

Memorandum

To: Assistant City Manager Cynthia Barber

From: Chief Michael DeLeo on behalf of the Community Leadership Council on Gun Violence

Re: Status and Recommendation

Date: January 18, 2016

Background

On August 14, 2014, a concerned group of citizens met to discuss what steps should be taken to address the gun violence in Tallahassee. The impetus for creating the Community Leadership Council on Gun Violence was a growing awareness of gun violence throughout Tallahassee. Violent crime, especially gun violence, is high in our community and well above the state average. The group was charged with evaluating solutions to addressing this community-wide challenge.

Assessment

A significant amount of time has been spent delving into detailed crime data to determine the most appropriate direction for plan development. The Council's research resulted in identification of suspect/victim demographics and specific neighborhoods where prevention and intervention programs should be focused. The race and sex of suspects and victims was reviewed for citywide incidents involving a violent crime where a firearm was used during the period 2011-2013. The results of the statistical review clearly showed that black males ages 18-29 make up the majority of offenders and victims. The 2014 analysis (attached) revealed the same trend.

The Council has also evaluated the economic impact of gun violence in Tallahassee. Dr. Dale Brill conducted an assessment of firearm-related assaults. Total projected cost estimates (society and government) in Tallahassee for violence involving a firearm or related instrument in 2014 equaled \$69,909,611. Murder resulted in the greatest projected loss of more than \$51 million chiefly as a result of the economic activity lost from premature end of life. Each murder carries a total cost of nearly \$5.7 million. These projections are considered conservative by comparison to the "value of a statistical life" of \$9.2 million used by the US Department of Transportation.

Costs associated with firearm-related, assault injuries requiring hospital admittance in 2014 are projected at more than \$14.7 million or \$475,152 per incident. Less severe injuries with the same reported cause in 2014 totaled more than \$4 million or \$131,735 per incident. Dr. Brill's report is attached.

The Council evaluated several violence prevention programs, and identified Cure Violence as an evidence based program that has resulted in significant decrease in shootings where it has been implemented. Cure Violence is a health based violence prevention model that has reduced shootings by 20% – 73% where it has been properly implemented. Cure Violence has been independently evaluated by CDC/Johns Hopkins, NIJ/Northwestern, and BJA/Center for Court

Innovation. Members of the Council visited the Cure Violence headquarters in June 2015 to conduct site visits and evaluate the program. After their review, representatives of Cure Violence visited Tallahassee to conduct an assessment on the viability of the program being implemented here. A copy of Cure Violence's assessment is attached.

Future Steps

There are three primary challenges if the City decides to adopt the Cure Violence model: funding, structure, and location.

The estimated first year cost of implementing the model at one pilot site is \$400,000 – \$450,000. Approximately \$75,000 covers the administrative and support costs collected by the parent organization; the remaining \$325,000 - \$375,000 stays in our community, primarily for the salary and benefits of local employees. Initially, the City could fund the pilot site, and seek grant funding from federal grants or private foundations for future years and/or sites.

The local organizational structure would need to be determined. There are two primary options: the City could adopt the program and implement it in an existing department, or the City could have a local non-profit organization manage the program. Both options have pros and cons that can be evaluated further if the city decides to adopt the Cure Violence model. A city department would give the administration better oversight and fiscal control, but limit the effectiveness of the model as it may be viewed as an extension of law enforcement. The City would have to clearly communicate that the department administering the Cure Violence model was not part of TPD. A local non-profit organization may establish trust and build effective relationships more quickly than a governmental entity; however, identifying a local NPO that has experience running this type of violence prevention program may prove daunting. Members of the Community Leadership Council on Gun Violence could serve in an advisory capacity regardless of the organizational structure.

The final challenge is determining the location of the pilot site. Both the Greater Frenchtown/Griffin Heights and South City areas have a clear need for a violence prevention program. However, with any new endeavor, there is a learning process and it would be even more challenging to attempt simultaneous implementation of two different sites. The City would have to select a pilot site or commit to funding two locations which would increase the cost substantially.

Recommendation

The Community Leadership Council on Gun Violence is recommending that the City of Tallahassee adopt, fund, and implement the health based, violence prevention model Cure Violence.