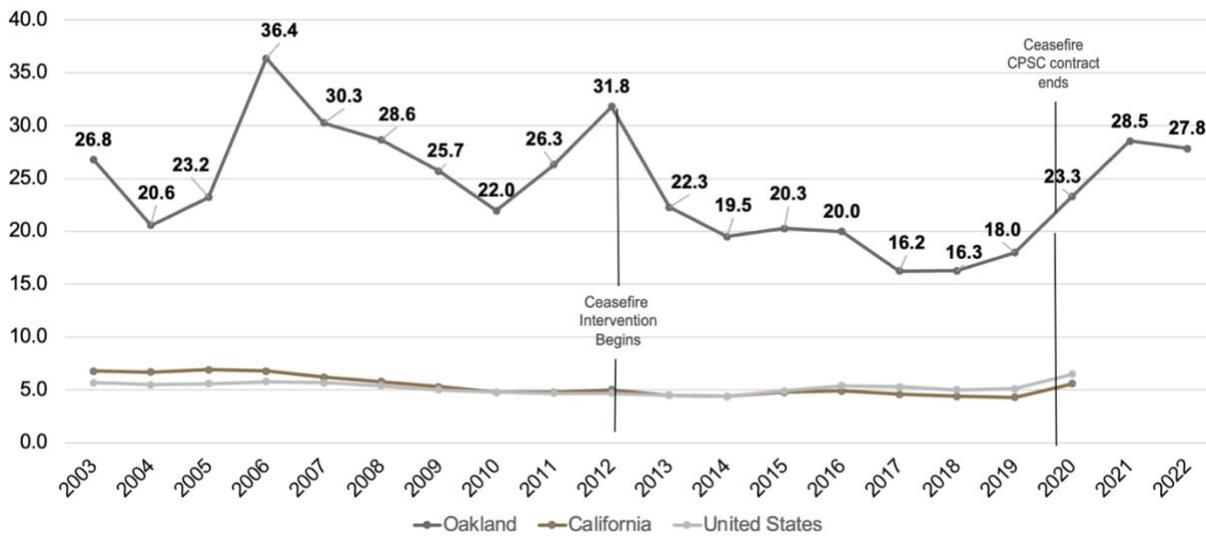
From 2012-2017, Oakland experienced a 43% reduction in homicides. Ceasefire was associated with a 31.5% reduction in citywide gun homicides.<sup>3</sup> This translated into approximately 140 lives saved in a five-year period compared to the average homicide rate for Oakland at that time.

<sup>1</sup> Braga, A., Weisburd, D., & Turchan, B. (2018). Focused deterrence strategies and crime control: An updated systematic review and meta-analysis of the empirical evidence. *Criminology & Public Policy*, 17(1), 205-250.

<sup>2</sup> Ibid

<sup>3</sup> Braga, A., Barao, L., Zimmerman, G., Brunson, R.K., Papachristos, A.V., Wood, G. and Farrell, C. (2019). Oakland Ceasefire Evaluation: Final Report to the City of Oakland.

Figure 2: Oakland Homicide Rate



Source: Figure created by the CPSC

In April of 2023, the CPSC was contacted by the office of Mayor Sheng Thao to discuss the effectiveness of the current Ceasefire strategy, specific to the internal workings of the city. In essence, Mayor Thao wanted to know how and whether the City of Oakland was doing its part to implement the strategy effectively. She referred to a recommendation that was provided to the City of Oakland in a 2021 Problem Analysis conducted by Dr. Anthony Braga of the University of Pennsylvania and Dr. Lisa Barao of Westfield State University, where they stated:

“It is recommended that the City of Oakland closely audits the resources allocated and activities of the organizations responsible for implementing Ceasefire. This audit will assess whether the challenges of the pandemic and demands for police reform have diminished focus. The audit should determine whether each key component (communications, service provision, law enforcement) has the necessary focus, quality, and scale to reduce the violence problem the city now faces.<sup>4</sup>”

As a result of this recommendation and those discussions, Mayor Thao requested the CPSC to audit the current Ceasefire strategy. This audit is limited to the Ceasefire strategy and to the role of the Oakland Police Department, Department of Violence Prevention, and how they work with

<sup>4</sup> Barao Lisa M., Braga Anthony A. 2021. Oakland violence problem analysis, 2019-2020. Unpublished report submitted to City of Oakland. Philadelphia, PA: Crime and Justice Policy Lab, University of Pennsylvania.

their partners<sup>5</sup>, who are funded to provide services for those clients. This audit does not examine the role of community partners such as moral voices or outside agencies.

**Objectives of the audit:**

1. To determine if the Ceasefire strategy is being implemented effectively.
2. To determine if Ceasefire is the appropriate strategy for Oakland's current gun violence challenges.
3. To understand what is currently driving gun violence in Oakland. This includes an updated brief problem analysis that captures Oakland's shootings and homicides from January 2023 to September 30, 2023.

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<sup>5</sup>Abode Services, Building Opportunities for Self-Sufficiency, Catholic Charities of the Diocese of Oakland, Center for Employment Opportunities, Inc, Communities United for Restorative Youth Justice, Community & Youth Outreach, Inc., Community Works West, Inc, Covenant House California, Destiny Arts Center, East Bay Asian Youth Center, Family Violence Law Center, Lao Family Community Development Inc., Movement Strategy Center (Urban Peace Movement), National Institute of Criminal Justice Reform, Oakland LGBTQ Community Center Inc, Oakland Kids First, Oakland Private Industry Council, Inc., Oakland Unified School District Office of Equity, Oakland Unified School District-JJC, Restorative Justice for Oakland Youth, Roots Community Health Center, Ruby's Place, Safe Passages, Sister-to-Sister 2, Incorporated, Student Program for Academic and Athletic Transitioning, The Mentoring Center, Trybe, Inc, Youth Employment Partnership, Inc., Young Women's Freedom Center, Youth ALIVE!

**2. Executive Summary**

**Audit Findings:** The City of Oakland gradually walked away from the Ceasefire strategy, notably in 2020. In 2020 there was a clear shift away from ensuring that the components of the Ceasefire strategy were focused on groups and individuals at the highest risk of gun violence; and that the strategy was implemented with sufficient quality to impact citywide violence. As supported by agency staff and managers, this shift away from high-risk people to places were diametrically opposed to the focus that Ceasefire requires and directly contributed to the strategy becoming ineffective. During the audit process, we found that beginning in 2016-2017 and accelerating in 2019 and 2020, each essential element of the strategy was significantly watered down, resources stripped away, or refocused. As a result, the Ceasefire strategy no longer impacted citywide levels of violence in Oakland and as such the City of Oakland has not been effectively implementing the Ceasefire strategy since 2020.

CPSC came to this conclusion during the audit process through observations, and a review of quantitative and qualitative data that included interviews with key stakeholders currently doing this work in Oakland. Specifically, this audit included collecting a) quantitative crime and key performance data from 2021, 2022, and 2023, b) qualitative interviews with key stakeholders from OPD and DVP, c) document review, meeting observations, and d) debriefing with stakeholders after the sessions to gather additional information.

The analysis was conducted by examining each component of the Ceasefire strategy including: 1) Gun problem analysis; 2) Shooting review; 3) Coordination meeting; 4) Direct communication; 5) Life coaching and services and supports; 6) Focused supervision and enforcement. In these components the analysis sought to understand the conditions of management and governance and elaborate proposals to improve it (see figure 3 below).

*Figure 3: Ceasefire Oakland Strategy*



Source: NICJR

A brief description of the Oakland Ceasefire Strategy components, the diagnostic and recommendations are summarized below.

- 1. Gun Problem Analysis:** Identifies what is driving gun violence in Oakland and who is at the highest risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence. This is a foundational document specific to Oakland that informs *who* and *what* intervention and enforcement partners should focus on.
  - a. Diagnostic:** Oakland's violence problem remains largely consistent with prior analysis in 2011-2012; 2016-2017 and 2020-2021, which found a hyper concentration of risk among justice involved, Black and Latino adult men, with social connections to identifiable street groups and gangs in Oakland. The increase in violence in Oakland cannot be explained by some dramatic shift in the nature of the problem.
  - b. Recommendations:**
    - i. Increase Subject Matter Experts (SME) on Latino Gangs/groups to include newly immigrated groups (Guatemalan, Salvadorian, and Honduran) in both the DVP and the OPD. In OPD these SME should be a new unit within Ceasefire.
    - ii. Reconfigure the risk assessments for DVP gun violence prevention/intervention to align with the Problem Analysis. The Problem Analysis should set the risk assessments for clients in Life Coaching and those receiving services and support under the gun violence prevention/intervention framework.
  
- 2. Shooting Review:** The Shooting Review is a weekly OPD and law enforcement meeting examining every shooting that took place in the last seven days to help determine 1) which incidents will result in retaliation, 2) what is driving violence that week, 3) identify gun violence trends and violence dynamics, 4) identify which incidents, based upon evidence, individuals will be arrested for engagement in violence, 5) manages and focuses enforcement plans, and 6) identifies who will be intervened with using direct communication.
  - a. Diagnostic:**
    - i. The effectiveness and significance of the Shooting Review meeting, crucial to the success of this strategy, have significantly diminished because this meeting is no longer used to manage and direct gun violence reduction efforts.
  - b. Recommendations:**
    - i. To Make the Shooting Review functional, the OPD executive team should make this meeting and this strategy **a priority** for the Department again.

Specifically, the executive team of the OPD needs to attend and participate in every meeting.

- ii. The shooting review should remain the Department's primary meeting to analyze and address gun violence in Oakland; should link analysis; investigations and enforcement; direct communication; and should guide the Department's work with partners including justice system agencies and community intervention organizations.
- iii. The National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) meeting should continue and be prioritized. Although this meeting is new, it has tremendous promise and should be fostered and cultivated to continue to inform the Shooting Review.

3. **Coordination Meeting:** The purpose of the Coordination Meeting is for 1) information to be shared with DVP and service providers on shooting incidents from the previous week, 2) to share what is believed to be driving gun violence dynamics, 3) to share who will be intervened with and why, and 4) to develop a proactive plan to address retaliatory shootings

- a. **Diagnostic:**

- i. Coordination meetings are divided into two sessions. The first meeting involves key stakeholders and lacks documentation, while the second meeting, though structured, faces challenges in planning for retaliation.

- b. **Recommendations:**

- i. Consolidate the coordination meetings into a singular session. Two coordination meetings are inefficient and consumes unnecessary staff and community-based organization (CBO) resources. Streamlining this process into a single meeting would optimize time and resources.
- ii. The meetings should be led and overseen by the Mayor's Office or a designated senior public safety representative from the City Administration. These facilitators must take responsibility for guiding staff in formulating plans and subsequently hold them accountable for outcomes.
- iii. The meeting needs to examine incidents comprehensively, emphasizing not only their literal review but also a critical discussion on *how* the team plans to utilize the array of city and city-funded resources to proactively prevent retaliation. This robust discussion should inform near term violence reduction plans aimed at reducing retaliation and addressing violence drivers.

4. **Direct Communication:** Direct Communications include call-ins and custom notifications. Call-ins are larger group meetings with individuals at the highest risk of gun violence, law enforcement, service providers, and survivors of gun violence. Custom

notifications are smaller meetings with a community member, a law enforcement official, a service provider, and individuals at the very highest risk of gun violence. The message communicated to participants in these meetings is that we care about you, want to help you, and have tailored services to assist you, and gun violence must stop.

**a. Diagnostic:**

- i. Quantity: The audit reveals challenges in tracking direct communications data from 2020-2023, hindering analysis. The average number of individuals directly communicated with has decreased compared to pre-pandemic years, raising concerns about the effectiveness of the current approach in reaching those at the highest risk of gun violence.
- ii. Quality: The messaging in both call-ins and custom notifications appears to be effective. However, we recommend that speakers in attendance at the meeting be reflective of the entire partnership to include the District Attorney's Office and trauma surgeons/social workers to be in alignment with best practices.
- iii. Finally, the quality of call-in messaging from OPD would benefit from the use of the PowerPoint that had historically been used to ensure more succinct messaging.
- iv. Lastly, the audit observed challenges in consistently tracking the promptness of custom notification referrals from the OPD Shooting Review to actual message delivery.

**Recommendations:**

- v. We recommend increasing custom notifications with highest risk people that are directly impacted by gun violence. This strategy works best when communications are done with *impacted* individuals who are out of custody. Direct communications should be similar to pre-pandemic levels at approximately 300-350.
- vi. During the audit process, data availability and discrepancies coming from OPD to DVP were a common theme. Data should be provided to DVP Life Coaches from OPD consistently regarding individuals communicated with including *why* they were communicated with and contact information.

**5. Life Coaching & Services and Support** are offered to individuals in call-ins and custom notifications. Participation in Life Coaching and services and support is not required. However, if people are interested in life coaching, then the goal of the engagement is to reduce an individual's *risk* of becoming a victim or perpetrator of gun violence.

- a. Diagnostic:** DVP is poorly structured to address the service and support needs of high-risk individuals that express interest in services. Organizationally, key staff

that would be responsible for locating these individuals and providing services to them are under different chains of command and do not formally communicate.

- i. Information provided by the DVP regarding percentage on retention during the observation period was unclear leading to inconsistencies between data and percentages
- ii. Even though the vast majority of direct communication recipients indicate interest in receiving help and support (84%); very few (only 25%) end up on a caseload after being referred to Life Coaching.
- iii. Out of the 25% of clients integrated into the caseload, a significant portion of Ceasefire clients do not remain on the caseload for an extended duration. Analysis of the data from the reporting period reveals a rapid decline, with Ceasefire clients often disengaging from the caseload within a span of 2-3 months.

**b. Recommendations:**

- i. Re-organize the DVP Gun Violence work under one management structure. The DVP lacks strategic focus and intentionality and needs to be reorganized with an understanding of the difference between prevention and intervention as it relates to gun violence.
- ii. The DVP needs a clear theory of change around gun violence. Currently, there are bits and pieces of elements of different strategies. The theory of change needs to be developed and designed based on the data and who is at the very highest risk of gun violence.
- iii. To increase the percentage of clients who come onto life coaching case load, we recommend combining the Outreach Worker and Violence Interrupter positions so that they can engage in relentless outreach. Relentless outreach is a function that the city currently does not fund and is needed to locate and engage Ceasefire clients and other individuals at elevated risk levels that are often difficult to consistently locate.
- iv. We recommend that 70% of DVP Life Coaches' caseloads be made up of Ceasefire referrals that originate from the Shooting Review, Custom Notifications, Call-Ins, and Coordination Meetings. The other 30% must meet at least four of the five following criteria to ensure they are the very highest risk population as per multiple problem analysis findings:
  1. Aged 18-35 Black or Latino male
  2. Significant Criminal Justice history
  3. Connected to a crew/group/gang
  4. Prior shooting victim

5. Connected to a recent shooting (in the past six months, a friend, a family member, or a fellow group member was either shot or arrested for a shooting)

**6. Focused Supervision & Enforcement** for individuals who continue to engage in gun violence. Enforcement should be specific to the small number of individuals who continue to engage in gun violence.

**a. Diagnostic:**

- i. While the goal of the Ceasefire strategy is to minimize the use of law enforcement sanctions and maximize the use of community intervention; holding violent perpetrators accountable is necessary both to provide justice to victims and families but also to be able to stem ongoing cycles of retaliation.
- ii. The Ceasefire unit's focused enforcement on violence drivers is impeded by staffing shortages and by being diverted to address other crimes. Current staffing levels don't allow the Ceasefire section to fulfill its focused enforcement responsibilities, given the violence in Oakland and the number of ongoing conflicts.<sup>6</sup>
- iii. This issue is attributed to broader structural and leadership challenges within the Department. The OPD's organizational shift, particularly with the creation of the Violent Crime Operations Center (VCOC) in 2021, by the former Chief of Police, prioritized solving past crimes to boost clearance rates. However, this strategy fails to yield sustainable crime reductions, as evidenced by a declining homicide clearance rate from 50% in 2020 to 35% in 2022. The focus on solving past crimes appears to contribute to the creation of new crimes, ultimately straining the OPD's resources and exacerbating the challenge of solving crimes effectively.

**b. Recommendations:**

- i. Disband the VCOC due to the lack of focus on preventing violence and addressing current violence trends at the area level
- ii. Fully staff the Ceasefire Unit to allow them to focus on multiple active conflicts simultaneously
- iii. Combine the Ceasefire Unit, and the Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC), under one chain of command
- iv. Put the Crime Reduction Teams (CRTs) back into the geographic areas
  1. Fully staff the area-based CRTs with a prioritization for areas most impacted by gun violence

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<sup>6</sup> The diminished staffing (16-20 in 2023, compared to a peak of 32-40) restricts their ability to address these conflicts effectively.

- v. The Assistant Chief of Police should manage the Ceasefire Unit with a focus on reducing gun violence.
- vi. Area based CRTs impacted by gun violence should have person specific plans that complement the Ceasefire units plans to reduce gun violence.
- vii. Ceasefire and CRT gun violence plans should be managed by the Assistant Chief of Police

## **Management and Governance**

As supported by agency staff interviewed, the Ceasefire strategy lacks effective management and a clear chain of supervision at various levels within both the DVP and the OPD. There are individuals who do aspects of the work, but no one with the authority to manage *all* of it with clarity on the performance indicators. This is a departure from the prior strategy implementation from 2011-2018.

Beginning with the **Ceasefire Director position**, it is crucial that this position aligns to the original design of the role which had significantly more authority and access to the mayor and executive leadership in both the OPD and DVP. Because of the breadth of the position, focus on strong project management skills are necessary and we recommend that the director position have the direct reporting relationship to the Chief of Police and to the Mayor per the Executive Directive issued in 2015.<sup>7</sup>

Additionally, given the amount of work that the director is responsible for, the management of the strategy should be expanded to include a **data position** that works with the director to ensure that data is analyzed and shared with DVP consistently and that grants are applied for and effectively managed. Finally, a **community engagement specialist position** is needed to grow community partnerships.

For the strategy to be successful, we recommend that the mayor, upon assessing the findings of this audit, restart the **Ceasefire performance review meetings** in February 2024 and continue them quarterly throughout the year. We also recommend that the new DVP chief have regular meetings with the Mayor and City Administrator where she and her team are held accountable for outcomes related to Ceasefire clients.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, the mayor and her staff will need to make clear who is responsible for gun violence reduction. To do this, she will need to build a **cohesive management team focused on gun violence reduction** with clear performance indicators for this strategy to begin yielding results. This team needs to include the DVP Chief, and her lead staff focused on gun violence reduction. Under the current organization this would need to include individuals

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<sup>7</sup> Ceasefire Executive Directive, October 14, 2015, Mayor Libby Schaaf

responsible for Life Coaching and Violence Interruption and from OPD this should include the Chief of Police, Assistant Chief of Police, Ceasefire Captain, and Ceasefire Director. This team will need support and regular engagement with the Mayor's Senior Public Safety staff and the City Administrator's office. The team will also need to be managed rigorously and regularly to ensure they are resourced, focused on the right people, and applying the appropriate interventions to reduce gun violence in the near term.

### **3. Ceasefire Audit Findings & Recommendations**

This audit and the analysis that informs it is organized according to the required components of the Ceasefire strategy that when working collaboratively has been proven to reduce gun violence in Oakland and throughout the nation<sup>8</sup>. The goal of this audit is to assess whether these components are working as intended.

In this section, we can find a) the descriptions of the components in Oakland, b) the analysis of those components based upon quantitative and qualitative data, and c) the recommendations for each component of the management cycle.

### **A. Gun Violence Problem Analysis**

The gun violence problem analysis is a thorough examination conducted by the city in partnership with the CPSC to understand who is at the highest risk of gun violence and to identify the primary factors driving such incidents. This approach is widely utilized as the analytic foundation for effective violence reduction strategies across U.S. cities. The process involves utilizing data from homicide and non-fatal shooting cases, including details on individual criminal histories, motives, and group affiliations. The ultimate goal is to understand *who* is at the highest risk of being impacted by violence *now* to inform strategic decisions on where to focus efforts and how to effectively reduce gun violence in the immediate future. Serving as a foundational document, the analysis will play a pivotal role in shaping operational and funding decisions for gun violence intervention.

#### **Gun Violence Problem Analysis 2023**

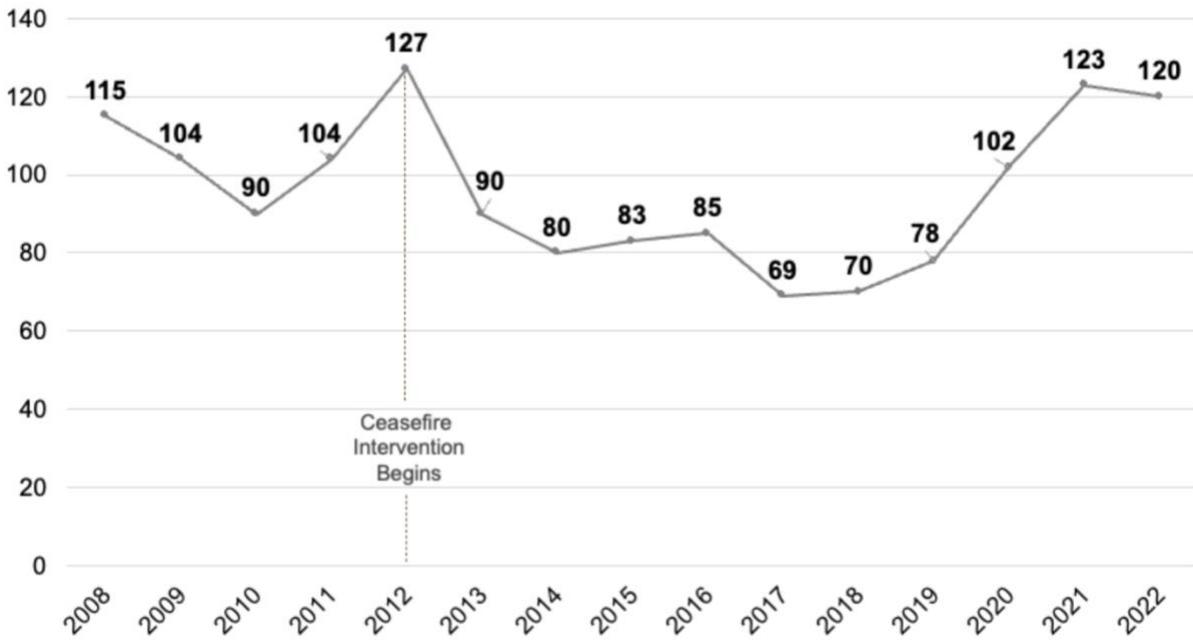
- This analysis examined all homicides and nonfatal injury shootings in Oakland from January 2023 – September 2013 (n=388).
- The 87 homicides involved 143 unique victims or identified suspects, and the 301 nonfatal shootings involved 401 unique identified victims or suspects.
- This violence analysis examines all homicides and nonfatal shootings occurring between January 1, 2023 – December 31, 2023.
- These 388 incidents include 87 homicides and 301 nonfatal shootings.

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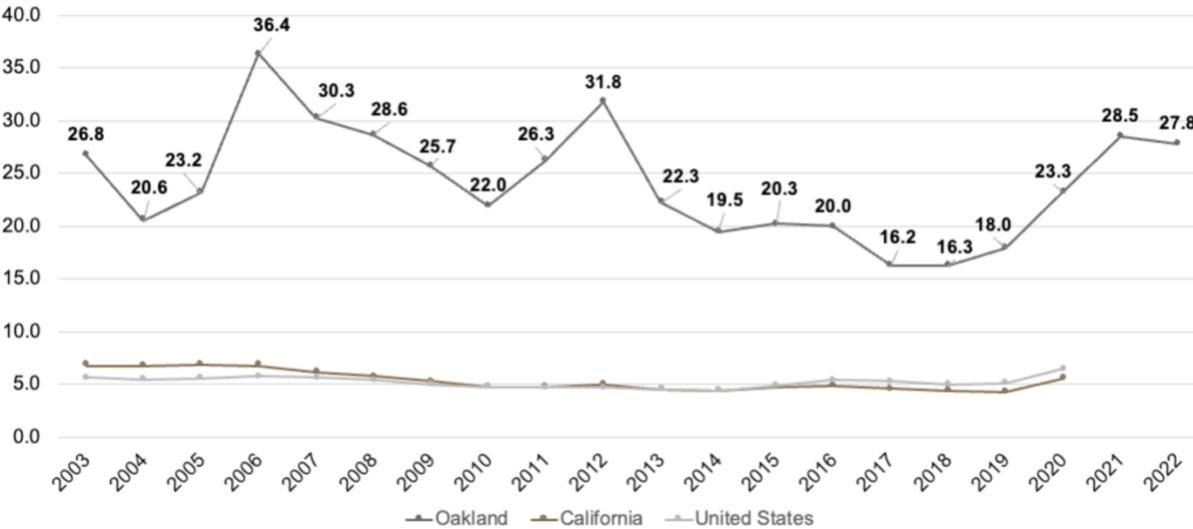
<sup>8</sup> Braga, A., Barao, L., Zimmerman, G., Brunson, R.K., Papachristos, A.V., Wood, G. and Farrell, C. (2019). Oakland Ceasefire Evaluation: Final Report to the City of Oakland.

# CALIFORNIA PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

*Oakland Homicides 2008-2022*

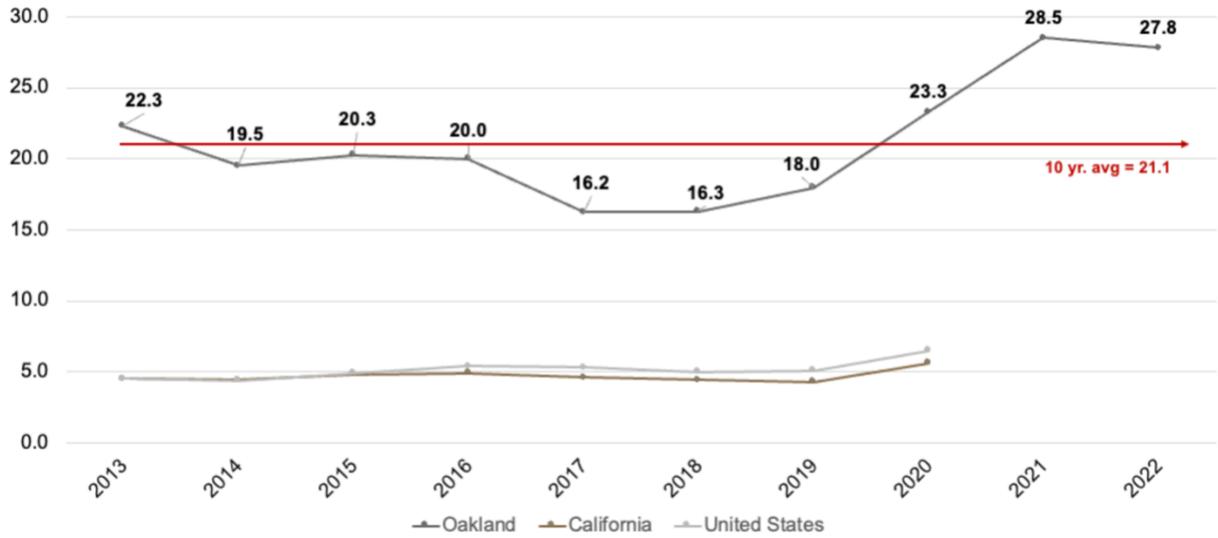


*Oakland Homicide rate (per 100,000 population): 2003-2022*



# CALIFORNIA PARTNERSHIP FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

Oakland Homicide rate (per 100,000 population): 2013-2022



Homicide Victims & Suspects: Sex & Race

	HOMICIDES (N=87)			OAKLAND POPULATION
	Victims (n=94)	Suspects (n=49)	Victims & Suspects (n=143)	
<b>Sex</b>				
Male	77.7%	89.8%	81.8%	48.3%
Female	22.3%	10.2%	18.2%	51.7%
<b>Race</b>				
Black	60.9%	58.1%	60.0%	23.8%
Hispanic	23.9%	32.6%	26.7%	27.0%
White	7.6%	2.3%	5.9%	35.5%
Other	7.6%	7.0%	7.4%	-

*Homicide Victims & Suspects: Age*

	HOMICIDES (N=87)		
	Victims (n=94)	Suspects (n=49)	Victims & Suspects (n=143)
<b>Age</b>			
17 & under	8.6%	2.1%	6.4%
<b>18-24</b>	<b>17.2%</b>	<b>25.5%</b>	<b>20.0%</b>
<b>25-34</b>	<b>31.2%</b>	<b>31.9%</b>	<b>31.4%</b>
<b>35-44</b>	<b>21.5%</b>	<b>23.4%</b>	<b>22.1%</b>
45-54	8.6%	17.0%	11.4%
55+	12.9%	17.0%	8.6%
<b>Average Age</b>	<b>34.6</b>	<b>32.2</b>	<b>33.8</b>

**Summary Findings:**

Homicide & Shooting Demographics:

- The victims and suspects involved in homicides are predominantly Black (60%) males (82%) between the ages of 25-34 (31%). About 74% of victims and suspects are 18-44. **The average age for homicide victims and suspects is 34.**
- The victims and suspects involved in nonfatal shootings are predominantly Black (61%) males (80%) between the ages of 25-34 (33%). About 75% of victims and suspects are 18-44. **The average age for shooting victims and suspects is 32.**

Criminal History Demographics

- About 66% of **nonfatal shooting** victims and suspects were known to the criminal justice system prior to their involvement in the incident.
- Of those, most also had extensive criminal history:
  - 60% were previously incarcerated.
  - 57% had been convicted of a felony.
  - 64% had previously been on probation.

- Victims and suspects had been arrested an average of 8 times prior to the shooting incident, of which about 4 arrests involved felony offenses.
- Victims and suspects had committed about 9 prior criminal offenses prior to their involvement in the shooting.
- Again, most of these are disorder, property, drug, and unarmed violent offenses.
- About 79% of homicide victims and suspects were known to the criminal justice system prior to their involvement in the incident.
- Of those, most have extensive criminal history:
  - 64% were previously incarcerated.
  - 48% had been convicted of a felony.
  - 70% had previously been on probation.
- Victims and suspects had been arrested an average of 8 times prior to the homicide incident, of which about 4 arrests involved felony offenses.
- Victims and suspects had committed about 9 prior criminal offenses prior to their involvement in the homicide.
- Most of these are disorder, property, drug, and unarmed violent offenses.

## Motive & Group Involvement as Victims & Suspects

- Most homicides evolve from ongoing personal disputes (21%) and sudden disputes (16%). Most shootings evolved from robberies (14%), personal disputes (12%), and sudden disputes (10%).
- **Although only 10% of homicides involved a group-related conflict, at least 32% of all homicides involve group/gang members as victims, suspects, or both. Only 5% of shootings involved a group-related conflict, but at least 27% involved group/gang members as victims/suspects or both.**
- **About 29-35% of homicide victims and 21-36% of homicide suspects were identified as group/gang-associated.**
- **About 25-42% of shooting victims and 25-51% of shooting suspects were identified as group/gang associated.**
- Notably, transient victims and/or suspects were involved in 9% of shootings and 13% of homicides.

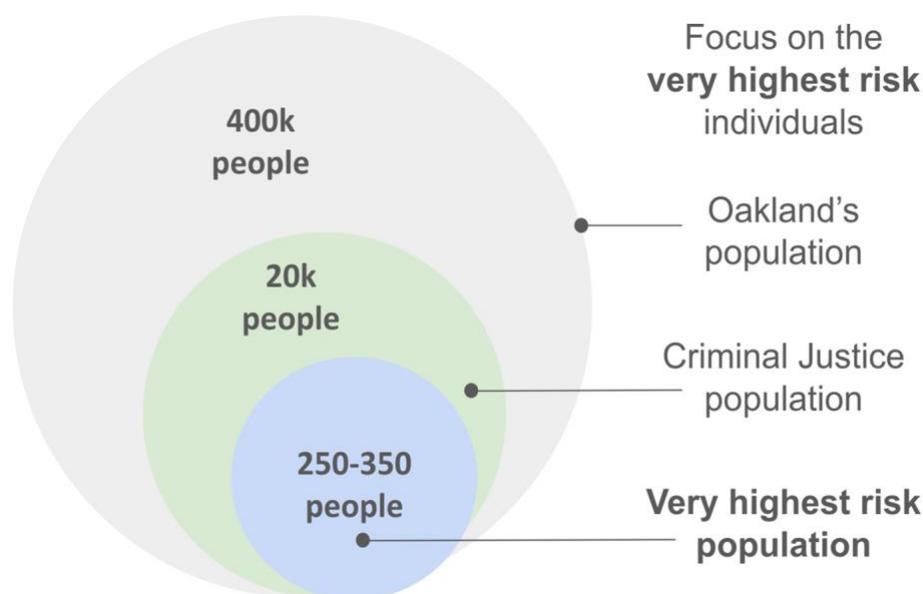
## Gang/Group

- Oakland PD personnel identified 48 active groups/gangs in the City.
- Of these groups, 16 have been involved in two or more homicides and/or nonfatal shootings in 2023.
- The estimated membership size of all 48 groups is 1232-1755 individuals, or about 0.4% of Oakland's total population. However, **these groups are involved in nearly one-third of all homicides and shootings.**
- Identified group/gang areas align closely with hot spots for homicides and nonfatal shootings.
  - At least 22% of homicides and shootings in 2023 occurred directly within identified gang territories.
  - Most violence concentrates in and around group territories in OPD Areas 3 and 5.

Oakland Very Highest Risk Demographic

- Adult Black and Latino men between the ages of 25-34
- Gang/Group involved
- Extensive criminal justice system history
  - Previously incarcerated
  - Previously on probation
  - Felony conviction
- Previously a victim or suspect in shooting, previous suspect in a homicide

*Figure 2: High-Risk Individuals vs population of Oakland.*



Source: NICJR

**Gun Violence Problem Findings & Recommendations**

1. Those at highest risk of violence have not changed since the first problem analysis in 2012. Oakland's violence problem remains largely consistent with prior analysis in 2011-2012; 2016-2017 and 2019-2020, which found a hyper concentration of risk among justice involved, Black and Latino adult men, with social connections to identifiable street groups and gangs in Oakland.
2. The increase in violence in Oakland cannot be explained by some dramatic shift in the nature of the problem.
3. Similar to the 2019-2020 analysis, gang/group dynamics have evolved in that most motives for incidents are not a "gang war/ongoing group conflict", but instead involve gang/group members as victims and suspects in incidents involving a variety of motives.

4. Given that well over a third of incidents involve gang/group members as victims/suspects in shootings and homicides, gang/group involvement continues to be one of the most important known factors in shootings and homicides
5. Increase Subject Matter Experts on Latino Gangs/groups to include newly immigrated groups (Guatemalan, Salvadorian, and Honduran). These SMEs should be a new unit within the Ceasefire unit.
6. Address the intelligence gap in OPD that is structural in nature by disbanding the VCOC (see **Important Considerations Impacting Effectiveness** )
7. Reconfigure the risk assessments for DVP gun violence prevention/intervention to align with the Problem Analysis. The Problem Analysis should set the risk assessments for clients in Life Coaching and those receiving services and support under the gun violence prevention/intervention framework.
8. Given the regional nature of gun violence per this analysis showing connectivity to out of city/county groups, and recent data indicating that 25% of shootings and homicides just from 2023 are tied to out of county groups (mainly San Francisco), OPD should consider strategically collaborating with other cities and counties.

## **B. Shooting Review**

Ideally, the purpose of the Shooting Review meetings should be to *get ahead of* retaliatory shootings by intervening using direct communication **or** by making an arrest of suspects where enough evidence is present. Although this sounds relatively simple, for most police departments, this is a significant cultural shift because it is uncommon for departments to share information, even with each other, and especially to prevent retaliation for fear of compromising an open investigation. Building upon this internal information sharing, this same information is also shared with outside agencies either working in Oakland (i.e. Oakland Housing Authority, Alameda County Probation) or who want to partner with Oakland (i.e. USAO, FBI, ATF, etc.).

All of this information and intelligence gathering about shootings and homicides in the last seven days should ideally develop into a plan with two separate routes:

1. **The first route** is intervention, where direct communications are used as a tool for individuals ***not*** likely to be arrested but closely connected to shooting and where retaliation is high. This could include someone who is a victim of a shooting whose criminal history and social connection indicate that they would retaliate if they were physically able, and who are friends/associates that would retaliate on their behalf.
2. **The second route** is arrest or intent to arrest. Discussions should occur in the room about whether there is sufficient evidence to make an arrest and which agency will be responsible for making the arrest/executing a search warrant.

Effective deconfliction between route one and route two is paramount, as it ensures authenticity in the discussion about risk during direct communication and the subsequent service offerings. The sincerity of these conversations and service proposals is compromised if law enforcement intends to apprehend the individual. Such an approach not only jeopardizes the integrity of the strategy but also undermines the trust of community members and service providers engaged in direct communication, posing a threat to the strategy's overall effectiveness.

Finally, the Shooting Review serves to get the OPD and other law enforcement partners on the same page regarding gun violence in real-time. By the end of the meeting, the OPD should understand *who* is driving gun violence/have a plan to figure it out, prioritize the conflicts, and dedicate resources to address the conflicts, including roles for outside agencies. For plans that are already in place, the executive team led by the Assistant Chief, should use the meeting to manage the progress of the plans, ensure resources are available to implement the plans and decide if plans should be canceled or redirected. This meeting should serve as the main venue for law enforcement in managing gun violence.

### **Shooting Review Analysis**

Shooting Reviews continue to exist in the Oakland Police Department and occur weekly. Participation is often inconsistent. In particular, there was one meeting during the observation period where no executive team member was present. When we inquired about what had happened and if a conflicting meeting had precedence, we found that there was none. If the meeting had been operating as intended, or if there had been a significant violent conflict (as a relevant example of the regional impact, this did happen with San Francisco during the observation period), no one would have guided the department's activities or resources. Despite the inconsistency of attendance by OPD, outside partners continue to participate apart from the Alameda County District Attorney's Office.

Although the discussions in the meeting generated intelligence about incidents, the information does not seem to inform the activities of the department and the resources needed to implement them that should be used to reduce gun violence. For example, the weekly Shooting Review PowerPoint focus for each area and for specialized units (Ceasefire and the VCOC) were rarely updated, even if the intelligence and the discussion in the meeting indicated that the individuals of focus should be changed. As such, law enforcement plans are rarely discussed, and there was no management by the executive team to oversee the progress of those plans. Additionally, there are no deliverables and follow-ups from the previous week's meetings. All in all, the key management function of the meeting was absent. Compared to how the meeting operated only a few years ago, it has now been reduced to a discussion-only meeting with law enforcement. Very rarely were any actions initiated, undertaken, and managed during the observation period.

Deconfliction of incidents did occur at the urging of the Ceasefire Director; however, direct communication was not offered for all the eligible incidents. Meaning that more opportunities for direct communication could have occurred.

Structurally, the Shooting Review is under the purview of the Assistant Chief of Police. As the operational lead in the OPD, this person is responsible for the quality of this meeting and, ultimately, for crime reduction city-wide. During the observation period, we noticed that the OPD did not have an Assistant Chief of Police. The position was vacant, with the Chief of Police, time permitting, trying to fill this role. Not having an Assistant Chief of Police to direct their attention to crime and specifically to gun violence is a significant problem. As a result, during the audit period, this was brought to the Administration's attention to remedy.

In summary, **the effectiveness and significance of the Shooting Review meeting, crucial to the success of this strategy, have significantly diminished.** As supported by agency staff themselves via the interviews, the strategy lacks a sense of direction starting in the Shooting Review within the OPD. Although OPD and outside agencies discuss incidents and provide intelligence that could reduce retaliation, there is no follow-up, no plans, and no accountability regarding gun violence. As such, the meeting lack's purpose because you cannot prevent retaliation if there is no action to address it. This is deeply concerning given that Oakland's gun violence rates have continued to rise since 2018, and if this is the priority meeting to discuss and take action on gun violence that informs the entire strategy, then the lack of action stemming from this meeting reveals some of the reasons why Oakland has been failing. ***This meeting drives the strategy.*** If the strategy were a car, the meeting would be the engine, and in its current state, the car would be inoperable and stationary. Finally, given that the OPD is an organization that operates by hierarchy and discipline (or paramilitary), attention and direction from the executive team are critical to get this engine running again. Interviewees from both DVP and OPD emphasized the need for strengthening the Shooting Review meeting.

### **Shooting Review Recommendations**

The primary recommendation for making the Shooting Review functional is for the executive team to make this meeting and this strategy ***a priority*** for the Department again. Specifically, if reducing gun violence is going to be a priority of the City of Oakland, then the executive team of the Oakland Police Department needs to attend and participate in every meeting. If the Chief is unavailable, at minimum, the Assistant Chief and the Deputy Chiefs should be available, and the meeting should be facilitated by the Cpt. of Ceasefire/Crime Gun Intelligence Center. In accordance with the statements made by agency staff, leadership at the executive level is needed to recommit and provide direction to Ceasefire and the department regarding gun violence reduction.

The executive team should participate in the meeting by:

1. Making sure that there are deliverables and there is follow-up on deliverables from previous meetings.
2. Not scheduling other mandatory executive meetings during the Shooting Review
3. Requiring that the PowerPoint be updated weekly to show shifts in priorities and individuals of focus
4. Requiring units and individuals with intelligence about gun violence to consistently attend the meetings
5. Requiring every unit responsible for reducing gun violence to have a weekly action plan that is updated weekly and is based on individuals, not on geographic areas
6. Holding staff accountable to the weekly tasks in the weekly action plan
7. Requiring CGIC/Ceasefire to do a weekly overview of conflicts and conflict mapping at least once a month
8. Prioritizing conflicts and assigning appropriate resources
9. Ensure that the information and intelligence from the National Integrated Ballistics Information Network (NIBIN) meeting (see below) is shared in the Shooting Review meeting

To make sure that the OPD is *prepared* for the meeting, in between Shooting Review meetings, the Assistant Chief should direct the Ceasefire Captain and the area commanders to meet to discuss *who* and *which* units will be assigned to each conflict. The Ceasefire Program Director should also brief the Assistant Chief in advance of the Shooting Review to ensure that he/she is prepared for the meeting and knows where the deficiencies are week to week in the strategy so he/she can work to address them in the meeting or in between meetings.

### **Innovation- NIBIN meeting**

During the observation period, we were informed of a new meeting that the OPD was starting. This meeting was called the “NIBIN meeting.”<sup>9</sup> What NIBIN data allows law enforcement and crime analysts to do is to match which firearms were used at which crime scenes and by individuals or groups. Often, crime guns are shared, so the NIBIN data may not be able to show which individual used the gun, but it can inform which social network has been using the firearm (crime guns are often reused and passed around in a gang/group/social network), and which series of shootings the same firearm was used in.

Upon observation, the CPSC learned that through a grant that the OPD Crime Lab received, they were able to expedite the analysis of casing recovered at crime scenes. As a result, the Lt. of the VCOC began taking that analysis and convening a small group of Ceasefire, intelligence officers, crime analysts, and outside partners to revisit incidents from the Shooting Review to determine if

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<sup>9</sup> The NIBIN (National Integrated Ballistic Information Network) evaluates the unique marks on ammunition casings when a gun is fired. ATF (2018) National Integrated Ballistic Information Network

the new NIBIN evidence could provide more information on the incident. Specifically, these meetings were able to provide information on involvement in incidents that had previously been listed as unknown or, in some cases, expand current knowledge of group involvement in incidents, confirm group involvement, or completely cancel out and redirect what was previously “known.” **Although this meeting is new, it has tremendous promise and should be fostered and cultivated to continue to inform the Shooting Review.**

### **C. Weekly Coordination Meetings**

The purpose of the Coordination meeting is for the OPD to share with the DVP and their CBO partners information from incidents in the Shooting Review that are likely to cause retaliation. This includes which incidents and individuals’ direct communications will be conducted with and the overall top violent conflicts in Oakland/region impacting Oakland. This information is shared with the DVP to inform their work, and these meetings are a one-way flow of information *to the DVP*, and no information from the DVP should flow back to the OPD. In the sharing of deconflicted information with DVP, the department should develop a plan with its gun violence reduction network resources to address violence with specific people, groups, and, in rare cases, in specific areas. This plan should be developed in the meeting, and every week during the Coordination meeting outcomes of the plan should be reported and measured for effectiveness by either the Ceasefire Program Director, the City Administrator's Public Safety staff, or the Mayor’s Public Safety Director/Senior Advisor on Public Safety.

For this meeting to have validity and integrity, the information coming *out of* OPD and being shared by the Ceasefire Program Director with the DVP should be deconflicted. No information shared should compromise an open investigation. Ideally, the information from the Shooting Review should be taken to the Gun Violence Reduction leads at the DVP and the Executive Liaisons at the contracted CBOs. To protect the integrity of line staff, no DVP or CBO line staff working with clients should attend the meeting. As mentioned above, the Mayor/City Admin office should be present to measure the outcomes of the intervention plan.

### **Coordination Meeting Analysis**

The Coordination meeting is no longer one meeting. Instead, it is technically two meetings. The first meeting occurs via Zoom or in person after the Shooting Review on Thursdays with the Ceasefire Program Director, occasionally two Ceasefire officers, Alameda County Probation, and one executive from a service-providing organization. The focus of the meeting is clearly on preventing violence and retaliation and is well run. Since most of the participants have been in the Shooting Review meeting, the first part of the meeting is a brief but informative recap of relevant Shooting Review incidents to get everyone on the same page. Then, there is a discussion on what

can be done about violence. However, it did not appear that anyone was taking notes, nor were we able to identify any deliverables from previous weeks.

The second Coordination meetings occur weekly on Zoom with the Ceasefire Program Director, System Partners Liaison, Community Outreach and Service Specialist DVP Life Coach, Triangle Incident Response<sup>10</sup> Coordinator (Gun Violence Response), and the case managers working under him. Not until the last meeting did the CPSC observe the DVP Life Coach supervisor in the meeting. Like the other Coordination meeting, the same information is shared about incidents likely to cause retaliation. Often, because the people in this meeting are also responsible for being at shooting scenes, there is time spent making sure incidents are covered that they responded to or checking to see if violence interrupters from the City/CBO responded to incidents reported on. There are notes and deliverables from previous meetings, so in this way, this meeting actually has more structure. This meeting, although helpful to the violence interrupters to make sure incidents are covered, lacks any type of planning around retaliation. This is partially because the key resources needed to develop a plan are missing. This includes the DVP's own Life Coach Supervisor, CBOs funded by the City of Oakland that do any type of violence intervention work, and structurally when connections to outside agencies are needed (i.e., if a shooting occurs in Oakland but in the jurisdiction of the California Highway Patrol, East Bay Regional Parks, etc..) there is no one in the meeting who has the authority to follow-up and make the appropriate connections. Interviewees described the work within and across different agencies as "work in silos," and highlighted the lack of information on each other's work.

### **Coordination Meeting Recommendations**

Like OPD, a large portion of the problems of these meetings are structural<sup>11</sup>. The DVP is not organized in a way where all internal and city-funded resources dealing with gun violence are coordinated or located in one division. As a result, city staff and CBO staff that play a role in gun violence reduction are typically not present in the same meetings and work independently on their strategies to effectively intervene in gun violence. This largely appears to be a result of the DVP shifting *how* it approaches gun violence. Specifically, the DVP began focusing on family intervention as a means of reducing gun violence. As a result, those Life Coaches working in this way became organizationally disconnected from the violence interrupters, CBOs, and other key staff and community partners working on gun violence. This way of working makes it difficult for city staff and partners working on gun violence to collaborate effectively.

As a result of this organizational dysfunction and the lack of clarity on *how* to address gun violence, the purpose of the Coordination meeting is difficult to meet, and it will impact different

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<sup>10</sup> "Crisis responders from the DVP and violence interrupters from DVP-funded organizations respond within one hour of activation to shootings in Oakland that are related to network conflicts or gender-based violence (GBV). This process is known as the Triangle Incident Response, and it is initiated when the DVP receives a notification of a shooting from the Oakland Police Department " Official website of the City of Oakland <https://www.oaklandca.gov/topics/triangle-incident-response>

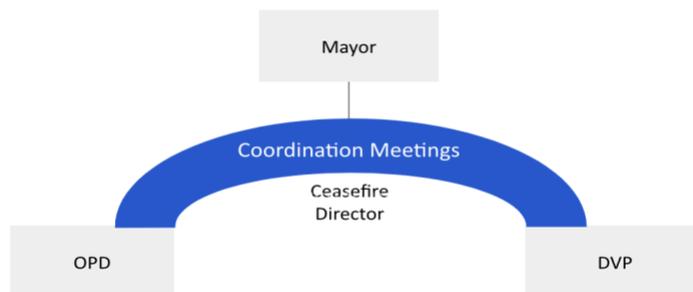
<sup>11</sup> For more detail see enforcement for OPD structural issues

aspects of the strategy, as we will detail later in this report. For the purpose of this section of the audit, recommendations for this meeting include:

1. Consolidate the coordination meetings into a singular session. Eliminate the redundancy of having two coordination meetings, as it is inefficient and consumes unnecessary staff and CBO resources. Streamlining this process into a single meeting would optimize time and resources more effectively.
2. The meetings should be led and overseen by the Mayor's Office or a designated public safety representative from the City Administration with the authority to direct staff. These facilitators must take responsibility for guiding staff in the formulation of plans and subsequently holding them accountable for the outcomes, as depicted in Figure 3.
3. At the beginning of each meeting, review the status of Customs delivered or participants engaged (was Custom delivered, was referral engaged, is referral enrolled)
4. Examine incidents comprehensively, emphasizing not only their review but also a critical discussion on how the team plans to utilize the array of city and city-funded resources to prevent retaliation proactively. The focus should extend beyond mere "welfare checks," incorporating actionable steps to address and mitigate the incidents effectively.
5. Meetings should include a discussion about each incident and the likelihood of retaliation. If retaliation is likely, then there should be discussion on who (groups/individuals) would be retaliated against and who (groups/individual) is likely to retaliate
6. Facilitate a comprehensive discussion led by the Oakland Police Department (OPD) addressing the primary drivers of violence city-wide. This vital conversation should be integrated into the Shooting Review as an initial step, filling the current gap in its absence.
7. At each meeting, review Shooting Review slides, review **every** shooting incident in past 7 days
8. Based on this information, make specific referrals to DVP for Outreach and enrollment in Life Coaching, but also identify among the referrals who will be scheduled for a custom notification
9. Coordination meetings should include OPD Ceasefire Unit reps, Ceasefire Director, DVP management, DVP Life Coaching Supervisor, and Probation.

The figure below (*Figure 3*) illustrates the bridge that is built through the weekly coordination meeting.

*Figure 3:*



Source: Figure created by the CPSC

#### **D. Direct Communications: Call-Ins and Custom Notifications**

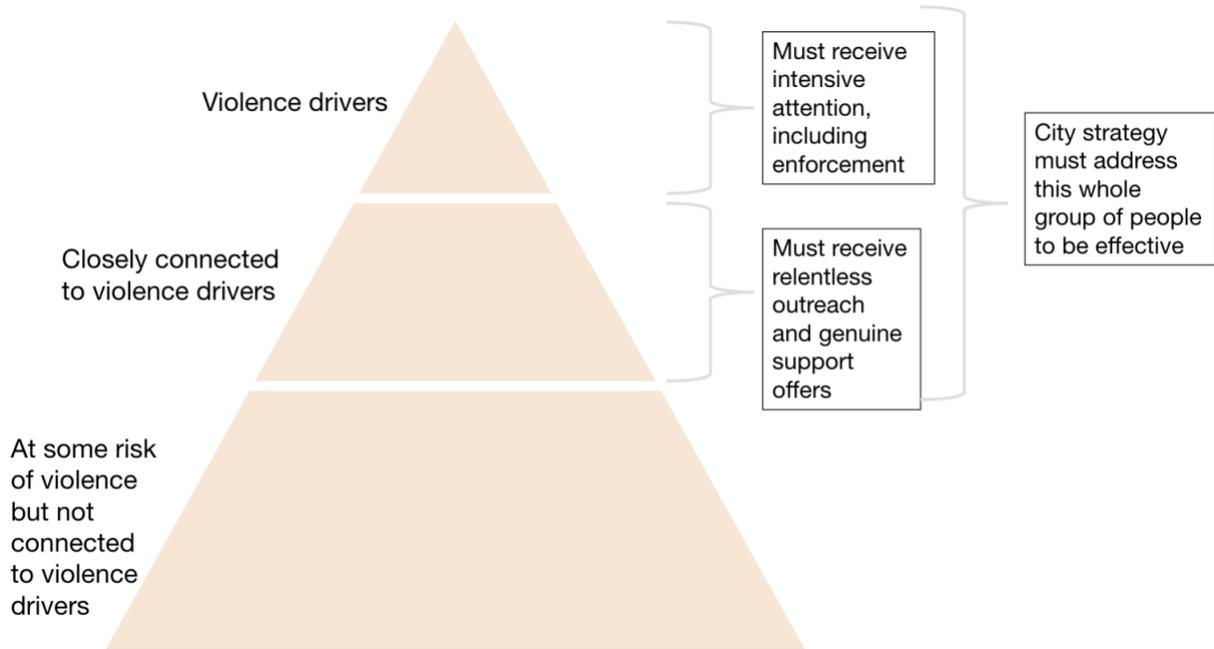
The purpose of **direct communication** is to provide information to individuals deemed to be at the very highest risk of violence as informed by incidents discussed in the Shooting Review where the risk of retaliation and individual risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence is discussed. This information is designed to reduce an individual's risk of being involved in gun violence so that *they can make an informed decision about their future behavior*. Studies have shown that the risk and recidivism levels of recipients of direct and respectful communications are significantly reduced<sup>12</sup>. Ideally, these communications are done with community partners, service providers, and law enforcement. Call-ins also involve survivors of violence, mothers who have lost their children to gun violence, and hospital social workers/physicians. Individuals participating in direct communications are typically not under active investigation, and as such, in these conversations, the offer of services is made but not required.

The figure below (*Figure 4*) illustrates the importance of communicating primarily with HRIs at the top of the pyramid.

*Figure 4: Communicating with High-Risk Individuals*

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<sup>12</sup> Wallace, Papachristos, Meares & Fagan. (2016) Desistance and Legitimacy: The Impact of Offender Notification Meetings of Recidivism among High-Risk Offenders. *Justice Quarterly*, Vol. 33, No. 7, 1237-1264



Source: University of Pennsylvania, Crime & Justice Policy Lab

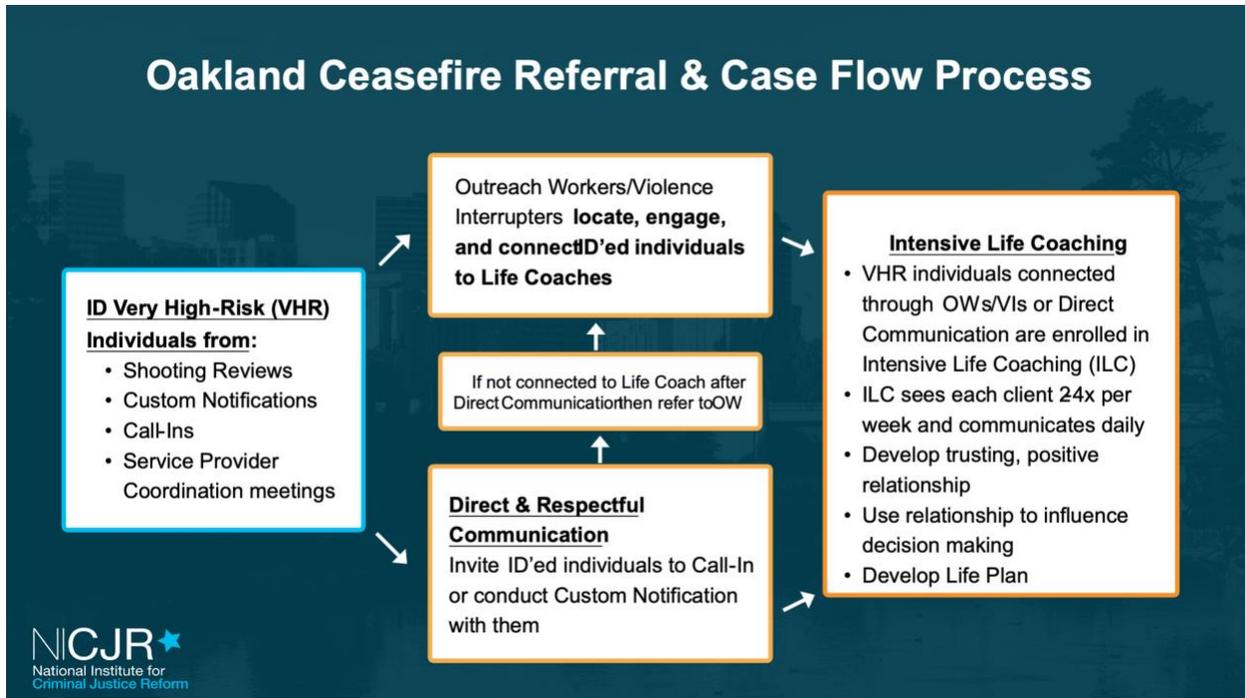
## Direct Communications Analysis

### Quantity

Direct communications are also about the appropriate dosage for a particular city based upon what the problem analysis says is the approximate number of individuals at the very highest risk in any given year. Dosage is important because the message must be received by enough individuals within a social network to alter not only the individual's behavior but also the behavior of the group. Essentially, enough people at very highest risk in the social network need to be communicated with so that enough of them can decide to disengage from violence. This decision to not engage in violence is what helps to decrease the shooting and homicide rate.

The figure below (*Figure 5*) illustrates the process for referrals and case flow.

*Figure 5: Oakland Ceasefire Referral & Case Flow Process*



Source: NICJR

In conducting this audit, it was difficult to obtain a centralized breakdown of direct communications from 2020-2023. The data was definitely present, but the organization/lack thereof made it difficult for analysis for this project and we would imagine it would be equally if not more difficult to do an internal analysis to inform the work of the strategy.

If we look at the pre-pandemic years when the strategy could be attributed to reductions in gun violence and the city was experiencing fewer than 100 homicides, the average number of individuals directly communicated per year was 316 (see *Figure 6*).

Figure 6: Direct Communications by Year (2016-2019)

Direct Communications by Year (2016-2019)								
EVENT	2016		2017		2018		2019	
	Events	Attended/ Invited	Events	Attended/ Invited	Events	Attended/ Invited	Events	Attended/ Invited
Call-Ins	4	46/58 (79%)	4	61/90 (68%)	4	41/56 (73%)	4	49/68 (72%)
Mediations/ Interventions	2*		1*	5/7	0	0	0	0
Custom Notifications	N/A	196	N/A	260	N/A	328	N/A	205
<b>Total DC's/Impacted Individuals</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>253</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>369</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>254</b>

Source: Figure created by CPSC with Information provided by OPD

In 2020-2023 the city started counting custom notifications not just with impacted individuals at the very highest risk but also people that can be *influential* in their lives. This might include a parent, grandparent, girlfriend, etc. By communicating with influencers, the thought was that they could share the message with those at the very highest risk and influence them to change their behavior. Additionally, because DVP had taken a similar approach and began focusing on families, services could also be offered to these individuals.

In comparison to the pre-pandemic data on direct communications (see Figure 7), the average number of individuals communicated with is 169. Even if you took out data from 2020 due to pandemic restrictions, in both 2021 and 2022 and likely 2023, respectively, each year is significantly less than any pre-pandemic year, and this is despite having an additional call-in each year. Additionally, each of these years includes an increasing number of influencers *and not* directly impacted people. While communicating with influencers is important, it is not *more important* than direct engagement with the individuals who are the focus of this strategy (see Figure 3). Moreover, because the individuals who are at the very highest risk are older, have extensive criminal histories, and are often in very complex situations, they may be beyond the influence or reach of their parents, grandparents, and loved ones.

Figure 7: Direct Communication Activity by Year (2020-2023)

Direct Communication Activity by Year (2020-2023)					
	2020	2021	2022	2023	4-Yr Total
<b>Call-In and Interventions</b>					
Events	5 (2 Interventions)	5	5	4*	19
Call-In Participants/Invitees	14/23	43/57	59/91 (64.8%)	54/74 (72.9%)	170/245 (69%)
Intervention Participants/Invitees	7/18				7/18 (38.8%)
<b>Custom Notification</b>					
Impacted Individuals	60 (2 I/C)	78 (1 I/C)	76 (8 I/C)	99 (74 I/C)**	313
Influencers	37	57	77	41	212
Total	97	135	153	140	525
<b>Total DC's</b>					
	118	178	212	194	702
<b>Total Impacted Individuals</b>					
	81	121	135	153	490

\* Call-Ins as of 9/15/2023

\*\* CN's as of 9/30/2023

Source: Figure created by CPSC with Information provided by OPD

### Quality

The quality of direct communications is largely about connecting with the right people and delivering the right message at the right time. The message should always be one of care, concern, *and* risk, given respectfully with a legitimate offer of services and support. In both the call-in and the custom notifications, this balanced message is delivered consistently. Although the quantity of direct communications needs to be increased, the quality of the messaging hits most of the critical points. This is largely because it has been the same team that has been directly involved in all types of direct communications for years. Moreover, the team has been working together for years and is highly experienced.

Despite the challenges with the Shooting Review, individuals are being referred for direct communications. From the information made available to us, the Director sends very detailed emails about who is being referred for a custom notification from the current week's Shooting Review and the reason. However, with the data provided, it was difficult to consistently see how soon after the referral they *received* a custom notification and whether it resulted in a referral. Direct communications become significantly less effective when a week or week(s) have gone by post-referral.

The call-ins have historically had messages of care and concern from Alameda County Hospital. This message was critical for participants to understand the physical and psychological impact of gunshot wounds, and the long-term recovery associated with surviving. This was absent during

the observation period. Additionally, the Alameda County District Attorney's Office had historically been a participant in the call-in. Their message had historically been to provide information to participants on the legal consequences of being a perpetrator of gun violence in Alameda County. This message from the District Attorney's office was absent during the observation period.

Finally, although the call-ins are never as specific as a custom notification, there are *elements* to the call-in that are more specific to the participants. This included a PowerPoint that was used by the OPD of individuals known to the participants who had been killed or who had continued to participate in violence after receiving the Ceasefire message. Because individuals in the PowerPoint were known to the individuals in the room, the messaging was more personalized and more likely to influence behavior change. This PowerPoint was absent during the observation period.

### **Innovation- Santa Rita Custom Notifications**

Custom Notifications have occurred in Santa Rita for many years. However, their focus and effectiveness had been mixed because these communications had been done in pods, as opposed to with key individuals. And because inmates are from all over the county, at times, it had been difficult to measure the Oakland-specific impact.

Beginning in 2022, the team that had been doing custom notifications with individuals in neighborhoods and in supervisory settings decided that they could have more impact if they were reaching out to individuals currently in Santa Rita who had been involved in gun violence and in groups involved in the violence that were coming home soon. The purpose of reaching out to these individuals was to deter them from engaging in violence once they re-entered the community and to help them transition back into the community safely by offering services and support.

The outreach in Santa Rita is conducted by Alameda County Probation, a community member, and the DVP Community Outreach & Service Specialist. The customs are specific to individuals, all of whom are known to the strategy to have been active in gun violence in Oakland prior to their incarceration and who will be reentering the community within weeks. The team goes to Santa Rita weekly to meet with specific individuals. Once inside Santa Rita, the young men that they are there to engage with are typically called out of their pod, and they have a conversation with the team about coming back home, disconnecting from violence and violence influencers in their lives, and about resources that could be helpful to them upon reentry. Information is left with the young men and like other direct communications, there is no mandate that individuals enroll in services.

This specific outreach to individuals at the very highest risk of gun violence **appears to be very promising** because it provides an increased dosage of the message that is effective in reducing involvement in gun violence and, in some ways, is a form of relentless outreach that is missing

from the out of custody direct communications. Put another way, it relentlessly pursues individuals despite them being incarcerated and despite the mistakes they have made. It shows a commitment to continuing to work with people if they are interested and willing to make positive changes in their lives.

Despite the promise of this innovative work, in-custody custom notifications should not outnumber out-of-custody custom notifications because the ability to influence violence on the street by individuals at the very highest risk at the time of the communication is limited due to their carceral state. Given the state of violence in Oakland, we must do both the in-custody and out-of-custody notifications well. Thus, this will mean that teams doing the out of custody notifications will need to increase their dosage significantly with very highest risk individuals.

### **Direct Communications Recommendations**

Direct communications are an essential part of the Ceasefire strategy. Although they are still functional, they could be greatly improved by more systematically collecting and organizing the direct communication data. This would allow staff to analyze the data more consistently and troubleshoot dosage, messaging, and timing issues.

Dosage is also a challenge in that not enough highest-risk individuals who are currently out of custody are receiving the message. When too few highest-risk individuals receive the message, the likelihood of behavior change within a social network is significantly reduced. The Ceasefire mechanism of putting gangs/groups/crews (the social network) ‘on notice’ is designed to increase the certainty of punishment for the group as a whole. Still, it does so through (a) the diffusion of the message among individual group members and (b) reliance on the group members, as a collective, to modify behavior accordingly<sup>13</sup>. Currently, there are just not enough out-of-custody notifications with impacted individuals occurring to make a significant consistent change across active groups.

Finding impacted individuals once a referral is made from the Shooting Review is difficult for a variety of reasons (bad addresses, people active in violence in Oakland but living elsewhere in the Bay Area, supervision status, etc.). However, this challenge of finding individuals could be addressed with a larger community partnership/network of individuals connected to those at the highest risk. Our understanding is that there is a dedicated team that includes probation, and community partners that goes out 1/week to do custom notifications. Unfortunately, during this study period, we were unable to observe their activities. Despite this, having accessible data points and using this information to address troubleshooting with this team may be valuable in increasing the dosage of custom notifications with impacted individuals.

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<sup>13</sup> Braga, Hureau, Papachristos (2013) Deterring Gang-Involved Gun Violence: Measuring the Impact of Boston’s Ceasefire on Street Gang Behavior. *J Quant Criminal* (2014) 30: 113-139.

The messaging at the call-ins could be improved by the participation of medical staff at Alameda County Hospital. A significant part of the Ceasefire strategy is providing information to participants about the risks of gun violence. The risks of victimization and what that means for physical and emotional health have always been an essential part of the strategy and need to be reincorporated. The vast majority of call-in participants are in the meeting specifically because they have been shot or lost a loved one to violence and are at the highest risk of being revictimized or victimizing someone else, and to not continue to make the health connection to them falls short of what the strategy seeks to accomplish. Studies have shown that in many cases, such individuals are at extremely elevated risk of reinjury within a short period following discharge. In urban settings such as Oakland, up to 41% of patients treated for violent injuries such as gunshots are reinjured within just five years.”<sup>14</sup>

Finally, the call-ins would benefit from using the PowerPoint in the meeting. Not only does it help to keep OPD speakers on message, but it also is personal to participants in the room so that they can understand and make the connection to this strategy and to people that they know have been impacted by gun violence both as victims and perpetrators. The PowerPoint also has and should be used to show how people have made positive choices after receiving the message.

### **E. Life Coaching and Connection to Services**

In the process of receiving direct communication, an individual is typically offered services<sup>15</sup> but they are not required to take those services. The only requirement is that they no longer engage in gun violence. In the event that individuals do express an interest in services, their information is provided to the DVP Outreach Developer, if present. If the Outreach Developer is not present, the community partner or probation agent will make note of this and then provide the participants contact information to the Ceasefire Program Director, who then provides the information to DVP within 48 hours.

In Oakland, once DVP receives the information, they make contact with the individual and collect basic intake information. Then, there are two routes that the client can be referred to.

1. Route 1 is to a Life Coach in-house through the Family Matters program funded through the California Violence Intervention Program (CalVIP) grant. For Family Matters, clients must have a family support to qualify for Life Coaching.
2. Route 2 is for Life Coaching in one of the Measure Z-funded CBOs that has a contract for Life Coaching.

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<sup>14</sup> Giffords Law Center. (2019) A Case Study in Hope.

<sup>15</sup> On very rare occasions a custom notification can be done with no offer of services. This is typically done when an individual had already received a direct communication and is already enrolled in services OR in the context of an arrest where an individual had previously received direct communication but continued to engage in violence and the message is a follow-up to previous conversations.

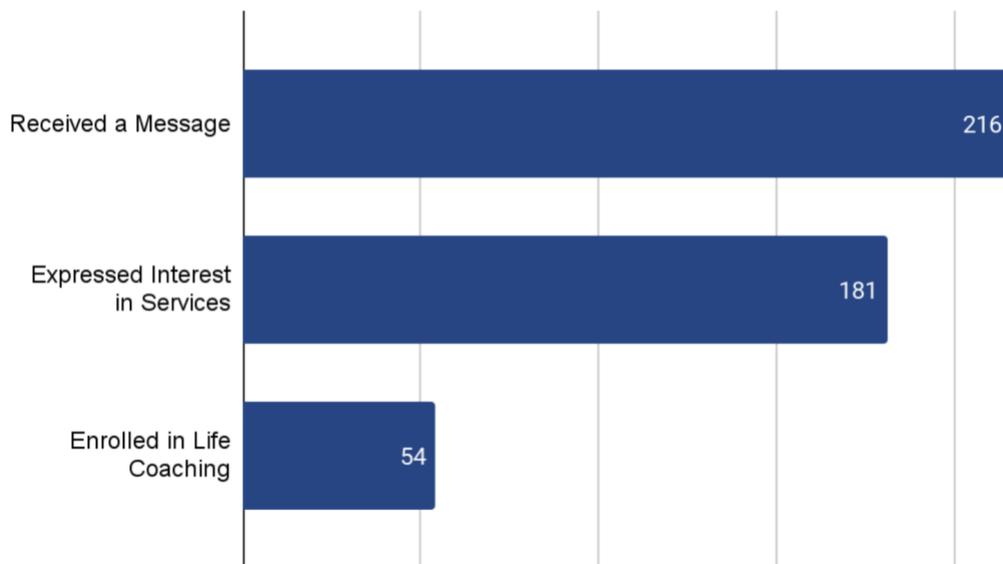
Regardless of if a person is on route 1 or 2, they should be assigned a Life Coach, and begin meeting with that designated Life Coach, developing a Life Plan, and receiving services within two weeks.

**Life Coaching and Connection to Services Analysis**

During July 1, 2022- June 30, 2023, 216 Ceasefire recipients received direct communication. Of that 216, 181 expressed interest in services and support. Of that 181, only 54 ended up on a caseload, as shown in the figure below.

*Figure 8: Ceasefire Enrollment in Life Coaching*

From Message to Caseload: July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023



Source: Figure created by CPSC with Information provided by DVP

The data provided raises a few issues worthy of discussion. First, it appears that 84% of the people receiving direct communication expressed an interest in services during the custom notification or call-in. This is a good uptick rate and confirms from the previous section that the messaging and messengers are effective when communicating the offer of services. Still, very few (only 25%) end up on a caseload even after being referred to Life Coaching.

Out of the 25% of clients integrated into the caseload, there appears to be a notable trend indicating that a significant portion of Ceasefire clients do not remain on the caseload for an extended duration. Analysis of the data from the reporting period reveals a rapid decline, with Ceasefire clients often disengaging from the caseload within a span of 2-3 months (see *Figure 9*).

Figure 9: Caseload Retention



Source: Figure created by CPSC with Information provided by DVP<sup>16</sup>

A fundamental tenet of Life Coaching is to develop relationships with the client to help them reduce their risk levels of being a victim or perpetrator of violence by modifying their risk level. Although traditional services like employment, housing, etc. are offered, the success of a client is not determined based upon how many or the types of services enrolled in. Instead, success should be measured by recidivism rates for violent crimes, whether they have been revictimized (shot or shot at), and whether or not they have been a perpetrator of violence. A key factor that increases the odds of a life coach being successful with this population is frequent quality contact.

The CPSC requested information from the DVP on their contacts with Ceasefire clients and found that clients are contacted 1-2 times per week for an average of 1 hour. Additionally, they did not track whether the contacts were in person or via phone. The quality and intensity in terms of frequency of contacts with highest risk individuals is the basis for behavior change in the Life Coaching relationship. For young adults who are at very high risk of being involved in gun violence, effective intervention requires very frequent engagement by someone (a Life Coach) who develops a positive and trusting relationship with them. The frequency of engagement should be daily communication (talk and/or text) and 2-4 times per week in person.

The low number of people who received a life coach and the low retention rate<sup>17</sup> for Ceasefire clients begs the question of *who is* on a caseload for Life Coaches. This required a look at the risk assessment used to qualify individuals for Life Coaching (See *Figure 10*).

<sup>16</sup> Note: After reviewing DVP data of Life Coaching enrollees, we found inconsistent calculations: the total number of participants in each of the Life Coaching stages (n=46) does not equal the total number of people enrolled in Life Coaching (n=54). The diagram above uses the numbers provided by DVP of enrollees in each stage of Life Coaching with new calculations of the percentages according to the total number of participants enrolled in Life Coaching (n=54).

<sup>17</sup> Between 6 and 18 months

*Figure 10: Risk Assessment Eligibility Criteria*

**Automatic Referral Sources Include:**

- Ceasefire
- Juv. Justice
- DVP Network Violence Interrupter
- DVP Network LC

**Conditional eligibility criteria for YOUTH/ADULT LIFE COACHING**

If client DOES NOT meet any one of the three automatic eligibility criteria, he or she is eligible for services in the sub strategy of youth/adult life coaching if he or she selected “**YES**” for at least **THREE** of the following six questions:

1. *In the past year, has someone pulled a gun on you?*
2. *In the past year, have you been in a serious physical fight?*
3. *In the past year, has a close friend or family member of yours been shot?*
4. *Do many of your friends carry a gun, knife or other weapon?*
5. *When you were growing up (during the first 18 years of your life), did you witness of experience physical violence in the home often or very often?*
6. *Have you previously been convicted of a violent offense? (Assault, armed robbery, shooting, etc.)*

Source: Figure created by CPSC with Information provided by DVP

It appears that there are four automatic referral sources for Life Coaching, one of which is Ceasefire. For Ceasefire the risk level is based upon the problem analysis and the weekly shooting reviews where individuals “self-select” from being a victim of a shooting/shootings or being closely connected to individuals at very highest risk based upon social network analysis. It was unclear to the CPSC what the other automatic referrals were based upon.

Additionally, for conditional eligibility, the risk assessment questions are so broad that almost anyone living in an under-resourced neighborhood or going to an under-resourced school could qualify. In fact, we found that by using these questions, members of the assessment team would have qualified even though no one on the team is at the very highest risk of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence. Moreover, the conditional eligibility questions to assess risk are too broad and need to be more specific to ensure that individuals on a caseload are at the very highest risk right now of being a victim or perpetrator of gun violence.

Finally, qualitative data provided to the team also demonstrated that once a Ceasefire referral is made to a community-based organization (CBO), it was very difficult for DVP to formally get information back from CBOs about whether clients got onto a caseload, if the client was still on a caseload, or how the client is progressing. In essence, it seemed like once a client was referred to a CBO, the DVP’s relationship and responsibility to the client effectively ended. This black box approach presents many challenges for the client whom the DVP and the provider are ultimately responsible to.

One of the challenges stemming from this issue that surfaced several times in the qualitative data was that CBOs often did not want to take Ceasefire clients because they were harder to work with due to their risk level. Connected to this was that the DVP was “poaching” the best Life Coaches in Oakland from the CBOs leaving these smaller organizations without skilled staff who could effectively work with this population. From our experience in Oakland, this “poaching” is not uncommon, instead it is a result of the city’s ability to offer better pay and benefits to Life Coaches than CBOs. Because of the better pay, benefits, and job stability offered, many Life Coaches working for the city don't have to juggle multiple jobs as they do at a CBO, giving the city-based life coaches *more time* to do the effective relationship building necessary to reduce the client's risk levels than could be accomplished with CBO based life coaches.

If the goal is to reduce gun violence in the near term (approximately two years) then the Department must organize itself around intervening and engaging with clients at the very highest risk of being involved in gun violence *now* as their top priority. This means that Ceasefire clients and everyone who engages with them in DVP should collaborate as a team to reduce the risk level of individual clients. Like doctors who work with patients suffering from serious life-threatening diseases, a team of highly experienced and skilled doctors and nurses work together across disciplines to save the patient’s life. A similar approach needs to be taken with Ceasefire clients. Thus, triangle response, violence interrupters, life coaches, and even the program planners and program analyst who oversee contracts with services providers that Ceasefire clients would be receiving services from would need to be in those planning meetings working together to develop person specific plans to reduce a client’s risk and to track a client’s progress.

Currently, the DVP is not organized around reducing the risk levels of very highest risk individuals and thus, as a result, are also not organized to reduce gun violence in the near term. The theory of change around near-term gun violence reduction in the field of violence intervention across multiple strategies is that you must be working with those individuals at the very highest risk *now*. Working with their cousins, younger siblings, or even in neighborhoods with high incidences of gun violence as the *sole* focus of the intervention will never get you individual level or community-level reductions in risk and gun violence. For gun violence *intervention* (not primary-secondary prevention or community transformation), you must go to the heart of the matter which is the individuals who are active in gun violence now. Understanding *who* that is the foundation of successful *intervention* work.

Based upon our observations and the data that was made available to us, it does not appear that the gun violence work conducted or funded by the DVP is designed to effectively focus on and support this population. Life Coaching and client retention are clear examples of this. Specifically, Ceasefire clients seem to be interested in services, but to engage with this population, service providers (both from the City and CBOs) need to fundamentally understand *who* these clients are and build an infrastructure around that reality.

The reality is that Ceasefire clients are at the very highest risk of gun violence, which means that they have extensive contact with the criminal justice system. They are older adult men who have been shot and have shot people, this means that their risk of being pulled back into the vortex of violence at any given moment is extremely high, and knowing that, they must move very carefully through networks and neighborhoods. They have precarious living situations where they are, by definition, “unhoused.” Finally, and most importantly, they are highly intelligent individuals who are survivors and have figured out how to survive the streets, how to navigate systems and networks, and have a healthy sense of skepticism about most things, including traditional services. Many of them have been “case managed” before, whether through the criminal justice, education, or social services systems. All of these have been unsuccessful, which is why they are now Ceasefire clients.

### **Life Coaching and Connection to Services Recommendations**

#### **Re-organize the DVP Gun Violence Work Under One Structure**

The DVP lacks strategic focus and intentionality and needs to be reorganized with an understanding of the difference between prevention and intervention as it relates to gun violence. For intervention efforts to be successful, the department needs to be reorganized with near term violence reduction as the goal. For the Ceasefire strategy specifically, all the gun violence efforts need to be under one organizational structure. This includes Outreach Coordinator, Triangle Response, and Life Coaching being under one management structure. Additionally, there should be regular and intentional coordination with Program Planners and Program Analysts. The Program Planners and Analyst will help to make sure that Measure-Z funded services (i.e. employment, housing, etc.) are prioritized and available for Ceasefire clients.

If DVP clearly defines and focuses its intervention efforts it can be more intentional about the support provided to clients. Below the creation of an Intervention Division in DVP is provided in more detail:

#### **Intervention Division:**

- Direct Service Unit
- Contracts Management Unit
- Development Unit

#### **Direct Services Unit**

- 1 Manager
- 3 Supervisors
- 12 Life Coaches (LC) (4 youth/8 adult)
  - 8 participants each: 96 participants
- 8 Violence Interrupters (VI)
- 25 Community Engagement Team (CET) members – part-time former clients who conduct outreach (CalVIP grant funded)

- 3 Teams:
  - Team 1: 4 Adult LCs, 3 VIs, 8 CETs
  - Team 2: 4 Adult LCs, 3 VIs, 8 CETs
  - Team 3: 4 Youth LCs, 2, VIs, 8 CETs

With the current volume of shootings in Oakland, we estimate that there are approximately 350 people who are identifiable as at very high risk of being involved in gun violence over the course of a year. With 350 very highest risk people, the suggested staffing to effectively implement a citywide effort includes:

- 30 Intensive Life Coaches (70% of 350/8)
- 15 Outreach Workers/Violence Interrupters

We suggest that Oakland combine the Outreach Worker and Violence Interrupter position duties under the title of Violence Interrupter.

### **Primary Roles & Responsibilities of DVP Staff<sup>18</sup>:**

#### **Outreach Worker (OW):**

- Locate, Engage, and Hand-off to Life Coaches Very High-Risk individuals
- Attend and host key community events to develop relationships in neighborhoods with high rates of violence

#### **Life Coach (LC):**

- Develop positive and trusting relationships with Very High-Risk individuals
- Intensive engagement with participants/frequent in-person contact
- Develop and implement Life Plans with each person on the caseload

#### **Violence Interrupter (VI):**

- Respond to shooting scenes
- Develop relationships with key people and groups engaged in conflicts
- Mediate Conflicts
- Gather and share with the team critical information on most active/violent conflicts

### **Relentless Outreach: The “Go Getters”**

The change in structure creates more opportunity for collaboration, but by itself, it does not guarantee that Ceasefire referrals will become clients. Given the obstacles that the Ceasefire client demographic has likely experienced, often individuals referred are not going to initiate calls with service providers, are not going to be self-motivated to show up on time (or at all) for meetings and are not going to be consistently easy to find. As such, the design of the DVP and the providers that they fund need to reflect *this* reality. If we know and accept this reality, then we should know that when an individual expresses interest in services, the contact information that they provide will likely be temporary, incomplete, or just false information. So, the city and its providers need a mechanism to address this gap between interest in services and a life coaching caseload, as well

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<sup>18</sup> Full Position Descriptions can be provided upon request.

as one for retention on a life coaching caseload. Our recommendation is that the **city use its existing resources in the DVP's Triangle Response to be responsible for going to get and find individuals who have been referred. In essence, they would be responsible for relentless outreach.** There is currently no formal mechanism that the DVP has or funds that performs this work.

These individuals within Triangle Response are currently doing violence interruption and case management. The recommendation is that their case management responsibilities be redefined in light of our recommended connection **to life coaches so that they are spending most of their time doing violence interruption and relentless outreach.** The individuals who do this work are often highly networked and skilled at finding people and connecting them initially to the Outreach Coordinator and then once a client is on a caseload connecting and reconnecting them to their Life Coach. Even if people refuse services during this process, these "Go Getters" would be charged with continually and periodically connecting with these individuals until they are ready for Life Coaching.

The "Go Getters" or individuals engaged in relentless outreach, should operate under the unified organizational structure as the Life Coaches within the DVP. This alignment ensures strategic coordination. In the case of "Go Getters" outside of the DVP, the Outreach Coordinator, Program Planner, and Program Analyst responsible for coordinating CBO-focused relentless outreach should also be integrated into the same organizational framework.

### **Regular Case Conferencing**

Being under the same organizational structure does not in and of itself guarantee strategic coordination and collaboration aimed at reducing client risk. Coordination between relentless outreach, Life Coaches, outreach coordinators, program planners, and program analysts should be intentional and minimally occur through bi-monthly case conferencing meetings. The purpose of these meetings is to ensure everyone who needs to be located is found, to make sure everyone who needs a Life Coach has one, and to troubleshoot specific client challenges that Life coaches are experiencing, reducing individual client risk. Additionally, in between case conferencing meetings once a week, the outreach coordinator should be meeting with the relentless outreach team to share referrals that need to be located and to provide information on incidents that may have occurred over the previous week where retaliation between groups and individuals is likely.

### **Life Coaching Pipeline**

Given the reality of the needs of Ceasefire clients, the individuals working with them need to have significant experience, training, and time to effectively help clients modify their behavior to reduce their risks. The reality is that DVP Life Coaches have this experience and training, and because of pay and benefits, have the time to do the type of engagement needed for Ceasefire clients. Our

recommendation is that the city should embrace this reality and have the vast majority, 80% of Ceasefire clients, be referred to in-house DVP Life Coaches. DVP Life Coaches should also *maintain* a caseload of 70% for Ceasefire clients. CBO based Life Coaches would instead serve lower-risk individuals that are not Ceasefire referrals.

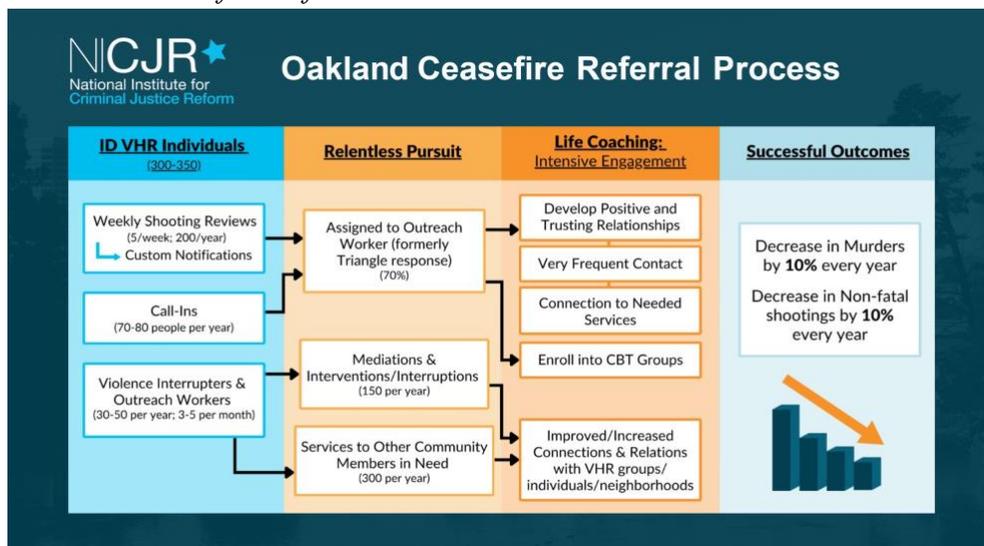
There should be a requirement that 70% of DVP Life Coaches' caseloads be made up of Ceasefire referrals (SR, CN, & CI). The other 30% must meet at least four of the five following criteria:

1. Aged 18-35 Black or Latino male
2. Significant Criminal Justice history
3. Connected to a crew/group/gang
4. Prior GSW Victim
5. Connected to a recent shooting (in the past six months a friend, a family member or fellow group member was either shot or arrested for a shooting)

**Eliminating the Family Participation Requirement**

Currently, the DVP based Life Coaches are under the Family Matters strategy. As previously discussed in the direct communication section as well as in this section, one of the reasons why Ceasefire clients are at the very highest risk of violence is because, most often, they *do not* have a stable and healthy family support system. However, the way that DVP is currently structured means that the mostly highly skilled and well-paid Life Coaches in Oakland will likely have the lower-risk clients that are easier to assist and will likely *not* be Ceasefire clients. As supported by our interviewees, **our recommendation is that the family requirement be eliminated for DVP Life Coaches so that they can serve Ceasefire clients.**

Figure 11: Oakland Ceasefire Referral Process



Source: NICJR

## **F. Focused Supervision and Enforcement**

Focused enforcement is reserved for individuals who continue to engage in gun violence. Per the graphic above (*Figure 2: High-Risk Individuals vs population of Oakland*), only a very small portion of individuals are at the very highest risk of gun violence, and an even smaller percentage will continue to engage in gun violence after participating in direct communication. For those that continue to engage in gun violence, the Ceasefire unit with the assistance of area-based CRTs will focus on those individuals and prioritize their arrest<sup>19</sup>.

### **Focused Supervision & Enforcement Analysis**

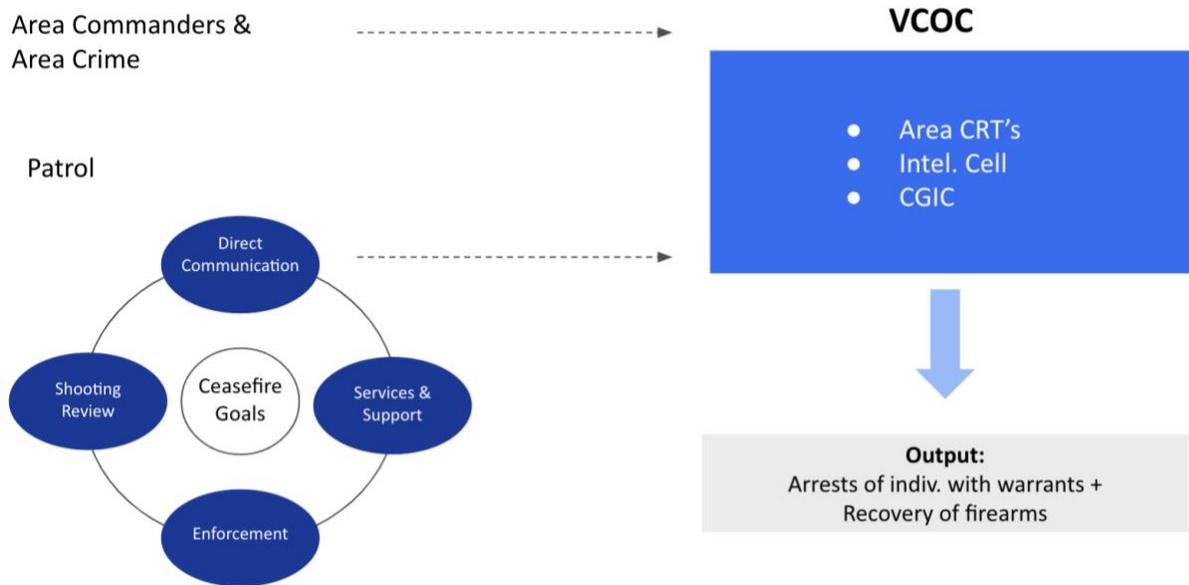
Based upon the plans and meeting observations, it appears that the Ceasefire unit is still doing focused enforcement; however, their efforts are severely hampered by lack of staffing and being pulled away from their enforcement efforts to address other types of crimes. Specifically, given the high rates of gun violence over the past few years, Oakland will have about 5-6 gang/group conflicts related to gun violence brewing at any given time. With Ceasefire averaging between 16-20 staff in 2023 compared to 32-40 at its height, it appears that they can only safely and effectively take on 1-2 conflicts at a time, leaving 4-5 conflicts unattended. This gap has traditionally been filled with Area based CRTs, especially if the active individuals within a group are within/impacting the geographic area (for example, a group of individuals involved in gun violence in East Oakland could also be involved in robberies in Chinatown) of the CRT.

All of this relates to a larger structural and leadership issue within the Department, Fundamentally, like the DVP, the OPD is not organized to reduce violence as affirmed by personnel during the interviews. This shift seemed to occur when the VCOC was created by the former Chief of Police in 2021. Essentially, the VCOC refocused the Department on solving crimes that had already happened, in an effort to increase the Department's clearance rate. Although this is not a bad idea, it just doesn't translate into sustainable reductions in crime or increased clearance rates. In fact, the homicide clearance rate has decreased since the VCOC was created from 50% in 2020, to 48% in 2021, to 35% in 2022. At the end of the day, not only were more crimes not being solved, but now more crimes are being created, creating more victims and more cases for the OPD to attempt to solve.

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<sup>19</sup> The CPSC requested access to written plans for area commanders and from the Ceasefire unit for this assessment. The CPSC also observed Violent Crime Operations Center (VCOC) planning meetings and the Chief's Monday morning department-wide crime meetings. Additionally, in November 2023 all of the OPD units, including the VCOC were required to make presentations to the mayor and her staff on how they were addressing gun violence and property crimes. CPSC staff and our contractors were present at this meeting as well.

Figure 12: Current Ceasefire Structure

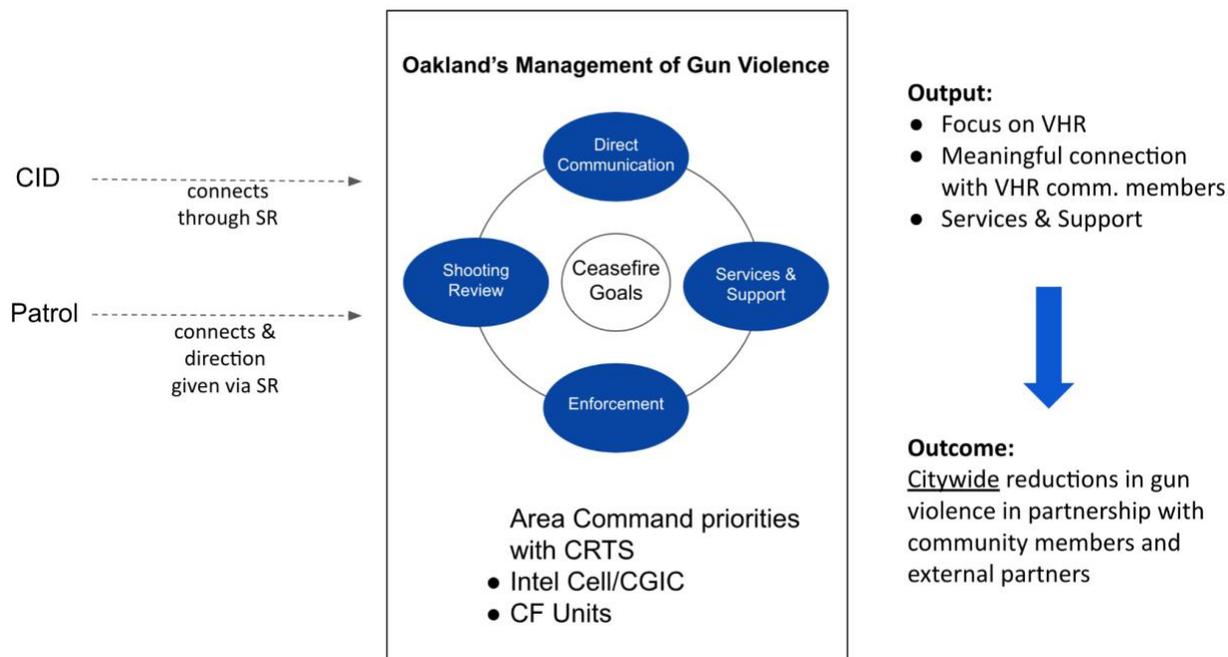


Source: Figure created by the CPSC

### **Focused Supervision & Enforcement Recommendation**

This shift to solely solving crimes, and not preventing crimes, impedes the department from being proactive and puts the focus on recovery of firearms and arrests *instead of* citywide reductions in gun violence. As demonstrated in *Figure 12* above, Ceasefire and the Area commanders are basically out of the loop when it comes to violent crime reduction. This contrasts with how they were working before 2021 (see *Figure 13*) when gun violence for the OPD was managed through Ceasefire with intelligence and focus. Their resources are currently tied to the VCOC, making it impossible for them to collaborate effectively with the Ceasefire Unit. **As such, our recommendation is that the Area based CRT go back to area command and that they begin to work collaboratively with the Ceasefire Unit. This collaboration should include the weekly action plans discussed in the Shooting Review section.**

Figure 13: Former Ceasefire Structure



Source: Figure created by the CPSC

Bottom line is that Police Departments should seek to improve their clearance rates, victims' families deserve this. It should just be done *in tandem* with reducing violence so that there are fewer future victims and victims' families who need cases solved.

**Important Considerations Impacting Effectiveness**

**OPD Organization, Staffing, & The Violent Crime Operations Center (VCOC)**

As discussed in the previous sections the Oakland Police Department is not currently organized to effectively reduce violent crime. The CRT, Ceasefire Unit, and the Crime Gun Intelligence Center (CGIC), which are all the resources and units needed to proactively address violent crime are in different parts of the OPD and do not work together strategically to proactively address violence. Some of this has been addressed by the Assistant Chief position being recently filled in October. However, that movement alone will not guarantee that the OPD's limited resources will continue to be used as effectively as possible. **As a result, and in consultation with OPD staff, we are recommending that the VCOC be disbanded.**

In an ideal situation, a version of a VCOC with a different focus and orientation could one day exist in the OPD. However, due to severe staff shortages, the need for area commanders to have resources is greater than what the VCOC can offer, even with the VCOC having more focused and

strategic actions. The VCOC assumes a certain level of staffing that the OPD does not currently have.

As a result of limited staffing and alternate goals, the VCOC has siphoned off the only resources that area commanders have to proactively address crimes in their respective areas. **Our recommendation is that the CRT be sent back to the areas, prioritizing the areas where violent crime is the highest. The Ceasefire unit will need to be fully staffed, and the CGIC should be placed under the Ceasefire Unit.**

Moving CGIC and Ceasefire under the same chain of command allows them to formally work collaboratively as they once did before 2021. This ensures that intelligence resources are being used to inform their work. The addition of CGIC will help the Ceasefire unit enhance the Department's ability to coordinate with local and regional intelligence and be proactive regarding crime trends.

Finally, the OPD, very similar to the DVP, needs leadership who possess a clear theory of change using **evidence-based** practices to reduce violence. This theory of change should be translated into actions that are measurable and are connected to outcomes. Given the limited resources within the department, actions **must be** informed by data and intelligence with a clear connection to stated outcomes. This is both a leadership and a management issue that starts at the top of the organization and will require the incoming Chief to lead in a different way to realize any significant reductions in violence.

### **Ceasefire Program Director Authority & Role**

The Ceasefire Program Director position was created specifically to manage the Ceasefire strategy full-time. To do this, the position needed to have direct access to the Chief of Police and to the mayor because management of the strategy would involve multiple departments. Additionally, the position would need to be high enough in the police chain of command to have the authority to make decisions and would work with the Ceasefire Captain, the Chief of the Department of Violence Prevention to accomplish the goals of the strategy through management of activities directly related to strategy goals. To effectively do this required the director to have access to police intelligence, and enforcement plans to ensure that the activities of the department were informed by data, focused, and procedural just. The director was also responsible for applying for and managing grants for Ceasefire and liaising with elected officials and the community about the strategy. This included developing and implementing the Procedural Justice training with the community and OPD. Finally, the director also had the responsibility of growing and informing a community partnership of advocates, directly impacted by gun violence, to hold the city accountable for the outcomes and fidelity of the strategy.

### **Data Analysis & Community Engagement**

In the first several years of this strategy this was one position and has continued to be one position. This was always too much for one position and our recommendation is to break up the work to ensure quality and fidelity. Our recommendation is that the director be supported by a data analyst, and a community engagement director. This would leave the bulk of the administrative and strategy work to the director who would need to have robust experience in project management.

The data analyst would regularly collect and track the data from the Shooting Review, Direct Communications, and DVP follow-up and feedback sessions to inform the strategy activities. This person would produce regular reports for the director, collect and analyze the indicator data for the Mayor's Performance Management meeting, and collect and manage data for grants

Additionally, there also needs to be a community engagement specialist whose primary responsibilities are to connect with families and groups who have been directly impacted by gun violence, and to develop curriculum and training for trust building between the OPD and communities most impacted by violence. These community connections should serve to grow the Ceasefire community partnership table with people who could assist in the direct communications and ultimately inform the work of the strategy, including the trust-building work with the OPD. Given the regional nature of violence, this could also include developing connections to individuals and groups outside of Oakland.

### **Conclusion**

Ultimately, this audit reveals that the Ceasefire strategy, while seemingly sound, has undergone substantial internal erosion over the years. Beginning in 2016, the City of Oakland started veering away from the Ceasefire strategy. The aftermath of a sexual abuse scandal involving a minor led to a "loosening" of collaboration with the Oakland Police Department (OPD) by Oakland Unite, diminishing the focus on clients at the very highest risk. In 2019, the DVP shifted its organizational focus away from individuals at the highest risk to "hot places" and families, deviating from evidence-based practices.

The pandemic further exacerbated this shift, as Life Coaches were directed to veer away from violence reduction to address broader community needs. The strategy intended for specific risk reduction became entangled in generalized efforts, diluting its impact. Meanwhile, structural challenges within the OPD, including the creation of the Violent Crime Operations Center (VCOC), further dismantled the strategy. The VCOC's focus on apprehending fugitives left a void in proactive policing, hindering the Ceasefire strategy's ability to prevent crime and leaving area commanders with an inability to address area specific crimes.

Additionally, a crucial setback occurred in 2018 when the OPD demoted the role. This diminished the director's authority and access to critical information, undercutting the effectiveness of the strategy.

The recommendations put forth in this report aim to revive the Ceasefire strategy by refocusing on individuals directly engaged in gun violence. The need for clear and strategic leadership at the executive level is emphasized, echoing the success seen in the strategy's early years. Without cohesive direction, the strategy's various components risk working in silos, undermining the collaborative efforts crucial to its success.

As the city grapples with the long history of gun violence, these recommendations serve as a roadmap for reinstating the effectiveness of the Ceasefire strategy. It calls for a return to its fundamental structure, emphasizing the need for a clear and specific focus on the individuals driving the majority of gun violence in Oakland. The hope is that, with concerted effort and strategic leadership from the mayor and city administration, the city can reclaim the success it once achieved in reducing gun violence and building community trust.

**4. Annexes**

1. Ceasefire Strategy Overview

Developed over the course of 25 years<sup>20</sup> and applied across various cities, this methodology establishes a collective understanding of local violence issues. It provides practical guidance for leaders in civic, community, and criminal justice domains, aiding in the identification of high-risk networks and individuals and facilitating the customization of interventions to address these specific risks. While research-informed, the problem analysis is primarily a practical tool with tangible implications for local policy. The problem analysis is usually conducted every two years.

To meet the aforementioned objectives of this audit, the CPSC had to determine if the core programmatic elements of the Ceasefire strategy were present, had the appropriate dosage and focus, and whether they were effective. These elements can best be described through the Ceasefire Management Cycle explained below.

Figure 15: Ceasefire Management Cycle



Source: Figure created by the CPSC

<sup>20</sup>Braga (2008) Problem-Oriented Policing and Crime Prevention, 2nd Edition. Criminal Justice Press.

### **A. Gun Violence Problem Analysis**

The gun violence problem analysis is a thorough examination conducted by the city in partnership with outside academic or technical experts to understand who is at the highest risk of gun violence and to identify the primary factors driving such incidents. This approach is widely utilized as the analytic foundation for effective violence reduction strategies across U.S. cities. The process involves utilizing data from homicide and non-fatal shooting cases (in Oakland in this case), including details on individual criminal histories, motives, and group affiliations. The goal is to understand who is at highest risk of being impacted by violence and why to inform strategic decisions on where to focus efforts and how to effectively reduce gun violence in the immediate future. Serving as a foundational document, the analysis will play a pivotal role in shaping operational and funding decisions for gun violence intervention.

### **B. OPD Weekly Shooting Review Meeting**

The weekly shooting review meeting serves as the strategy engine / starting point for the city to identify and address violence dynamics and individuals at the highest risk of gun violence promptly. This meeting, held at the OPD, involves various key entities such as Probation, Parole, District Attorney's Office, federal agencies, Felony Assault, Homicide, Violent Crime Operations Center, Ceasefire Units, and other relevant units, aiming to comprehensively analyze incidents from the preceding week to prevent retaliatory actions. Attendees, including the Chief/Assistant Chief and Deputy Chiefs, ensure accountability for enforcement plans and resource coordination. The meeting aids in understanding current violence dynamics through a scorecard<sup>21</sup>, tracking shootings by groups over a defined period, subsequently informing 60/90-day plans that encompass both enforcement and intervention focuses. The deconfliction of intervention providing support needed or enforcement candidates is also addressed during these sessions.

### **C. Weekly Coordination Meetings**

The Coordination Meeting serves the purpose of equipping service providers and close community partners with crucial information regarding shootings and homicide incidents from the previous week, with the specific aim of minimizing retaliatory shootings. Following the Shooting Review, the Ceasefire Program Coordinator and an OPD representative convene with service providers to examine top citywide conflicts and shootings prone to retaliation. Together, they collaborate on formulating a city-wide plan to effectively mitigate retaliation in the short term. The meeting ensures that service providers are informed about individuals earmarked for direct communication and contributes to the development of a shared intervention plan to curtail retaliatory shootings in the immediate future.

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<sup>21</sup> Braga, Winship & Turchan. (2019) "Partnership, Accountability, and Innovation: Clarifying Boston's Experience with Focused Deterrence."

#### **D. Direct Communications: Call-ins and Custom Notifications**

Call-ins and Custom Notifications aim to communicate a tailored public health message to individuals impacted by and/or involved in gun violence with information about their imminent risk of harm, the communities deep care and concern for their well-being; and the special supports and opportunities available to them, enabling them to make informed decisions to reduce their risk. Call-ins involve group meetings with individuals from different high-risk groups and networks, while Custom Notifications are one-on-one sessions. Both formats convey a consistent message emphasizing care, concern, and risk. Custom Notifications, being more personalized, typically involve a police officer/probation officer, community member, and service providers, whereas Call-ins feature speakers such as formerly incarcerated individuals, bereaved mothers, prosecuting agencies, OPD, hospital social workers, and service providers. The goal of this direct communication is to encourage individuals and their networks to choose non-retaliation and take steps towards a positive future.

#### **E. Intensive Life Coaching & Connection to Needed Support**

The goal of Intensive Life Coaching (LC) is to decrease an individual's risk of both victimization and perpetration of gun violence, emphasizing the development of a trusting relationship with a responsible and caring adult from Ceasefire referrals<sup>22</sup>. Unlike merely signing individuals up for services, LC focuses on fostering healthier decision-making by spending significant time with individuals on their caseloads. The success of LC lies in individuals opting for healthier choices, contributing to a reduction in gun violence. Additionally, the initiative seeks to address immediate needs and ensure long-term stability by connecting individuals to essential support services, including employment, education, housing, and cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT). Clients who refrain from engaging in gun violence are the ones who stand to benefit from this support, further strengthening their relationship with their Life Coach. CBT, in particular, plays a role in reducing an individual's risk.

#### **F. Focused Supervision & Enforcement**

The purpose of the Focused Supervision and Enforcement is to focus on and remove individuals from the community who continue to engage in gun violence. The approach is data driven gleaned from the Shooting Review meeting and the scorecard, guiding the identification of individuals. This data shapes the focus and resource allocation for the development of precise 60/90-day plans. These plans, tailored to specific individuals, delineate clear goals, and incorporate intervention components wherever feasible. By honing in on those who persist in violent behavior, this strategy aims to significantly contribute to the city's overarching goal of reducing gun violence.

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<sup>22</sup> Individuals at the highest risk identified and deconflicted by OPD

**G. Performance Management Meetings**

At the core of the overall strategy lies the Performance Management Meeting, a crucial forum designed to oversee and ensure accountability for the stated outcomes. Led by the Mayor's office, this meeting is instrumental in managing the entirety of the strategy, scrutinizing key indicators that determine the appropriate focus and dosage of all strategy elements. The overarching aim is to achieve significant results in reducing gun violence, lowering recidivism rates among Ceasefire participants, and fostering stronger community-police trust. The effectiveness of the Ceasefire strategy hinges on the seamless operation of all these elements with fidelity. The strategy sets forth ambitious goals, including the reduction of gang/group-related shootings and homicides, a decrease in recidivism among individuals at the highest risk of engaging in gun violence, and the establishment of robust community-police trust.

In the ongoing audit, the assessment will not include the Performance Management meetings since they were temporarily suspended pending the results of this report.

**2. Documents reviewed**

The documents reviewed for this audit are listed below divided by the organization:

<b>Documents Reviewed from OPD</b>	
<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Total Number of Documents Reviewed</b>
Citywide Crime and Violence Reduction Plan	10
Ceasefire 90 Day Enforcement Plan	2
VCOC Crime Plan	2
Ceasefire Custom Notification Form	185
Weekly Crime Report	1
Ceasefire Partnership Meeting Notes	2
Direct Communication Stats	1
Shooting Review Notes	4
Shooting Review Slides	5
Homicide and Shooting Response Weekly Meeting Format	1

Total	211
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<b>Documents Reviewed DVP</b>	
<b>Name of Document</b>	<b>Total Number of Documents Reviewed</b>
Service Categories Funded by Fiscal Year 2022-2023 DVO Grant Agreements	1
CYO ALC Scope of Work FY 23-25	1
Group and Gun Strategy Eligibility Screener	1
Group and Gun Strategy Eligibility Screener with references	1
Group and Gun Strategy Eligibility Screener Scoring Guide	1
Case Management Report Example	1
Total	6

### 3. Meeting observations

Sixteen observations took place from July 2023 to November 2023 as follows:

<b>Name of Meeting</b>	<b>Number of Meetings Observed</b>
Shooting Review	5
Direct Communication	6
Call-In	2
VCOC Meeting	1
Monday Crime Meeting	2
Ceasefire Team Meeting	1
NIBIN	1

Online Coordination Meeting	2
Post Shooting Review Coordination Meeting	2

**3. Interviews conducted**

OPD	5
DVP	6
Probation	2
Total	13