



LA PEACE PLAN

**The Case to Revise, Revitalize, & Relaunch
LA City's Comprehensive Safety Strategy**

"The first of all civil rights is the right to safety and the first of all freedoms is freedom from violence. Without public safety there are no civil rights."

— Connie Rice, UPI Co-founder

BUILDING COALITION:

UNITY IS THE FUTURE OF LOS ANGELES

The current political turmoil ravaging city hall is not reflective of the history of inter-ethnic coalitions built to transform the politics of the city. For over 15 years Urban Peace Institute (UPI) has been building Black and Brown coalitions to create solutions to complex challenges. The Los Angeles Violence Intervention Coalition (LAVIC) is composed of Black and Brown-led organizations on the frontlines confronting community violence, committed to ending the bloodshed and creating a new vision for public safety. There is a deep collective purpose to bridge divides among those in the street because we know power is built through unity. Community intervention is a voice of reason during a time of crisis whether on the streets or in the political arena. We know the future of Los Angeles will be built by multi-ethnic coalitions that form a unified voice to transform systems to better serve the needs of our communities. For these reasons we offer a new and inclusive vision for public safety.

“There is no us and them, only us.”

— Father Greg Boyle, Homeboy Industries



PURPOSE

The purpose of this plan is to propose a public safety framework that revises, revitalizes, and relaunches Los Angeles' successful comprehensive community safety strategy, which first launched in 2008. This wrap-around strategy worked to increase trust between community and civic leadership and improve residents' perceptions of safety. This generated steep declines in crime and violence with fewer arrests. Evaluations of the comprehensive strategy have been positive as Los Angeles achieved the following:

- Los Angeles transitioned from a “war on gangs” to a war on violence and conditions for crime.
- Los Angeles built the foundation for a robust community-based public safety infrastructure.
- Drastic reductions in gang homicides, increased clearance rates, and dramatically reduced shootings in the most violence-impacted areas of the city.
- The Los Angeles Police Department's Community Safety Partnership increased public trust and reduced crime with fewer arrests.
- Los Angeles community intervention workers saved the city an estimated \$110 million dollars over a two-year period.
- When professionally trained violence intervention workers responded to a homicide scene, the likelihood of a retaliation killing dropped 99%!

The proposed Los Angeles Peace Plan builds on the success of community-based public safety efforts from the last 15 years in the City of Los Angeles. This strategy not only saves lives and improves quality of life conditions, but it is also a budget saver. However, the strategy as it exists today has suffered some setbacks and requires revitalization to meet the emerging public safety challenges in the city and region. Our goal is to ensure an enhanced and scaled comprehensive strategy is developed to redefine public safety in the region.

"Law enforcement can't create safety alone. Violence intervention workers are a crucial part of dramatically reducing gang retaliation shootings on the streets of Los Angeles."

— Former LAPD Chief Charlie Beck



SUMMARY OF PLAN

Given Los Angeles' success in addressing violence, the revived strategy must build out a more robust system to tackle the root causes of violence. The pandemic has exposed the need for a public health infrastructure that supports safety, as well as the wellbeing of impacted communities. Los Angeles can become a model for the rest of the nation on how to restore and heal our most wounded neighborhoods.

The Peace Plan will require a joint public-private investment strategy to scale community-based efforts to transform public safety in Los Angeles. It will require bold and visionary leadership that can transcend electoral and bureaucratic limitations by embedding the mission of peace and safety into the social fabric of the region. The first phase of the plan will focus on the City of Los Angeles, with additional forthcoming recommendations for Los Angeles County, philanthropy, and a regional safety strategy.

The following actions are required to revise, revitalize, and relaunch the comprehensive strategy:

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- Create an Office of Community Safety with a transition date to create a Department of Community Safety.
- Create two positions, a Deputy Mayor of Community Safety and a Deputy Mayor of Public Safety to shepherd the comprehensive strategy.
- Create a commission, that includes community and intervention leaders, to oversee the Department of Community Safety.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

- Scale the efforts of the Los Angeles Police Department's Community Safety Partnership Bureau focused on relationship-based and public trust policing.

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

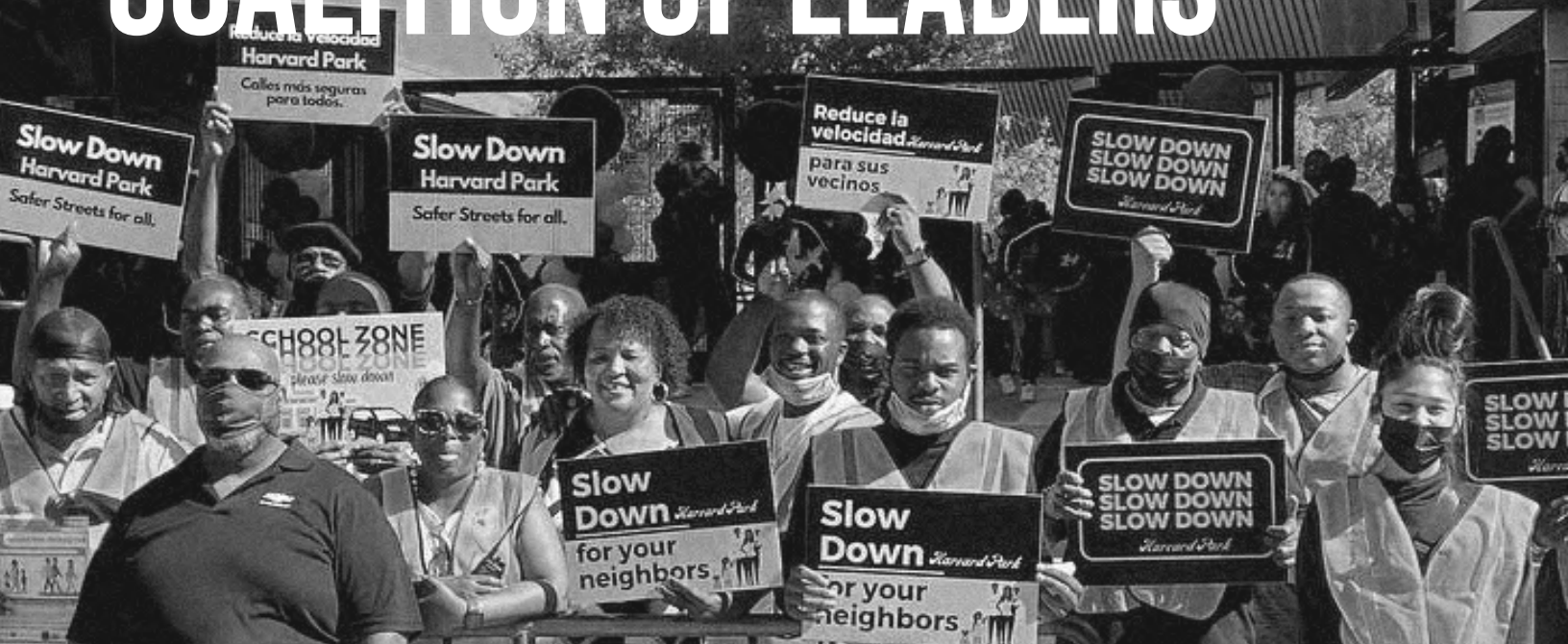
- Increase the number of violence intervention workers working on the frontlines to 500, with a \$60,000 starting annual salary recognizing this dangerous work and unique expertise of Los Angeles peacemakers.
- Ensure workforce development opportunities that train and build professional capacity for community leaders to contribute to public safety.

- Reinvigorate the family-systems approach to violence prevention.
- Relaunch the Summer Night Lights Program as a safety strategy.

PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

- Strengthen the Triangle Incident Response Protocol – LAPD <-> Mayor's Office <-> Community Intervention.
- Develop a cutting-edge, comprehensive evaluation and data-sharing system to track and respond to violence.
- Partner with Los Angeles Unified School District to ensure community-based safety efforts are integrated on school campuses and throughout the surrounding neighborhoods.
- Partner with local trauma centers and hospital administration to coordinate violence response services.
- Work in partnership with County and philanthropy to build multi-jurisdictional commitment to a 10-year plan to transform public safety through a regional approach.

WHO WE ARE: A MISSION-DRIVEN COALITION OF LEADERS



“Los Angeles needed to replace an endless “shock and awe” war with a community safety model based on a comprehensive public health approach that melded strategic suppression, prevention, intervention and community mobilization.”

— UPI, A Call to Action report

“For over 10 years, gang intervention has integrated community services into the public safety platform by providing safe passage for schools, community events, funerals, and interrupting violence at the neighborhood level. Peacemakers have bridged relationships with community members, law enforcement, and government officials. As a result, homicides and violence have been reduced tremendously.”

— Ben “Taco” Owens, Community Intervention Leader

In 2007, Urban Peace Institute¹ (UPI) released the report *A Call to Action: A Case for a Comprehensive Solution to L.A.'s Gang Violence Epidemic*² which found, “After spending \$25 billion over 30 years fighting a ‘war on gangs’, Los Angeles gang participation and violence had mushroomed. In 2007, Los Angeles had more than 700 individual gangs with 40,000 members; nearly 75 percent of all youth gang homicides in the state of California occurred in Los Angeles County.” Utilizing the framework provided in the report UPI and a multi-sector coalition of partners transformed Los Angeles’ approach from war on gangs, to a war on community violence. Through this collaboration:




- The LA comprehensive strategy generated the lowest homicide rates in over 50 years.³
- The creation of the Mayor’s Office of Gang Reduction and Youth Development (GRYD)⁴, which initially invested \$24M⁵ dollars a year in intervention and prevention services in the most violence impacted areas of the city.
- UPI and intervention leaders created the first of its kind practitioner-led community violence intervention and street outreach training academy. The Urban Peace Academy⁶ provided training and certification for over 300 Los Angeles peacemakers charged with interrupting violence at the neighborhood level through a program known as LAVITA. The Urban Peace Academy professionalized the field of violence intervention by creating standards of practice for peacemakers in alignment with public health approaches to reduce violence.
- A multi-sector coalition of City, community, and non-profit leaders created a community-based intervention infrastructure to address violence on the frontlines through the development of networks of peacemakers with a strong License to Operate.⁷
- The City of Los Angeles launched the Los Angeles Police Department Community Safety Partnership (CSP), a first of its kind bureau focused on relationship-based policing and increasing public trust in the most violence-impacted communities as opposed to heavy-handed, arrest-only enforcement. Per the CSP Evaluation Report, 221 violent crimes were prevented by CSP between 2012 and 2017.⁸
- UPI and intervention leaders formed the Los Angeles Violence Intervention Coalition⁹ (LAVIC) in 2020 to advocate for peacemakers which has led to increased investment of over \$30 million in the City and County funds.
- UPI worked in coalition to transform youth justice in LA County ending reliance on youth probation and leading to the creation of the Department of Youth Development.

STRATEGY PERFORMANCE

The comprehensive violence reduction strategy launched in 2008 led to significant increases in safety through a coalition of civic and community partners dedicated to the mission of safety and healing. The key elements included:

- 1) GRYD funding administration, strategy coordination, and partnership
- 2) LAVITA gang intervention certification training coordinated by the Urban Peace Academy to professionalize the field
- 3) the Triangle Response Protocol that coordinated the separate but aligned roles between GRYD, the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD), and violence intervention workers, and
- 4) LAPD CSP investing in building public trust with a focus on problem-solving as opposed to enforcement-only. In particular, gang intervention has played a major role over the last decade to achieve safety.

LAPD Chief Michel Moore attributed a large share of the 2018 decline in violence to “...the work of gang interventionists who try to prevent retaliatory shootings by tamping down rumors and talking gang members out of revenge.”¹⁰ It is estimated that a single homicide costs society and the victim’s family \$9 million dollars.¹¹ The work of frontline gang intervention workers has been an indispensable pillar in the city-wide strategy. Frontline intervention incident response efforts utilizing the *Triangle Response Protocol*¹² in South Los Angeles demonstrated significant declines in violence and retaliations.



“Further proof that this system works, was seen during the pandemic when Los Angeles and the nation saw double-digit increases in homicides and crime. The work of CSP, gang intervention, and prevention never ceased. CSP achieved an across site decline of 78% in homicides when everything else was going up.”

— LAPD Deputy Chief Emada Tingirides,
CSP Bureau

GRYD evaluated the effectiveness of intervention and the Triangle Response in partnership with UCLA, USC, and Cal State LA:

Researchers found that gang intervention and Triangle Response efforts helped produce a

41%



reduction in retaliatory violence.¹³

When professionally trained intervention responded to a homicide the chance of a retaliatory killing fell to less than 1%, which translates to a

99%



in retaliatory killings when intervention is involved.¹⁴

The evaluation estimated that gang intervention and the Triangle Response yielded a total city-wide savings of

\$51M



per year.¹⁵

- When intervention responded to an aggravated assault the likelihood of a **follow up assault dropped by 77%**.¹⁶
- Gang intervention **prevented 185 violent gang crimes** over a two-year period.¹⁷

A UCLA, USC, and Cal State LA evaluation of GRYD prevention services showed:

- GRYD prevention program participants **decreased risk of gang joining by 83.4%**.¹⁸
- Participants also showed a **70.8% decrease in anti-social tendencies** after receiving services.¹⁹

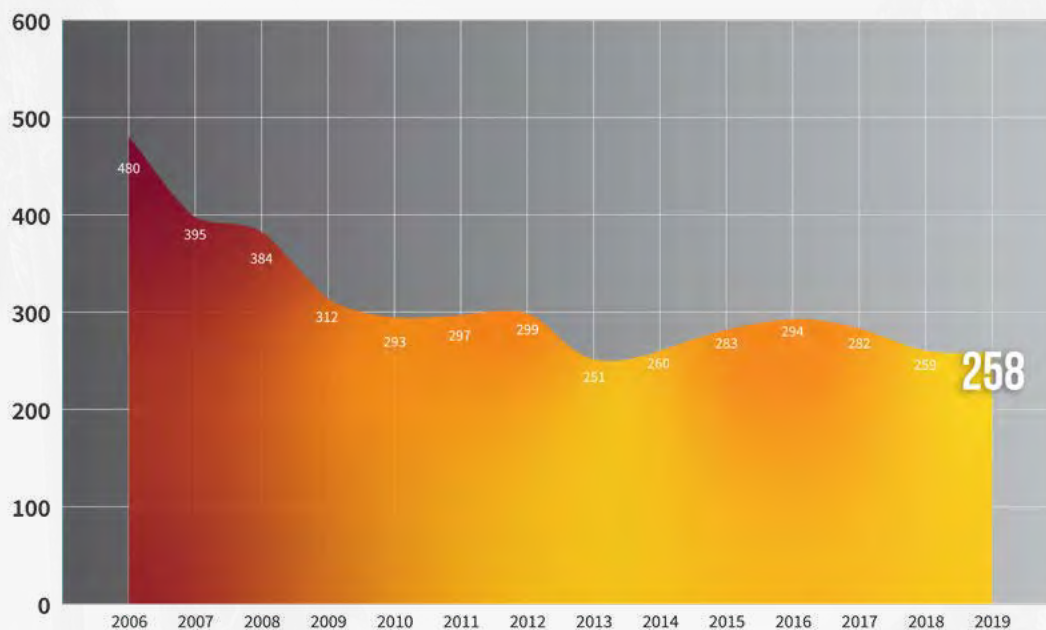
Current statistics and an evaluation of LAPD's Community Safety Partnership program demonstrated:

- CSP has achieved a **78% reduction in homicides, 34% reduction in shots fired, 28% reduction in victims shot, and 12% reduction in aggravated assaults across all sites**.²⁰
- CSP's trust and relationship-based partnership policing improves residents' perception of safety.²¹
- Crime reductions associated with CSP sites are even greater than **overall crime declines** city-wide.²²
- The **savings from prevented violent crimes in two CSP sites is an estimated \$14.5 million dollars** in tangible costs.²³
- An estimated total of **221 violent crimes were prevented** by CSP and a **reduction of 206 violent crime calls** for services over a 5-year period.²⁴

WHERE WE ARE NOW: THE CASE TO REVIVE, REVITALIZE, & RELAUNCH

Los Angeles is at a critical juncture in shaping the future of public safety in the region and influencing the nation. After a decade of implementing a comprehensive wrap-around approach yielding less than 300 homicides a year, Los Angeles ended 2021 with 403 homicides. Compared to the 2019 homicide rate, the City of LA is currently 49.5% higher, a by product of a myriad of social issues resulting from social-political unrest and a 100-year global pandemic that continues to devastate the most disadvantaged communities.

CITY OF LOS ANGELES HOMICIDES 2006 - 2019



The pandemic has demonstrated the need for a public health infrastructure that not only addresses violence, but also the health of isolated and underserved communities. While a spike in crime requires an immediate revitalization of a comprehensive strategy, the call to establish a more robust infrastructure will also yield significant benefits in terms of improving overall community wellness and savings. If each homicide yields \$9 million dollars in costs²⁵, every 100 homicides costs society \$900 million dollars, not to mention the immeasurable impacts of trauma on families and communities.

Given the significant increases in safety over the years it's time to revive, revitalize, and relaunch a scaled comprehensive community safety plan that builds from the success and addresses the challenges experienced over the last 15 years.

STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION CHALLENGES

GRYD has shepherded a comprehensive safety strategy and demonstrated significant success over the last decade. However, the GRYD strategy has become diluted and fallen away from the original mission of violence reduction. The administration of the strategy has become stagnant and unwilling to innovate. Over the last 6 years, the gang intervention infrastructure has been weakened emphasizing case management over violence reduction forcing intervention into a social worker role. Lack of visionary leadership, inadequate staffing infrastructure, and low morale have contributed to the weakening of the comprehensive strategy over the years. **The community safety and violence reduction mission need to be resuscitated and requires a hard reset to transform neighborhoods.**

CHALLENGES/GAPS

The current challenges and gaps with the GRYD model and comprehensive approach:

- The original vision for the comprehensive strategy did not go to scale. The formation of a city department and public-private partnership entity to administer public and private resources to expand the strategy to the regional level fell flat.
- The revitalized approach will need to generate full council buy-in to the comprehensive strategy to grow and sustain political will to transform safety. Increased and consistent communication with council offices is needed to integrate reasonable district needs that fall within the mission.
- The City's gang intervention violence reduction infrastructure has been weakened by an over-emphasis on case management and lack of focus on street violence and hiring of individuals with strong LTO's²⁶. The identity of gang intervention has evolved into a GRYD identity as opposed to an independent field of professionals.
- Gang intervention workers have been underpaid for years diminishing the field and leading to low morale, oftentimes being asked to "work for free" to implement city initiatives or support events. There has been a lack of investment in the development of the gang intervention workforce causing frustration among the field of workers.
- Real-time violence prevention data is not available to track trends in violence and provide coordinated responses. Successes are not broadly communicated to demonstrate effectiveness of prevention and intervention services.
- There has been a de-prioritization of Summer Night Lights as a summer safety strategy. This initiative has turned into an after school parks program versus a strategic investment in high violence areas. Summer Night Lights should negotiate agreements between communities in conflict and provide resources and employment opportunities to the larger community during the summer months when violence tends to increase.
- City contracts have been overly prescriptive which restricts the ability of intervention providers to address the full spectrum of needs of participants and communities they serve. This can also be attributed to the over-reliance on GRYD as the sole source of public funding for the violence reduction and prevention strategy.
- Los Angeles has suffered from the lack of visionary leadership and will to innovate that weakened the violence reduction infrastructure creating service gaps, low morale, communication barriers, mission dissonance, and overall frustration among community and public leaders.

NEW

COMPREHENSIVE MODEL & STRATEGY MUST HAVES

To build on the success and restore what was lost, the following are the must haves for the new comprehensive model:

PUBLIC LEADERSHIP

- **Building on the success of GRYD, create a Mayor's Office of Community Safety** and set a transition date for the launch of a **Department of Community Safety** that will have parity in authority, power, and funding with LAPD. This entity must be treated and respected as an essential part of the city's public safety approach, on par with LAPD.
- **The mayor's cabinet must include a Deputy Mayor of Community Safety** to shepherd the City's vision for the community-based safety **and a Deputy Mayor of Public Safety** to focus on police reform to help scale LAPD relationship-based policing efforts that dovetail into the community-based safety efforts.
- **Create a commission, that includes community and intervention leaders, to oversee the Department of Community Safety** and support the creation of policy to generate actionable plans to nurture mission alignment among key leaders and stakeholder groups and support the implementation of the larger public safety strategy.

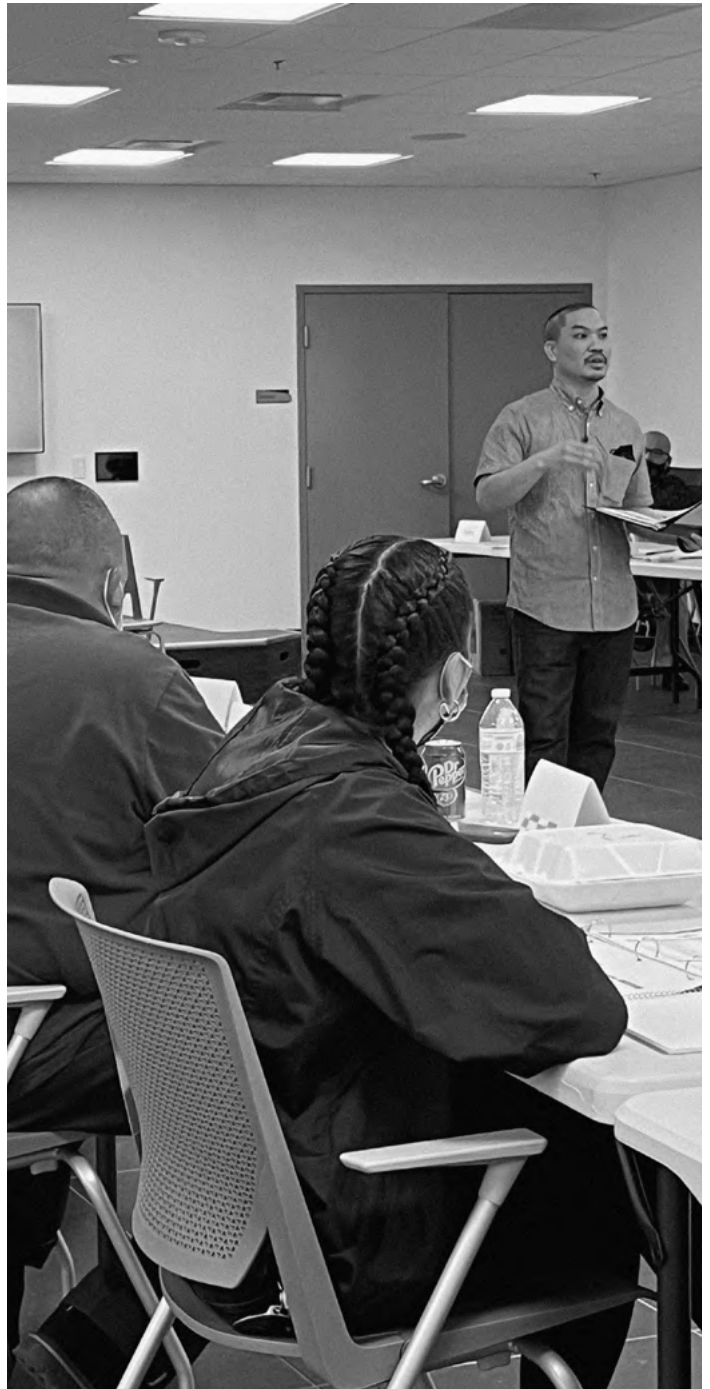
LAW ENFORCEMENT

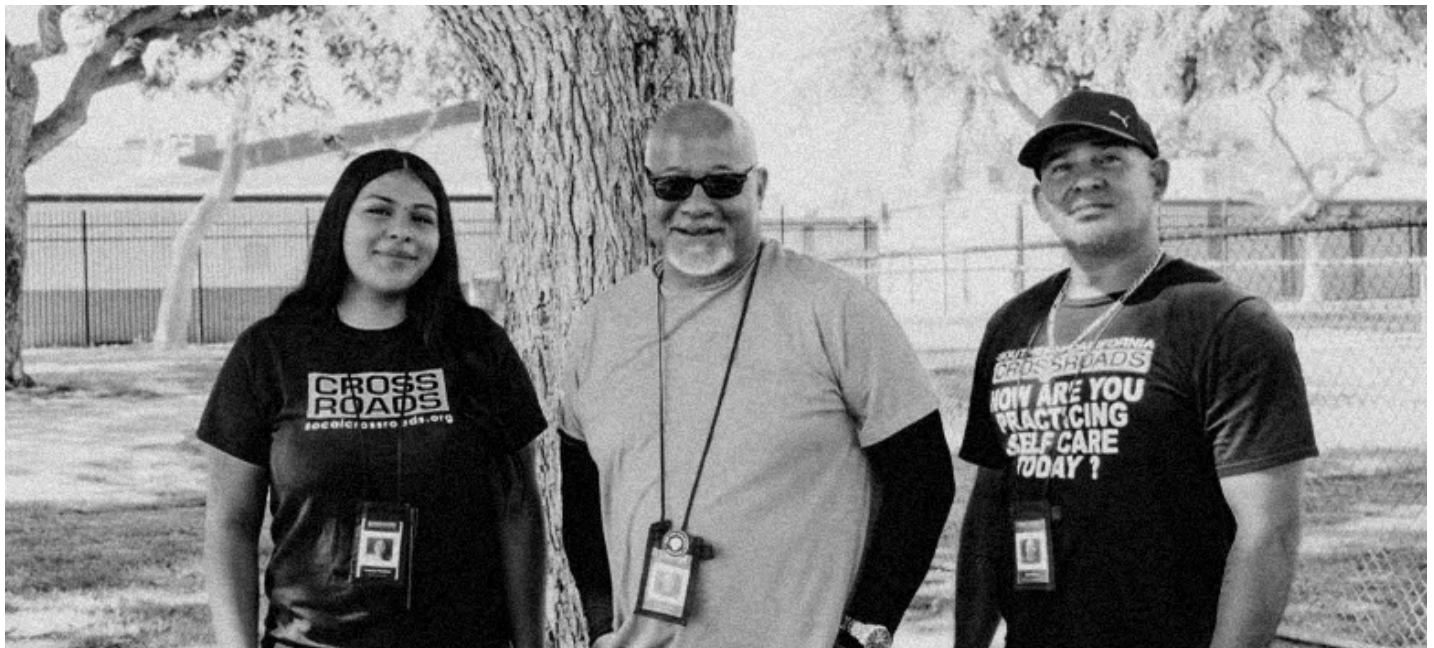
- **Support the efforts to scale up LAPD's Community Safety Partnership Bureau** to fully integrate relationship-based and public trust policing into the Department.



COMMUNITY VIOLENCE INTERVENTION

- **Increase violence intervention services to scale** by boosting the number of trained gang intervention workers from 120 to 500. Entry-level workers should receive a starting salary of \$60,000 a year including full health and retirement benefits with veteran workers earning higher salaries based on years of service. Workers should receive periodic pay increases over the years with opportunities for advancement through professional career and educational pathways. Emphasis should be placed on worker well-being and on-going training to support frontline workers to address the ever-changing street dynamics.
- **Ensure workforce development opportunities** that train and build professional capacity for community leaders to contribute to public safety outcomes via multiple sectors such as violence intervention, mental health, homeless outreach, and trauma services. This workforce should have the opportunity for professional advancement and salary increases. The city should develop private-public partnerships to create set-aside job slots for those with lived experience or transitioning away from the life of violence. This will also require on-going year-round job readiness training and life skills support to grow and sustain the workforce.
- **Reinvigorate the family-systems approach to violence prevention** to the scale of the problem through a multi-generational lens that provides services to stabilize families utilizing a strengths-based approach. The highest need families involved in the cycle of violence should receive direct support services from a “care first” perspective, not criminalization.
- **Reinvigorate the Summer Night Light’s program²⁷** as a summer safety strategy focused on revitalizing communities most isolated from social services by flooding parks with resources and services to increase cohesion and improve safety and health outcomes. Summer Night Lights should return to hiring and developing youth workers, community coordinators, and intervention workers to provide year-round job opportunities to improve and scale the strategy each year. The Summer Night Lights initiative should increase its capacity to embed its programs at more parks in the most-impacted areas and consider a year-round program to institutionalize consistent investment in neighborhoods.





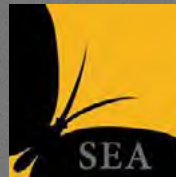
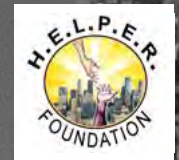
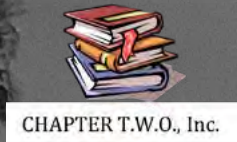
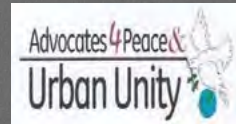
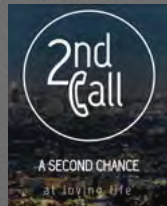
PARTNERSHIPS & COLLABORATION

- **Strengthen the Triangle Incident Response Protocol** – LAPD <-> Mayor’s Office <-> Community Intervention. This is key to reducing retaliation, community trauma and improves relationship between city government and marginalized communities. Ensure there are clear firewalls differentiating between the role of law enforcement and the role of gang intervention to protect the integrity and independence of peacemakers. Establish clear guidelines regarding roles and protocols including cross-training for each partner group. Mutual accountability among all partners will have to be led by the Mayor’s office.
- **Develop a cutting edge, comprehensive evaluation and data-sharing system** that tracks data on crime and violence utilizing both LAPD quantitative statistics and public health outcome indicators to measure service effectiveness. Los Angeles should have a real-time dashboard, like Chicago, providing information on trends in violence and crime to ensure tailored and targeted responses.²⁸
- **Partner with LAUSD and local schools** to ensure community-based safety efforts are integrated into campuses and the surrounding neighborhoods. Schools can play a larger and more central role in community safety given their direct attachment to youth in communities. Intervention workers can provide safety on campus and safe passage with other resident leaders outside of school.
- **Partner with local trauma centers and hospital administration** to coordinate violence response services that engage individuals and families impacted by shootings and violent assaults. Seamless communication between hospital-based intervention staff and frontline intervention workers at the neighborhood-level help to reduce the likelihood of retaliation and maximize the opportunity to engage those who are at the highest risk of being re-victimized.
- **Work in partnership with County and philanthropy** to build multi-jurisdictional commitment to a 10-year plan to transform public safety through a regional approach. Support the creation of a national funders collaborative to generate long-term private investment. Additionally, support the creation of a public-private partnership entity that will be the nexus between City, County, philanthropy, and community-based services.

ENDNOTES

- 1 Urban Peace Institute was formerly part of Advancement Project California and launched into an independent organization in 2015.
- 2 [A Call to Action: A Case for a Comprehensive Solution to L.A.'s Gang Violence Epidemic](#), UPI, 2007
- 3 [Killings in LA Drop to 1967 Levels, LA Times 12/26/10](#);
[Crime in LA is Down for the First Time in 5 Years, LA Times 12/29/18](#)
- 4 The Mayor's Office of Gang Reduction & Youth Development (GRYD), launched in 2007, is the most successful iteration of a comprehensive safety strategy in the City of LA
- 5 The current annual GRYD budget is \$32.5 million dollars
- 6 [Urban Peace Institute, Urban Peace Academy](#), since 2010 the LA GRYD Office contracted with UPI to provide gang intervention training certification for workers for the LA Violence Intervention Training Academy (LAVITA). UPI certification is provided by the Urban Peace Academy.
- 7 License To Operate (LTO): is the permission and credibility of an individual based on their status as a community member or former gang member to engage active individuals or groups to interrupt violence, de-escalate tension, and broker non-aggression agreements as a peacemaker. This community organizing concept was first applied to the field of gang intervention in the 1990s by Howard Uller.
- 8 [Evaluation of the LAPD Community Safety Partnership, UCLA Luskin School, March 2020](#)
- 9 LA Violence Intervention Coalition (LAVIC) is a group of 20 frontline violence intervention agencies committed to ending the homicide epidemic in Los Angeles and beyond.
- 10 [Crime in LA Dropped Again in 2019. Police Credit Outreach & Gang Intervention, LA Times 12/31/20](#)
- 11 Brantingham, P.J., Sundback, N., Baichuan, Y., Chan, K. (2017). Gang intervention incident response & gang crime 2017 evaluation report. Los Angeles, CA: California State University, Los Angeles, UCLA, USC, pp. 30
- 12 Triangle Response Protocol: a GRYD incident response coordinated through three entities: 1) LAPD, 2) GRYD, and 3) community violence intervention to address gang-related violence. There are clear firewalls between law enforcement and community intervention workers to protect the integrity and independence of peacemakers.
- 13 Brantingham, P.J. & Schoenberg, F.P. (2020). Further exploration on the impact of GRYD Incident Response Program on retaliatory violence (GRYD research updated No.1). Los Angeles, CA: California State, Los Angeles
- 14 Ibid. 11, 29
- 15 Ibid. 11, 32
- 16 Ibid. 11, 29
- 17 Ibid. 11, 30
- 18 Kraus, M., Chan, K., Martin, A., Park, L., Leap, J., Riva, L., Monos, K., Hennigan, K.M., Kolnick, K.A. (2017). GRYD Gang Prevention 2017 Evaluation Report., Los Angeles, CA: Cal State Los Angeles. pp. 52
- 19 Ibid. 18
- 20 LAPD CSP Bureau, YTD Statistics October 2022; There are currently 10 CSP sites city-wide.
- 21 Ibid. 8, 2
- 22 Ibid. 8, 3
- 23 Ibid. 8, 6
- 24 Ibid. 8, 28
- 25 Ibid. 11, 30
- 26 Ibid. 7
- 27 [Crime Falls 40% in Neighborhoods with SNL program, LA Times, 10/31/10](#)
- 28 [City of Chicago Violence Reduction Dashboard](#)

LOS ANGELES VIOLENCE INTERVENTION COALITION MEMBERS



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