



Community-Based Public Safety Task Force

Progress Update and Funding Approach

Creating safe and connected communities

Community-Based Public Safety Task Force

Background

On 2020 February 3, Council unanimously approved Notice of Motion PFC2020-0120 initiating the formation of a Community-Based Public Safety Task Force (Task Force) **to identify and address community concerns around escalating urban violence in Calgary, with a focus on gang and gun violence.** The Task Force undertook extensive community and public engagement and reviewed local and national gang prevention, early-intervention and exiting programs to understand which services are effective, and identify gaps, challenges, and issues with existing programs. The Task Force heard from the community that:

- i. Barriers exist related to service access and navigation for certain population groups.
- ii. There are significant programming gaps in the areas of parenting skills development, gang exiting/re-integration and street outreach focused on gang-involved individuals.
- iii. There is a need for more culturally appropriate programming options, more input required from the community and those with lived experience on program design and evaluation.
- iv. Greater support is needed for advocacy-focused initiatives that address the experience of inequality that disproportionately impacts members of the Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC) community.

On 2021 April 14, Council endorsed three Task Force actions:

Action 1: Share, monitor and advocate valuable insights gained by the Task Force with stakeholders.

Action 2: Apply for and align funding based on criteria identified by the community and the Task Force.

Action 3: Coordinate and improve navigation and access with community stakeholders.



1. Share, Monitor and Advocate: Updates from Task Force Member Agencies

Insights gained from the Task Force report on proposed solutions to decrease urban violence were shared with stakeholders and member agencies. The Task Force further identified a strong need for coordination with City initiatives to advance reoccurring themes that emerged through engagement. This section summarizes progress achieved by both member agencies and city initiatives.

Anti-Racism Program

Council passed Calgary's Commitment to Anti-Racism in 2020 June, prompting the establishment of the *Anti-Racism Action Committee* and the *Anti-Racism Program*. The Anti-Racism program has a vision to catalyze actions to mitigate and remove systemic racism for Indigenous and racialized people in Calgary, and a mission to remove systemic racism through education, engagement, collaboration, and policy changes that will lead towards a racially just Calgary. To achieve this, the Anti-Racism Program uses three streams of focus: *Community Engagement*, *Organizational* and *Public Safety*.

The Task Force emphasized that to successfully address systemic racism, solutions must be rooted in emancipatory principles and would require specific focus on community ownership and belonging. In alignment with this recommendation, the *Community Engagement stream* seeks to advance anti-racism outcomes for the community by providing strategic leadership, consultation, facilitation and coordination. This engagement initiative has completed 36 events to date, with a total of 1,114 participants spanning 13 different languages. Feedback from these engagement sessions will be used to develop an Anti-Racism Community Action Strategy. The *Organizational stream* aims to remove systemic racism in the City's policies, practices and services. An organization-wide racial equity assessment was conducted to inform the design of a City of Calgary approach to help become an anti-racist organization. The model outlines key racial equity criteria to investigate and assess racial inequities and establish The City's current state of racial equity.

The *Public Safety stream* aims to mitigate and prevent hate activities in all spheres of public life in Calgary, municipal enforcement, and in all City programs and services. This stream initiated a scoping exercise with City partners and staff to map out the nature, patterns, and priority areas of hate-motivated activities in municipal enforcement and service delivery. These discovery conversations will contribute to the development of a public safety strategy. Additional efforts include extensive research, municipal scans, and a literature review on causes and strategies to help address hate activities and enhance public dignity. Next, this stream will be developing an engagement plan for the *Municipal Anti-Hate Strategy*.

Community Action on Mental Health

Public engagement led by the Task Force showed a clear connection to mental health and addictions issues in the community, in alignment with findings by *Calgary's Mental Health and Addiction Community Strategy and Action Plan 2021-2023*, convened by The City of Calgary. The Strategy and Action Plan recognizes that actions that reduce risk factors and increase protective factors for positive social development can contribute to the prevention of not only mental health and addiction problems, but also crime, violence, and other negative outcomes. Implementation of the Strategy and Action Plan is underway and is in the early stages of implementing initiatives related to increasing natural supports and improved mental health literacy, particularly for underserved and marginalized communities. Understanding the impact of offering a holistic, wrap-around approach to at-risk children and

youth, mental health supports are to be inclusive of parents, siblings, and other community members.

Community Safety Investment Framework

Public The Community Safety Investment Framework is a collaborative effort between The City of Calgary, the Calgary Police Service and community partners to transform Calgary's crisis response system to improve the wellbeing of Calgarians through an equitable and effective crisis response system. The Framework identified short, mid, and long-term crisis prevention and response-related outcomes for investment through two funding priorities: Strengthening Existing Crisis Supports; and Transforming Calgary's Approach to Persons in Crisis, which align with Task Force findings. A call for proposals in 2021 March allocated investment in non-profit and community organizations focused on strengthening existing crisis supports, including BeTheChangeYYC and the Downtown Outreach Addictions Partnership (DOAP).

A research project to Transform Calgary's Crisis Response System is underway, with a final report and recommendations expected back to the Community Safety Investment Framework Implementation Team in 2021 December. Funding has been set aside for design and implementation work resulting from the research project. The Task Force identified that there is an opportunity to address how domestic violence cases are managed, specifically noting the need for more streamlined communication related to calls. This opportunity will be considered within the scope of the research project recommendations.

Calgary Board of Education (CBE)

To advance an Anti-Racism Action Plan for the organization, the CBE CARES initiative was introduced to advance equity, anti-racism and inclusion to ensure that all students have the opportunity to succeed personally and academically regardless of background, identity or personal circumstances. An

established Advisory Council will offer direction and actionable strategies informed by research, evaluation of existing CBE programs and services, and findings from listening sessions with students, staff, families and school communities held during the 2020-2021 school year. This progress contributes to a long-term multi-year plan to revise policies and implement staff training on harassment, anti-racism and bullying.

The CBE is working to adapt and improve mental health support and afterschool programming for students and parents virtually accessing resources during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through collaboration with partnering organizations, the CBE has explored how to shift platforms and innovate program design to ensure that they are culturally appropriate and continue to be responsive to student needs in an online environment. Advocacy efforts for continued investment in supports for children and families at an early age continue, as the benefits of early investment in pre-school education have proven to have significant long-term impacts.



Calgary Police Commission and the Calgary Police Service

The Calgary Police Commission and Calgary Police Service are progressing practices and policies that modernize equity and bias training, promote diversity in recruitment, evaluate youth programming, and improve data sharing to support prevention, intervention and enforcement strategies in response to recommendations from the Task Force report. A summary of these actions is shared in Appendix A.

Government of Alberta

To aid communities developing strategies to stop youth from getting involved in gangs and support youth who want to leave gangs, the Community Mobilization Grant was announced 2021 June. This grant enabled non-profit organizations, community-based coalitions, and Indigenous communities to submit

funding proposals designed to create new support systems and address gaps in existing programming. This grant is part the Government of Canada's overarching initiative to take action against gun and gang violence. The provincial government announced a \$140 million investment in mental health and addictions treatment spaces and is currently developing a youth-focused Addictions and Mental Health Strategy.

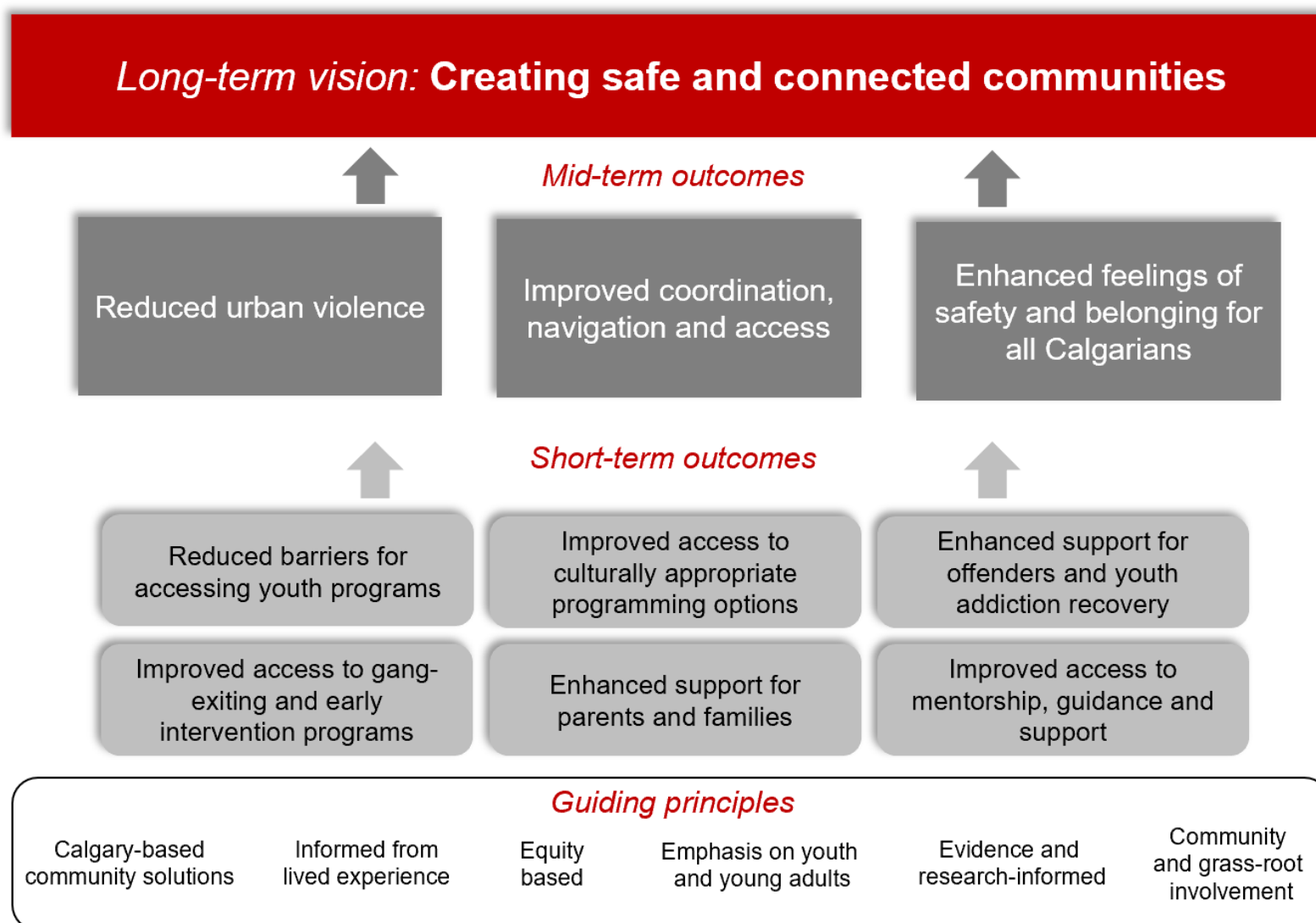
Government of Canada

The Crime Prevention Action fund was launched in 2021 August, seeking proposals for projects tailored to the needs of youth, through the National Crime Prevention Strategy. This initiative prioritized multi-sectoral community-driven intervention projects for Black and Indigenous youth, and research projects on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on crime prevention issues. Additional funding announced in 2021 August has been allocated to support newcomer integration and address gender-based violence.



2. Apply for and Align Funding: Funding approach

The Task Force funding approach was developed using findings collected through community engagement and a gap analysis review of existing programs and services. Additional research was conducted to help prioritize outcomes and validate their prospective contributions to achieving the long-term vision of creating safe and connected communities.



2.1 Long-term vision

Creating safe and connected communities. This vision can be achieved using three approaches classified as mid-term outcomes.

2.2 Mid-term outcomes

Each mid-term outcome was selected based on local needs identified through community engagement conducted by the Task Force and are supported with research validating their contributions to achieving the long-term vision of creating safe and connected communities.

Reduced urban violence

To address concerns about escalating gang and gun violence in Calgary.

Positive contributions to achieving this mid-term outcome could include:

- Decreasing rates of violent crime and shootings.
- Decreasing rates of gang participation.
- Decreasing prevalence of drug markets and trade.
- Decreasing access to guns and firearms.

Improved program coordination, navigation, and access

Ensuring that individuals are consistently supported through navigation and coordination of programs and services over time.

Positive contributions to achieving this mid-term outcome could include:

- Increased participation in programs designed to prevent gang and gun violence.
- Increased availability of resources to support navigation of formal systems and processes.
- Increased access to information for communities on the variety and type of services available.
- Reduced barriers for individuals seeking access to programs and services.

Enhanced feelings of safety and belonging for all Calgarians

Providing a safe and inclusive environment for all residents to live and thrive.

Positive contributions to achieving this mid-term outcome could include:

- Decreasing rates of poverty.
- Decreasing rates of crime and vandalism.
- Increased access to services that support mental health and recovery.
- Increased opportunities to engage and connect with the community.
- Increased access to employment opportunities and programming.



2.3 Short-term outcomes

Each short-term outcome was selected based on local needs identified through community engagement conducted by the Task Force and are supported with research on gang and gun violence prevention. Each short-term outcome contributes to achieving mid-term outcomes and the overall vision of the Task Force funding approach.

Reduced barriers for accessing youth programs

Engagement sessions conducted by the Task Force identified that there is a lack of information in communities on the variety and type of services that are available and how to access them. There also needs to be more information on how to navigate various formal systems and processes. Research has further emphasized that broadening access to youth programs is essential for improving program participation rates¹. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Increased access to information on the benefits of youth programs and how to participate.
- Assurance that information can be easily obtained through a variety of platforms.
- Consistent and flexible access to youth programs, enabling individuals to align participation with their lifestyle needs.
- Increased street outreach to help share information about available resources and their related benefits.

Improved access to gang-exiting and early intervention programs

The Task Force identified an emerging need for more gang-exiting and intervention programs in Calgary. Intervention programs are intended to help gang members disaffiliate, and to prevent young people who are on the periphery of gangs from joining². The most effective intervention programs are multi-faceted, and use a wraparound strategy involving youth, their families, service providers and community agencies to achieve gang disaffiliation³. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Increased collaboration among partner agencies to offer programs specialized in gang-exiting and intervention.
- Availability of attractive alternatives that empower individuals involved in gang-life to safely exit and pursue new opportunities.
- Specialized resources designed to help gang-involved individuals identify and commit to long-term positive, pro-social and non-criminal goals.
- Scheduled follow-ups throughout the exiting process to support individuals navigate their journey towards their long-term objectives and goals.

¹ Bania, M. (2009). Gang violence among youth and young adults: Affiliation and the potential for prevention. IPC Review, 3, 89-116.

² Erickson, P. G. and J. E. Butters (2006). "Youth, Weapons and Violence in Toronto and Montreal." A Final Report prepared for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Canada, under the direction of Project Manager, Rebecca Jesseman. University of Toronto, Canada.

³ Linden, R. (2012). Comprehensive approaches to address street gangs in Canada.

Improved access to culturally appropriate programming options

Relevant studies identify that many of the risk factors for gang involvement are indicative of the sustained marginalization often faced by newcomer youth and their families. Gang involvement and association may provide social support, acceptance and a sense of social status and respect that youth do not receive at home, at school or in their community⁴. Improving the access that individuals have to programs designed and facilitated by those who understand the cultural context of those they serve would greatly benefit Calgary's diverse communities. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Inclusion of language needs and cultural norms in program design.
- Increased availability of programs and services in diverse environments and familiar cultural settings.
- Increased availability of programs that address the needs of newcomers, such as the trauma of immigration adversity.
- Established partnerships with local communities and faith-based organizations to increase convenience and comfort for participants.

Enhanced support for parents and families

Negative parental and family influence is considered one of the leading risk factors associated with gang affiliation, delinquent behavior, and urban violence⁵. The Task Force further identified that there are relatively few prevention and intervention programs targeted specifically to parents and caregivers of at-risk or gang involved youth. Considering that gang-intervention programs have proven most effective when using an integrated approach that involves the parents and the family unit⁶, enhancing support for parents and families is essential for successful prevention and intervention. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Additional programs that support the unique needs of parents and families impacted by gang and gun violence, including resources for those with at-risk youth.
- Strengthened connections between families and the local community.
- Increased opportunities for parents to access family therapy and training programs to help reduce frequency of conflict.
- Availability of family and group therapy to find effective strategies to mitigate risk for youth.
- Access to education and awareness regarding the issues related to gangs, the social pressures related to gangs, and the types of criminal acts that often lead to gang activity.

⁴ Rossiter, M. J., & Rossiter, K. R. (2009). Immigrant youth and crime: Stakeholder perspectives on risk and protective factors. PMC Working Paper Series. Edmonton, AB: Prairie Metropolis Centre, University of Alberta.

⁵ Dunbar, L. K. (2017). Youth gangs in Canada: A Review of current topics and issues.

⁶ Kumpfer, K. and R. Alvarado. 1998. "Effective Family Strengthening Interventions". Justice Juvenile Bulletin. Family Strengthening Series. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.

Enhanced support for offenders and youth addiction recovery

Relevant studies emphasize that many gang intervention programs fail to address the high prevalence of mental health and substance abuse issues associated with gang members, often presenting a significant barrier for successful disaffiliation⁷. This aligns with findings from the Task Force that identifying a need for additional support for offenders to make positive life changes to make disaffiliation a realistic option. Gang violence can be discouraged by offering increased opportunities for those who stop committing violent acts, including access to drug and addiction treatment, job skills training and tattoo removal⁸. There is also a need to increase availability of these types of supportive services. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Increased support for individuals committed to long-term positive, pro-social and non-criminal goals.
- Increased inter-agency collaboration with that support individuals coping with addictions and mental health issues.
- More opportunities for individuals involved in gang-life to engage with their local community and gain employment.
- Increased resiliency within peer groups and families to reduce the likelihood that youth and young adults will become involved with alcohol and drug use.

Improved access to mentorship, guidance, and support

The Task Force identified that there is a need to increase support for grassroots street outreach programs to help establish relationships with hard to reach, gang-involved individuals. These efforts would help bridge meaningful connections between gang-involved individuals and their local community⁹, which is helpful for providing support and navigation of available programs and services. This objective is supported by relevant studies that found community-based strategies should focus on outreach, support with separation from gangs, availability of post-gang support, and leadership opportunities for formerly gang-involved youth to make positive life changes¹⁰. *This short-term outcome could be achieved with:*

- Enhanced mentoring services offered to high-risk populations that are underserved because of location, a shortage of mentors, physical or mental challenges, or other related issues identified by the community.
- Structured activities and programs for mentoring matches, with training and support for mentors.
- Increased opportunities for individuals to form positive and trusting relationships with others in their community.

⁷ Macfarlane A. (2018). Gangs and Adolescent Mental Health: a Narrative Review. *Journal of child & adolescent trauma*, 12(3), 411–420.

⁸ Tita, G., Troshynski, E., Graves, M. (2007). *Strategies for Reducing Gun Violence: The Role of Gangs, Drugs and Firearm Accessibility*. Public Safety Canada.

⁹ Totten, M. (2009). Aboriginal youth and violent gang involvement in Canada: Quality prevention strategies. *IPC Review*, 3(1), 135-156.

¹⁰ Wortley, S., & Tanner, J. (2006). Immigration, social disadvantage and urban youth gangs. Results of a Toronto-area study. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*.

2.4 Guiding principles

The Task Force funding approach is intended to guide investment in outcomes that develop and improve programs and access, with a long-term vision to create safe and connected communities for the well-being of all Calgarians. Six guiding principles have been identified based on community engagement and research to ensure that the funding approach advances key findings from the Task Force report.

Calgary-based community solutions

Ensuring that local solutions are informed by local challenges will promote the development of programs and services that fit the Calgary-context. Funding objectives should be evaluated through a community-based lens and align with the evolving needs of Calgarians.

Informed from lived experience

The Task Force identified that programs designed with input from those with lived experiences have a greater impact on the community. Seeking consultation from participants from related programs or from individuals who have been affected by urban violence will ensure that solutions are designed and evaluated to achieve desired outcomes.

Equity-based

To address the reality that racism in Calgary is both a form of violence and a cause of violence, emphasis should be placed on efforts to end systemic racism and promote systematic liberation. Considering that gang and gun violence disproportionately impacts Black youth and racialized communities in Calgary, involvement of BIPOC in the design of advocacy-focused programs and services is essential to address inequality. An equity-based approach is intended to remove barriers that limit BIPOC participation and will apply the lens of anti-racism and anti-colonialism to program development and evaluation.

Emphasis on access for youth and young adults

Considering that accessibility gaps exist for youth and young adults seeking support, emphasis should be placed on addressing the root causes of crime by removing barriers to education, employment, mentorship, and housing. Developing accessible programs and services for youth, young adults and individuals experiencing mental health challenges should be prioritized.

Evidence and research-informed

Using evidence and research on intervention and prevention of gang and gun violence will provide valuable information to help develop solutions with proven success. Promoting a consistent commitment to leverage emerging research to inform investment and program design will ensure that program funding evolves with the needs of our communities.

Community and grassroots involvement

Recognizing that the best solutions to community concerns about public safety will be collaborative and inclusive, it will be essential to promote involvement from community leaders and local service providers. As each perspective is unique and valuable, the local needs and informal links that exist within our communities can be better understood and leveraged with the support of grassroots stakeholders.

2.5 Monitoring, evaluation, and reporting

Progress towards creating safe and connected communities through the Task Force funding approach will be tracked using internal indicators or other methods used for measuring urban violence, program access and navigation and public safety. Emerging trends and best practices in reducing gang and gun violence will be incorporated into the funding approach as they become available. All Task Force funding proposals will be reviewed using customized screening and evaluation tools that will be developed to help allocate funding.

3. Coordinate and Improve Navigation and Access: Next Steps

Creating safe and connected communities continues to be a priority for The City of Calgary and the Task Force. The actions taken by Task Force agency members and the funding approach will be used to inform the identification and prioritization of community needs and help allocate prospective funding from other orders of government.



Appendix A: Update from the Calgary Police Commission and Calgary Police Service



October 18, 2021

Community Based Public Safety Task Force Update from the Calgary Police Service (CPS) and Calgary Police Commission (CPC)

This memo is in response to Councillor Chahal's letter dated June 8th, 2021, requesting an update from the CPS and CPC on the recommendations from the Community Based Public Safety Task Force (the Task Force) in Q4 2021. The letter referenced six recommendations specific to police, with an overall theme of addressing racism and systemic racism in policing.

Through *Our Strategy*, the Calgary Police Service (CPS)'s long-term strategic plan, the CPS is committed to the following goals:

- Increased community safety & well-being
- Increased public trust & confidence
- Increased equity, diversity & inclusion
- Increased efficiency & effectiveness
- Increased employee satisfaction & engagement.

Our Promise is to create an organization & community that is safe, diverse, inclusive & inspired. With these elements at our foundation, the CPS is committed to the Task Force's mandate to identify and address community concerns around escalating urban violence in Calgary, with a focus on gang and gun violence, and to achieve this in an equitable, inclusive way.

In September 2020, the CPS presented to Council and citizens its commitments to anti-racism. As part of this work, the CPS is developing a strategy that will guide the Service toward becoming an anti-racist organization. We have learned much through our internal and external anti-racism action committees, our advisory boards, and our continued partnership with the City of Calgary's public consultation that will inform the strategy. The Anti-Racism strategy will be supported and prioritized through our long-term strategic plan (*Our Strategy*) and actioned through our Annual Policing Plan (APP). We will continue to build our inclusion and Anti-Racism foundations to ensure equitable services to all Calgarians.

In 2021, the CPS continued to operationalize its service-wide Gang Strategy under the Predict, Pursue, Protect, and Prevent pillars. Building on this work and the 4-P model, the CPS launched *Ceasefire* – a targeted 12-week Gun Violence Prevention Action Plan – to reduce gun violence and victimization and enhance community safety in our city. With an increasingly broad range of offenders using firearms in the commission of all types of crimes, CPS has coordinated resources and initiatives – detection, enforcement, suppression, and prevention – into one, focused effort.

As of August 31, 2021, the CPS saw 26% fewer shootings than the same period in 2020. Though investigations are ongoing, to date a very small proportion of these have been confirmed as organized crime/gang related. For the same period, incidents of violence and incidents where a firearm was the most serious weapon were down slightly from 2021. In addition, from January to August 2021, 406 crime guns were seized.



Task Force Recommendations for Police

The following summarizes the response to the specific considerations for CPS that emerged from the Task Force engagement. Through the CPS Anti-Racism Strategy, a number of these suggested actions will continue to be explored and addressed into the future.

- | | |
|----------------------------|--|
| Hiring and Training | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the overall makeup of CPS's workforce reflects the diversity and make up of Calgary's population. • This includes hiring female officers at a more rapid speed to ensure gender parity is achieved. • Diversity and implicit bias training for CPS members should be mandatory and regularly evaluated and updated. |
|----------------------------|--|

Recruitment:

- The CPS is implementing a Recruitment: Communication, Marketing and Outreach Plan, that emphasizes building relationships and addressing barriers faced by diverse communities. It also outlines improved monitoring of outreach efforts and disaggregated race-based data. This will be reported on regularly to the CPC.
- Part of the Recruitment Plan includes efforts to increase the hiring of female officers. In the last ten years the CPS has increased its female officers by 46% and continues to reduce barriers in the recruitment process for female and racialized candidates. The CPS also conducted an external review of marketing materials and outreach efforts to ensure there is a gender and intersectional lens on the approaches – the Service has already begun implementing the recommendations.

Diversity/Implicit Bias Training:

- The CPS provides bias awareness training through several channels, including the recruit training program, the patrol training officer program and in-service training. The Service continues to look for opportunities to modernize diversity and implicit bias content based upon learnings from community engagement. The Service is currently engaged with the University of Calgary to deliver equity and bias awareness learning and barrier identification within our human resources functions.

- | | |
|-------------------|--|
| Discipline | An independent tribunal be established for dealing with complaints against officers. |
|-------------------|--|

- The current Alberta Police Act does not allow for this specific recommendation.
- The Government of Alberta has consulted with stakeholders, including law enforcement agencies across the province for Police Act Reforms. The CPS made a written submission with numerous recommendations for their consideration. These recommendations included support for an external provincial body to oversee complaints including intake, triage and retaining some investigations – with the caveat that this body be properly resourced.

Other steps taken to improve transparency and accountability include:

- Adoption of a recommendation from the External Anti-Racism Action Committee to amend the current *Code of Conduct Policy (Conduct and Discipline (Sworn))* to have sworn members provide CPS issue business cards that contain their name, rank, and regimental number (or in other written form).
- Evaluation of the Body-Worn Camera program, yielding several recommendations for program improvement of which 23% of the have been addressed to date. CPS will continue to improve the program through changes to policy and expansion of the program to specialty teams, including the Police & Crisis Team (PACT).



Programming A comprehensive system evaluation of all the existing programs should be conducted to determine effectiveness and cultural appropriateness. Such programs include but are not limited to; Integrated School Support Program (ISSP), Stay Smart Stay Safe (S4) Program, School Resource Officer (SRO) Program, The Multi-Agency School Support Team (MASST), The Youth at Risk Development (YARD) Program.

Following the 2020 commitment to anti-racism, the CPS executed a plan to evaluate its youth programs, which includes the application of an anti-racism/equity lens. As of August 31, 2021:

- The CPS contracted Argyle Public Relations to conduct an evaluation of the School Resource Officer (SRO) program (including S4). The evaluation revealed that the program is achieving positive outcomes for many students, teachers, and families, but these outcomes are not being achieved equitably for all students, particularly Black and Indigenous students. The recommendations of the report were accepted in principle, and the CPS is engaging partners in the development of an action plan for transformation of the program through the fall of 2021.
- An evaluation of the Integrated School Support Program (ISSP) was initiated in summer 2021, with expected delivery in Q4. The evaluation will yield a framework for evaluation and continuous improvement that will include the application of an anti-racism/equity lens.
- The Multi-Agency School Support Team (MASST) and Youth At Risk Development (YARD) Program are subject to ongoing evaluation in partnership with City of Calgary – Calgary Neighbourhoods. The CPS plans to work with Calgary Neighbourhoods to apply an anti-racism lens to these evaluations in 2022.

Data and Information Sharing Collaborate and share data between CPS and the City of Calgary related to communities and individuals effected by violence to help inform prevention, intervention, and enforcement strategies.

The CPS has several planned and ongoing initiatives to improve collaboration and information sharing with community partners to proactively address public safety concerns. These include:

- **Stephen Avenue Safety Hub:** pilot co-location of CPS, Calgary Transit and Calgary Community Standards to increase collaboration, information sharing and relationships among enforcement agencies and other community partners.
- **District Portraits:** the CPS is in the planning phase of developing district portraits that combine crime data with community characteristics to better understand crime trends within the local context and develop adequate responses.
- **Open Data:** the CPS has been working with the City of Calgary to increase the availability of anonymized data for other agencies and the public.
- **Operational Efforts:** the CPS collaborates with partners on operational initiatives to address local crime concerns. Examples include:
 - **District 5 Encampment:** the CPS is partnering with Calgary Community Standards (Bylaw) and Alpha House's encampment team to address community safety concerns about social disorder and panhandling from encampments in district 5, and to provide health and social supports to encampment residents.
 - **Pharmacy robberies:** the CPS partnered with the Alberta College of Pharmacists and City Licensing to address the escalation in frequency and violence of pharmacy robberies.



- | | |
|-------------------------|---|
| Public Education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with community groups that represent cultures that may have mistrust of police to build relationships and provide general education related to the role of police, how to report crime, etc. • Such education should be provided in a way that is culturally appropriate for the audience it is intended for. |
|-------------------------|---|

The CPS with its partners has engaged in several public education opportunities to raise awareness about gun and gang violence, with specific initiatives for diverse communities:

- **Crime Stoppers Stolen Gun Campaign:** as part of Operation Ceasefire, Crime Stoppers developed a marketing campaign to promote rewards for tips leading to an arrest and/or seizure of stolen guns.
- **Firearms Safety Presentation:** as part of Operation Ceasefire, YouthLink has implemented a Firearm Safety presentation for youth, piloted with 60 youth aged 6-12 years old. The presentation educates on rules for firearm safety, replica vs authentic firearms, gangs, racism, and building trust with marginalized communities.
- **REAL ME program:** YouthLink and the CPS have continued to partner with the Centre for Newcomers to deliver educational programs through the REAL ME program. As of August 31, 2021, presentations have been delivered to a diverse audience of nearly 2100 participants. Presentations offer an opportunity for newcomer youth and families to learn about prevention of high-risk lifestyles and gang recruitment and current issues related to gun/gang violence in Calgary.
- **Calgary YouthLink Newcomers Program:** YouthLink has partnered with the Centre for Newcomers to deliver an initiative aimed at youth 11-17 who are recent immigrants to Calgary. This program will seek to build relationships between the police and youth who are new to Canada.
- **Gangs Are Real Campaign:** the CPS with the Alberta Law Enforcement Response Team (ALERT) and other law enforcement agencies across the province have participated in a province-wide campaign in 2021 to raise awareness about the risks of gun and gang involvement.
- **Online Buy/Sell Robbery Prevention:** with an escalation in frequency and violence (e.g. presence of a weapon) of online buy/sell robberies, the CPS connected with Facebook and Kijiji to post ads on safe online buying/selling. A marketing campaign was implemented encouraging online buyers/sellers to meet at safe exchange locations (e.g., CPS district offices) and providing other safety tips.

- | | |
|------------------------------|---|
| Support for offenders | Following a similar model to the Edmonton Police, CPS should consider issuing letters of reference to ex-convicts who do not pose a danger to reoffend but cannot clear criminal file off record. |
|------------------------------|---|

The CPS does not currently issue letters of reference to ex-convicts with criminal records, but rather, had adopted a more robust offender management approach:

- In late 2020, an offender management section was created that works with community partners to provide wraparound service for prolific/repeat offenders.
- The CPS supports and leverages Gang Exit Community Outreach (GECO), a provincial initiative operated by the John Howard Society that provides community referrals and wraparound supports to those seeking to exit gangs.
- The CPS has implemented an evaluation plan to examine the effectiveness of its offender management initiatives.



Challenges and Opportunities

The CPS continues to identify challenges in addressing gun and gang violence in our City, including the absence of comprehensive gang exit strategies for youth, systems navigation for vulnerable and marginalized populations, and lack of enforceable, timely consequences and conditions for perpetrators of violence. The CPS values the opportunity to work with the City of Calgary and other community partners in pursuing funding to collectively solution these and other gaps identified through the Task Force.

References

- Bania, M. (2009). Gang violence among youth and young adults: Affiliation and the potential for prevention. *IPC Review*, 3, 89-116.
- Dunbar, L. K. (2017). Youth gangs in Canada: A Review of current topics and issues.
- Erickson, P. G. and J. E. Butters (2006). "Youth, Weapons and Violence in Toronto and Montreal." A Final Report prepared for Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness, Canada, under the direction of Project Manager, Rebecca Jesseman. University of Toronto, Canada.
- Kumpfer, K. and R. Alvarado. 1998. "Effective Family Strengthening Interventions". Justice Juvenile Bulletin. Family Strengthening Series. Washington, DC: U.S Department of Justice, Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention.
- Linden, R. (2012). Comprehensive approaches to address street gangs in Canada.
- Macfarlane A. (2018). Gangs and Adolescent Mental Health: a Narrative Review. *Journal of child & adolescent trauma*, 12(3), 411–420. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40653-018-0231-y>
- Rossiter, M. J., & Rossiter, K. R. (2009). Immigrant youth and crime: Stakeholder perspectives on risk and protective factors. PMC Working Paper Series. Edmonton, AB: Prairie Metropolis Centre, University of Alberta.
- Tita, G., Troshynski, E., Graves, M. (2007). Strategies for Reducing Gun Violence: The Role of Gangs, Drugs and Firearm Accessibility. Public Safety Canada.
- Totten, M. (2009). Aboriginal youth and violent gang involvement in Canada: Quality prevention strategies. *IPC Review*, 3(1), 135-156.
- Wortley, S., & Tanner, J. (2006). Immigration, social disadvantage and urban youth gangs. Results of a Toronto-area study. *Canadian Journal of Urban Research*, 15(2), 18-37.