

Community Action Partnership

Oxnard, California ♦ May 2008



Strategic
Action
Framework for
Empowered &
Thriving
Youth

Blueprint

A thriving Oxnard in which all people feel safe and all young people have hope and opportunity supported by caring adults, strong families, and empowered communities.

Community Action Partnership (CAP)

Initiated by Mayor Thomas Holden, Supervisor Kathy Long, Councilmember Andres Herrera and Supervisor John Flynn, the Community Action Partnership (CAP) is a collaborative between the City of Oxnard and the County of Ventura to prevent violence in Oxnard. Further, CAP strives to reflect the voice of the community, and its aim is to include representatives from all sectors of the community within its membership. The structure of CAP is comprised of a policy team and a technical team. The policy team oversees the overall mission and direction of CAP. The technical team oversees the implementation of the policies and strategies of CAP.

The mission of CAP is:

*To develop and provide coordinated resources
to create a safe environment for our youth and families
in their homes, schools and communities.*

CAP Co-chairs:

Dr. Thomas Holden
Mayor, City of Oxnard

Kathy Long
Supervisor, Ventura County Board of Supervisors

CAP represents Oxnard in the California Cities Gang Prevention Network, an initiative of National the League of Cities (NLC) and the National Council on Crime and Delinquency (NCCD). This network of 13 major cities in California was formed to combat gang violence and victimization. The California Cities Gang Prevention Network, the first of its kind in the nation, focuses on successful policies and practices that interweave prevention, intervention, enforcement and a community's "moral voice" as an alternative to prison-only solutions.¹ CAP would like to thank NLC; NLC's Institute for Youth, Education, and Families; and NCCD for their support and participation in the planning process.

Purpose of the SAFETY *Blueprint*

In architecture, a Blueprint describes a building or engineering plan, that is what a building will look like and how will it function. The purpose of the SAFETY *Blueprint* is to describe the range of elements needed in Oxnard to increase positive outcomes for young people, and consequently, to also reduce violence, shift social norms and promote safety for all. More specifically, it can inform and guide a coordinated and collaborative effort among multiple, diverse sectors and the community that spans a prevention, intervention, and enforcement/suppression continuum.

The SAFETY *Blueprint* is purposely broad and lends itself to an on-going planning and prioritization based on current needs. The SAFETY *Blueprint* was shaped by the Community Action Partnership (CAP) Strategic Planning Group to inform CAP in its efforts.

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Introduction: A Life-Long Commitment to Supporting Empowered and Thriving Youth

"There is no doubt that we can make a difference in the lives of youth and families in Oxnard."

- Mayor Thomas Holden, City of Oxnard

Oxnard is a dynamic and culturally-vibrant city. Further, the City of Oxnard has made significant steps in creating a positive environment where its young people can thrive and grow up to become caring, productive adults. Despite these efforts, too many young people still remain disconnected from their families, schools, and communities. This disconnection is often reflected in high-risk behavior, ranging from anti-social attitudes, drug and alcohol use, criminal activities, gang membership and violence. Thus, Oxnard is committed to a strategic approach to do even more to promote positive outcomes for our youth. Research and empirical evidence show that supporting positive youth development is an essential element in preventing and protecting young people from violence and other risky behaviors. Caring adults, meaningful activities, safe and supportive school environments, social connectedness and employment opportunities are all key contributors to this process for young people.

Young people need skills and supports that will enable them to negotiate potentially volatile situations, form strong attachments and relationships, participate in their schools and communities in a meaningful way, and have hope about the future. Providing these supports and opportunities is vital for both short-term and long-term reductions in violence. The National Research Council and the Institute of Medicine concluded that positive environments can promote youth development and desired outcomes, such as safety and academic achievement.² Other research demonstrates:

- Meaningful inclusion can successfully counter anti-social behavior among youth.
- Attachment to parents, parental supervision, and consistency of discipline have been found to be the most important family protective factors in preventing delinquency in high-risk youth.^{3,4}
- Children show significantly better cognitive and language skills, as well as positive social and emotional development, when they are cared for by adults who are attentive to their needs and who interact with them in encouraging and affectionate ways.^{5,6}
- People who understand and can regulate their emotions, exercise self-discipline, and develop impulse-control, judgment, and coping mechanisms can better deal with aggressive or violent experiences without negative effects. To learn this, children need to experience healthy and appropriate behaviors, such as open and positive communication, consistent discipline, and problem-solving modeled by the adults around them.⁷
- Cognitive skills (oral, written, reasoning, and problem-solving skills, creative expression and the ability to learn) lay the foundation for educational success and academic achievement^{8,9} - factors which are highly protective against involvement in violence.^{10,11}
- Family history have a strong influence in determining whether young people become involved in criminal activities. A 2004 Justice Department report, which was conducted in state prisons across the United States, showed that 48% of the 2 million inmates reported having relatives who have also been incarcerated.

A strategic focus on positive outcomes for young people must recognize the interrelationship between different forms of violence. Few individuals and even fewer families experience violence as a single issue or as a discrete phenomenon. Often, different forms of violence- intimate violence, child abuse and neglect, sexual violence, gang violence, suicidal behavior- co-exist within the same home, interrelated in complicated ways. Each experience of these types of violence is a risk factor for other forms of violence. Nearly half of all men who abuse their intimate partners also commit child abuse.¹² According to some studies, women survivors of domestic abuse are also more likely to abuse their children.¹³ Boys who grow up exposed to domestic violence are significantly more likely to use violence later in life than those who grow up seeing healthy resolution to conflict.¹⁴ They are more likely to batter their intimate partners and they are more likely to commit violent crimes in general. Girls who suffer sexual assault experience elevated rates of depression and anxiety and are more likely to attempt suicide. Like boys, they are also more likely to engage in juvenile delinquency, as is borne out by the high proportion of young women in juvenile jails who are survivors of sexual assault (San Francisco, Juvenile Justice Action Plan, 1997).¹⁵

*"Our youth must have hope, must feel safe, and we must provide opportunity as a community to support their dreams.
It must be a priority for all of us."*

- Supervisor Kathy Long, Ventura County

Vision and Shared Values/Principles

As a part of the planning process, the CAP Strategic Planning Group developed a vision and shared values/principles, in which to guide and inform the implementation of the *Blueprint*. Thus, the *Blueprint* is grounded in the SAFETY Vision:

*A thriving Oxnard in which
All people feel safe and
All young people have hope and opportunity
Supported by caring adults, strong families, and empowered communities.*

Shared Values/Principles

- ◆ Together, we can help ensure that young people in Oxnard have hope and a positive sense of a future that they need and deserve.
- ◆ All young people deserve love, respect and a life of dignity.
- ◆ Prevention, intervention and enforcement/suppression are all important and viable elements of a continuum to promote positive youth development and reduce violence. We will strive to provide supports as early in the continuum as possible; however, if someone breaks the law, there should be clear and consistent consequences, which are designed to assist young people to make better choices for positive and law-abiding life outcomes.
- ◆ Community members and youth provide an authentic voice in planning, implementation and evaluation and are critical for success and sustainability.
- ◆ The diversity of the community is an honored strength.
- ◆ Everyone has a role in promoting positive outcomes for Oxnard's youth and safety for all.
- ◆ We are building on what is working.
- ◆ Violence is not an intractable social problem or an inevitable part of the human condition; individuals are affected by their environments in general and their families, schools, neighborhoods in particular and human beings thrive in environments where they feel safe, connected, healthy, abundant and validated.
- ◆ Our coordinated efforts will be characterized by transparency and accountability.
- ◆ Increasing positive outcomes for youth requires a lifelong commitment to continuously ensure that all youth and future generations are thriving in Oxnard.

Overview of the SAFETY *Blueprint*

Initiated by CAP, the SAFETY *Blueprint* was developed in a four-month process with the participation and input of the CAP Strategic Planning Group and key community stakeholders. The *Blueprint* encompasses a broad range of objectives across the continuum of prevention, intervention and enforcement/suppression supported by strong community engagement. The objectives delineated in the *Blueprint* reflect the priorities that emerged in the planning process, which are supported by the recommended strategies to promote positive youth development and address violence in Oxnard. Additionally, outcome measures, which will indicate whether the objectives have been achieved, were identified and prioritized. Finally, successful implementation and sustainability of the *Blueprint* requires appropriate structures and systems are in place. The *Blueprint* concludes with broad structural recommendations, which aim to ensure that structural and systems supports are developed and well-coordinated. The objectives and structural recommendations are summarized in the following table:

SAFETY *Blueprint* Objectives and Structural Recommendations

| | 1. Prevention | 2. Intervention | 3. Enforcement/ Suppression |
|-----------------------------------|--|---|--|
| Individuals/youth | <p>Activities: Expand opportunities for meaningful involvement of youth</p> <p>Caring adults: Foster meaningful one-on-one relationships between youth and adults</p> | <p>Mentoring: Enhance and support mentoring programs that link at-risk youth to positive adults, experiences, and opportunities</p> <p>Coordinated support: Develop and expand on-going and coordinated support for at-risk youth and ensure a consistent and effective/efficient system of support</p> <p>Rehabilitation/re-entry: Ensure the availability of rehabilitation/re-entry services for incarcerated youth, including support systems for youth entering a juvenile facility or probation</p> <p>Jobs: Increase opportunities for successful employment among formerly incarcerated individuals</p> | <p>Referral: Ensure that appropriate people are connected to support and services</p> <p>Diversion: Ensure immediate diversion of minor violators to intervention programs</p> <p>De-classification: Establish clear criteria and pathways for de-classification as a gang member and removal from the database</p> |
| Families | <p>Strong families: Strengthen the capacity of families to provide supportive home environments for young people</p> | <p>Family support: Provide case management, family support and coordinated service provisions to support families in highly-impacted neighborhoods</p> | |
| Schools | <p>School Connectedness: Foster school connectedness and academic success by promoting a comprehensive, asset-based approach to education</p> | <p>Strong schools: Support schools to be successful in educating all Oxnard youth</p> | |
| Neighborhoods | <p>Social connectedness: Foster socially connected neighborhood environments</p> <p>Economic development: Increase the availability of living wage jobs and the skills required for those jobs</p> <p>Housing: Increase the availability of affordable housing throughout Oxnard</p> | <p>Community development: Support locating commerce, services, and resources in highly-impacted neighborhoods</p> <p>Neighborhood Intervention/Outreach: Ensure a presence of known and trusted individuals and organizations in highly impacted neighborhoods to foster connections to community resources and reduce conflicts.</p> <p>Neighborhood appearance: Proactively address neighborhood blight (street lights, loitering, safety, graffiti) and reduce graffiti and neighborhood damage</p> | <p>Proactive enforcement/suppression: Continue existing, proactive enforcement/suppression efforts and examine regularly for appropriateness and make changes as needed</p> <p>Partnerships: Enhance partnerships between law enforcement, including probation and parole, and the community</p> |
| 4. Community Engagement | <p>Empowerment: Empower residents in impacted neighborhoods to become full partners in solutions across the prevention, intervention and suppression/enforcement continuum</p> <p>Youth voice: Ensure a youth voice in solutions for Oxnard</p> <p>Community partners: Encourage strong commitment and collaboration among a broad spectrum of community partners to promote youth development and address violence, including local government, businesses, schools, faith groups, community-based organizations, the media, grassroots groups, and community residents (adults and youth)</p> | | |
| 5. Structure & systems | <p align="center">Responsibility: <i>Leadership; Oversight; Reporting; Accountability</i></p> <p align="center">Implementation: <i>Focused impact; Planning and prioritization; Data; Evaluation; Funding</i></p> <p align="center">Staffing and Coordination: <i>Staffing; Coordination</i></p> <p align="center">Training and communication: <i>Training; Information; Public campaign</i></p> | | |

Background on Violence and Gangs in Oxnard

*"The city's response to gangs [needs to be] in the youth, in the future gang members.
The root causes need to be addressed."*

- Oxnard youth, Pacifica High School

Although violence that affects youth can manifest itself in various forms, gang violence is one of the major issues facing young people in Oxnard today. While the City has made significant strides in reducing gang membership and gang homicides, gangs remain a significant concern in Oxnard. There are an estimated 1,500 gang members and 545 associate members in the city. Gang members are defined by a specific set of criteria outlined by the City of Oxnard and the State of California (see Appendix A). Gang recruitment and membership usually starts during the early adolescent years, with the youngest documented gang member in Oxnard identified at 13 years old. However, the average age group for gang members is concentrated between 20-30 years¹. Ninety-two percent of gang members in Oxnard have been identified as Hispanic. Although the majority of gangs are comprised of males, females make up about 7% of gang members.

Serious gang assaults in Oxnard has seen a 60% decrease from 2001 to 2006. This decrease has been attributed to increased cooperation among agencies, the faith community and non-profit groups, including on the suppression side a significant amount of resources committed to enforcement and to the gang injunctions that have been instituted in highly impacted areas in Oxnard. Before the implementation of the gang injunctions, gang homicides consistently made up about half of all homicides in the city. However, in the past 18 months, the Oxnard police department reported that there was only one homicide that was identified gang-related within that period.

Despite the reduction in gang-related homicides, gang violence still presents a serious community and public safety issue in Oxnard, especially as it tends to be sporadic and unpredictable. In the summer of 2006, there were 22 shootings and 3 deaths related to gangs. Furthermore, focus groups conducted with youth in Oxnard in 2008 revealed that many young people are fearful and confronted with physical threats by gang members on a daily or nearly daily basis. These interactions with gang members usually occur on the streets throughout the city, as young people are asked to identify what neighborhoods or areas they "claim" or are associated with.

Beyond the personal costs of the loss of a loved one, disability, and general sense of living in fear, gang crime and violence has become a significant expense to the City and County. Oxnard spends \$1 million per year on graffiti clean-up. Furthermore, 20% of the Oxnard Police Department field resources is dedicated to gang suppression, and further costs have been identified, including resources directed towards incarceration, prosecution, and supervision for probation and parole.

¹ Ages 13-15, 1.6% of gang members; ages 16-19, 11%; 20-25, 34%; 26-30, 28%; 31-34, 15%; 35-39, 7%

Factors Associated with Gang Membership

The motive for gangs is universal, just to be accepted.

- Oxnard youth, Hueneme High School

With the input of key community stakeholders, including youth focus groups, the CAP Strategic Planning Group identified various factors associated with both gang membership (risk factors) and the absence of gang membership (resilience/protective factors). Although there are many factors associated with each, the Planning Group prioritized the following set of factors in Oxnard.

Why people join gangs in Oxnard

- lack of caring adults
- low self-esteem
- sense of belonging
- lack of positive options
- safety/protection

Why people leave Oxnard gangs

- tragedy, life changing experience
- prison, death, event
- marriage, child, family
- strong support structure, viable alternatives, support systems like a church or career/jobs
- caring person, mentor to guide them out

Why people stay in Oxnard gangs

- lack of opportunities – recreational, educational, economic
- fear of repercussions from leaving – by your own gang and being in the mix of violence without the support of your gang
- relationships – social networks and sense of family from gang; no outside family or social networks/support

Why people do not join gangs in Oxnard

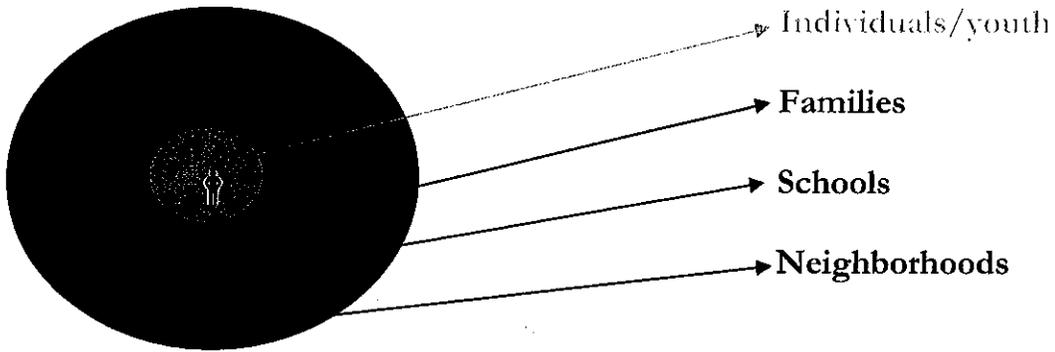
- Strong community and family support systems: specifically, **supportive families; community, school, and faith supports and systems; education and jobs**
- Strong relationships and activities: specifically strong presence of **caring adults and positive peer networks; engagement in positive activities** and keeping busy
- Outputs from strong support systems and relationships and activities: specifically having a **sense of hope and a future and self-esteem**

Overarching Themes Associated with Gang Membership

Planning group members identified the following themes that cut across and influence gang membership and not being a member of a gang, which would have to be addressed in the objectives: having support, access to opportunities, the presence of caring adults, education and connection to school; jobs and economics; belonging, relationships, love, connection to others; hope and sense of future; feeling safe and protected. The absence of these puts people at risk of gang membership and the presence of these factors serve an immunity function, protecting young people.

Fostering Positive Outcomes for Youth and Safety for All through Prevention, Intervention, Enforcement/Suppression, and Community Engagement

The following objectives reflect a commitment to a prevention-intervention-enforcement/suppression continuum and an understanding that individuals are affected by their environments in general and their families, schools, neighborhoods in particular. The objectives and associated strategies are specifically designed to foster thriving youth, strong families, and empowered communities. Further, effectiveness and sustainability along the continuum depends on having the necessary structures and systems in place.



| | 1. Prevention | 2. Intervention | 3. Enforcement/Suppression |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Individuals/youth | <i>Activities</i> <i>Caring adults</i> | <i>Mentoring</i> <i>Coordinated support</i> <i>Rehabilitation/re-entry</i> <i>Jobs</i> | <i>Referrals</i> <i>Diversion</i> <i>De-classification</i> |
| Families | <i>Strong families</i> | <i>Family support</i> | |
| Schools | <i>School connectedness</i> | <i>Strong schools</i> | |
| Neighborhoods | <i>Social connectedness</i> <i>Economic development</i> <i>Housing</i> | <i>Community development</i> <i>Neighborhood intervention/ outreach</i> <i>Neighborhood appearance</i> | <i>Proactive enforcement & suppression</i> <i>Partnerships</i> |
| 4. Community Engagement | <i>Empowerment</i> <i>Youth voice</i> <i>Community partners</i> | | |
| 5. Structure and systems | Accountability: <i>Leadership; Oversight; Reporting; Accountability</i> Implementation: <i>Focused impact; Planning and prioritization; Data; Evaluation; Funding</i> Staffing and Coordination: <i>Staffing; Coordination</i> Training and communication: <i>Training; Information; Public campaign</i> | | |

PREVENTION

- 1 **Prevention** is a systematic process that promotes healthy communities and behaviors, promoting positive youth development, strong families, and empowered communities, and thus reducing the likelihood of violence occurring *in the first place*. Violence prevention strategies for individuals, families, and communities are designed to be upfront, that is before there is evidence of the risk for violence (called universal or primary prevention). Prevention includes the structures, strategies, supports, and programs that *we all need* and which are protective against violence.

The objectives and strategies listed here are grounded in the expanding evidence base of best and emerging practices in preventing violence and fostering positive youth development. Young people need positive things to do, and when engaged in structured activities such as the arts, recreation and civic opportunities, they are “more likely to express anger appropriately, communicate effectively, engage less in delinquent behavior, have improved attitudes and self-esteem, and greater self-efficacy and resistance to peer pressure”.¹⁶ Further, the presence of a caring adult in young people’s lives is associated with “better development, social interactions and academic achievement”.¹⁷ Young people need to be supported by strong families, schools and communities. Strong social networks and connections correspond with physical and mental health, academic achievement and local economic development.¹⁸ Even further, employment and being able to support oneself and family fosters self-sufficiency and dignity and lowers the risk of engaging in crime, violence and high-risk behaviors.

Outcome Measures

The following outcomes measures informed the development of the SAFETY *Blueprint* prevention strategies and are designed to help monitor progress on achieving the prevention objectives. (See *Appendix F* for a list of outcomes measures for each objective).

| <i>Increased/Improved</i> | <i>Decreased/Reduced</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic achievement • apprenticeship programs • community involvement in fostering safe neighborhoods • community supports for parents and families • feelings of attachment/commitment to school • feelings of hope and opportunity • graduation rates • housing stability in highly impacted neighborhoods • job opportunities for all people in Oxnard • living wage incomes among households in highly impacted neighborhoods • low and middle income housing units in highly impacted neighborhoods • owner-occupied housing in Oxnard • parental involvement in schools • parents reading daily to their children | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • domestic violence rates • foster/out of home placements • teens unsupervised (home alone/on the street) • truancy rates |

| | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • parents' attendance at teacher conferences • people with skills to obtain/maintain living wage jobs • perceptions of safety • quality relationships between youth and adults • social cohesion and trust • time youth spend with parents and family • youth with meaningful jobs • youth participation in internship and apprenticeship programs • youth participation in positive, pro-social activities outside school and home • youth reporting at least one positive adult relationship | |
|---|--|

Prevention Objectives and Strategies

The following prevention objectives emerged as key priorities to promote positive youth development and to prevent violence. The associated strategies are ranked in priority order. *In recognition of the importance of emphasis at the individual, family, school, and neighborhood levels, the colors correspond with these levels (see page 7).*

1.1 Activities: Expand opportunities for meaningful involvement of youth

- 1.1.1 Expand free-time activities and foster appropriate, unstructured destinations for young people, including affordable, cultural, social and civic activities and safe, social gathering places.
- 1.1.2 Expand City Corps to accommodate more young people including those identified as at-risk (see also *Intervention*).
- 1.1.3 Provide affordable and accessible transportation for youth to participate in school and extracurricular activities.
- 1.1.4 Establish structured, school-based after-school activities, which incorporates a curriculum to foster positive, social-emotional development.

1.2 Caring adults: Foster meaningful one-on-one relationships between youth and adults

- 1.2.1 Foster understanding in the community about the importance of adult relationships to children and provide model relationships.
- 1.2.2 Integrate parenting skills and child development classes into pre- and post-natal healthcare and other settings for parents.
- 1.2.3 Encourage groups such as churches and local businesses to adopt a school or structured afterschool program.

1.3 Strong families: Strengthen the capacity of families to provide supportive home environments for young people

- 1.3.1 Infuse fatherhood and male responsibility programs into peer settings with men and boys.
- 1.3.2 Foster an understanding of healthy childhood development, developmental stages, and child-rearing practices through establishing parenting skills training for parents in highly-impacted areas.
- 1.3.3 Establish affordable community-based childcare options for working parents.

- 1.3.4 Establish a support system for families, including multi-generational gang families, which allows for affordable activities for all family members and provides meaningful alternatives to gangs.

1.4 *School Connectedness:* Foster school connectedness and academic success by promoting a comprehensive, asset-based approach to education²

- 1.4.1 Integrate skills training into the school curriculum to promote youth development and prevent violence, including, violence prevention skill development, anti-oppression curriculum to increase diversity awareness, awareness of the realities of gang life, and life skills training.
- 1.4.2 Foster safe and positive school climates for all students and school staff, regardless of race/ethnicity, sexual orientation, learning style or learning ability.
- 1.4.3 Enhance adult involvement and presence on school campuses, through opportunities for parental/caregiver involvement within a welcoming environment, encouraging local employers to provide release time for parents/caregivers to participate in school events and activities with their children; enhancing supplemental adult presence in schools, including school resource officers, social workers, counselors, and police field officers; and establishing school-based mentoring programs.
- 1.4.4 Establish Safe Routes to school to encourage and enable young people to walk and/or bike to school.
- 1.4.5 Expand opportunities for youth to participate in extracurricular activities at school, including scholarships or removal of fees.

1.5 *Social connectedness:* Foster socially connected neighborhood environments

- 1.5.1 Create neighborhood gathering places
- 1.5.2 Ensure that neighborhood parks and other community assets are safe, well-lit and well-maintained.
- 1.5.3 Establish neighborhood associations in highly-impacted areas, with pro-active dispute resolution structures and support at the neighborhood level.
- 1.5.4 Collaborate with Oxnard Family Power Project to identify neighborhood assets and reinforce neighborhood supports.
- 1.5.5 Foster ongoing communication and information exchange in neighborhoods, through newsletters, website, meetings and publicity.
- 1.5.6 Foster cooperation and collaboration among all faith-based groups, including the expansion of the Clergy Council.
- 1.5.7 Support the activities of existing community members (church, recreational, local business, informal) to plan events, festivals, block parties and clean-ups at the neighborhood level.

1.6 *Economic development:* Increase the availability of living wage jobs and the skills required for those jobs

- 1.6.1 Expand meaningful employment opportunities for youth, including with the City of Oxnard, churches, local businesses and community organizations.
- 1.6.2 Expand the availability of job training opportunities.
- 1.6.3 Incorporate job skills training into high school curriculum with linkages to internships and mentors.

² In line with Ventura County BASICO's Call to Action "Ventura County CAREs" Report

- 1.6.4 Foster the collaboration of the business sector.
- 1.6.5 Create appealing volunteer opportunities for youth, with a focus on job skills-building.

1.7 *Housing:* Increase the availability of affordable housing throughout Oxnard

- 1.7.1 Encourage developers to include quality, low-cost housing in development plans and mixed income communities
- 1.7.2 Encourage public and private employers to adopt policies to assist their employees in purchasing homes.
- 1.7.3 Assist low-income and middle-income residents in locating quality, affordable housing and the means to purchase homes.

INTERVENTION

- 2 **Intervention** Intervention strategies are for those at increased and sometimes imminent risk for violence, gang involvement and on-going participation in gangs. This includes not only providing those at risk with positive opportunities and activities but also intervening to support successful transition out of and away from violent behavior and activities, including gangs, and enables individuals to become contributing members of a community. The following objectives are designed to support at-risk individuals, families, schools and neighborhoods.

A growing evidence base of best and emerging practices has shown the importance of intervention in addressing violence and supporting at-risk and disconnected youth. Mentoring is proven to be one of the most effective ways to foster caring relationships, to promote academic achievement and to reduce risk behaviors among youth. For incarcerated youth, successful rehabilitation and re-entry is a critical element in preventing further violence, and requires support from families and communities. According to the Urban Institute, “families are important resources for ex-prisoners, so strategies and resources designed to strengthen family ties during the period of incarceration and after release are recommended.”¹⁹ Finally, successful interventions are those that are community-based and coordinated across various sectors. As evidenced in the Ceasefire models in Boston and Chicago, the use of street outreach workers increasingly shows positive results in reducing the potential escalation of conflicts and providing viable economic opportunities in at-risk communities.²⁰ From 1999-2006, a significant reduction in shootings and crime in Chicago was associated with the implementation of Ceasefire zones throughout the city.²¹ There are several street outreach and Ceasefire models, some of which include a stronger enforcement component. These models should be considered under enforcement practices. (*See Enforcement/Suppression, 3.4 Objective*).

Outcome Measures

The following outcomes measures informed the development of the SAFETY *Blueprint* intervention strategies and are designed to help monitor progress on achieving the intervention objectives. (*See Appendix F for a list of outcomes measures for each objective*).

| <i>Increased/Improved</i> | <i>Decreased/Reduced</i> |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • academic achievement • at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs • availability of services within highly impacted neighborhoods • business development in highly impacted neighborhoods • community and funding resources in highly impacted neighborhoods • family re-entry services • feelings of attachment/commitment to school • graduation rates • job placement for formerly incarcerated individuals • living wage incomes among households in highly impacted neighborhoods • multi-agency family support plans • opportunities during incarceration to build education and skills | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • escalation of conflicts in highly impacted neighborhoods • foster/out of home placements • new graffiti • mental health problems such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and depression • parolees re-entering the criminal justice system • retaliation following violent incidents |

| | |
|--|---|
| <p>toward a trade or career</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • people with skills to obtain/maintain living wage jobs • perceptions of safety • positive feelings about living in specific neighborhoods • quality relationships between youth and adults • test scores • youth participation in positive, pro-social activities outside school and home • youth reporting at least one positive adult relationship • youth with meaningful jobs | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • substance abuse or dependency • teens unsupervised (home alone/on the street) between 3 and 6 pm • truancy rates • youth entering the juvenile justice system • youth re-entering the juvenile justice system |
|--|---|

Intervention Objectives and Strategies

The following intervention objectives emerged as key priorities to promote positive youth development and to address violence. The associated strategies are ranked in priority order. *In recognition of the importance of emphasis at the individual, family, school, and neighborhoods level, the colors correspond with these levels (see page 7)*

2.1 Mentoring Enhance and support mentoring programs that link at-risk youth to positive adults, experiences, and opportunities.

- 2.1.1 Enhance and expand the existing mentoring infrastructure (e.g., Boys and Girls Club, Big Brothers and Sisters), including conducting a needs assessment, engaging local business owners, city agencies, non-profits and the arts, identifying formerly incarcerated individuals and gang members to serve as mentors, establishing a cross-age youth mentoring program, and establishing standardized training for mentors.

2.2 Coordinated support Develop and expand on-going and coordinated support for at-risk youth and ensure a consistent and effective/efficient system of support.

- 2.2.1 Expand mental health and substance abuse services to be available at earliest intervention stages, including integration of the JDAI “ideal substance abuse continuum”.
- 2.2.2 Establish a school protocol and monitoring system to follow-up on non re-registered kids and to re-engage youth back into schools.
- 2.2.3 Provide appropriate coordinated services, including case management, across multiple sectors and organizations for at-risk youth and their families to reduce the possibility of school failure, violence, and/or gang involvement and to increase the possibility of positive outcomes. Build on existing mechanisms such as the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB) and the Truancy Habits Reduced, Increasing Valuable Education (THRIVE) program.
- 2.2.4 Coordinate diagnostic systems and practices across sectors, community groups and parents, to identify at-risk and early gang-affiliated youth.
- 2.2.5 Conduct socialization training for highly gang-involved individuals.

2.3 Rehabilitation/re-entry: Ensure the availability of rehabilitation/re-entry services for incarcerated youth, including support systems for youth on re-entry, juvenile delinquency, or probation.

- 2.3.1 Establish a graduated supervision program for post-incarceration youth, including mentoring, tutoring, volunteering, and counseling activities every day from the close of school until 9pm.
- 2.3.2 Provide in-prison counseling and preparation for re-entry for incarcerated youth.
- 2.3.3 Support families to be an important source of support for returning formerly incarcerated people, including emotional support, financial resources, housing and overall stability.
- 2.3.4 Improve the case-to-probation officer ratio.
- 2.3.5 Expand City Corps to include post-incarceration youth.
- 2.3.6 Expand city and county employment opportunities, as well as private sector opportunities, for formerly incarcerated youth.
- 2.3.7 Implement restorative justice programs with community organizations and the justice system.

2.4 Jobs: Increase opportunities for successful employment among formerly incarcerated individuals.

- 2.4.1 Create job skills training for youth during incarceration.
- 2.4.2 Assist in identifying job opportunities and placing formerly incarcerated individuals in them.
- 2.4.3 Establish linkages with the business sector in creating employment and internship/apprenticeship opportunities for formerly incarcerated individuals.
- 2.4.4 Expand involvement of local businesses in the network to assist in re-entry process.
- 2.4.5 Establish post-incarceration protocol for participation in mandatory job skills training.
- 2.4.6 Explore a ban the box policy for the City of Oxnard and the County of Ventura job applications, and educate formerly incarcerated individuals about existing policies.
- 2.4.7 Establish a local living-wage policy for all sectors.

2.5 Family support: Provide case management, family support and coordinated service provisions to support families in highly-impacted neighborhoods.

- 2.5.1 Develop school-based family support systems including coordinated cross-sector diagnostic systems and practices for identifying and supporting families and youth at risk. Include home visitation, integrated, comprehensive case management, mental health and substance abuse services, and bilingual services.
- 2.5.2 Expand neighborhood-based support services including coordinated cross-sector diagnostic systems and practices for identifying and supporting families at risk, particularly those with young children. Include home visitation, integrated, comprehensive case management, mental health and substance abuse services, and bilingual services.

2.6 Strong schools: Support schools to be successful in educating all Oxnard youth.

- 2.6.1 Support school districts in exploring research-based successful school models for all students, including academic programming and supplemental academic support.
- 2.6.2 Establish a vehicle for regular communications and action between Oxnard school districts and CAP.

- 2.6.3 Strengthen school-community partnerships to engage multiple partners and sectors in improving school performance and helping them meet the needs of multiple students.

2.7 Community development: Support locating commerce, services, and resources in highly-impacted neighborhoods.

- 2.7.1 Expand community-based centers and school-based family resource centers by increasing funding sources, staff, programs and activities.
- 2.7.2 Engage the collaboration of the business sector by establishing and supporting cottage industries through bringing together the business community, Workforce Investment Board/Job & Career Centers/Regional Occupational Programs and community colleges.
- 2.7.3 Reduce alcohol density in highly impacted neighborhoods and enhance the laws and punishments for those who sell liquor to minors.
- 2.7.4 Foster support for local businesses, including restaurants, theaters, and other places of interest, to encourage neighbors to be socially engaged in their communities.
- 2.7.5 Designate a percentage of block grants to highly-impacted neighborhoods.
- 2.7.6 Enhance the visibility of local offices for city departments and agencies in highly-impacted neighborhoods.
- 2.7.7 Ensure that development, planning, and zoning decisions take neighborhood needs and positive youth outcomes into account.
- 2.7.8 Establish incentives for businesses to locate in highly-impacted neighborhoods, including tax incentives and priority in choice of location.

2.8 Neighborhood Intervention/Outreach: Ensure a presence of known and trusted individuals and organizations in highly impacted neighborhoods to foster connections to community resources and reduce conflicts.

- 2.8.1 Institute street outreach workers model, and establish neighborhood-based activities with former gang members and/or formerly incarcerated youth
- 2.8.2 Establish and implement a coordinated community crisis response plan and work to facilitate truces/peace pacts between gangs at the community level.
- 2.8.3 Ensure all services in Oxnard are culturally relevant and age-appropriate, that service providers reflect the community they serve and that other providers have access to training in cultural competency.
- 2.8.4 Integrate young people into neighborhood council structure as full participants
- 2.8.5 Foster cooperation and collaboration between and among neighborhoods of Oxnard.
- 2.8.6 Garner community support from all residents for efforts in prevention, intervention, and suppression.
- 2.8.7 Expand and strengthen linkages across neighborhood-based organizations and groups (churches, recreational groups, local businesses, neighborhoods groups, etc).

2.9 Neighborhood appearance: Proactively address neighborhood blight (street lights, loitering, safety, graffiti) and reduce graffiti and neighborhood damage.

- 2.9.1 Establish city-funded neighborhood beautification groups in highly impacted neighborhoods to create a more inviting and pride-inducing environment and to maintain well-kept, highly lit parks.
- 2.9.2 Establish a city-wide arts program including murals and establishing links between young artists and local artists in apprenticeship or mentorship programs, and creating opportunities for young people to display their artwork.

- 2.9.3 Collaborate with City Corp to identify and prioritize neighborhood improvement projects in highly impacted neighborhoods.
- 2.9.4 Expand the community policing approach to help monitor the upkeep of neighborhood appearance and safety.
- 2.9.5 Continue/expand Oxnard's graffiti action program at the neighborhood level and increase youth participation.

ENFORCEMENT/SUPPRESSION

- 3 ***Enforcement/Suppression*** Enforcement/suppression refers to enforcement efforts designed to suppress violent and criminal behavior, arrest those who have committed violence or other crimes, successfully prosecute these activities when they do take place, and to supervise those on parole and probation.

Evidence has shown that enforcement/suppression strategies are most effective when coordinated across different agencies and departments as well as various sectors. Law Enforcement, Probation/Parole, and the District Attorney must work in coordinated fashion to maximize their effectiveness at reducing violence through aggressive enforcement, supervision and prosecution. The City of Oxnard and the County of Ventura have an established history of working collaboratively through the South Oxnard Challenge Project, Weed and Seed, Gang Violence Suppression and Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative. Arrest and incarceration of key gang members and on-going police presence at locations where gang members congregate have been effective at interrupting violent gang activity. Suppression can help to reduce the amount of violence and to protect the public from gang members involved in criminal and violent activities. Enforcement must also play a key role in partnering with groups and organizations involved in prevention and intervention. Referrals of those in need of social services, diversion of minor violators to effective interventions and the maintenance of good relationships with young people in the community are also important aspects of enforcement.

Outcome Measures

The following outcomes measures informed the development of the SAFETY *Blueprint* enforcement/suppression strategies and are designed to help monitor progress on achieving the enforcement/suppression objectives. (See Appendix F for a list of outcomes measures for each objective).

| <i>Increased/Improved</i> | <i>Decreased/Reduced</i> |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs • capacity and knowledge of probation, parole and law enforcement on referral support and services • coordination among probation, parole and law enforcement • community representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning and evaluation of enforcement/suppression efforts • community understanding of criteria for gang membership used in gang injunctions • feelings of empowerment among community • gang youth who are declassified and removed from database • minor violators referred to appropriate services and diversion activities • regular attendance by community members at coordination meetings | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • gang-related assaults and homicides • identified gang members on the streets • juvenile hall admissions • substance abuse or dependency • youth entering the juvenile justice system |

Enforcement/Suppression Objectives and Strategies

The following enforcement/suppression objectives emerged as key priorities to suppress violence and to support successful rehabilitation and re-entry of incarcerated youth into the community. The

associated strategies are ranked in priority order. *In recognition of the importance of emphasis at the individual, family, school, and neighborhood levels, the colors correspond with these levels (see page 7).*

3.1 Referral/Ensure that appropriate people are connected to support and services.

- 3.1.1 Provide referral training and appropriate referral guides/handouts to all patrol personnel.

3.2 Diversion/Ensure immediate diversion of minor violators, who have been determined to not pose a risk to the community, to intervention programs.

- 3.2.1 Restructure diversion practices, with input from police, probation, the juvenile court and social workers, to ensure the immediate diversion of youth for minor offenses by the police.
- 3.2.2 Integrate JDAI (Juvenile Detention Alternatives Initiative) principles in developing diversion policies.

3.3 Declassification/Establish clear criteria and pathways for declassification as a gang member and removal from the database.

- 3.3.1 Develop a set of criteria used to determine when a person is no longer classified as an *injuncted* gang member; ensure that once criteria is met, that the process of removal is prompt.
- 3.3.2 Continue monitoring system of database to ensure that the names of individuals who meet the criteria are removed.
- 3.3.3 Provide information for youth on how to declassify from both gang member and gang *injunctee*.

3.4 Proactive enforcement/suppression: Continue existing, proactive enforcement/suppression efforts and examine regularly for appropriateness and make changes as needed.

- 3.4.1 Continue to emphasize the community policing approach through maintaining high visibility in areas with significant gang presence and criminal activity.
- 3.4.2 Examine the effectiveness of enforcement strategies by comparing changes in the number of gang crimes reported, and track the number of serious gang assaults by month and compare to same month in previous year.
- 3.4.3 Decrease caseloads for probation officers.
- 3.4.4 Reduce jail overcrowding.
- 3.4.5 Continue proactive interventions through rapid investigation of serious gang assaults, prevention of retaliatory gang assaults, and identification and arrest of violent gang members.
- 3.4.6 Continue to enforce probation/parole terms of gang members.

³ Based on the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI) principles, only minor violators who are determined to present a risk to the safety of the community should be incarcerated. Minors who do not pose a risk to the community are immediately placed in an appropriate intervention program in the community. Such intervention programs are designed to support the minor in developing the skills and abilities necessary to make law abiding and positive life choices.

3.5 Partnerships: Enhance partnerships between law enforcement, including probation and parole, and the community.

- 3.5.1 Establish coordinated efforts among law enforcement, public and private service providers and community- and faith-based groups.
- 3.5.2 Establish regular community dialogues and activities between law enforcement and community members.
- 3.5.3 Expand cultural diversity training for police to focus on youth-related issues and trainings to support respectful community and youth relations for all police officers.
- 3.5.4 Establish connections with youth.
- 3.5.5 Incorporate fully the JDAI (juvenile detention alternative initiative) into the juvenile system.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- 4 **Community Engagement** Community engagement is the meaningful and sustained involvement in every facet of community life of multiple players in the community including but not limited to: business, faith, community-based organizations, grassroots organizations, the media, and adults and youth who live in impacted neighborhoods. Community engagement spans across the prevention, intervention and suppression/enforcement continuum.

As stated in the *UNITY RoadMap*⁴, “community input, engagement and leadership are vital to defining the problem and prioritizing and implementing violence prevention strategies. It ensures that prevention planning, programming, and policies meet the needs of those they are designed for and can help ensure support and sustainability over time as a strong constituency is built that transcends election cycles. Community-driven means that in order to achieve positive community change, strategies must empower youth, families, neighborhoods and communities to identify problem areas and devise innovative solutions to impact violence, which increases the sense of ownership by those most affected by violence in their communities. Community-based organizations, youth, adults who live in the community, activists and the private sector all have a vital role to play. Further, individuals and communities most impacted by violence can help transcend turf battles and other obstacles.”²²

Outcome Measures

The following outcomes measures informed the development of the *SAFETY Blueprint* community engagement strategies and are designed to help monitor progress on achieving the community engagement objectives. (See *Appendix F* for a list of outcomes measures for each objective).

| <i>Increased/Improved</i> |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• coordination between public and private sectors and impacted communities• community and funding resources• Community voice in planning and evaluation of Prevention/Intervention/Enforcement/Suppression efforts• Diverse non-governmental partners support the <i>SAFETY Blueprint</i>• Diverse non-governmental partners engaged in implementing the <i>SAFETY Blueprint</i>• formal decision-making channels and advisory bodies for youth• identification and awareness of community assets• regular attendance of community members in planning meetings• regular attendance of youth in planning meetings• representation of community members in the CAP• participation of youth in decision-making processes• trust, respect and caring between the police and communities• youth representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning• youth voice in planning for violence Prevention/Intervention/Enforcement/Suppression activities |

⁴ Urban Networks to Increase Thriving Youth (UNITY). *Partnership: Community Engagement*. The *UNITY RoadMap* for Preventing Violence Before it Occurs. Prevention Institute. January 2008

Community Engagement Objectives and Strategies

The following community engagement objectives emerged as key priorities to ensure the meaningful involvement of community in efforts to support the youth of Oxnard. The associated strategies are ranked in priority order. *In recognition of the importance of emphasis at the individual, family, school, and neighborhood levels, the colors correspond with these levels (see page 7).*

4.1 *Empowerment:* Empower residents in impacted neighborhoods to become full partners in solutions across the prevention, intervention and suppression/enforcement continuum.

- 4.1.1 Establish/strengthen neighborhood associations in highly-impacted areas and promote neighbor-to-neighbor support and assistance.
- 4.1.2 Establish a formal liaison between CAP and the community, such as neighborhood councils.
- 4.1.3 Establish ongoing meetings between community members and city officials and designate community representatives from each neighborhood to participate in city council meetings and to take the lead in community-based initiatives.
- 4.1.4 Identify and recruit community members into CAP membership.

4.2 *Youth voice:* Ensure a youth voice in solutions for Oxnard.

- 4.2.1 Build and develop a youth-led city government structure with wide youth participation and representation at every level. Create a governance body to oversee this effort, similar to the First 5 Model, that has the authority to make programmatic and budget decisions.
- 4.2.2 Foster leadership opportunities for youth in civic and community engagement, such as a city youth commission, City Council youth representatives, and community-based peer mentors
- 4.2.3 Establish a city youth advisory council to inform prevention/intervention/enforcement efforts in Oxnard.
- 4.2.4 Create incentives for youth to participate in community planning meetings including food, financial incentives, and gift certificates.
- 4.2.5 Create a Myspace page for all youth organizations to engage more young people.
- 4.2.6 Highlight examples of youth leaders.

4.3 *Community partners:* Encourage strong commitment and collaboration among a broad spectrum of community partners to promote youth development and address violence, including local government, businesses, schools, faith groups, community-based organizations, the media, grassroots groups, and community residents (adults and youth).

- 4.3.1 Support a tax initiative for additional youth programs and services across the continuum of prevention/intervention/enforcement and community engagement.
- 4.3.2 Expand and strengthen linkages across neighborhood-based organizations and groups (i.e. church, recreational, local business, neighborhoods groups).
- 4.3.3 Engage local business and service organizations in implementation of the SAFETY *Blueprint*
- 4.3.4 Expand CAP membership to include more sectors of the Oxnard community, such as, businesses, public health, community-based organizations and youth.
- 4.3.5 Create a communication system such as a website for agencies to access information, and establish communication links to the community.

Structural and Systems Recommendations

“People in power can help a lot, [they] can make changes.”

- Oxnard youth, Pacifica High School

Successfully implementing and sustaining the prevention, intervention, enforcement/suppression and community engagement objectives in the SAFETY *Blueprint* requires ensuring that the appropriate structures and systems are in place. A national study of cities and violence prevention revealed that the cities in which the various departments (i.e., Mayor's office, Schools, Law Enforcement, and Public Health) work together, and communicate efficiently have the lowest rates of youth violence, including homicide, suicide and gun deaths.²³

Structural/ Systems Issues Objectives

I. Responsibility

A. *Leadership*: Led by local elected officials, ensure that the City of Oxnard and County of Ventura continue to play a visible and high-level leadership role in improving outcomes for Oxnard youth, families and neighborhoods in general and in CAP and the implementation of the SAFETY *Blueprint* specifically.

B. *Oversight*: Establish regular CAP meetings as a vehicle for coordination, review of progress in *Blueprint* implementation, troubleshooting, priority setting, and advancing relevant policies and practices.

C. *Reporting*: Prepare regular (annual) reports on current priorities, progress, challenges, outcomes, and next steps for the public, Mayor and City Council of Oxnard, County Board of Supervisors and Oxnard School Boards.

D. *Accountability*: Ensure that city departments and agencies and service providers are held accountable for their part in achieving the prioritized objectives in the SAFETY *Blueprint*.

II. Implementation

A. *Focused impact*: Based on the *Blueprint* objectives, work with youth and adults in Oxnard's most impacted neighborhoods to develop local action plans and coordinate saturation of prevention-intervention-enforcement/suppression strategies within specific geographic boundaries.

B. *Planning and prioritization*: Develop work plans at least semi-annually based on the elements outlined in the *Blueprint* and current needs and priorities in Oxnard.

C. *Data*: Expand and coordinate data collection to inform action along the prevention-intervention-enforcement/suppression continuum.

D. *Evaluation*: ensure that adequate resources are allocated to ongoing evaluation and that evaluation findings inform ongoing action and prioritization.

E. *Funding*: Establish stable public and private funding sources to support effective implementation of the SAFETY *Blueprint* and allocate existing resources in alignment with the SAFETY *Blueprint* priorities.

III. Staffing and Coordination

A. *Staffing*: Ensure adequate staffing to coordinate and implement the priorities and strategies identified by the SAFETY *Blueprint*.

B. *Coordination*: Establish clear roles and responsibilities of agencies, departments and other key players and ensure that these efforts are coordinated to maximize effectiveness and leverage resources.

IV. Training and communication

A. *Training*: Ensure that all members of the Oxnard community have access to the necessary knowledge and skills to implement priorities in the *Blueprint*.

B. *Information*: Establish effective communication strategies for providers and the community to ensure their knowledge about the SAFETY *Blueprint* and of existing resources and efforts.

C. *Public campaign*: Build public understanding of and support for implementing priorities in the SAFETY *Blueprint* and promulgate a sense of hope and opportunity in Oxnard.

CONCLUSION

*"[Being] safe means you can wear anything and walk anywhere.
I feel safe because I know everyone on my street."*

- Oxnard youth, Pacifica High School

Young people need to grow and develop in a positive environment which nurtures and encourages their thoughts, feelings and capabilities. Caring adults, meaningful activities, safe and supportive schools, and social connectedness are the key elements to positive youth development. The *SAFETY Blueprint* reflects Oxnard's commitment, supported by the County of Ventura, to create positive environments in which youth can thrive and grow into caring, productive adults. The *Blueprint* also strives to empower youth, families and communities to be active participants in the process, while recognizing the influence of the environment on fostering positive outcomes.

Under the leadership of CAP, a serious effort has been undertaken to develop this *Blueprint*, and it reflects a well-developed and thoughtful framework created by city, county and community stakeholders engaged in the issue of positive youth development and violence prevention. As reflected in the *Blueprint* principles, this is a long-term effort that requires the participation and commitment of all people in Oxnard. The *Blueprint* is the first step in ensuring that the City of Oxnard is a community where "all people feel safe and young people have hope and opportunity".

APPENDIX A : Terms and Definitions

Community engagement is meaningful and sustained involvement in every facet of community life of multiple players in the community including but not limited to: business, faith, community-based organizations, grassroots organizations, the media, and adults and youth who live in impacted neighborhoods.

Criminal Street Gangs are any ongoing organization, association or group of 3 or more persons, whether formal or informal, having as one of its primary activities performing a criminal act enumerated in Penal Code section 186.22e*, having common name or identifying sign or symbol, and whose members individually or collectively engage in or have engaged in a pattern of criminal gang activity.

Gangs are peer groups, generally unsupervised, and socialized by the streets. Behaviors exhibited by gangs are varied, and the purpose of gangs range from offering peer support and protection to engaging in violent and criminal activities, including some activities for profit. Gangs are usually organized by neighborhood geography or race/ethnicity. They are generally hierarchical and share common values.

Gang violence is an act of violence perpetrated by one or more members of a gang on behalf of the gang for any of a number of reasons that include turf, identification, previous insults, or an act of perceived lack of respect. Gang violence may be inflicted within, close to, or outside of the gang. Gang violence changes the look and feel of the community and fosters fear.

Gang violence enforcement/suppression is the control of gangs through enforcement efforts designed to reduce gang activity and gang crime and violence and to arrest and successfully prosecute these activities when they do take place, and to supervise those on parole and probation.

Gang violence intervention addresses individuals, families, and communities at increased and sometimes imminent risk for violence or in the midst of gang involvement and ongoing participation in gangs. This includes not only efforts to keep young people from joining gangs but also intervening to support successful transition out of and away from gangs, and enables individuals to become contributing members of a community.

Gang violence prevention is a systematic process that promotes healthy communities and behaviors, reducing the likelihood of gang involvement and committing violence in the first place and promoting healthy communities that don't produce gangs in the first place. Gang violence prevention strategies for individuals, families, and communities are designed to be upfront, that is before there is evidence of risk for gang involvement or violence (called universal or primary prevention).

Social justice refers to the right of all human beings to have equal access to education, jobs, housing and healthcare.

Social norm change refers to a systematic process that stimulates the imagination and opens the possibility to transform the attitudes, beliefs and behaviors of individuals and communities through increased knowledge on root causes of violence and other social issues.

Systems change refers to the process of identifying existing policies and practices within institutions/agencies and changing them to better support positive outcomes for the individuals and communities they serve.

Violence is the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological or emotional harm, maldevelopment or deprivation. (World Health Organization)

Violence prevention is a comprehensive and multifaceted effort to address the complex and multiple risk factors associated with violence, including, but not limited to, poverty, unemployment, discrimination, substance abuse, educational failure, fragmented families, domestic abuse, internalized shame, and felt powerlessness. Efforts build on resilience in individuals, families and communities. Violence prevention efforts contribute to empowerment, educational and economic progress, and improved life management skills while fostering healthy communities in which people can grow in dignity and safety.

Violence intervention addresses individuals, families and communities who are at increased risk and sometimes imminent risk of violence, including violent behavior, alcohol and drug abuse, physical assault, homicide, gang involvement, criminal gang activity, child abuse and neglect, domestic and/or sexual abuse, and physical and emotional trauma. Intervention includes not only efforts to provide alternative choices and opportunities, but also intervening to support successful transition out of and away from violence, and enables individuals to become contributing members of a community.

Youth development refers to the process through which all young people seek ways to meet their basic physical and social needs and to build knowledge, skills and competencies necessary to succeed in adolescence and adulthood (Community Network for Youth Development). Positive youth development requires positive experiences with caring and supportive adults and the availability of meaningful activities and opportunities.

*** Penal Code section 186.22e:**

1. Assault with a deadly weapon or by means of force likely to produce great bodily injury, as defined in Penal Code § 245
2. Robbery, as defined in Penal Code § 211
3. Unlawful homicide or manslaughter, as defined commencing with Penal Code § 187
4. The sale, possession for sale, transportation, manufacture, offer for sale, or offer to manufacture controlled substances as defined in §§ 11054, 11055, 11056, 11057, and 11058 of the Health and Safety Code
5. Shooting at an inhabited dwelling or occupied motor vehicle, as defined in Penal Code § 246
6. Discharging or permitting the discharge of a firearm from a motor vehicle, as defined in subsections (a) and (b) of Penal Code § 12034;
7. Arson, as defined in Penal Code § 450
8. The intimidation of witnesses and victims, as defined in Penal Code § 136.1
9. Grand theft, as defined in Penal Code § 487, when the value of the money, labor, or real or personal property taken exceeds ten thousand dollars (\$10,000)
10. Grand theft of any firearm, vehicle, trailer, or vessel
11. Burglary, as defined in Penal Code § 459
12. Rape, as defined in Penal Code § 261
13. Looting, as defined in Penal Code § 463
14. Money laundering, as defined in Penal Code § 186.10
15. Kidnapping, as defined in Penal Code § 207
16. Mayhem, as defined in Penal Code § 203
17. Aggravated mayhem, as defined in Penal Code § 205
18. Torture, as defined in Penal Code § 206
19. Felony extortion, as defined in Penal Code §§ 518 and 520
20. Felony vandalism, as defined in Penal Code § 594
21. Carjacking, as defined in Penal Code § 215
22. The sale, delivery, or transfer of a firearm, as defined in Penal Code § 12072
23. Possession of a pistol, revolver, or other firearm capable of being concealed upon the person in violation of paragraph (1) of subdivision (a) of Penal Code § 12101
24. Threats to commit crimes resulting in death or great bodily injury, as defined in Penal Code § 422
25. Theft and unlawful taking or driving of a vehicle, as defined in Vehicle Code §10851
26. Felony theft of an access card or account information, as defined in § 484e
27. Counterfeiting, designing, using, attempting to use an access card, as defined in § 484f
28. Felony fraudulent use of an access card or account information, as defined in §484g
29. Unlawful use of personal identifying information to obtain credit, goods, services, or medical information, as defined in §530.5
30. Wrongfully obtaining Department of Motor Vehicles documentation, as defined in §529.7
31. Prohibited possession of a firearm in violation of §12021
32. Carrying a concealed firearm in violation of §12025
33. Carrying a loaded firearm in violation of §1203

APPENDIX B: Methodology

The SAFETY *Blueprint* was developed through a six-month period from November 2007 to April 2008. The process consisted of the following eight components:

- **Workplan Creation:** Prevention Institute worked with the CAP technical team to develop a workplan matrix for the strategic planning process.
- **Document review:** Prevention Institute conducted a document review of existing youth and gang violence prevention plans of California cities. The purpose of the review was to identify best practices and models, so as to build on what is working.
- **Individual and Group Interviews:** Prevention Institute interviewed over 60 people in Oxnard, including 18 individual interviews with key stakeholders and 45 high school students, who were divided into four focus groups. The interviews aimed to provide information on the reasons why young people join gangs or engage in violence, and to identify the efforts that are working and those that need strengthening in Oxnard.
- **Planning Group Meetings:** The CAP Planning Group, comprised of over 30 representatives from the City of Oxnard, County of Ventura, law enforcement, public health, education, faith, community-based organizations and youth, participated in monthly strategic planning meetings over the period of three months. Together, the group worked to develop a vision and guiding principles, and to review, refine and prioritize the objectives and strategies of the *Blueprint*.
- **Technical Team Meetings:** The CAP technical team held monthly phone meetings with Prevention Institute to assess and provide feedback on the on-going planning process.
- **Synthesis and Review:** The outcome from meetings and findings from the document review and interviews were reviewed and synthesized to inform the agenda of the planning meetings and the final *Blueprint*.
- **Feedback on Draft Blueprint:** Throughout the process, feedback from the CAP technical team and planning group members was solicited and incorporated into the working draft and final iteration of the *Blueprint*.
- **Final Blueprint:** The final product of the *Blueprint* represents the synthesis of data, community and planning group input and the priorities of the City of Oxnard to support the positive development of their youth.

Consensus-Building Method

As a result of the strategic planning process, the SAFETY *Blueprint* delineates a set of prioritized objectives, outcome measures and strategies. These elements of the *Blueprint* were refined and affirmed by the planning group members through a consensus-building method. Through this method, the planning group aimed to achieve shared agreement, but not necessarily unanimity. In order to seek consensus, the group employed simple hand gestures as a means of voting, where five fingers indicated "I enthusiastically support this idea", three fingers indicated "I am not thrilled but I can live with it", and a fist indicated "I cannot live with this idea". For those who indicated a fist, they were asked by the group to share their reasons on why they did not agree and then to offer an alternative, in which to be voted on.

Criteria

For the purpose of prioritization, criteria were used to review and refine the outcome measures and strategies for each objective. The criteria for a good outcome measure included: *important, understandable, measurable, valid, reliable, data-available, demographics, geographic detail, actionable and asset-oriented*. In determining the best strategies, the group developed a set of criteria, loosely based on Covey's time management matrix of "urgent and important". The criteria developed by the group to prioritize strategies included: *accountability, building on existing systems, responsiveness, appropriateness, accessible, measurable, feasibility, large scale impact, important, sustainable, flexibility, alignment with resources and youth-defined priorities*.

APPENDIX C: Community Action Partnership Strategic Planning Group

Mayor Thomas Holden, City of Oxnard
Supervisor Kathy Long, Ventura County Board of Supervisor
Councilmember Andres Herrera, City of Oxnard
Supervisor John Flynn, Ventura County Board of Supervisor
Al Escoto, Ventura County Board of Supervisor John Flynn's Office
Alan Hammerand, Ventura County Probation Agency
Asencion Olea, Transitional Aged Youth/Pacific Clinics/Community Youth
Barbara Bonsignori, Ventura County Public Health Department
Barbara Marquez-O'Neill, Community Action Partnership
Bryan Wilson, Probation Agency-Juvenile Facilities
Carla Castilla, Congresswoman Lois Capp's Office
Charlotte Torres, First 5 Ventura County
Dr. Cary Dritz, Ventura County Office of Education
Dr. Jerry Dannenberg, Hueneme Elementary School District
Dr. Kathy Green, Oxnard Elementary School District
Dr. Nancy Carroll, Ocean View School District
Edmund Sotelo, City of Oxnard
Efren Gorre, Oxnard City Corps
Gil Ramirez, City of Oxnard
Grace Magistrale Hoffman, City of Oxnard
Gustavo Deharo, City of Oxnard City Corps Youth
Karen Burnham, City of Oxnard
Kathleen Back, Juvenile Detention Alternatives, Probation Agency
Kerryann Schuette, Oxnard Elementary School District
Lucianne Ranni, Behavioral Health Department Alcohol and Drug
Maria Garcia, City of Oxnard City Corps Youth
Marisa Martinez, Parents of Murdered Children Ventura County Chapter
Martin Hernandez, Ventura County Supervisor Kathy Long's Office
Melissa Cansino, City of Oxnard City Corps Youth
Michael Kanter, Ventura County Partnership for Safe Families & Communities
Mike Matlock, Oxnard Police Department
Patrick Zarate, Behavioral Health Department Alcohol and Drugs
Rev. Edgar Mohorko, Community Action Partnership/Oxnard Police Department Clergy Council
Rev. Greg Runyon, Oxnard Police Department Clergy Council
Rico Ramirez, Oxnard Police Department Clergy Council
Sandra Lozano, Human Services Agency West Oxnard Job and Career Center
Sonia Kroth, Ventura County Human Services Agency
Tim Blaylock, Boys & Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme
Uriah Glynn, Boys and Girls Club of Greater Oxnard and Port Hueneme /Community Member

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APPENDIX D: Acknowledgments

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- Supervisor John Flynn, Ventura County Board of Supervisors
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- Debbie De Vries, Oxnard Elementary School Board
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- Peter Martinez, Senior Deputy Probation Officer, Ventura County
- Stefan Sisman, Counselor, Oceanview Elementary School
- Youth groups, grades 10-12, Hueneme High School
- Youth groups, grades 10-12, Pacifica High School

APPENDIX E: Resources

In order to support the planning process, Prevention Institute conducted a document review of existing youth and gang violence prevention plans of California cities. The information collected from the document review was integrated into the *Blueprint* throughout the process, as needed.

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2. Commission on Gang Prevention and Intervention. *The San Diego Gang Prevention and Intervention Strategic Action Plan The San Diego Initiative*. October 2007
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4. Marquez-O'Neill, Barbara. *Moving from "No Se Puede" to "Si Se Puede": A Message of Hope for Violence Prevention in the Oxnard Area*. Human Services Agency County of Ventura. HSA Policy Paper Series #05-01. June 2005.
5. Prevention Institute. *A Lifetime Commitment to Violence Prevention: The Alameda County Blueprint*. July 2005.
6. San Jose Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force (MGPTF). *Reclaiming Our Youth: Mayor's Gang Prevention Task Force Strategic Work Plan*. 2005-2007.
7. Ventura County Office of Education. *Creating Asset Rich Environments for Children and Youth: A Call to Action "Ventura County CAREs"*. December 2007.

APPENDIX F : Objectives and Outcome Measures

The SAFETY *Blueprint* objectives were developed across the continuum of prevention, intervention, enforcement/suppression and community engagement by the CAP Strategic Planning Group. The accompanying outcomes measures were refined and prioritized, and relate specifically to each objective.

Prevention:

- 1.1 *Activities:* Expand opportunities for meaningful involvement of youth, as evidenced by: increased youth participation in positive, pro-social activities outside school and home; in internship and apprenticeship programs; and with meaningful jobs and decreased number of teens unsupervised (home alone/on the street) between 3 and 6 pm
- 1.2 *Caring adults:* Foster meaningful one-on-one relationships between youth and adults, as evidenced by: increased quality relationships with adults, number of youth reporting at least one positive adult relationship, and number of parents reading daily to their children
- 1.3 *Strong families:* Strengthen the capacity of families to provide supportive home environments for young people, as evidenced by: increased time youth spend with parents and family; number of parents reading daily to their children; community supports for parents and families; and living wage incomes among households in highly impacted neighborhoods and decreased rates of domestic violence and foster/out of home placements
- 1.4 *School Connectedness:* Foster school connectedness and academic success by promoting a comprehensive, asset-based approach to education⁵, as evidenced by: increased feelings of attachment/commitment to school; academic achievement; graduation rates; parental involvement in schools, and rate of parents' attendance at teacher conferences and decreased truancy rates
- 1.5 *Social connectedness:* Foster socially connected neighborhood environments; as evidenced by: increased social cohesion and trust; community involvement in fostering safe neighborhoods; feelings of hope and opportunity; and perceptions of safety.
- 1.6 *Economic development:* Increase the availability of living wage jobs and the skills required for those jobs; as evidenced by: increased youth participation in internship and apprenticeship programs; number of youth with meaningful jobs; number of people with skills to obtain/maintain living wage jobs; living wage incomes among households in highly impacted neighborhoods; and job opportunities for all people in Oxnard
- 1.7 *Housing:* Increase the availability of affordable housing throughout Oxnard, as evidenced by: increased number of low and middle income housing units in highly impacted neighborhoods, availability of quality affordable housing; number of owner-occupied housing in Oxnard; and housing stability in highly impacted neighborhoods.

⁵ In line with Ventura County BASICO's Call to Action "Ventura County CAREs" Report

Intervention

- 2.1 *Mentoring:* Enhance and support mentoring programs that link at-risk youth to positive adults, experiences, and opportunities, as evidenced by: increased quality relationships with adults and number of youth reporting at least one positive adult relationship and decreased truancy rates; substance abuse or dependency; and youth entering the juvenile justice system.
- 2.2 *Coordinated support:* Develop and expand on-going and coordinated support for at-risk youth and ensure a consistent and effective/efficient system of support, as evidenced by: increased number of at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs; graduation rates; and number of multi-agency family support plans & decreased truancy rates; substance abuse or dependency; youth entering the juvenile justice system; and foster/out of home placements.
- 2.3 *Rehabilitation/re-entry:* Ensure the availability of rehabilitation/re-entry services for incarcerated youth, including support systems for youth entering a juvenile facility or probation, as evidenced by: increased number of at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs; job placement for formerly incarcerated individuals; family re-entry services; and opportunities during incarceration to build education and skills toward a trade or career and decreased number of parolees re-entering the criminal justice system; youth re-entering the juvenile justice system; and substance abuse or dependency.
- 2.4 *Jobs:* Increase opportunities for successful employment among formerly incarcerated individuals, as evidenced by: increased job placement for formerly incarcerated individuals; number of people with skills to obtain/maintain living wage jobs; and living wage incomes among households in highly impacted neighborhoods and decreased number of parolees re-entering the criminal justice system and youth re-entering the juvenile justice system.
- 2.5 *Family support:* Provide case management, family support and coordinated service provisions to support families in highly-impacted neighborhoods, as evidenced by: increased number of multi-agency family support plans; graduation rates; and number of youth with meaningful jobs and decreased truancy rates, mental health problems such as PTSD and depression; youth entering the juvenile justice system; foster/out of home placements; and substance abuse or dependency.
- 2.6 *Strong schools:* Support schools to be successful in educating all Oxnard youth, as evidenced by: increased feelings of attachment/commitment to school; academic achievement; graduation rates; and improved test scores and decreased truancy rates
- 2.7 *Community development:* Support locating commerce, services, and resources in highly-impacted neighborhoods; as evidenced by: increased community and funding resources in highly impacted neighborhoods; business development in highly impacted neighborhoods; availability of services within highly impacted neighborhoods; and positive feelings about living in specific neighborhoods.
- 2.8 *Neighborhood Intervention/Outreach:* Ensure a presence of known and trusted individuals and organizations in highly impacted neighborhoods to foster connections to community resources and reduce conflicts, as evidence by: increased perceptions of safety; youth participation in positive, pro-social activities outside school and home; and number of at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs and decreased number of teens

unsupervised (home alone/on the street) between 3 and 6 pm; youth entering the juvenile justice system; number of parolees re-entering the criminal justice system; youth re-entering the juvenile justice system; escalation of conflicts in highly impacted neighborhoods; and retaliation following violent incidents.

- 2.9 *Neighborhood appearance:* Proactively address neighborhood blight (street lights, loitering, safety, graffiti) and reduce graffiti and neighborhood damage, as evidenced by: increased positive feelings about living in specific neighborhoods and perceptions of safety and decreased new graffiti

Enforcement/Suppression:

- 3.1 *Referral:* Ensure that appropriate people are connected to support and services, as evidenced by: increased capacity and knowledge of probation, parole and law enforcement on referral support and services and number of at-risk youth connected to relevant services and programs and decreased youth entering the juvenile justice system and substance abuse or dependency.
- 3.2 *Diversion:* Ensure immediate diversion of minor violators⁶, who have been determined to not pose a risk to the community, to intervention programs, as evidenced by: increased capacity and knowledge of probation, parole and law enforcement on referral support and services and minor violators referred to appropriate services and diversion activities and decreased juvenile hall admissions
- 3.3 *De-classification:* Establish clear criteria and pathways for de-classification as a gang member and removal from the database, as evidenced by: increased gang youth who are declassified and removed from database and a decrease in identified gang members on the streets.
- 3.4 *Proactive enforcement/suppression:* Continue existing, proactive enforcement/suppression efforts and examine regularly for appropriateness and make changes as needed, as evidenced by: increased coordination among probation, parole and law enforcement and decrease in identified gang members on the streets and in gang-related assaults and homicides.
- 3.5 *Partnerships:* Enhance partnerships between law enforcement, including probation and parole, and the community, as evidenced by: increased community representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning and evaluation of enforcement/suppression efforts; feelings of empowerment among community; and community understanding of criteria for gang membership used in gang injunctions and continued regular attendance by community members at coordination meetings

⁶ Based on the Juvenile Detention Alternative Initiatives (JDAI) principles, only minor violators who are determined to present a risk to the safety of the community should be incarcerated. Minors who do not pose a risk to the community are immediately placed in an appropriate intervention program in the community. Such intervention programs are designed to support the minor in developing the skills and abilities necessary to make law abiding and positive life choices.

Community Engagement:

- 4.1 *Empowerment:* Empower residents in impacted neighborhoods to become full partners in solutions across the prevention, intervention and suppression/enforcement continuum, as evidenced by: increased community voice in planning and evaluation of P/I/E-S efforts; youth representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning; relationship of trust, respect and caring between the police and communities; regular attendance of community members in planning meetings; balanced representation of community members in CAP.

- 4.2 *Youth voice:* Ensure a youth voice in solutions for Oxnard, as evidenced by: increased youth voice in planning for violence P/I/E-S activities; youth representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning; participation of youth in decision-making processes; regular attendance of youth in planning meetings; and community and funding resources and established formal decision-making channels and advisory bodies for youth.

- 4.3 *Community partners:* Encourage strong commitment and collaboration among a broad spectrum of community partners to promote youth development and address violence, including local government, businesses, schools, faith groups, community-based organizations, the media, grassroots groups, and community residents (adults and youth), as evidenced by: diverse non-governmental partners support the SAFETY *Blueprint* and engaged in implementing the SAFETY *Blueprint*; and increased coordination between public and private sectors and impacted communities; community voice in planning for violence prevention/intervention/enforcement/suppression activities; identification and awareness of community assets; community and funding resources; youth representation from highly-impacted neighborhoods in planning; and regular attendance of youth in planning meetings.

APPENDIX G: Prevention Institute and The California Endowment

The CAP Strategic Planning Process and SAFETY *Blueprint* development was facilitated by Prevention Institute with support from The California Endowment.



Prevention Institute is a non-profit national center dedicated to improving community health and well-being by building momentum for effective primary prevention. Primary prevention means taking action to build resilience and to prevent problems before they occur. The Institute's work is characterized by a strong commitment to community participation and promotion of equitable health outcomes among all social and economic groups. Since its founding in 1997, the organization has focused on injury and violence prevention, traffic safety, health disparities, nutrition and physical activity, and youth development. (www.preventioninstitute.org).

The California Endowment is a private, statewide health foundation that was created in 1996 as a result of Blue Cross of California's creation of WellPoint Health Networks, a for-profit corporation. This conversion set the groundwork for our mission: *The California Endowment's mission is to expand access to affordable, quality health care for underserved individuals and communities, and to promote fundamental improvements in the health status of all Californians.* The California Endowment's vision for a healthy California involves more than the absence of disease. It is a state where community members and policymakers work together to improve health and health care, and there is respect for the experience and knowledge of the people who are the most directly affected by health disparities. It is a state where all Californians have a strong sense of self-worth and practice healthy lifestyles, where diversity is a source of strength for communities, where health problems are addressed promptly and effectively to minimize their consequences, and where prevention is a shared agenda and partnership is the norm. (www.calendow.org)

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