



# CITY OF PHILADELPHIA CITY COUNCIL

June 4, 2021

Mayor James F. Kenney  
City of Philadelphia  
*Sent via e-mail*

Re: Gun violence and the FY22 budget

Dear Mayor Kenney,

We applaud your proposed Fiscal Year 2022 budget for its focus on a more holistic, racially equitable, well-resourced approach to public safety. It is the right focus at the right time. But we believe that our next budget must go further. It must be bolder and more urgent. This year threatens to be the bloodiest in our beloved city's history. No place is safe. Not our streets, not our parks, not our schools, not our workplaces, not even our homes. This is a generational crisis that has reached a bloody peak. Indeed, homicide is the leading cause of death for Philadelphia's Black men aged 15 to 34. Over 800 youth have been shot since January 2020. Gun violence is everywhere, but most of it is concentrated in a handful of disinvested, predominantly Black and Brown neighborhoods.

Such unprecedented violence demands an unprecedented response. Accordingly, we write today to announce our intention to increase FY22 funding for violence prevention and response by \$100 million. These targeted investments will be concentrated in the neighborhoods suffering most from gun violence, with a particular emphasis on Black and Brown youth. This plan is outlined generally below, with a more detailed description in the attached appendix.

### **Prevention (\$15M)**

Prevention programs save lives by stopping shootings before they happen. They are directed at those most likely to shoot or be shot. We propose investments to expand capacity and ensure efficacy of existing evidence-based programs such as Group Violence Intervention, Community Crisis Intervention (Cure Violence), and community-led violence interventions.

### **Healing (\$15M)**

Hurt people tend to hurt people. Trauma radiates throughout our neighborhoods. We propose investment in programs that provide direct services for mental and behavioral health, hospital-based violence interventions, restorative justice, peer-to-peer support, and other proven approaches to healing our communities.

### **Safe Havens for Youth and Families (\$45M)**

Young people are our most precious asset, but they have faced unprecedented deprivation during the pandemic—closed schools, closed playgrounds, closed libraries, and canceled programs. In



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violence-plagued neighborhoods, even stoops and sidewalks are not an option, trapping youth in their homes. We propose investments that will ensure access to safe places to learn, play, keep cool, and be fed.

**Employment and Careers (\$15M)**

Employment opportunity is a crucial violence-reduction tool, providing economic security and fortifying social networks. We propose investments that will create dedicated, low-barrier job opportunities for people at risk, including guaranteed employment for youth in the most impacted neighborhoods, while re-establishing a workforce development office that will have dedicated staff to support City violence-prevention initiatives.

**Community Empowerment (\$10M)**

Communities know best what they need, but we must support them. We propose increased investment in community-led interventions and restorative justice.

Thank you for your careful consideration. We look forward to working with your Administration to refine and implement this vision.

Sincerely,

Kenyatta Johnson  
Second District  
Chair, Special Committee  
on Gun Violence

Jamie Gauthier  
Third District

Katherine Gilmore Richardson  
At Large

Helen Gym  
At Large  
Chair, Committee on  
Children and Youth

Mark Squilla  
First District

Curtis Jones, Jr.  
Fourth District  
Chair, Committee on  
Public Safety

Bobby Henon  
Sixth District

Cindy Bass  
Eighth District



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Kendra Brooks  
At Large

Allan Domb  
At Large

Derek Green  
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Isaiah Thomas  
At Large

David Oh  
At Large

cc: Jim Engler, Chief of Staff

Tumar Alexander, Managing Director

Erica Atwood; Senior Director, Office of Policy and Strategic Initiatives for Criminal Justice & Public Safety; Co-chair, Roadmap to Safer Communities Implementation Team

Danielle Outlaw, Police Commissioner; Co-chair, Roadmap to Safer Communities Implementation Team

Ruth Abaya; Acting Director, Division of Chronic Disease and Injury Prevention, Department of Public Health; Co-chair, Roadmap to Safer Communities Implementation Team



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### **APPENDIX: Gun Violence Budget Priorities**

#### **Prevention (\$15M)**

- Increase Group Violence Intervention (GVI) program staff to support improved outreach and services, and citywide program expansion
- Provide dedicated housing and employment placements for referrals from GVI and other violence-prevention programs
- Expand CCIP to 24/7, increase Cure Violence training and technical assistance, and increase dedicated services, including housing and employment
- Enhance probation supervision—including updated program design, increased officer training, and expanded services—for defendants deemed high-risk for violence
- Provide conflict resolution programming at recreation centers, schools, and other public sites in high-violence neighborhoods
- Create a City Council Gun Violence Fund to allow for nimble appropriations to emergent gun violence spending priorities
- Fully subsidize cameras for business owners and/or small commercial property owners
- Recruit and compensate individuals able to devote time to mentoring youth and building relationships
- Offer stipends to youth to attend anti-violence programming
- Independent, outside evaluation of all gun violence programs receiving \$250K or more in City funding in any fiscal year

#### **Healing (\$15M)**

- Expand the Health Department's data and policy work on firearm injury and death, including establishment of a citywide network of hospital-based violence intervention programs
- Ensure dedicated staff within the Network of Neighbors program for each high-violence area
- Create a DBHIDS mobile crisis unit for each high-violence area
- Expand staffing for the Office of the Victim Advocate
- Speed implementation of Anti-Violence Resource Network and integrate it with Office of Victim Advocate and Office of Violence Prevention
- Create crime scene clean-up teams to clean the site of every shooting
- Guarantee immediate outreach and prompt resource delivery to victims and co-victims of gun violence
- Guarantee access to therapeutic services for traumatized youth and families through the Department of Behavioral Health and Disability Services and community-based providers

#### **Safe Havens for Youth and Families (\$45M)**

- Offer 7-day service with expanded hours at all rec centers, playgrounds and pools, with 7-day programming at all locations and food distribution during school
- Invest capital dollars in rec center facility upgrades and maintenance
- Offer 7-day service with expanded hours at all libraries with 7-day programming



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- Expand funding for play streets, including cooling equipment and food distribution during weekends and school breaks
- Expand availability and variety of Out of School Time offerings, including guaranteed access to daily activities
- Establish Evening Resource Centers in all high-violence areas

### **Employment and Careers (\$15M)**

- Re-establish workforce development office within Commerce Department, with dedicated staff to ensure access for highest risk youth and young adults to career development opportunities
- Guarantee youth employment in high-violence areas
- Create a grant program to supplement wages for employees referred by anti-violence programs, similar to the Philadelphia Re-Entry Program Tax Credit
- Expand PHS LandCare program and Community Life Improvement Programs (CLIP) to allow for accessible employment opportunity while cleaning and maintaining vacant and blighted properties, with priority for high-risk youth from high-violence areas

### **Community Empowerment (\$10M)**

- Create a gun violence grants officer position
- Expand Targeted Community Investment Grants program to fund all meritorious proposals, while maintaining newly increased grant cap of \$50,000
- Expand restorative justice program for system-involved youth
- Expand Mural Arts restorative justice program
- Expand Town Watch