



Memorandum

**TO: NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES AND
EDUCATION COMMITTEE**

FROM: Jon Cicirelli
Director

SUBJECT: SEE BELOW

DATE: October 28, 2022

Approved

Date

11/1/22

**SUBJECT: MAYOR'S GANG PREVENTION TASK FORCE PLAN – SAN JOSE
YOUTH VIOLENCE PREVENTION STRATEGY**

RECOMMENDATION

1. Accept the MGPTF Strategic Plan and refer to a future City Council meeting in 2023 for full adoption including the following changes:
 - a. *San José Youth Empowerment Alliance* as the new name of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF) as approved by the Policy Team on October 27, 2022
 - b. Discontinue use of the term *Hot Spots* by the Administration to define areas of high youth and gang crime and replace it with the term *Opportunity Neighborhoods*.

OUTCOME

The Committee will accept the recommended three-year plan as approved by the Policy Team with outcomes, strategic objectives, first year key results, and overall strategy for preventing and reducing youth violence.

BACKGROUND

More than 30 years ago, there was a community call to action – stop gang violence, save our children. Gang violence was plaguing neighborhoods and young people of color were killing each other. Today, the level of gang violence has diminished, yet it still affects young people and neighborhoods, particularly those marginalized by society, the economy, public policies, and generational disadvantage. These same systemic risk factors among family, peers, schools, and neighborhood conditions that allow gangs to grow, are the same factors that contribute to violence among young people in different forms – bullying, dating, digital abuse, trafficking, and gun violence. Moving forward, this three-year plan calls for a broader youth violence prevention strategy that will also continue to address those factors related to gangs that harm communities.

ANALYSIS

There are several new aspects to the City of San José's youth violence prevention strategy.

First, the proposed plan broadens the focus from addressing gang violence to include other forms of youth violence that have shared risk and protective factors. The programs delivered by the City's Youth Intervention Services, Bringing Everyone's Strength Together (BEST) providers and numerous stakeholders remain critical to maintain the lower levels of gang violence than in previous years. The BEST grant funds as well as the City's Children and Youth Services Master Plan provide opportunities to enhance and broaden the City's ability to prevent youth violence in its various forms. The Children and Youth Services Master Plan is currently in development, through a collaborative process led by the City Manager's Office in partnership with internal departments, educational leaders, parents/caregivers, youth/young people, and community stakeholders. This Plan will provide a strategic framework and guidance on policy priorities, investments, and alignment of programs and services to create opportunity pathways from cradle to career, from prevention to intervention. The Children and Youth Services Master Plan will be presented to City Council in Spring 2023.

Second, since 2020 there have been several discussions to change the name of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force. Also, a new name was needed to that reflected what youth and community members have mentioned for years, that the 'Gang Task Force' was not a welcome name. With the wider focus on preventing youth violence generally in addition to intentional gang violence prevention and intervention approaches, the timing of a new name is appropriate.

On October 27, 2022, the Policy Team discussed the five choices that ranked highest among over 1,400 community members and reflected on the hopes and aspirations for the collective group's work. Staff recommended and the Policy Team approved the name, San José Youth Empowerment Alliance (Alliance). Discussion on how the structure reflects the new name will be conducted through the work to deliver on a key result in year one which seeks to increase community voices, other sectors, and those with lived experience on the Policy Team.

Additionally, the City has used the term 'Hot Spots' for decades as way of describing the areas with the most gang crime and to help determine where to deploy community-based services, law enforcement resources and other service modalities. Due to the demeaning nature of referring to high crime areas and the label it places on neighborhoods, the new term will be 'Opportunity Neighborhoods' and Hot Spots will be phased out.

Objectives and Key Results

This new Strategic Plan for the San José Youth Empowerment Alliance calls out four strategic objectives and 12 Key Results:

- 1) **Prevention** – Increase knowledge and protective factors in young people
- 2) **Intervention** – Reduce youth risk factors in opportunity neighborhoods and schools

- 3) **Diversion and Reentry** – Divert from incarceration and reduce recidivism among young people ages 12-24
- 4) **Healing** – Advance trauma-informed, healing-centered approaches

These objectives capture the continuum of care that will be the focus for the coming three-years.

During the first year, there are 12 Key Results across the four objectives prioritized for completion by December 2023. It should be noted that while there are not current measurables for the four objectives at this time, the identification of measurable objectives will be completed during Year 1 through “Key Result - Healing 10” which calls for annual reports to the Policy Team and community on the outcomes, with a racial equity lens.

KEY RESULTS – Year 1 Work Plan

Objective		Key Result by December 31, 2023
1	Prevention	Develop a Youth Violence Prevention training plan for bullying prevention, substance use, mental health, and healthy relationships
2	Prevention	Disseminate information in all City and County facilities on existing gun violence prevention and safety practices, ordinances
3	Prevention	Implement a multilingual campaign to raise awareness of publicly funded youth violence reduction programs
4	Intervention	Deliver expanded BEST Eligible Services including youth-driven, whole family, place-based strategies.
5	Intervention	Identify neighborhood blocks with high rates of Youth Violence to pilot enhancements and focus on built environment resources
6	Intervention	Conduct at least 3 additional youth-led, school safety initiatives such as Sandy Hook Promise (Total=6)
7	Diversion/ Reentry	House at least 6 young people released from the Department of Juvenile Justice or County Probation
8	Diversion/ Reentry	Complete design of a community-level response for youth who have committed gun-related offenses
9	Diversion/ Reentry	Convene employment sector experts to place at least 15 high risk youth
10	Healing	Report annually to Policy Team & community on program and community outcomes with a racial equity lens
11	Healing	Increase the number of community voices, sectors, and those with lived experience on the Policy Team
12	Healing	Implement a joint pilot with County/Cross Agency Services Team & City/Youth Intervention Services in a Project Hope neighborhood

CONCLUSION

For over 30 years, the City of San José and its many partners have committed to improving the lives of young people, prevented and reduced the death and injuries by gang violence, and served thousands of young people through a concerted effort called the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force with youth intervention services, BEST grant funded community-based providers, and an empowerment strategy in nine Project Hope neighborhoods. This City-led, funded approach brings community leaders, and partners from the County, schools, faith-based, and non-profit groups together to ensure safe and healthy outcomes and opportunities for San José's young people and their neighborhoods.

The adoption of the new plan will advance the City's commitment to racial equity, acknowledge San José's young people as one of its greatest strengths, and continue to amplify the partnerships that make a collective impact model work. Two challenges will be 1) ensuring that a broader youth violence prevention strategy does not dilute current funding for important programs; and 2) measuring success beyond gang activity, while maintaining the coordination of a collective impact model will take new resources beyond operating the important City and community-based programs.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW-UP

The San José Youth Empowerment Alliance Strategic Plan proposes to report out the following community-wide indicators on an annual basis to the Policy Team and community. At the program level, youth intervention and BEST services are to be evaluated with the first evaluation report expected in 2024. The indicators and outcome data are desired to be collected and disaggregated by age, race, location, gender identity, and disability when possible. The City seeks to understand and respond to disparities that are identified through the data.

Community Indicators

- Decreased youth (12-24) violence incidents, injury, & homicide
- Decreased youth (12-24) arrests & recidivism
- Improved perceptions of neighborhood safety
- Decreased chronic absenteeism
- Increased on time high school graduation

Program Outcomes

- Reduced incidents in 82 schools
- Improved school attendance
- Increased job placement
- Reduced substance use
- Reduced justice involvement
- Improved hopefulness, sense of purpose

CLIMATE SMART SAN JOSÉ

The recommendation in this memo has no effect on Climate Smart San José energy, water, or mobility goals.

PUBLIC OUTREACH

To gather community input for this planning process, a series of 31 community listening sessions and focus groups were held with approximately 700 people. Sessions were held from February 2022 through April 2022. Participants represented a variety of stakeholder groups, including:

- Community-based organizations that work in youth violence prevention programs
- Cultural groups
- MGPTF Technical Team members including BEST providers
- Racial equity advocacy groups
- Residents and Neighborhood Association leaders in Project Hope areas
- Youth groups/program participants

Subsequently, the draft plan has been presented to the MGPTF Technical Team, Interagency Subcommittee, and advocacy groups in August and October 2022.

This memorandum will be posted on the City's Council Agenda website for the November 10, 2022, Neighborhood Services and Education Committee.

COORDINATION

This report was coordinated with San José Police Department, the Budget Office and the City Attorney's Office.

COMMISSION RECOMMENDATION/INPUT

The Policy Team of the Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force heard this report on October 27, 2022.

CEQA

Not a Project, File No. PP17-008, General Procedure and Policy Making resulting in no changes to the physical environment.

/s/
JON CICIRELLI
Director, Department of Parks, Recreation
and Neighborhood Services

NEIGHBORHOOD SERVICES AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

October 28, 2022

Subject: MGPTF Plan – The San José Youth Violence Prevention Strategy

Page 6

For questions, please contact Andrea Flores Shelton, Deputy Director, at andrea.floresshelton@sanjoseca.gov.

Attachment: DRAFT MGPTF Strategic Plan